

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTEENTH PARLIAMENT:

The Legislative Assembly was dissolved by Proclamation on the 31st January, 1933.

The Fifteenth Parliament was convened for the despatch of business on the 18th July, 1933, and the First Session was commenced on that day.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 18th July, 1933.

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OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at 12 noon.

The PRESIDENT took the Chair.

PROCLAMATION.

The Clerk of Parliaments (Mr. A. R. Grant) read the Proclamation of His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor summoning the first session of the Fifteenth Parliament.

COMMISSIONER.

His Excellency's Commissioner (His Honour, Mr. Justice Dwyer) having entered the Chamber at noon, a message was sent to the Legislative Assembly requesting the presence of members in the Council Chamber.

Members of the Legislative Assembly having arrived accordingly, His Honour requested the Clerk to read His Excellency's Commission to do all things necessary in his name for the opening of the first session of the Fifteenth Parliament. The Commission was read.

The Commissioner then read the following statement:—

Mr. President, Hon. Gentlemen of the Legislative Council and members of the Legislative Assembly—

I have it in command from His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor to inform you that at three o'clock this afternoon His Excellency will declare to you the causes of the calling together of this Parliament; and it being necessary that a Speaker of the Legislative Assembly should be first chosen, it is His Excellency's pleasure that you, Members of the Legislative Assembly, repair to the place where you are to sit, and, having been duly sworn by me in accordance with the terms of the Commission granted to me by His Excellency, you do elect your Speaker, and notify His Excellency of your having done so.

Members of the Legislative Assembly having retired, His Excellency's Commissioner left the Chamber.

SWEARING-IN.

The Clerk produced the return to the writ for the Central Province vacancy (Ministerial re-election).

The Hon. John Michael Drew, Chief Secretary, took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

Sitting suspended from 12.17 to 2.58 p.m.

LIEUT.-GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

His Excellency the Lieut.-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—

The first session of the Fifteenth Parliament of Western Australia has been summoned for the consideration of important public business.

I have to announce that the Honourable Sir John Northmore, K.C.M.G., recently resigned his appointment as Lieutenant-Governor, and that the choice of his successor by His Majesty the King fell upon the Honourable Sir James Mitchell, K.C.M.G.

In accordance with an Act passed during the last session of Parliament a referendum was placed before the people of Western Australia submitting the following two questions:—

1. Are you in favour of the State of Western Australia withdrawing from the Federal Commonwealth established under the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act (Imperial)?
2. Are you in favour of a convention of representatives of equal number from each of the Australian States being summoned for the purpose of proposing such alterations in the Constitution of the Commonwealth as may appear to such convention to be necessary?

The result of the referendum was that 138,653 votes were cast in the affirmative and 70,706 in the negative on the first question, and 88,275 votes in the affirmative and 119,031 in the negative on the second question.

My Ministers are giving careful consideration to the best methods to be adopted in order to give effect to the decision of the people. In due course the result will be submitted for the full deliberation and decision of both Houses of Parliament.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly—

The financial situation is causing the gravest concern. The revenue for the year

ended 30th June, 1933, was £8,332,153 and the expenditure £9,196,234, leaving a deficit of £864,081 on the year's transactions.

It was decided by the Treasurers forming the Loan Council that Western Australia's deficit for the coming year should be financed up to £750,000.

Revenue is difficult to collect, and expenditure has already been heavily reduced. Finance is so stringent that only by the exercise of the most rigid economy will it be possible to operate through the coming year within the amount agreed upon.

An encouraging feature of the financial position is the success accorded the Australian conversion loan placed on the London market last month, and the internal loan floated in Australia. In both cases the money required was subscribed in a very short time, and the result augurs well for future operations. It is also estimated that the conversion now in progress will result in a saving of interest to Western Australia of £52,000 per annum.

It is the considered view of my Ministers that further conversion of overseas loans to a lower rate of interest is essential in the immediate future if Australia is to continue to meet her obligations. The success of the recent conversion reducing rates from 6½ per cent. to 3½ per cent. demonstrates the market value of money at the present time and indicates the rates of interest which should reasonably be paid. The Loan Council was unanimous in its advocacy of further substantial operations, with cheaper rates as the objective. Not only are the people weary of paying exorbitant rates of interest, but the Governments are no longer able to do so. It is imperative that relief should be secured in this direction without undue delay.

Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly—

My Ministers have been very concerned regarding prevailing unemployment. Every effort is being made to assist those unfortunate people unable to secure work. Western Australia has this year been allocated from loan money a slightly larger amount

than last year, and every penny available will be devoted towards providing employment upon constructive work. So seriously do my Advisers regard the position that one Minister has been appointed to attend exclusively to employment and the problems associated with it.

As a means of providing new avenues of employment and re-establishing men in industry, a representative Economic Council has been created. This movement has met with a gratifying response from all sections of the community. It is expected that the council's operations will materially assist in re-absorbing men in industry and solving unemployment.

Too much stress cannot be laid upon the importance of encouraging local manufacture, especially by extending rigid preference in purchasing even to the smallest items of local production. If the money spent on imports from the Eastern States could be distributed within this State, work could be found for an additional 13,000 people and unemployment solved. The continued and patriotic support of local industry is essential to provide employment for the growing boys and girls of this State. My Advisers feel that a common ambition in this direction cannot be too strongly encouraged.

It is gratifying to note that recent wool sales in Perth returned average prices of 1½d. per lb. higher than those ruling last September, and were the highest recorded in the State for over three years. A rise has also taken place in the price of wheat. The high price of gold is an important factor in our progress and development. It is unnecessary to stress the importance of such increased prices to Western Australia. If the upward trend should be maintained, and the relief to which I have referred in overseas interest rates is secured, it would be reasonable to anticipate improvement in the general conditions of Australia, in which Western Australia would participate.

Wheat.

The estimated total production of wheat for the past season is 40,424,429 bushels from an area of 3,318,390 acres. The average per acre is estimated to be 12.18 bushels, slightly less than last year, because

of the lateness of the season. A record number of entries was received in connection with the 50-acre crop competition conducted by the Royal Agricultural Society, and a new official State record was established, with a yield of 47 bushels per acre over the competing area of Mr. F. S. Freebairn, of Jilakin. The Agricultural Department experts, recognising the importance of increased yields per acre, are rendering all possible assistance towards this end.

Wool.

The production of wool for the 1932-33 season totalled 220,000 bales, or 12,000 bales more than the previous year. This is a record for the State, and, although prices have not been satisfactory, it is worth noting that the general quality of the clips has improved.

Dairying.

Despite the grave fall in the price of dairy products during the year production has continued to increase, the amount of butter fat advancing to approximately 11,000,000 lbs., or 884,000 lbs. more than last year. The export of butter increased from 24,983 boxes in 1931-32 to 40,723 for the present season. Over 2,000,000 lbs. of cheese are imported annually, and now that the export stage for butter has been reached manufacturers are turning their attention to developing the production of cheese. One factory has commenced operations, and a very good quality cheese is being placed upon the market. Imports of bacon and pork have been reduced from 2,176,856 lbs. in 1931 to 1,278,601 lbs. in 1932, a decrease of approximately 40 per cent., demonstrating a very gratifying increase in local production.

Fruit.

All fruit crops during the season have been good. The quantity exported is well up to the average, and the quality has maintained the good name which Western Australian fruit has earned overseas. Up to the 26th May over half a million cases had been shipped. For the third year in succession Mr. G. Simpson, of Karragullen, has won for dessert or culinary apples displayed at the Imperial Fruit Show the silver cup open to competitors from the whole of Australia.

Eggs.

The export of eggs in shell has increased in the past two years from 11,474 cases to 52,252 cases. Each case contains 30 dozen eggs. Western Australian eggs in London deservedly enjoy a high reputation, which has been earned by shipping eggs of only the best quality.

The North-West.

A strong agitation still exists for the repeal of the pleuro-pneumonia regulations in connection with the cattle industry, and an investigation is in hand by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research as to the best methods of detection of this disease. In addition to this, the Government are seriously considering the best means which can be taken to meet the situation generally.

Experiments in banana and pineapple culture in the North-West seem at last to promise definitely favourable results. Early attempts in banana culture 10 years ago resulted in temporary failure, but, latterly, a policy of irrigation, hitherto practically unattempted throughout the world, has been adopted in both fields of production, with wonderful promise. Sixteen months ago seven (7) cases of bananas were produced from the Carnarvon district; at the present time 200 cases are being delivered by each boat. The industry is employing between 50 and 60 men, and there appears to be no reason why the State should not in due course overtake its demand of 20,000 cases per annum, which will doubtless be augmented with the development of country trade.

The growth of pineapples in the Gascoyne was first attempted in February, 1931. One hundred cases have been placed upon the Perth market since fruiting commenced two months ago. The quality is superb; there is a splendid export trade ahead, and there appears to be no reason why the North-West should not at once satisfy the demands of local markets and, at the same time, establish an important canning and export trade.

Gold Mining.

The revival in gold mining continues, and the industry is pregnant with possibility. The gold yield for the year 1932 totalled 605,561 fine ozs.—of a value in Australian

currency of £4,403,642—exceeding that of the previous year by 94,989 fine ozs. Important developments at depth on the Golden Mile have been reported, and the installation of modern plants by several of the companies has enabled the treatment of increased tonnage. The Wiluna gold mine continues to increase its production, and the resuscitated township is now a busy centre.

The State batteries have had a very successful year, a gratifying feature being the increase in the value per ton of ore treated. The parcels of prospectors' ore treated numbered 2,117, and amounted to 79,744 tons. The estimated value of bullion recovered in Australian currency was £387,869, being an increase on the previous year's yield of £163,655. Returns to date show a considerable increase over the corresponding period of 1932, and it is expected that the peak tonnage reached in 1908 will this year be equalled, if not exceeded.

During the past 18 months there has been a considerable influx of British capital, and British interest is being fostered. Several companies are already testing extensive areas with a view to developing mines on a large scale, while numerous local mining companies are engaged in looking for suitable properties to work.

A comprehensive prospecting scheme has now been launched with a view to relieving unemployment. Men are being suitably equipped and sent out in small parties to engage in prospecting in approved districts. This scheme should benefit the men thus employed and at the same time further stimulate the increasing gold production of the State.

Railways.

There has been a net improvement of over £50,000 in the financial position of the Railways when compared with the year 1931-32; but deferred repairs have become imperative, and these will cost a large sum of money.

Lands.

During the year 841 applications for an area of 462,411 acres under conditional alienation were approved, and 75 applications for 3,206,777 acres were granted under pastoral lease. There were 491 new settlers.

Wire amounting to 88 tons and 649 miles of wire netting were supplied to 187 settlers at a cost of £29,808, representing a considerable increase on the previous year.

Forests.

The position in the timber trade is brighter at the present time than it has been for the two years just passed. During recent months there has been an encouraging increase in orders received from overseas for Western Australian hardwoods. It is hoped that this may be regarded as a sign of the return of the timber industry to more normal conditions.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that the quantity of mature timber remaining is limited; and careful regulation of the annual volume of timber which may be removed from our forests is a matter of great importance, if adequate provision is to be made for the permanence of the industry and future supplies for internal requirements. The acceleration of reforestation operations on cut-over forest will prove an important factor in improving this position. During the past year regeneration and improvement work has been carried out over 56,000 acres of cut-over jarrah forest. Similar reforestation work is being undertaken on a smaller scale in karri, tuart, and mallet forest areas.

Education.

There were 870 primary and high schools open at the end of the financial year, with an enrolment of about 59,500 children. The expenditure of the Education Department was £555,000.

Legislation.

You will be asked to give consideration to measures dealing with—

Land Act Consolidation,
Mine Workers' Relief Act Amendment,
An amendment of the Mining Act relating to tributaries,
Yuna-Balla-Dartmoor Railway Construction,
Aborigines,
Emergency Legislation.

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

BILL—GOVERNMENT TRAMWAYS ACT AMENDMENT.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [3.28]: 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 make provision in the Government Tramways Act, 1912, for the use of trolley buses as part of the Government Tramways System."

Leave given; Bill introduced, and read a first time.

LIEUT.-GOVERNOR'S SPEECH, DISTRIBUTION.

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [3.31]: I move—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Lieut.-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 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."

This, in my opinion, is a fitting occasion on which to refer to the outstanding services rendered by the retired Lieut.-Governor. It has been my good fortune repeatedly to see the retired Lieut.-Governor moving amongst the people. Not many persons in Western Australia, when they saw Sir John Northmore travelling, say, on the trams of the city, knew that he held the exalted position of head of the State. He held that position when Western Australia encountered the depression, which came like a thunderclap, thousands of people being suddenly deprived of their means of livelihood. The example set by the ex Lieut.-Governor should live in history as a guide to all citizens. Notwithstanding the fact that he was entitled to

draw substantial remuneration from the coffers of the State, it is not generally known that he refrained from doing so, and thereby he set an example which might well be followed by persons in many other avocations. I desire also to congratulate Sir James Mitchell on having been appointed to the Vice-Regal position. It is indeed a great change to pass from the turbulent sea of politics into the placid waters of Vice-Regal representation. Many people have contended that that high position should be held by a Western Australian citizen, and I think I can, on behalf of the people of the State generally, congratulate Sir James Mitchell on being the first Western Australian born citizen to hold the exalted position to which I allude. We are told by financial experts that the State is emerging from the depression, and that at such a time new tactics should be adopted. In his present position Sir James Mitchell is, naturally, debarred from entering into the political life of the State; but he can, like his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, do an enormous amount of service by awakening the people to a sense of their responsibility, and he can do this without in the slightest degree encroaching upon the rights of the people or usurping the functions of the head of any political party. The time has come to rally our citizens. My reading of history tells me that when a country is emerging from a severe crisis, the hardest time of all lies ahead of it. Unquestionably, however well the Government may carry out their duties, the greater proportion of the Western Australian people have still to face hardships and suffering. Every citizen, irrespective of the position he holds, owes a duty to bend his energies towards assisting in every possible way to relieve those who are less fortunately situated than he is himself. I take this opportunity to diverge from the usual procedure of a mover of the Address-in-reply. I appeal not only to the Government, but also to the general body of citizens. Not often do we find such an assemblage of citizens as is now present in this Chamber, an assemblage representing every phase of the life of Western Australia. Therefore this is a unique opportunity for driving home not only the responsibilities of the Government but the responsibilities of every member of the community. Three years ago, when the depression struck Western Australia, thousands of citizens,

horror-struck at the fate of unfortunate fellow-citizens, made every kind of effort to supplement the Government's efforts, splendid work being done in this respect. The Government, owing to lack of funds, could not meet fully the demands resulting from the crisis. All over the metropolitan area, and indeed in practically every Western Australian hamlet, citizens of their own accord banded together to succour those who were in dire want. So accustomed, however, have the people generally become to seeing large numbers of their fellow-citizens in want, fellow-citizens quite as good as themselves and in many cases far better, that they have forgotten the condition of those who are suffering. People in high positions and people in fairly comfortable positions are altogether overlooking the plight of their fellow-citizens. Complete relief of the suffering which exists is beyond the financial capacity of any Government, and therefore it is for the general body of citizens to rally, and to discard the attitude, which has marked many of them during the last 18 months, of callously disregarding the plight of their fellow creatures. I take the present opportunity to mention these matters because as head of the Metropolitan Council's relief committee I have been brought into close contact with the dire suffering that exists in this State. Once I was the proud occupant of that position. It was a matter of pride and gratification to me to find so many citizens of all shades of political opinion uniting to relieve the distress around them. To-day, however, many persons able to assist are neglecting that duty. It is, I repeat, their duty to supplement the assistance granted by the State. I hope the relief committees will have no further cause to complain; for the men and women assembled to-day in this Chamber come from practically all parts of the metropolitan area, and they can go back to their respective suburbs and urge the various local authorities to impress upon every citizen in receipt of a good salary or even at work on full time, whether receiving £5 a week or £10 a week, the necessity for coming to the assistance of the very large number of sufferers in our midst. His Excellency's Speech has struck a note of optimism. I congratulate the Minister for Mines upon his courage and enterprise in instituting his big

prospecting scheme in the goldfields areas. There is untold wealth to be gained on the goldfields, and the Minister is to be commended for his breadth of outlook in launching that big scheme. We do want to get the people away from the hated dole. Plenty of earnest men are perfectly willing temporarily to leave their wives and families and with younger men go out on the goldfields and suffer hardships far away from the social amenities of the city, and I say such men should be encouraged in every way. We see by a Press announcement that one of the inspectors appointed to supervise that big scheme is Mr. Thomas Chesson, who for many years was a member of another Chamber. No straighter man than Mr. Chesson ever entered Parliament, and his life-long knowledge of mining will be of the utmost assistance to the Minister responsible for that great scheme. I was impressed with the tone of the financial section of His Excellency's speech. There does not seem to be very much money about. However, during the last few days we learned that we shall save an annual expenditure of £52,000 through the conversion loan. All must appreciate the fact that the sooner these conversion loans are pushed along the better it will be, because it will result in lessening the burden of the people in the payment of rates and taxes. In the activities of a Government £52,000 per annum is only a small sum, but at all events it is a start on the right road. I congratulate the Government on having already carried out their pre-election promise to appoint a full-time Minister to look after the big question of unemployment. Mr. Kenneally, the new Minister, is a man of great experience and has started off well by creating the Economic Council, which is a move in the right direction. That council will be of great value to Western Australia if only it is supported morally by the citizens and the traders of the State. My experience of the last 10 years in urging people to patronise local industries by purchasing local goods is that in too many instances the policy is not sufficiently backed up by the traders. Consumers will not go very much out of their way in insisting upon being supplied with locally-made goods. If, then, we have big wholesale houses silently working against that policy, the position is made very difficult. If one goes into a tailor's shop and is met with an argument

against Albany cloth, or if he has to battle with his grocer before he can induce that gentleman to supply him with local products, then the outlook is hopeless. In the past the greatest obstacle in the way of our agitation to promote the sale of locally-made goods has been the silent and profitable opposition of many business people. I want to appeal to the local authorities to carry out their work. I can logically take this stand in regard to unemployment, because of my attitude towards the members of the previous Government. The stand I take is that it is the duty of every citizen to do everything possible to support the Government in their struggle with the unemployed situation. No member of Parliament nor any newspaper can charge me with having failed to do my best to support any and every effort of the late Government to alleviate the unemployment position. I clearly remember a big meeting in the City Council chamber when the former Minister in charge of unemployment, Mr. Scaddan, addressed the representatives of the local authorities and laid down his scheme. If that scheme had been loyally carried out by the local authorities, all would have been well. The previous Government carried out their part of the contract, and if the local authorities had but carried out their obligation there would have been much more work offering for the unemployed and fewer people sent to receive ration tickets. But with the exception of one or two, the whole of the local authorities in the metropolitan area betrayed the late Minister in charge of unemployment. There can be no question about that. He was basely betrayed. Instead of supplementing the efforts of the Government, in far too many instances the local authorities built up surpluses and showed profits. In normal times that might have been counted to their credit, but in existing circumstances it is a mark of shame on any local authority that it should publish a balance sheet showing a profit at the expense of the unfortunates amongst our people.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: That is rather rough.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It should be rougher. Every possible avenue ought to be exploited to save any citizen from the necessity for receiving rations. It is repugnant to any decent man or woman to have to accept charity, and I urge the Government to continue doing their utmost to spare the people from the humiliation of receiving rations. In realising the plight of our people we must

recognise that if we put all unemployed persons on rations we should be depriving them of their independence. Therefore I hope the Government will press forward in their efforts to find work instead of reducing people to degradation by the receipt of rations. The task before the Government is very great. The time has come when all sections of the community, working in their respective districts, should strive earnestly to create work. When we see that savings bank deposits have been increasing, we get the suggestion that every citizen should strive to spend his money rather than hoard it. If everybody in the position to do so would immediately carry out necessary renovations to residences in the metropolitan area, every available carpenter and painter would find employment to-morrow morning. I ask everyone to support the Government. The only way we can do that is to exploit every avenue in which it is possible to provide work, to the end that we may quickly get all our people back into reproductive employment.

HON. A. M. CLYDESDALE (Metropolitan-Suburban) [3.51]: I formally second the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

On motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [3.52]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 25th July, at 4.30 p.m.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 18th July, 1933.

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MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at noon, pursuant to Proclamation by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, which proclamation was read by the Clerk (Mr. F. G. Steere).

MESSAGE—OPENING BY COMMISSIONER.

A Message from His Excellency's Commissioner requested the attendance of members of the Legislative Assembly in the Legislative Council Chamber. Hon. members having accordingly proceeded to that Chamber and heard the Commission read, they returned to the Assembly Chamber.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

His Honour Mr. Justice Dwyer having been commissioned by the Lieut.-Governor, appeared in the Assembly Chamber to administer to members the oath of allegiance to His Majesty the King.

The Clerk produced election writs showing the return of 49 members (Kimberley being the exception); also writs for by-elections for Boulder, East Perth, Geraldton, Hannans, Mt. Hawthorn, Mt. Magnet, and South Fremantle (Ministerial re-elections).

All the members elected, with the exception of Mr. Cunningham (Kalgoorlie) and Mr. Marshall (Murchison) were present and took and subscribed the oath as required by statute and signed the roll.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [12.47]: The House being duly constituted, I now move—

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