

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

### Tuesday, 20 September 2022

The **PRESIDENT (Hon. T.J. Stephens)** took the chair at 14:15 and read prayers.

**The PRESIDENT:** We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners of this country throughout Australia, and their connection to the land and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to the elders both past and present.

*Address to His Majesty the King*

#### DEATH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II AND ACCESSION OF KING CHARLES III

*Message from Governor*

The Governor informs the Legislative Council that she has learned with the deepest regret that our late Most Gracious Sovereign, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, passed away at Balmoral Castle, United Kingdom, on the 8th day of September 2022.

The Governor further informs the Legislative Council that on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of September 2022, His Majesty King Charles the Third was duly and lawfully proclaimed King of Australia and His other Realms and Territories, Head of the Commonwealth.

*Parliamentary Procedure*

#### STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:18):** I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable me to move a motion for an address to His Majesty the King without further notice.

**The PRESIDENT:** I note the absolute majority.

*An absolute majority of the whole number of members being present:*

Motion carried.

*Address to His Majesty the King*

#### HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:18):** I move:

That the following address to the King be adopted—

To His Most Excellent Majesty King Charles III:

We the members of the Legislative Council of South Australia in parliament assembled take this earliest opportunity of expressing our deep sympathy in the great sorrow which Your Majesty and members of the royal family have sustained through the death of our Sovereign, Queen Elizabeth II, who was loved for the grace, devotion and steadfast resolve displayed over her reign of 70 years.

We acknowledge and pay tribute to Her Majesty's lifetime of dedicated service and our gratitude at the commitment she made to the people of South Australia and the commonwealth.

We also offer our sincere congratulations on Your Majesty's accession to the throne and to express the hope that Your Majesty may enjoy a long and prosperous reign.

I think all of us as members of the Legislative Council, and as South Australians, acknowledge what an extraordinary moment of history is occurring at the moment. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II reigned for 70 years. Most South Australians have not seen another monarch on the throne, and the rituals and traditions now unfolding—proclamations of accession, address to the King, funeral procession and plans for coronation—are entirely new to us, despite being centuries-old customs.

The death of Her Majesty the Queen has caused many of us to reflect on the extraordinary changes in our state, our country and our world over the past 170 years. When Queen Elizabeth II acceded to the throne in 1952, Sir Thomas Playford was still in the early years of his 27-year-long premiership of South Australia. Sir Robert Menzies was the Prime Minister of Australia and the leader of a then relatively new political party, the Liberal Party of Australia.

The traumas of World War II were still fresh in the minds of people the world over. Television transmission was yet to begin in Australia, the moon landing was a distant dream and the Sydney Opera House was years away from being built. In 1952, the idea of the British Empire at the time was still real and dominant. The United Kingdom held colonies across Africa, the Caribbean, South America and the Asia-Pacific. Australia was still a dominion, with the Australia Acts and the severing of other constitutional ties still decades away.

The world in 1952 was a very different place from the world in 2022. The reign of Queen Elizabeth II has seen enormous shifts in society, in culture, in technology and in the law. Her Majesty was in many ways the model of a constitutional monarch. She did not stray into politics and did not try to wield power unnecessarily, and in doing so she created the environment for a profound shift in society, driven by democratic ideals that we in this place continue to practise today.

So, with the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, it is timely for us to pause and reflect on the extraordinary period of history encompassed by her reign. Across South Australia, including across the road at Government House, many South Australians have taken the opportunity to write messages of condolence. We know the significance of this historical moment, and in marking the passing of Queen Elizabeth II we acknowledge the accession of His Majesty Charles III as the King of Australia.

His predecessor was such a constant and stable force that it is easy for us to forget the burden she bore. To maintain neutrality of the Crown, to quietly and diligently undertake your duties and to allow the processes of our constitution and our democracy to play out takes great skill but also great restraint. His Majesty the King comes to the throne after an extraordinary reign, and we wish him well in the duties he now undertakes. To him, his family and his loved ones, we extend our sincere sympathies for the loss of their beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. I commend the address to the council.

**The Hon. N.J. CENTOFANTI (Leader of the Opposition) (14:23):** I rise today on behalf of the opposition in the Legislative Council of South Australia in support of the address to His Majesty to express our deep sympathy and great sorrow on the passing of our sovereign, Queen Elizabeth II. In 1947, on her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, Princess Elizabeth was on a tour of South Africa with her parents and younger sister. In a speech broadcast on the radio from Cape Town she made a commitment:

...that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong.

She most certainly delivered on that pledge. Throughout her remarkable reign of 70 years she demonstrated a courageous and inspiring devotion to duty, and she did so with extraordinary grace, skill and tact. In one of the many reports I have read, watched and listened to over recent days, it was noted that the Queen was a monarch who was wise enough to understand that she had to put her duty before herself, and who was selfless enough to do so.

I am grateful for this opportunity to pay tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, to acknowledge her lifetime of dedicated service and express our gratitude at the commitment she made to the people of South Australia and the commonwealth.

The first public insight into the remarkable character of Queen Elizabeth came in 1945 when, at just 18 years of age, she joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service. She did so despite her father, King George VI, ruling that she would not be due for national service upon turning 18, as her training as a princess outweighed the nation's increasing manpower problem during the Second World War. However, a young Princess Elizabeth was determined to do her bit for the war effort and, like so many teenagers do, she ignored her father's wishes and joined many of her peers who were signing up to the women's auxiliaries. In doing so, she became the first female member of the royal family to become a full-time active member of the armed services.

The young princess enrolled in a driving and vehicle maintenance course. Classes included mechanics theory and map reading, and she learned how to service, maintain and drive heavy armed vehicles, graduating as a fully qualified driver. During her training, photographers captured her dressed in overalls, working on vehicle engines and changing tyres, and she became known in the media as 'princess auto mechanic'. An avid driver, she was photographed just last November, at age 95, behind the wheel of a green Jaguar estate car near Windsor Castle.

Queen Elizabeth was born on 21 April 1926 in Mayfair, London, as the first child of the Duke and Duchess of York, later King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. Her father acceded to the throne in 1936 upon the abdication of his brother King Edward VIII, making Elizabeth the heir presumptive. In February 1952, she would become Queen following the death of her father. In Kenya with her husband, Prince Philip, at the time, she would go to sleep a princess and wake up a queen.

At just 25 she became Queen of seven independent commonwealth countries—the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan and Sri Lanka—as well as head of the commonwealth. Her forebear, Queen Elizabeth I, had ruled over the dawning British Empire in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. On her accession to the throne, Queen Elizabeth II confronted an empire on the brink of collapse after two devastating world wars. The United Kingdom was still in a state of recovery, weakened by many years of war, and there was an international shift against imperialism.

It is a testament to the Queen's character, intellect and leadership that, as the empire crumbled around her, the monarch endured. In 1957, realising the difficulty she was facing as a queen and as a head of state, she made some decisive moves that would reshape her role and preserve British influence in a postcolonial world. She cancelled the annual balls held at Buckingham Palace for young aristocrats; instead, she held garden parties for people from all walks of life. She started delivering her annual Christmas address on television, speaking to millions of her subjects from her Sandringham living room. During her first address, she set out a new vision, a vision of service, stating:

It is inevitable that I should seem a rather remote figure to many of you. A successor to the Kings and Queens of history...but who never really touches your personal lives. But now at least for a few minutes I welcome you to the peace of my own home...In the old days the monarch led his soldiers on the battlefield and his leadership at all times was close and personal.

Today things are very different. I cannot lead you into battle, I do not give you laws or administer justice but I can do something else, I can give you my heart and my devotion to these old islands and to all the peoples of our brotherhood of nations.

I believe in our qualities and in our strength, I believe that together we can set an example to the world which will encourage upright people everywhere.

This speech set the tone for what she would be known for during her life: someone with duty, self-discipline, humility and humour. She lived a life dedicated to public service, royal ritual and the form of freedom that Christian tradition inspires.

Her sense of duty was reflected throughout her reign with endless ribbon cuttings, meet-and-greets, thousands of official engagements as patron of more than 600 organisations and charities, and many foreign tours, which included seven visits to South Australia. During her first visit to our great state in 1954, she graciously opened a special session of our parliament. Subsequent visits in 1963, 1977, 1981, 1986, 1992 and 2002 reaffirmed her affection for the people of South Australia, and our affection for her.

Her presence was not imposed upon her people, but she was visible and present. I think the United Kingdom, the commonwealth and the world came to rely on her continuity and presence and the stability that garnered.

Those fortunate enough to have spent time with her say that she effortlessly combined the formality of the monarchy with a sharp wit and a sense of fun. For all of my life I, along with my family, have tuned in on Christmas night to hear the Queen's Christmas message. These messages were ones of reflection and would often convey wisdom and hope for the year to come. They brought my family, and I am sure they brought other families during that time, comfort.

Though tolerant, she was a Queen of many countries with other dominant religions. She was unabashed in her belief in the divinity and grace of Christ. Not only was she head of the worldwide

Anglican Communion, Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church of England, she was—unusually, some critics may say—also a committed Christian. She often spoke about her faith during these messages, and in 2004 she described her faith in Christ as 'the anchor in my life'.

In 1952, during the Third Session of the Thirty-Third Parliament of South Australia, the Hon. A.J. Melrose, in acknowledging the passing of King George VI and the accession of Queen Elizabeth II, stated in his Address in Reply that:

It occurred to me that probably most of us in this Parliament have served under four sovereigns, which in one way shows that the wear and tear on those who occupy this high and strenuous office is very great. I can only hope that Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth the Second, will be able to follow some of the excellent precedents set by Queens of England and that there will be many men in the parliamentary and public services of the country who will live out their long services under one Royal personage only.

It is fair to say that Mr Melrose got his wish and then some, although I am pleased to say that many men and women were able to serve out long services under Her Majesty.

Queen Elizabeth was the oldest and longest reigning monarch. To fully appreciate the length of time she was on the throne, consider that Winston Churchill, the first of 15 prime ministers she advised, was born in 1874. The current UK Prime Minister, Liz Truss, whom the Queen met with two days before her passing, was born in 1975.

I take this opportunity to affirm my loyalty and devotion to His Majesty King Charles III. I am confident he will emulate his late mother and be inspired by a tremendous sense of devotion, serving with integrity, dignity above politics, loyalty and grace. May he enjoy a long and prosperous reign.

The United Kingdom, the commonwealth and the other realms and territories have lost their Queen. An endearing figure who captured the hearts and minds of most, the outpouring of grief, tributes and incredible scenes as hundreds of thousands pay their respects in the United Kingdom and across the globe are testament to the affection for her and the legacy she leaves.

But we must remember that a family also lost their mother, their grandmother and their great-grandmother. Our condolences, thoughts and prayers to King Charles III and the royal family on their personal loss. To paraphrase the Anglican hymnist and clergyman John Newton:

'Tis Grace hath brought her safe thus far,

And Grace will lead her home.

Motion carried by members standing in their places in silence.

**The PRESIDENT:** Honourable members, I thank you. I declare the resolution carried unanimously.

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:35):** I move:

That the address be presented to Her Excellency the Governor, requesting Her Excellency to transmit the address to His Most Excellent Majesty the King.

Motion carried.

#### *Parliamentary Procedure*

### **SITTINGS AND BUSINESS**

**The Hon. K.J. MAHER (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector) (14:35):** I move:

That the council at its rising adjourn until Tuesday 27 September 2022 at 11am.

Motion carried.

At 14:36 the council adjourned until Tuesday 27 September 2022 at 11:00.