

**REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF
HOUSE OF KEYS**

**Douglas, Tuesday, 21st March 2000
at 9.00 a.m.**

Present:

The Speaker (the Hon N Q Cringle) (Rushen); Mr L I Singer and Hon A R Bell (Ramsey); Mr R E Quine OBE (Ayre); Mr J D Q Cannan (Michael); Hon W A Gilbey (Glenfaba); Hon S C Rodan (Garff); Hon D North (Middle); Mr P Karran, Hon R K Corkill and Mr G T Cannell (Onchan); Messrs J R Houghton and R W Henderson (Douglas North); Hon D C Cretney and Mr A C Duggan (Douglas South); Mr R P Braidwood and Mrs B J Cannell (Douglas East); Mr J P Shimmin and Hon A F Downie (Douglas West); Hon J A Brown (Castletown); Hon D J Gelling (Malew and Santon); Sir Miles Walker CBE LLD (hc) and Mrs P M Crowe (Rushen); with Prof T StJ N Bates, Secretary of the House.

The Chaplain took the prayers.

Apologies for Absence

The Speaker: Hon. members, the hon. member for Peel, Mrs Hannan, has leave of absence this morning.

Legislative Council – Election of Member

The Speaker: We have but a short agenda, an important agenda in front of the House this morning, simply the election of one person to serve as a member of the Legislative Council expiring on 28th February 2005. Hon. members, I call upon the hon. member for Garff.

Mr Rodan: Mr Speaker, two weeks ago this hon. House was unable to complete the election for the fourth member of the Legislative Council. The two candidates competing for that fourth place a fortnight ago have presented themselves again today but they have been joined by no other candidate, either from inside this House or from outside this House; no-one else has been put forward on the ballot.

I believe that, having had time to reflect and ponder the matter, members will now wish to bring this election to a definite and final result today. It will do the reputation of this House no good, I suggest, for us to come back again for a third time. The public of the Isle of Man will hold us all in discredit if we fail in our duty to reach a decisive conclusion today.

Two experienced politicians this morning ask for our vote, and questionably both would bring considerable knowledge and experience and very obvious if distinctive strengths and qualities to the work of the Legislative Council because, whatever we believe the future of the Council to be or how and from where it should be constituted, our duty this morning is to see to it that the important role of that particular chamber in the parliamentary and legislative process of today is carried out by men and women of the necessary political skill and highest ability. We are fortunate to have a choice between two candidates, both of whom possess that skill and ability in large measure, who draw on proven expertise and who are both very well known to us. That is why the task before us is so very, very difficult.

In proposing Dr Edgar Mann, a parliamentarian who has led this country in government and who is held in high esteem outside this place, it is not to diminish in any way the considerable contribution that the hon. member for Middle could be expected to bring to the Council. The question is, is this House really ready to say, 'No, there is no longer a place for Dr Mann in the legislature. The contribution Dr Mann still has to make to parliamentary life, to government especially in the field of education, that contribution is no longer needed, no longer wanted.'? Is that what we want to say? Let me put it bluntly: if Edgar Mann fails to be re-elected this morning then he becomes lost to the legislature; he is out of Tynwald altogether.

Mr Brown: His choice is still to run.

Mr Rodan: If, on the other hand, he succeeds in this morning's vote, both he and the hon. member for Middle, winner and runner-up, both stay in the legislature, but that is a matter entirely for this House.

Dr Mann is no stranger to electoral defeat. He has won at the polls and he has lost at the polls. But recently I discovered something about him I did not know. It was to do with the time he lost at the polls in 1986 in his old constituency of Garff. He had been elected by the House of Keys to the Legislative Council 18 months earlier. He was at the time leader of Executive Council, the then equivalent of today's Chief Minister. The safest and easiest thing in the world for him would have been simply to carry on as a Member of the Legislative Council, but knowing that the change to setting up the ministerial system was imminent, as a matter of principle he decided he needed to seek the people's mandate if he wished to be a future candidate for Chief Minister. What I did not know was that not only did Dr Mann fight that 1986 general election but he also resigned from the Legislative Council on the eve of the election to do it, and the point is he did not have to resign; the rules did not oblige him to resign from Council to be an election candidate. He could simply have stood for the Keys and lost and then just carried on as before as a Member of the Legislative Council. That would have been safe and would have saved his political career. But he did not do that. He took a chance, he faced the Garff electorate without a safety net and lost, and was out of politics for four years.

With that little episode, whatever the differences politically that members have had over the years with Edgar Mann, few will deny he is a man of strong conviction and purpose and, whatever the political differences, no-one can doubt the intellect which has brought to bear on complex issues of policy as evidenced by the carefully considered views he brings to debate. We all listen attentively because we know that invariably he will have something worthwhile to say. No longer vigorous physically, but who can doubt the youthfulness and continuing vigour of that brain?

I would ask that we do reach a final decision today. I would ask also that we say, 'Yes, Edgar Mann deserves a vote of confidence from us, there is still a place for him, there is still a need for him in this Isle of Man legislature.' Mr Speaker, I beg to move the nomination of Edgar Mann for election.

Mr Downie: I wish to second.

The Speaker: Hon. members, before I ask for a seconder I would like to make it quite plain that whilst we all may wish to reach a decision today we will follow the procedures both in statute and in standing orders and the choice will be made by this House following those

procedures. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) Whatever the outcome, there will be no adverse reflection on the House. Hon. member for West Douglas.

Mr Downie: I wish to second that nomination, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Does any hon. member wish to speak to the nomination? In that case I call upon the hon. member for Douglas West, Mr Shimmin.

Mr Shimmin: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Once again this morning we are here and I am pleased to be in a position to nominate once again the hon. member for Middle, Mr David North, to stand for elevation to the Legislative Council. I believe all hon. members are fully aware of the two candidates' experiences, and certainly the achievements of Mr North do not require a relative novice such as me to outline them. It is well known to all members. I believe all members have already made their decisions; therefore I am pleased to move Mr David North for the Legislative Council, sir.

Mr Gelling: Yes, Mr Speaker, I wish to second that nomination.

The Speaker: Now, hon. members, we have the two nominations before the House. We have had prepared ballot papers with the two names on. Is the House happy that we should use these ballot papers?

Members: Agreed.

The Speaker: In that case, hon. members, ballot papers will be circulated. When you have ballot papers in your hand you will cast your vote for one member.

A ballot took place.

The Speaker: Hon. members, the votes cast in the election mean that Dr Mann has received 12 votes and Mr North has received 9 votes. Hon. members, in this case 12 is a majority of 23 - we are at 23 in the House. I propose, hon. members, that we shall vote again on the name of Dr Mann only.

A second ballot took place.

The Speaker: Hon. members, the result of that ballot is that Dr Mann has polled 15 votes which puts him clear over the majority of 13 which was required, so I declare that Dr Mann be elected to the Legislative Council. I think it is incumbent, therefore, that we offer our congratulations to the four successful candidates in this round of election and the House will now stand adjourned till 10.30 in Tynwald Court. Thank you, hon. members.

The House adjourned at 9.23 a.m.