

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

### FOURTH SESSION OF THE NINTH PARLIAMENT.

*The Parliament was prorogued on the 30th March, 1917, until the 31st May, 1917. It was further prorogued to the 28th June, and finally to the 19th July, 1917, when it met for the despatch of business; and the Fourth Session commenced on that day.*

*Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.*

#### Legislative Council,

*Thursday, 19th July, 1917.*

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attended in the Chamber obediently to summons, His Excellency was pleased to deliver the following speech:—

*Mr. President and Honourable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council—*

*Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—*

Since the last session of Parliament His Majesty has been graciously pleased to appoint me Governor of the State in succession to His Excellency Major-General Sir Harry Barron. I take this opportunity of again expressing my gratitude for the welcome which was so warmly extended to me, and for the expressions of loyalty and attachment to the Throne and Person of His Majesty King George V.

On the eve of the third anniversary of the declaration of war, my Advisers feel that there are abundant reasons for complete confidence in the ultimate victory of Great Britain and her faithful Allies. The recent glorious achievements of the British and French armies on the Western Front, the magnificent victories of the reconstructed Russian Army in response to the newly-born democratic spirit of the people, and the determination of the United States of America to enter the war in the cause of justice and humanity, have combined to shatter the hopes of the Central Powers and to incite internal revolt against Prussian militarism. The Australian troops, in common with

#### OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at 2.50 p.m., pursuant to proclamation, which was read by the Clerk of Parliaments (Mr. G. F. Hillman).

The PRESIDENT took the Chair.

#### SWEARING-IN.

The following members, elected since the prorogation, took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll:—

Hon. H. Boan (Metropolitan), Hon. H. J. Stewart (South-East).

#### THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

His Excellency the Governor entered the Council Chamber at 3.5 p.m., and, the members of the Legislative Assembly having also



those from the other Dominions, have continued to display unexampled valour and endurance. It will be the duty of my Advisers to aid the Federal Government in every effort that may be made to secure their adequate reinforcement, in order that Australia may perform to the full its duty to the Empire, and be represented by a complete army in the field when the triumphant peace to which we look forward with assurance is achieved.

*Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—*

A Supply Bill will be submitted to meet the requirements of the Public Service, pending the passing by Parliament of the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the financial year.

The financial position of the State is causing my Advisers considerable anxiety. The revenue for the year just closed was £4,577,009, and the expenditure £5,276,758, leaving a deficit of £699,749. The accumulated deficit now amounts to £2,060,714. The gravity of this position has been increased by an indefinite communication from the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth to the effect that the loan of £3,100,000 borrowed for this State from the Imperial Government in 1914 must be repaid as the Treasury bills mature, notwithstanding the clearly expressed intention that these bills should serve merely as a temporary security pending the issue of inscribed stock on terms corresponding with those secured by the Commonwealth from the Imperial Government.

The first of these Treasury bills matures in December, 1917, and thence monthly until December, 1918: and also, by inference, the Prime Minister intimates that the sum of £1,059,000, the balance which the Commonwealth had undertaken by agreement entered into at the Premier's Conference to provide to finance the State's loan expenditure for this year, will be withheld to meet these Treasury bills as they mature.

My Advisers contend that it was not intended to redeem any of the loans obtained during the currency of the war until such time after the war as would permit of their conversion on reasonable terms, and that to insist on the earlier repayment of the loan

would mean, in view of a restricted money market, not only a large addition to our annual interest bill, but a stoppage of all development, which would be disastrous to the State.

Negotiations for a satisfactory settlement are still in progress.

In view of the financial stringency, my Advisers are determined to exercise careful economy in administration, and hope, by amalgamation of offices and the strictest scrutiny of expenditure, to make material savings during the currency of the year.

When the measure of these savings has been ascertained, it is the intention of my Advisers to introduce equitable taxation proposals to adjust in part the balance between revenue and expenditure.

Notwithstanding existing financial difficulties, my Advisers realise that it is still their obligation to provide funds to aid the development of the industries of the State, both primary and secondary, in order that the production of wealth may be increased and the prosperity of the State restored.

*Mr. President and Honourable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council—*

*Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—*

Since the conclusion of the last session of Parliament, steps have been taken to form a Government on national lines to deal with the many pressing problems now confronting the State. The policy of the Government will be shortly submitted for the approval of the people. Grave attention is being given to the important question of repatriation, and a detailed statement of the intentions of my Advisers in this regard will be made available for your information.

In view of the necessity of submitting the policy of the Government for the endorsement of the people, my Advisers are of the opinion that the time is inopportune for the introduction of legislation, and only measures of urgency will be submitted. These will include Bills:—

To unite the Municipality of Victoria Park with the City of Perth on the expiration of the current municipal year.



To validate the distribution of Sand Bag Funds.

To postpone the commencement of contributions to the sinking fund of the Melville Park Tramways, and

For the continuance of certain Expiring Laws.

Commending your deliberations to the guidance of Divine Providence, I now leave you to your responsible duties.

[The Governor then retired, and the President resumed the Chair.]

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the Table reports and papers similar to those presented by Ministers in the Assembly.

#### BILL — PERMANENT RESERVE (KING'S PARK).

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [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 intitled "An Act to amend the Boundaries of Reserve A1720 (the King's Park).

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

#### OBITUARY—HON. A. G. JENKINS— HON. J. F. CULLEN.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [3.21]: In the brief period of five years during which I have had the honour of being a member of this House, death has removed no fewer than nine of its members; and during the four months since we last parted, two of our members—Hon. Arthur George Jenkins and Hon. Joseph Francis Cullen—have passed away. The late Mr. Jenkins was first elected to this House in 1898, and, allowing for a brief interval of absence, was a member for about 17 years. I am competent to speak only about the closing years of that service, years in which, notwithstanding indifferent health, Mr. Jenkins's ripe experience, sound judgment and exact

legal knowledge were of great value to this House and to the country. Personally, the deceased gentleman enjoyed the esteem and confidence of his fellow-members to a remarkable extent, a fact which at once explained and justified the very considerable influence he always exercised in debate. Following as it did upon the loss by death and retirements of other members of the legal profession, we must all feel that the House is the poorer by the removal of Mr. Jenkins from our deliberations. The late Mr. Cullen was first elected in 1909 and had completed eight years of service. Although he had reached a ripe old age, his vigour remained unimpaired till within a few days of his death; and at the close of last session none of us would have contemplated his early demise. This House has had few more useful or more conscientious members. He brought to this Chamber a very complete knowledge of Parliamentary procedure gathered during his membership of the Parliament of the mother State, New South Wales, and at all times he applied himself with exceptional diligence to the study of measures submitted. A keen debater, a fearless but generous critic, and a single-minded advocate of the public good, he was directly responsible for the improvement of much of the legislation submitted during his membership; while as parliamentarian and journalist he rendered conspicuous service to the province he represented and to the State at large. He was a most conscientious worker; no Bill, however relatively unimportant, escaped his close scrutiny. I beg to move—

*That a message of condolence be sent by the Hon. the President to the widow and family of the late Hon. Arthur George Jenkins, and that a similar message be sent to the widow and family of the late Hon. Joseph Francis Cullen.*

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) [3.25]: I second the motion which has been so eloquently proposed by the leader of the House. I have to re-echo his sentiments in regard to the very great loss this Chamber has sustained by the death of Mr. Jenkins and Mr. Cullen. In regard to the first-named gentleman, I enjoyed the privilege of being a colleague of his in the representation of the Metropolitan Province for



many years, and so perhaps came into closer touch with him than did most hon. members. It has always appeared to me that the career of that hon. gentleman specially fitted him for a place in the Legislature of this or any other State. To the ripe knowledge, the liberal education necessary to qualify him for the position he held as a member of a learned and honourable profession, he added that wider experience of human nature which he gained first in the athletic world of public schools of Victoria, and secondly in the wider and more strenuous field of the early days of our own gold mining districts. That training gave him a knowledge of human nature which few parliamentarians have the privilege of possessing. As Mr. Colebatch has said, Mr. Jenkins gave of his talents freely to the House and to the country, and he has made an indelible mark on the Legislature and legislation of Western Australia. In regard to the late Mr. Cullen, I, too, can say that no member was more assiduous in attention to the details and to the general principles of legislation passed by the House, nor did anybody possess a fuller knowledge of parliamentary procedure than the hon. gentleman whom death has claimed. I feel sure that this branch of the Legislature has suffered grievously in the loss of those two members, and I second heartily the motion that letters of condolence be sent to the relatives of both deceased gentlemen.

Hon. C. SOMMERS (Metropolitan) [3.28]: I had the honour of being a colleague of the late Mr. Jenkins on the goldfields, when he was member for the North-East Province in 1900, and, almost without interruption, until the time of his decease. All that has been said about his legal knowledge, his great value to the House, the experience he had on the goldfields and in the metropolitan area, and his intimate knowledge of the requirements of the State, I can fully endorse. In losing him we have lost indeed a great legislator. In regard to the late Mr. Cullen, he was really the father of the House, to new members particularly, because as has been already pointed out, there was no Bill he did not criticise ably and generously. In losing him we have lost an able and valued colleague. I sincerely concur with the motion.

Hon. C. McKENZIE (South-East) [3.30]: I desire to say a few words in support of the motion moved by the Colonial Secretary. The late Mr. Cullen was a colleague, and I do not know of any other member of this House who discharged his parliamentary duties more conscientiously than did the late hon. member. Knowing his worth I can echo the sentiments expressed by the leader of the House that this House is the poorer by the death of Mr. Cullen. The House has suffered a loss, too, in the death of the late Mr. Jenkins, who by reason of his legal knowledge and his long experience rendered valuable service here over many years. He was a thoroughly conscientious man, who took a great interest in his parliamentary duties. I was more intimately associated with the late Mr. Cullen, and wish to pay a tribute to his memory for the great assistance he was to me, and which assistance I shall now very much miss. I desire to support the motion.

Question passed, members standing.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

##### *First day.*

Hon. H. BOAN (Metropolitan) [3.32]: I have accepted the honour of moving the adoption of the Address in reply to the Message which His Excellency has been pleased to deliver to us. I wish first to pay my tribute to the memory of the late Mr. Jenkins. He was a gentleman whom I always admired, and although I did not know him in a public capacity, I knew him intimately in a private way, and I can speak of him as a most highly cultured gentleman, full of charm; and everyone who knew him and met him will testify to that. It is my privilege to succeed the deceased gentleman as one of the representatives of the Metropolitan Province, and I wish to say here that I regard my election as a great personal compliment. I realise that in succeeding a man of the talents of the late Mr. Jenkins, I have undertaken a difficult task. Such men as he are not easily found, but I will say with confidence that I shall do my best, and I can give this assurance that for whatever I do I shall be answerable to the electors and shall honourably endeavour to



carry out the duties entrusted to me in accordance with the best traditions of this Chamber. I regret that we are still in the midst of this terrible and momentous war. It is a matter of the greatest importance; His Excellency has given it prominence in his Speech. His Excellency has also told us that the present is a time of great stress for the whole of the Empire. We in Australia have to a great extent, in my opinion, done handsomely in some ways, though I fear it must be admitted we have been lax in some respects. I believe conscientiously that conscription is a democratic policy which should be adopted in Australia. We have the spectacle of men going to the Front leaving behind them large responsibilities. I know of three such myself, men with families. I maintain that such men should be the last to go. It would be a wiser policy on the part of this State if an endeavour were made to so regulate matters that those who can best be spared shall go first and that those whom we can ill afford to lose should be the last to go. Men with responsibilities of family should, in my opinion, remain here for the present and be used only later on when a supreme effort is necessary to terminate the war decisively in our favour. The next item in the Governor's Speech to which I desire to refer is the question of finance. This is a question which will undoubtedly demand the earnest consideration of the new National Government. I may here remark that I have the honour of being the first representative of the National movement elected to this Chamber. I believe that with the present Government this important question will receive very careful consideration, and that the Government will refrain from that over indulgence in expenditure which we have witnessed in recent years. I should like to see an effort made—and I believe it would be received sympathetically by the country—for the improvement of the productiveness of our primary industries which produce the commodities which the world requires. The encouragement of our secondary industries too would undoubtedly help towards relieving the Empire's present extreme pressure. Then again, there is necessity for economy in many ways. I do not know that reduction of expenditure is al-

ways the wisest form of economy. In my observations through life I have realised that one cannot accomplish a desired end by that means only, and that it is more desirable to offer a greater incentive to work. I believe that if our people worked harder and determinedly, that would be the best method of furthering the production so necessary in order to relieve the pressure of taxation. Every man, and I might add every woman, should resolve to work harder, and if our community adopted that course it is surprising what results can be achieved—let there be no idlers. Avenues for energetic employment should be opened up to every one of our workers. There must be no slowing down, which is the greatest factor creating the greatly increased cost of living at the present time. It has occurred to me that we might with advantage adopt a policy which has been pursued in some parts of England and has worked profitably and pleasantly. The Government might with advantage to the State secure, if they do not already possess, an area within a radius of say ten miles of the City. In such an area there must be thousands of acres of land suitable for cultivation in one form or another: if not suitable for the raising of agricultural products, it would be suitable for the raising of poultry, pigs, and so forth. This land should be given to the people, made a present to them on the condition that they made it productive. By such means many people could be settled on poultry farms a mile or two from town and the State would then soon be in a position to save the hundreds of thousands of pounds which are at present sent out of the State for poultry, eggs, dairy produce, etc. I do not mean that these people should necessarily live on the land, but that instead of the people going in their thousands bathing and tripping here and there, men might take their wives and families to indulge in healthy outdoor occupation. Under such a scheme we should in a very few months have more eggs and poultry than would be required for consumption within the State. That is one direction in which productiveness might be increased. The great question of irrigation as it affects the north-western part of the State is one which demands attention. Millions upon



millions of gallons of water flow to waste annually, and I am perfectly satisfied that, with scientific aid, all that water could be conserved, and it could be used to assist in the profitable production of many things. We hear a great deal about the high cost of living in this part of the State. Why, in the North-West one could live for nothing, or almost nothing. On the occasion of a recent visit, within gunshot of where we camped one evening, we were able to get everything that we required for a delectable breakfast. We had kangaroo tail soup, fillet of turkey and beans, and if we had been so inclined, we could also have feasted on the wild oats that the blacks live on, and we could have busied ourselves by making our own damper. I assure hon. members that they have no idea of the possibilities of the great North-West. If I were an idle man, this City would not hold me for five minutes; the North-West would attract me and hold me. It is a most beautiful part of the State, and is only waiting for man to develop it. I had the privilege of meeting and conversing with many people in that part of the State, people who are following the vocation of mining. I am an old mining man myself. I spent many years in the mining centres of Victoria and Broken Hill, and I listened sympathetically to everything that was told to me. My attention was drawn to vast auriferous areas, which took many days to go through. One could not but be astonished at the immense possibilities of that great country. I was informed by a number of people that it was utterly impossible to keep the natives at work in the North-West, because they preferred to go out with bags and collect minerals and dispose of them to such an extent as to satisfy their immediate wants. In the course of conversation with miners and influential men whom I met in the different centres, it was pointed out to me that it would be a great advantage if prospectors did not have to await a fall of rain before being able to carry on their operations. There is a great scarcity of water in the North-West. True, there are tanks and wells along the tracks, but the water contained in them is for consumption by stock and, moreover, this water supply is not in the mineral areas. It was pointed out to me that it would be of immense benefit if

the Government could see their way to sink wells and provide for a water supply in these highly auriferous belts. Many hundreds of people who are now denied the opportunity of making use of that vast territory would occupy it and render it productive. There is another matter that I would like to comment on, and it is one which is always with us—the liquor question. In my movements around the world I always like to draw reasonable comparisons on the question of temperance among the people. I can assure hon. members that both in America and on the Continent—of course I am speaking of the period before the war—I never saw any sign of harmful effect on the constitution of the people through over-indulgence in liquor. But when I returned to England and to Australia, it was pitiful and hurtful to behold at our very doors what the excessive consumption of alcohol meant. I believe that this menace could be considerably modified. Our laws, from what I know of them, compel an hotel-keeper to sell grog at a certain standard, a standard which will almost knock an elephant over. An unfortunate man, after a tedious day's work, will go to an hotel and ask for a pint of beer. There should not be an evil influence in a pint or even two, which would merely satisfy a modest thirst; the evil influence lies in the strength of the liquor. This, I maintain should be considerably reduced. I would reduce the strength 50 per cent., and if that did not prove enough, then by 75 per cent., and I would go so far as not to provide for a penalty if the publican merely sold water. On the Continent the strength of liquor is materially reduced, and at the cafés and beer gardens there are to be seen whole families remaining for hours refreshing themselves without any evil result following. These people may be happy and contented, but one never sees them intoxicated. Here in our midst we find intoxication at our very doors. Therefore, let us reduce the strength of alcohol and in this way in a great measure overcome the evil. Yet one other matter to which I desire to refer, and I shall bring my remarks to a close. The other day, I attended a meeting of those British boys who were sent out to Western Australia, and who are established under wise control



at Pinjarra. I could not but be struck by the worthy nature of the mission the authorities in charge of these lads were engaged in, and it occurred to me that we could do likewise for many of our boys and even girls. It might be possible for neighbours to devote attention to many of our children, and we might encourage the development of a generous feeling towards the young. For instance, there should not be such a thing as sickness in the house without the neighbours knowing of it and doing something towards alleviating it. I knew of a case of sickness in a house in which no one seemed to be interested. This kind of thing occurs frequently, and there seems to be no one to be made aware of it or even to care. But if a person has the misfortune to lose a dog, then the surrounding community inquires about it and offers sympathy. I think that kindly and charitably disposed ladies could do very good work in this direction by extending towards sufferers the hand of good fellowship. A more generous intercourse amongst neighbours is what I would advocate, and by little acts of kindness many sufferings and much distress would be relieved, and perhaps the health of many restored. Friendship and advice do not cost anything, and when they are freely and generously given are appreciated all the more. I thank hon. members for the patience with which they have listened to my maiden effort, and will conclude by moving the following Address-in-reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor:—

*May it please your Excellency, we, 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 address to Parliament.*

Hon. H. STEWART (South-East)  
[3.55]: I desire to second the motion.

On motion by Hon. C. Sommers debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 3.56.*

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 19th July, 1917.

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### MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at noon, pursuant to proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, which proclamation was read by the Clerk (Mr. A. R. Grant).

### RESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER.

The Clerk (Mr. A. R. Grant): It is my duty to announce that a vacancy has occurred in the office of Speaker during the recess through the resignation of the Hon. James Gardiner, and with the permission of hon. members I will read the letter he handed to me on accepting the office of Colonial Treasurer:—

Perth, 28th June, 1917.

Dear Mr. Grant,—Having accepted the office of Colonial Treasurer, I hereby tender my resignation as Speaker of the House of Assembly. In doing so I may be permitted to acknowledge the kindly courtesy which was so generously extended to me by the leaders and the members of the House, and also to acknowledge my appreciation of the help of yourself and Mr. Steere. These kindnesses tinge with sincere regret my resignation. Yours faithfully, James Gardiner.

### ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [12.5], addressing the Clerk, said: I have much pleasure in moving—

*That Mr. Taylor do take the Chair of this House as Speaker.*