

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

**First Session of the Fifty-First Parliament
(2006)**

The Fiftieth Parliament of South Australia having been prorogued until 4 May 2006, and the House of Assembly having been dissolved on 20 February, general elections were held on 18 March. By proclamation dated 6 April, the new Parliament was summoned to meet on 27 April, and the First Session began on that date.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 27 April 2006

The House met at 11 a.m. pursuant to proclamation.

The Clerk (Mr D.A. Bridges) read the proclamation summoning parliament.

GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION

At 11.05 a.m., in compliance with summons, the house proceeded to the Legislative Council, where a commission was read appointing the Hon. John Jeremy Doyle, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of South Australia, and the Hon. Margaret Jean Nyland, a judge of the Supreme Court, to be commissioners for the opening of parliament.

MEMBERS, SWEARING IN

The house being again in its own chamber, at 11.14 a.m. His Honour Mr Justice Doyle (Chief Justice) attended and produced a commission from Her Excellency the Governor appointing him to be a commissioner to administer to members of the House of Assembly the oath of allegiance or the affirmation in lieu thereof required by the Constitution Act. The commission was read by the Clerk, who then produced writs for the election of 47 members of the House of Assembly.

The oath of allegiance required by law (or the affirmation) was administered and subscribed to by members.

The commissioner retired.

SPEAKER, ELECTION

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I remind the house that it is now necessary to proceed to the election of a Speaker. I move:

That the member for Playford take the chair of the house as Speaker.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Leader of the Opposition): I second the motion.

The CLERK: Does the honourable member accept the nomination?

Mr SNELLING (Playford): I accept the nomination and submit myself to the will of the house.

The CLERK: Are there any further nominations? There being no further nominations, I declare the honourable member for Playford duly elected as Speaker of the House of Assembly.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Mr Snelling was escorted to the dais by the mover and seconder of the motion.

The SPEAKER (Hon. J.J. Snelling): This is not an occasion for a lengthy speech, but I should like to make a solemn undertaking that I will strive to protect the hard-won rights and privileges of the house and to deal fairly with all members. For those people who do not understand today's ceremonies, they may seem quaint and even anachronistic. People who understand the Westminster system better understand that Speakers were reluctant to accept the office because it involved great responsibilities that could cost one one's life. These rituals remind us that we are but the custodians of the sturdiest, most resilient and adaptable of all parliamentary traditions: the great guarantor of our liberties. Our duty is to hand them on, in tact, to those who will follow us.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I congratulate the new Speaker. We look forward to the delicacy and sense of duty that you bring to this great office, and I am sure that all members of the house congratulate you. I inform the house that Her Excellency the Governor will be pleased to have the Speaker presented to her at 12.15 p.m. today.

responsibilities, has been inadequate to address the need for investment.

The arrangement this government came to late last year and finalised just before the election with the Local Government Association has been described not only by us but by them as both historic and overdue. It has received glowing praise from the president of the LGA. It will create an authority which will allow a proper and planned investment in stormwater infrastructure. It is not going to be my role to decide from here what is and is not best for managing stormwater in a particular catchment. That will be the role of the authority, and that is something we want. We want local governments to play the leading role in it. We want them to be able to manage their stormwater investment. We want to create, and we will create, an authority for them to do it.

It should sit ill in the mouth of the opposition to criticise this. It has been a brave move, an historic move, by this government. It has been overdue, but it is brave for us because we are wading into responsibilities, in some cases, which are not ours. But we have taken this step to create an authority to allow councils to get together to address it in a planned fashion and to bring ahead investment, that is, the authority can borrow against guaranteed revenues. One of the things that we have done is to guarantee the revenues from the state government to the authority over a long period of time so it can borrow against those revenues and bring stormwater investment on. It is an excellent thing.

What buoys me up most with it is that the council—the only council as far as I can ascertain—that appears to be opposing and criticising it is the Burnside council. I suspect that Burnside, in some language somewhere in the world, has the meaning of recalcitrant because that is the Burnside council. I am more assured than ever that we are taking the right approach by the criticism of the Burnside council. All I know is that the vast bulk of councils in South Australia and the Local Government Association have welcomed this with a warm enthusiasm, and that is rare in relationships between the two levels of government.

RAPID BAY JETTY

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss): Thank you, Mr Speaker, and let me also congratulate—

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: Is he better than the other one, Gunny?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Finniss.

Mr PENGILLY: Let me also congratulate you, Mr Speaker, on your appointment. My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure. Will the minister advise the house of the scheduled start and completion dates for the upgrading and reopening of the Rapid Bay jetty? During the recent state election campaign, an announcement was made that the Rapid Bay jetty would receive funding to upgrade and reopen this major tourism drawcard on the Fleurieu Peninsula. This jetty drew around 18 000 recreational fishers and divers when opened, including, possibly, the minister, and was a major economic catalyst in the district, impacting on a considerable number of local small businesses.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Infrastructure): I congratulate the member for Finniss on his fighting win in the seat—somewhat of a struggle against the daughter of Des Corcoran, I think. He did well to hold her out as it turned out. But he is here and that is what counts. Isn't that right, Graham? That's all that counts. They pay you the same no

matter how much you win by. I can advise the member for Finniss that it would be possible to commence some work now, but the fear is that that would be seen as pre-empting the solution by what is quite a diverse group of interests in the jetty. We have said that we are going to all of those interest groups, and one of our very best bureaucrats in government, Rod Hook, is dealing with that to find a solution that accommodates all of them. The truth is that this jetty is of very keen interest to the diving community and it has very strong environmental values. The Hon. John Hill frequently used to speak to me about the leafy sea dragon, as I am sure will the Hon. Gail Gago. It is simply not true that I used to use them for bait; that rumour was made up by someone else. Of course, fishermen also have a keen interest.

The possible solution will be different for each of those groups and it will also be expensive. We are working with those groups at present and, as soon as we can resolve with those groups the best outcome, we will commence work. I will say, though, that it is a pretty expensive obligation on the state government for a jetty. Sometimes you wonder about the history of how these things end up as the taxpayers' responsibility, but they do. We spend taxpayers' money and we do that as wisely as possible. We will talk to all of those groups and arrive at the best solution for all of them. I am sure that it will not make everyone happy, but that's not my specialty anyway.

BROWNHILL AND KESWICK CREEKS FLOOD MITIGATION STUDY

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): My question is to the Minister for Infrastructure. Given his earlier answer to the member for Unley, how does the government intend to deal with Burnside Council's decision to dissociate itself from the state/local government stormwater management agreement? Is the minister aware of any other councils that have similar concerns about the government's plans?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Infrastructure): If you want to know how many councils have concerns, plenty of councils want governments to pay more and for them to pay less; that is the nature of the relationship between the two levels of government. How will we deal with Burnside council? We said at the outset that if the majority of councils want to do this—and they certainly do—we will proceed with it. The parliament will deal with this matter. Some councils would like a better arrangement than others, but the vast bulk of councils are strongly supportive. The LGA is strongly supportive. As I said, it was warmly embraced by the LGA and the bulk of councils and, under those circumstances, we will proceed. I think that Burnside council will come to its senses at some point, but I must place on the record that I am very glad that the majority of South Australian councils do not have the attitude of the Burnside council.

RODEOS

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): My question is to the Attorney-General.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Stuart. I will protect him.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: My question is to the Attorney-General, and I know how pleased he is to see me, even though he sent one of his staff up to campaign against me.