

We of the Country party feel very keenly the loss we have suffered. I desire to pay this special tribute to his memory. When I became Leader of the Country party, he stood by me in all my difficulties and troubles. He gave me all the support it was possible for a man to give another. In this House we treat one another as colleagues and friends. When I heard the news of Sir Albert's death, I found that he and I had been much closer than I had previously realized. I am sure that this Parliament is the poorer for his passing. I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Labour party in their expressions of sympathy to Lady Dunstan and the other members of the family.

**Mr. TURNBULL** (Korong).—As the present member for Korong, I support the motion. The late Sir Albert Dunstan was an excellent representative of the electorate of Korong. He was an ardent advocate of country interests. At all times, he was approachable and happy to serve his constituents in whom he took a personal interest. I am sure that no member could have served his electorate better than did Sir Albert Dunstan.

**The SPEAKER** (the Hon. Archie Michaelis).—I should like to add my expressions of sympathy with Lady Dunstan and the other members of the family of the late Sir Albert Dunstan. In addition to being in every way a realist, Sir Albert had another quality which I think endeared him to many people; he was a bonny fighter. He never knew when he was beaten, and whether one agreed or crossed swords with him, one knew that he would put up the fight of his lifetime for what he believed to be right. Such a quality we can admire in any man. Sir Albert was for many years a notable figure in Victorian politics, and I have no doubt that long after those members who are present to-day have passed on, history will recall his accomplishments. In the meantime he will remain a living memory with those who associated with him, first in his capacity as a private member, later when he became a Minister, and more especially when he was Premier.

The motion was agreed to in silence, honorable members standing in their places.

## DEATH OF THE HONORABLE FRANCIS EDWARD OLD.

**Mr. HOLLWAY** (Premier and Treasurer).—By leave, I move—

That this House expresses its sincere sorrow at the death of the Honorable Francis Edward Old, and places on record its acknowledgement of the valuable services rendered by him to the Parliament and the people of Victoria as member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Swan Hill from the 19th of November, 1919, to the 3rd of October, 1945, and as Minister of the Crown from 1923 to 1924, and from 1935 to 1943.

Frank Old—as he was affectionately known to members on both sides of the House—was one of the pioneers of the Country party. By virtue of his ability, he became a Minister of the Crown in various Governments and served in that capacity for a long period. In the early days of his association with Parliament, Mr. Old was Minister of Railways and Minister of Agriculture and later he held the portfolios of Minister of Water Supply and Minister in Charge of Electrical Undertakings. He was an ardent advocate of the national benefits of irrigation and did a great deal towards the extension of the irrigation system in Victoria. He believed that the rivers and streams were vital to the progress of primary production in this State, and he evolved plans for a larger measure of control of streams.

Mr. Old's efforts resulted in the formation of trusts composed of local residents. Among the schemes which were launched during his period of office and which remain an outstanding tribute to him were those by which improvements were made to the Latrobe, the Avon and the Snowy rivers. I am sure that honorable members generally will agree with me when I say that the late Frank Old was a staunch and sincere advocate of country interests—a true son of the soil. On behalf of the Government I desire to extend sincere sympathy to his widow and the other members of his family in their bereavement.

**Mr. CAIN** (Northcote).—I wish to support the motion submitted by the Premier regarding our late friend and colleague, Frank Old. Mr. Old was not a member of this House for a few years

prior to his death, but he is affectionately remembered for the friendship he displayed during the long period of his membership. Apart from his deep interest in water supply and irrigation generally—an interest that was due to his close association with the development of the Murray valley—he performed outstanding work when he acted as Premier while the late Sir Albert Dunstan was abroad in 1937. At that time the Labor party was supporting the Government of the day and I had many opportunities to learn of Mr. Old's ability to fill the position of Acting Premier. At one period that Government was faced with troubles at Wonthaggi and I was impelled to pay a compliment to Mr. Old for the manner in which he handled the situation.

He was human, understanding, and tactful, and so possessed the fundamental qualities of leadership. Throughout his Ministerial experience, the late Mr. Old was looked upon as a most affable and decent type of man. I join with the Premier in extending deepest sympathy to the widow and other members of the family in their bereavement. Mr. Old suffered a lingering illness, such as causes much more worry to a family than when death occurs suddenly, as it did with Sir Albert Dunstan and Mr. Everard.

The members of our party consider that this Parliament and the State as a whole owe a debt of gratitude to the late Mr. Old, and that his family will realize that while he was in the service of the State he acquitted himself most creditably, more particularly in the interests of the people in the northern part of Victoria.

**Mr. McDONALD** (Shepparton).—When I first became a member of this Assembly the late Mr. Frank Old was my political mentor. My association with him was marked by real friendship and affection. I soon learned to appreciate his sterling character, his very generous nature and the wide knowledge he possessed as the result of long experience. He did much for Victoria, especially when he was responsible for the administration of water supply and

electrical undertakings. When explaining the provisions of any Bill of which he was in charge, he never failed to impart worth-while information. That was an outstanding characteristic based on his intimate knowledge of the public Departments over which he had Ministerial control. Moreover, he never hesitated to assist other members of this House whenever he could. As an irrigator I, with many others, formed a high opinion of Mr. Old's practical experience of irrigation. He evinced a real interest in us as settlers and was able to effect practical improvements in water supply administration generally. By his death the members of the Country party have lost a great friend and a sincere colleague. I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in expressing sympathy to the relatives.

**Lieut.-Colonel HIPWORTH** (Honorary Minister).—I desire to join with the Premier and other members who have spoken to the motion regarding the late Mr. Frank Old. I knew him for many years, and I am aware of the splendid work he performed on behalf of the Swan Hill electorate. The services he rendered for 27 years, not only to that electorate, but to the State as a whole, will long be remembered by those who were acquainted with him. Mr. Old, who had many sterling qualities, was one of the pioneers of the North. His efforts in the early days were of a monumental character, and they will make a substantial contribution to the welfare of new settlers in the electorate he represented so well.

**The SPEAKER** (the Hon. Archie Michaelis).—I should like to add my tribute to the late Frank Old. Although I had no personal experience of his work for the constituency he represented, I remember him well as a loyal member of this Assembly. He was a very kindly man, always willing to render invaluable assistance to new members, and to make them feel at home. I was one of many to whom he was most courteous, out of a desire to make them *au fait* with the forms and procedure of the House. As has already been pointed out, Mr. Old was a capable Minister of the Crown, and

a keen advocate of the requirements of his electorate. I join with those who have already expressed their sympathy to the sorrowing family.

The motion was agreed to in silence, honorable members standing in their places.

**Mr. HOLLWAY** (Premier and Treasurer).—I move—

That as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late Honorable William Hugh Everard, the late Honorable Sir Albert Arthur Dunstan, and the late Honorable Francis Edward Old, the House do now adjourn until to-morrow, at half-past Three o'clock.

The motion was agreed to.

*The House adjourned at 5.13 p.m.*

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Wednesday, June 21, 1950.*

The **SPEAKER** (the Hon. Archie Michaelis) took the chair at 4.8 p.m., and read the prayer.

### COMMISSION TO SWEAR MEMBERS.

The **SPEAKER** (the Hon. Archie Michaelis) informed the House that he had received from His Excellency the Governor a commission authorizing him to administer the oath of allegiance to such members as had not already taken and subscribed the same since their election.

### ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The **SPEAKER** (the Hon. Archie Michaelis).—I understand that it is the general desire of the House to proceed with the election of a Chairman of Committees. I, therefore, call for nominations.

**Mr. FRASER** (Grant).—I move—

That the honorable member for Borung (Mr. W. J. Mibus) be appointed Chairman of Committees of this House.

In submitting this nomination I do not feel that it is necessary for me to extol the many virtues of the honorable member for Borung. He is well known and highly respected by all members of the House. He is of irreproachable character and his ability is undoubted. He

has a clear knowledge of parliamentary procedure, and I have no doubt that, if appointed, he will discharge his duties at all times with dignity and in keeping with the high standard set by previous occupants of the office. He has been a member of the House for six years, and during that period has faced four elections in his constituency. On each occasion the electors of Borung have returned him to the House. It is quite clear, therefore, that those who elect him hold the honorable member in the same high regard as do members of this House. I have very much pleasure in submitting the motion.

**Mr. DAWNAY-MOULD** (Dandenong).—I feel it is a privilege to second the motion of the honorable member for Grant in favour of the appointment as Chairman of Committees of this House of the honorable member for Borung. Mr. Mibus by his deportment in this House has shown us exactly that he will discharge the duties of the office of Chairman of Committees with dignity and efficiency. It gives me great pleasure to second the motion.

The **SPEAKER**.—Does the honorable member for Borung accept nomination?

**Mr. MIBUS** (Borong).—I am conscious of the honour done to me in proposing me for the position of Chairman of Committees, and I accept nomination and leave the decision with the House.

The **SPEAKER**.—I have to announce that the time for submitting nominations has expired, and, as the only proposal made is that for the appointment of the honorable member for Borung, I declare him elected as Chairman of Committees.

**Mr. HOLLWAY** (Premier and Treasurer).—I should like to congratulate the honorable member for Borung on his appointment to the very high and honorable position of Chairman of Committees. I feel perfectly certain that he will carry out his duties fearlessly, impartially, and in accordance with parliamentary traditions. I do not know how long he will retain the office, but so long as he does so I am sure he will be a credit not only to himself, but also to the Parliamentary institution. On behalf of myself and my colleagues I congratulate him heartily on the position he has attained.