

ELECTION OF SENATOR

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Nick Griffiths): Honourable members, this joint sitting has been called to choose a person to hold the place in the Senate of the Commonwealth of Australia rendered vacant by the resignation of Senator Ian Campbell, notification of which has been reported to this Parliament by His Excellency the Governor (Dr Kenneth Michael, AC).

I now call for nominations to fill the vacancy.

MR A.J. CARPENTER (Willagee - Premier) [12.02 pm]: Mr President, I propose that Mathias Hubert Paul Cormann, of 23 Clyde Road, Menora, being a person who is eligible to be chosen pursuant to section 15 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia, as amended, be chosen to hold the vacant place in the Senate of the Parliament of the Commonwealth created by the resignation of Senator Ian Gordon Campbell. I advise that I have Mr Cormann's assurance that, if chosen, he is willing to act.

MR P.D. OMODEI (Warren-Blackwood - Leader of the Opposition) [12.03 pm]: I second the proposition, and, in doing so, I wish to congratulate Mr Cormann on his nomination for appointment to the Senate.

The PRESIDENT: Does any member wish to speak to the nomination?

MR A.J. CARPENTER (Willagee - Premier) [12.03 pm]: On behalf of all the government members of both the Assembly and the Council, may I congratulate Mathias Cormann on this honour that has been bestowed upon him. I mean that sincerely. We wish him well in his career in the Senate of Australia. It is a great honour. In particular, if I may say so, for a person who came to Australia as a migrant from another country to so quickly and so assuredly reach a position of this importance is a great achievement. We recognise that and wish him well.

Members: Hear, hear!

MR P.D. OMODEI (Warren-Blackwood - Leader of the Opposition) [12.04 pm]: I wish to make a few comments on this matter. This vacancy arose following the resignation of Senator Ian Campbell, and it is appropriate at this time to recognise his contribution. Senator Campbell was born in Perth in 1959, and was chosen by this Parliament to replace Hon Fred Chaney in the Senate following Mr Chaney's resignation in 1990. From 1996, Senator Campbell served in a number of executive positions in the Senate, including as Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer and Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads. He also served as Minister for the Environment and Heritage, and more recently as Minister for Human Services. Senator Campbell was a strong voice for Western Australia in the federal government, and he should be proud of his significant contribution to the state and to the nation. On behalf of the Parliamentary Liberal Party, I wish him and his family all the best for the future.

With regard to the replacement of Senator Campbell, the Liberal Party's nominee is Mr Mathias Cormann. Mr Cormann was born in Belgium in 1970 and, after visiting Australia on a number of occasions, emigrated permanently to our shores in 1996. Now, in 2007, he is our nomination for the Senate. As the Premier said, as a migrant to this country, it is an achievement of which he can be very proud.

Mr Cormann worked as a researcher and adviser in the former Court coalition government. He was also an adviser to Senator the Hon Chris Ellison during his time as Minister for Justice and Customs. More recently, Mr Cormann has worked with HBF, where he held the position of acting general manager.

The position of a senator for Western Australia comes with great responsibilities, none of which is greater than the responsibility to represent the best interests of this great state. The strength of our nation is dependent on the strength of our Federation. Mr Cormann has a strong passion for Western Australia, and I fully expect that this passion will guide his actions in the Senate. We expect Mr Cormann to represent Western Australia without fear or favour in the Senate, and we wish him well for the future.

Members: Hear, hear!

The PRESIDENT: Does any other member wish to speak to the nomination? Are there any further nominations? There being no other nominations, I declare Mathias Hubert Paul Cormann, of 23 Clyde Road, Menora, Western Australia, elected to hold the place vacated by Senator Ian Gordon Campbell.

Members, I advise that the newly elected senator, Mr Mathias Cormann, is present in the President's gallery. Members, the joint sitting is concluded.

[Applause.]

The joint sitting concluded at 12.07 pm
