

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

### THIRD SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT.

*The Parliament was prorogued on the 12th July, 1928, to the 19th July, 1928. It was further prorogued to the 2nd August, 1928, when it met for the despatch of business.*

*Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.*

### Legislative Council.

*Thursday, 2nd August, 1928.*

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### OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at 3 p.m., pursuant to proclamation.

The PRESIDENT took the Chair.

The Clerk of Parliaments read the proclamation.

### GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

His Excellency the Governor entered the Council Chamber at 3.5 p.m., and the members of the Legislative Assembly having also attended in the Chamber, obediently to summons, His Excellency was pleased to deliver the following Speech:—

*Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council:—*

*Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly:—*

You have been called together at a time of great importance and historic significance. Western Australia is on the eve of her first Centenary as a British possession. Trade and production during the financial

year ended 30th June reached the highest point yet recorded. The magnitude of the various projects associated with the speedy development of the primary industries, upon which progress is substantially based, calls for the heartiest co-operation of all sections of the people.

The value of the year's trade reached the record total of £36,297,719. Exports were valued at £17,941,603, and imports at £18,356,116, so that outward and inward trade was almost evenly balanced.

### *Finance.*

*Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly:—*

The financial position is viewed with satisfaction within the State and in Great Britain. Confidence was particularly marked in the over-subscription of the loan for three million pounds recently floated in London.

The Revenue for the year ended 30th June, 1928, was £9,807,949 and the Expenditure £9,834,415, leaving a small deficit of £26,466.

A new Agreement, governing the financial relationships between the Commonwealth and the State, was approved by the Parliament on 12th July. Under this Agreement, which supersedes the per capita payments abolished by the Commonwealth Parliament, the extent of the Federal Government's annual financial contribution to the State has been fixed for a period of years. Before the arrangement can be finalised, an amendment of the Constitution will have to be submitted to a referendum of the people.

The investment of capital in many directions has provided evidence of confidence in the future of the State, whilst State Savings Bank deposits during the year have increased.

*Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council:—*

*Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly:—*

Although very great progress has been made in recent years in the settlement and development of virgin lands, a much greater programme is now engaging the attention of the Government.

Western Australia has taken full advantage, consistent with that degree of care necessary in any large expenditure, of the money made available at a low rate of interest by the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments in order to open up vast areas of new territory. At the present time my advisers are negotiating for an advance to be used in the development of 3,500 new farms in wheat growing and sheep carrying country. This with State advances will involve a large expenditure and the settlement, approximately, of 8,000,000 acres of land.

#### *Wheat Production.*

It is gratifying to record that the wheat yield for the 1927-28 season was not only the highest ever obtained in Western Australia, but that it represented the greatest contribution by any one State to the total grain production of Australia for the year. The yield aggregated 35,134,156 bushels, this being slightly more than five million bushels greater than for the previous year.

The area stripped for grain, namely, 2,993,677 acres, in the season just closed, constituted a record. It is estimated that a further big advance will be made for the current season, and a campaign has been initiated for the production of 50,000,000 bushels of wheat during the Centenary year (1929-30).

#### *Pastoral Development.*

Pastoral development during 1927 was most marked. The number of sheep was increased during the year by one million head.

The wool production also showed a marked increase of 9,300,349 lbs.

#### *Land Settlement.*

The demand for land was never greater than at present.

A total of 14,295 applications was received during the year. The area allotted amounted to 2,145,694 acres for agricultural and 11,096,833 for pastoral purposes, making a total of 13,242,527 acres.

The number of new settlers was 1,056.

Loans approved by the Agricultural Bank amounted to £663,100. Of this amount £441,502 was allocated for clearing 403,640 acres of virgin land.

#### *Soldier Settlement.*

Further consideration has been given to the de-valuation of soldier settlers' securities. Relief has now been granted to 1,352 soldiers, necessitating the cancellation of £414,312 of their aggregate indebtedness. These losses will be recoverable from the grant made by the Commonwealth for that purpose.

#### *Wire-netting to Settlers.*

During the year 2,285 miles of rabbit-proof netting were supplied to settlers at a cost of £104,373.

#### *Agricultural Water Supplies.*

Extensive operations for the provision of water supplies in agricultural districts were carried out during the year.

#### *Group Settlement.*

A reclassification of the Group Settlement areas has been practically concluded. It is the intention of the Government at an early date to institute a policy which, it is hoped, will result in an improved position and definitely fix the period during which Government farming assistance will be extended to settlers.

#### *Mining.*

Although the gold yield showed a further decline for 1927, the prospects in the gold-mining industry are more encouraging than they have been for some years past.

The value of the mineral production for the year was £2,202,437. Of this amount gold represented £1,734,571.

The Government continued its policy of active assistance to the mining industry with encouraging results. Diamond drilling was carried out in several districts, and this work will be continued.

Encouraging developments have taken place at several gold-mining centres, and large sums of new capital have been obtained for mining operations.

Active new developmental work has been undertaken on the Sons of Gwalia mine, and the Wiluna mine continues to open up satisfactorily.

#### *Railway Construction.*

During the year the Norseman-Salmon Gums Railway, 58 miles in length, was completed and handed over to the Workings Railways.

The Railways at present under construction are:—

Albany-Denmark Railway Extension—  
35 miles.

Ejanding-Northwards Railway — 67  
miles.

Lake Brown-Bullfinch Railway — 50  
miles.

#### *Railway Returns.*

After allowing for interest charges, a profit of £26,761 was made on the operations of the State Railways during the year.

The policy of building necessary rolling stock at the Midland Junction workshops has been extended with gratifying results. Ten locomotives were constructed at a saving to the State of, approximately, £10,000, compared with the lowest tender for similar work.

#### *Electricity Supply.*

The installation of a new unit, which will increase the capacity of the Perth power house by approximately 40 per cent., is nearing completion. This will prove an important factor in the development of secondary industries.

#### *Harbours and Rivers.*

Harbour extension and improvement works at Fremantle, Geraldton, Bunbury, and at North-West ports were carried on during the year.

The scheme for improving the Swan River and foreshore in the vicinity of, and above, the Causeway has advanced satisfactorily.

#### *Road Construction.*

An amount of £293,445 was expended during the year under the Federal Aid Roads Scheme, and an amount of £116,778 under the Migration Agreement on group roads. In addition, expenditure from State funds totalled £160,731 on road work generally, thus making an aggregate expenditure from State funds on road construction of £479,077.

#### *Forestry.*

Steady progress has been made in the dedication of State forests and the extension of re-afforestation operations, and the Government is giving serious consideration to the provision of future supplies of timber for internal development.

#### *Metropolitan Water Supply.*

Despite the heavy increase in the consumption of water in the metropolitan area during the long summer, the water supply proved adequate to meet all requirements.

Improvements in the water supply system were carried out, and it is confidently anticipated that a full supply from Churchman Brook will be available during the ensuing summer.

#### *Medical.*

Activities in regard to hospital and medical services throughout the State were pronounced during the year. New hospitals were opened at Pemberton and Quairading, and another is nearing completion at Goomalling.

Extensive additions were made to the Fremantle Hospital, and an eighty-eight bed hospital ward was completed at the Old Men's Home.

Special attention was devoted to infant welfare work. Thirteen infant health centres, and four branches, are now in existence.

The Entertainments Tax Fund continues to be of great assistance in extending hospital services. Funds, however, are insufficient, and consideration is being given to

an equitable scheme by which hospital and medical services may be placed on a stable foundation.

### *Legislation.*

You will be asked to give consideration to measures dealing with a Rural Bank Department of the State Savings Bank, the Redistribution of Seats, the Prevention of Profiteering, the Registration of Land Agents, the Health Act, Workers' Homes, Local Government, and other matters.

I now declare this session of Parliament open, and trust that Divine Providence may bless your labours in the interests of this State.

### **BILL—MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF COLLIE VALIDATION.**

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [3.20]: In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation, I move, without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill entitled "An Act to render valid certain acts done by the Municipal Council of Collie otherwise than in its correct corporate name."

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

### **GOVERNOR'S SPEECH, DISTRIBUTION.**

The **PRESIDENT**: For the sake of greater accuracy, I have obtained from His Excellency the Governor copies of the Speech that he has been pleased to deliver. These will be distributed amongst members.

### **ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.**

#### *First Day.*

**HON. G. FRASER** (West) [3.25]: I move—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to us:—  
"May it please Your Excellency. We, the members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament."

I desire to take this opportunity to thank the Government for having accorded me the honour of moving the adoption of the Address-in-reply. Before doing so, however, I would like to mention that prior to my entrance to this Chamber, I had been told that it would be an education to me. I have found out already that that is true. Although I have been a member of the Legislative Council for a comparatively few weeks only, I have already discovered that some of the lessons I was taught in my younger days were altogether wrong. One of those lessons was that I should never contradict my elders! When I came to realise that I am the youngest member to enter any Legislative Council of Australia, it was apparent to me that if what I was taught in my younger days was correct, I would be confronted with a serious handicap in carrying out my duties. For that reason, Mr. President, you will realise what I mean when I say I have already learnt that some of my lessons were wrong. At any rate, that is the decision I have reached. The Governor, in his Address, touched upon many important subjects and phases of work that the Government have given attention to during the past year. One of those subjects related to the agricultural policy. It is strange that when one speaks to city people regarding the State's agricultural policy, they are apt to become rather impatient. They want to know how they are concerned with such a policy. If they reflected for one moment, they would realise that they have much in common with the interests of the agricultural community. If they took into consideration the vast amount of work and revenue agriculture provides for our railways, and the great effect the agricultural industry has upon the well-being of the city and the State in general, they would quickly realise how the trade and commerce of the city are vitally affected by it. Shops and factories all are affected. In fact, if people stopped to consider the position for a moment, they would realise just how vital and important it was to them to have a vigorous agricultural policy in operation. They would realise what work would be provided if serious consideration were given by the Government to an active agricultural policy. I congratulate the Government upon having carried out a vigorous agricultural policy during recent years. I am indeed pleased that they have not been content to rest on their laurels when a record harvest was secured last year. On the other hand, they have set themselves the task of

encouraging the production of a harvest of 50,000,000 bushels for the Centenary year. While I recognise that the Government are not wholly responsible for the record harvest, the great assistance offered to the industry by the Government has gone a long way towards making possible that splendid result. Another matter mentioned in the Speech was the pastoral industry. The increase in our flocks has been something like 1,000,000 during the past year. That increase, too, cannot be attributed wholly to the Government, but some credit is due to them on account of the extension of the provisions for Agricultural Bank assistance to the pastoral industry. Still dealing with the question of land development, reference has been made to the group settlements. Those settlements have been a heavy drain on the financial resources of the State, and it is pleasing to know that the Government have grappled with that aspect of the question. Settlers located on holdings that would not permit of their making a living are, under the policy of the Government, to have other blocks linked with theirs or are to be moved to other areas. Those alterations should enable the group settlements to be made a payable concern. It is pleasing to know that in a few years' time we can expect the whole of the dairy produce required by the State to be produced by people within the State. Mining is another industry that has received assistance. I hope the Government will do all in their power to push forward the construction of the railway to Wiluna, the development of which goldfield will not only lead to the establishment of a big population in that town, but will prove beneficial to other portions of the State. The Government's policy of railway extension and harbour improvement shows that the present administration are prepared to consider the interests not only of the city but of the whole State. I compliment the Government upon the assistance rendered to hospitals. According to the Speech, new hospitals have been established in several parts of the State, whilst additions have been made to other hospitals, including that at Fremantle. I believe increased subsidies have been granted to the managing committees of various old-established hospitals. While on the question of hospitals, let me remark that the action of the Government in banning the tipping competitions has made very serious inroads into

the revenue of at least one or two of those institutions. I shall make further reference to that question later on. So far all I have said has been in congratulation of the Government, but there are some things which the Government have done or failed to do and with which I am not entirely in accord. One of those is the pressing problem of unemployment. Unlike many people I do not blame the Government solely for the existence of unemployment; still I consider the Government have not handled the difficulty as seriously as they might have done.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Hear, hear!

Hon. G. FRASER: I thought Mr. Holmes would agree with me on that point.

Hon. J. R. Brown: He would agree with anything said in opposition to the Government.

Hon. G. FRASER: It is true the problem of unemployment has extended over a much longer period of this year than of past years. I know it was serious even so far back as last Christmas. Yet not until recently have the Government made any move to alleviate the trouble. From my own knowledge I know that more men were out of work during the early part of this year than in the corresponding period of previous years. I do not blame the Government entirely for that, but I do place some of the responsibility at their door. I understand that the Government made what was considered to be adequate provision to cover unemployment during the winter, but owing to the influx of Southern Europeans and the arrival of a large number of people from the Eastern States, their calculations were quite upset. Still the Government should have moved much quicker than they did to grapple with the problem. While on the question of unemployment, I have a few remarks to make about the manner in which the police handled the demonstrations. Several marches through the city were organised, especially during last week. I admit that the police acted quite within their rights in taking the names or arresting the leaders of the demonstrations, but I think they could have carried out their duty in a much gentler way. I should not like to imagine what would have happened had similar action been taken in connection with a St Patrick's Day celebration, a Caledonian Society procession, or even a Labour Day procession.

Hon. J. Cornell: Or a 12th of July celebration.

Hon. G. FRASER: I thank the hon. member for supplying that omission. Had the police not only broken up one of those processions, but taken the banners, I should not like to imagine what would have happened. The unemployed, as well as other sections of the community, must obey the laws of the land, but there are two ways of handling persons who transgress the law, and I certainly am of opinion that the police overstepped the mark. I have been informed that if I wish to make myself popular with the ladies, I must not speak at too great a length this afternoon. However, there are one or two other questions on which I should like to touch, one of which is that of hospital finance. The Government have intimated their intention to introduce an equitable scheme for financing the hospitals. I take it they intend to impose a tax. I admit that a tax would probably be the most equitable means to finance those institutions, but at the same time I think a much better method could be adopted by which more money could be raised, thus permitting of greater assistance being given to existing hospitals and of similar facilities being provided in other parts of the State. The method that the Government should adopt is that of instituting a State lottery or of premium bonds. Either one would be acceptable to me. A lottery would probably be readily subscribed to right from the start, but I fear the public would have to be educated to the advantages derivable from an issue of premium bonds.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Do you not think there is enough gambling already?

Hon. J. R. Brown: The introduction of either of those methods might minimise gambling.

Hon. G. FRASER: I admit there is enough gambling at present, but the adoption of either of the schemes I suggest would not have the effect of increasing gambling.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: It would be demoralising to the people.

Hon. G. FRASER: The gambling in which the people indulge to-day would not be increased by the introduction of a State lottery. Prior to entering this Chamber, I happened to be in a position to judge of the large amount of money sent out of this

State for lottery purposes, particularly to Tasmania and Queensland. I feel convinced that the people of Western Australia would be loyal to a State lottery, and I cannot believe, as Sir William Lathlain suggests, that it would have the effect of increasing gambling.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Gambling rather should be limited.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am of opinion that the people of Western Australia at present indulge in gambling right up to the limit.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Beyond it.

Hon. G. FRASER: Perhaps the hon. member is in a better position than I am to judge of that.

Hon. J. Cornell: Sir William Lathlain does not believe in the saying that another little drink would not do us any harm.

Hon. G. FRASER: I hope the Government will seriously consider adopting one or other of those methods for raising hospital funds. A matter that greatly affects my province is that of the Fremantle bridge. No mention of it was made in the Speech.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It concerns the whole State.

Hon. G. FRASER: I admit it concerns the whole State, but it also vitally concerns the province which I represent and in which I live. Though no specific reference is made in the Speech to the Fremantle bridge, I take it the question is covered by the reference to "other matters." I hope that will prove to be so, because it is a burning question in the Fremantle district. My final remarks relate to the State Implement Works. I hope that Mr. Lovekin, Mr. Holmes and Mr. Miles will give us their support should it be possible during the session to suggest means for improving the position at the State Implement Works. Those members have told us they are true blue Western Australians, and therefore I appeal for their support for the State Implement Works.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Sell them!

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You cannot give them away.

Hon. G. FRASER: Mr. Holmes suggests giving them away.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: No, I said you cannot give them away.

Hon. G. FRASER: Then I hope the hon. member will not be averse to assisting to improve them.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: You want to sink more money in them?

Hon. G. FRASER: No, I do not. Those works were established in about 1912 and at that time employed roughly 600 men.

Hon. E. H. Harris: What profit have they made?

Hon. G. FRASER: Notwithstanding the tremendous increase in agriculture with which increase the State Implement Works should have kept pace, their output has dwindled, and to-day only about 200 men are employed.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Has not the capital been written down?

Hon. G. FRASER: I know all about that.

Hon. J. Cornell: I think you are sowing seed on barren ground.

Hon. G. FRASER: I hope not. I believe that the employees of the State Implement Works are as capable as any workers in Australia. Where the trouble lies, I do not know.

Hon. J. Nicholson: We do not question that part. It is the other part.

Hon. G. FRASER: It is the "other part" I wish to get at. I hope the Government will consider appointing a Royal Commission to inquire thoroughly into the operations of the State Implement Works. Such a body would be able to ascertain just where the trouble lies. Instead of members of this House decrying the State Implement Works and refusing to do anything to help them along, they should be ready to consider the recommendations of a Royal Commission in the direction of improving the works and assisting the State, so that our farmers would not continue to purchase their machinery from what Mr. Holmes has described as the opulent State of Victoria.

**HON. J. R. BROWN** (North-East) [3.45]: I formally second the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion by Hon. J. J. Holmes, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 3.46 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 2nd August, 1928.

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### MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at 3 p.m. pursuant to proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, the proclamation being read by the Clerk.

The SPEAKER took the Chair.

### SUMMONS FROM THE GOVERNOR.

The Speaker and hon. members, in response to summons, proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber and, having heard His Excellency deliver the opening speech (vide Council report ante), they returned to the Assembly Chamber.

### BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [3.25]: In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation, I move, without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Traffic Acts 1916 and 1926.

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

### GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** In company with hon. members of this Chamber, I attended His Excellency the Governor in the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the Speech which His Excellency was pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament. For greater accuracy, I have had printed copies of the Speech distributed amongst hon. members of this Chamber.