

On motion by *Mr. Bolton*, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at half past 10 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 11th September, 1907.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

QUESTION—CONDITIONAL PURCHASE RETURN.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE asked (without notice): When are we likely to get the return ordered by the House showing the amount owing by conditional purchase owners in the State?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I cannot answer the question without notice, but I think it was shown that it would take some three months to get out the return, because the figures have to be taken from books which are being used during the day, and the figures can be extracted only in the evening. I will get the information to-morrow.

QUESTION—RAILWAY BRIDGES, FREMANTLE.

Hon. M. L. MOSS asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, On how many occasions

during the past 12 months has the Railway or other Government Department had inspections made of the two railway bridges at Fremantle? 2, What was the date of the last inspection? 3, Is the Government perfectly satisfied as to the stability for traffic of both these railway bridges?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, The bridges are inspected at least once a week, and in addition special inspections are made when circumstances render it necessary. 2, 9th September, 1907. 3, Yes.

MOTION—RAILWAY OIL AND GREASE.

On motion by *Hon. M. L. Moss*, ordered: That all papers in connection with the supply of oil and grease to the Railway Department during the years 1904-5, 1905-6, and 1906-7 be laid upon the table of the House, the papers to particularly include those dealing with this matter and referred to in the speech of the Hon. the Colonial Secretary in this House on the amendment proposed by the *Hon. R. W. Pennefather* with reference to the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the working of the Government Railways.

MOTION—FEDERAL TARIFF, MOOJEBING TELEGRAM.

Hon. W. MALEY (South-East) moved—

That a select committee be appointed, with power to call for the production of a certain telegram having reference to a public meeting at Moojebing from some person in Western Australia, with intent to mislead a Minister of the Commonwealth. Sir William Lyne; and with power to call for the production of any other papers consequent thereto.

With respect to the publication of this alleged telegram in the *West Australian*, there seemed to be something extremely unusual about the method in which the telegram was despatched from Western Australia, and the way in which it was received back and found its way into

the Press. There were so many channels of information through which such a telegram might find its way into a newspaper so well conducted as the *West Australian*. He was not an admirer of the politics of the *West Australian*. The telegram referred to in the motion was published in the *West Australian* of September 5th, and was headed in large capitals "Discovery by Sir William Lyne." The telegram, which was not dated from any particular State, was as follows:—

"The Acting Prime Minister (Sir William Lyne) has to-day discovered farther approval of the tariff in the shape of a telegram from Moojebing, Western Australia, as follows:—'Enthusiastic meeting, unanimous approval new tariff.'"

When he read that telegram he was highly amused at the humour. The population of Moojebing was about six or seven souls; at most there were not more than four adult residents in the town of Moojebing as far as he was aware, and there was no telegraph office at Moojebing, only a telephone office at the back of a small store in the town. The publication of the telegram by the *West Australian* without any comment must indicate that it was ridiculous, especially when it said that an enthusiastic meeting unanimously approved of the new tariff, when there were so few people in the town.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: Where was the telegram received from?

Hon. W. MALEY: The hon. member might be able to inform the House.

Hon. J. W. Hackett did not intend to take any notice of the motion; only he asked where the telegram was received from.

Hon. W. MALEY did not intend to reply to the member. Wherever it came from, the *West Australian* thought it necessary to follow it up, although that newspaper did not follow up any other telegram sent to Sir William Lyne.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Who was Sir William Lyne?

Hon. W. MALEY: The Acting Prime Minister. There appeared on the 9th September another message under large

capitals, "Sir William Lyne hoaxed," and the telegram was as follows:—

"The Katanning farmers are practically unanimous in their opposition to Sir William Lyne's tariff, and were astonished at the telegram alleged to have emanated from a meeting of farmers at Moojebing. On inquiry it was found that no such meeting had been heard of by the people of Moojebing, nor did any such message go through the Moojebing telegraph office. The whole thing is regarded here as a hoax."

Whether a hoax or not, and however amusing it might be to himself and other people in the State, underlying this telegram remained two facts. One was that the telephone office at Moojebing was near to his (Mr. Maley's) residence, and that he was the only member in the House who had had any remarks to make on the motion in respect to a remonstrance being sent in relation to the tariff. Members who were present knew that when the motion was passed through the House, scarcely a quorum of members was present. No sooner had he (Mr. Maley) spoken, than a member moved that the question be put. No discussion was required.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: There was a quorum.

Hon. W. MALEY was glad to hear it. The fact remained that discussion was hulked.

Hon. G. Randell: No.

The Colonial Secretary: No one else desired to speak.

Hon. M. L. Moss: It was a matter of urgency to get the motion through, so that representations could be made to the Federal authorities.

Hon. W. MALEY: The reason was not given at the time, and he assumed that no discussion was wanted.

The PRESIDENT: Standing Order 392 said:—"No member shall reflect upon any vote of the Council, except for the purpose of moving that such vote be rescinded."

Hon. W. MALEY: Certain facts were referred to. There was no reflection in his remarks on anything done in this House or elsewhere, or on any individual.

and he had not laid himself open to any censure. The correspondent of the *West Australian* newspaper, who resided at Katanning, could inform his newspaper of the fact that there was no telegraph office at Moojebing. The telegram must have been despatched from the nearest telegraph office, and that was at Katanning. One did not know by what right the Press could make searches at a Commonwealth telegraph office to ascertain what had been done. A select committee of this House experienced difficulty in getting certain evidence on one occasion in respect to a telegram, it being Commonwealth business, and the fact had to be reported to the House. One could not understand by what right the Press could demand information this House could not obtain, nor had the Government any means of discovering what passed through telegraph offices, except through a select committee, which he now moved should be appointed. Was the Commonwealth to be humbugged by certain people of Western Australia—whether those people had the support of members or not—by the despatch of telegrams that were distinctly misleading, and as such should be put down by the Parliament and Government of the State? In this matter the Press should give assistance; and as he had said nothing disrespectful of the Press, he was rather surprised at the interjections from Dr. Hackett, one of the principal lights of the Press. That hon. member claimed that he would take no notice of this matter. Why not? It was to be trusted the hon. gentleman had nothing to hide.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: The matter had nothing to do with the *West Australian*.

Hon. W. MALEY: It had a great deal to do with us. These telegrams that misled the Commonwealth must react with harm to the interests of Western Australia. If the Prime Minister were misled by the Press and people of Western Australia, we as a Parliament had no right to remonstrate against the tariff.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: How did the Press mislead?

Hon. W. MALEY wished to know whether these telegrams were genuine. It was certain the hon. member would put

no obstacles in the way of the appointment of a select committee, which might deter any person from again resorting to this method of underground engineering.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: What had he to do with it?

Hon. W. MALEY: The hon. member's duty was to promote the use of cleaner weapons in all our public business; and when any traitor appeared in the camp, it was the hon. member's bounden duty to say, "This is the man who caused me to be a party to hoaxing Sir William Lyne." There was nothing more to add, except to say that it was his (Mr. Maley's) first duty, because he happened to be at his home at the time the telegram was sent, to clear himself of any connection with anything that might have happened at his own door. Dr. Hackett did not communicate with him.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: What had he to do with this matter?

Hon. W. MALEY: The hon. member was the cause; the hon. member owned the newspaper.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: The telegram came from Melbourne to the *West Australian*.

Hon. J. T. GLOWREY (South) formally seconded the motion, and said the matter was not of sufficient importance to justify the calling together of a select committee. No one took the matter seriously. The telegram had not affected the State in any serious degree, and there was no occasion to take any great interest in what Sir William Lyne might think about it. Judging from the great interest Sir William Lyne took in the State, we should not worry about him in the slightest degree.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan-Suburban) did not take so humorous a view of the situation as members appeared to be taking. He supported the motion generally, not because it had any application to Moojebing or Katanning, or the *West Australian* newspaper; but Federal and State politics should not be made a plaything by practical jokers, and if the finding out of the actual sender of this telegram could act as a deterrent on this

class of thing, the House would be well justified in moving in this direction. One could not quite appreciate the trend of Mr. Maley's remarks about the *West Australian*, because it must be presumed that newspaper got the information in the usual course from Melbourne.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: That was so.

Hon. W. Maley: That was not denied. He had said there were many channels for getting the information.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: It would be superfluous and totally unnecessary to act as apologist for the *West Australian*, but he took it that the news came from Melbourne. If we could deter any future practical jokers from sending this sort of telegram, we should do so. To people in the Eastern States the name of Moojebing was of the same significance as the name of Katanning; and if Sir William Lyne received a telegram from Katanning, Wagin, or Narrogin, or any of the farming towns along the Great Southern line, he would be well justified in placing a good deal of confidence in it. The hon. member represented the province in which Moojebing was situated and so was justified in moving this motion—and the House should assist him—in order to clear up this mystery, and, if possible, deter a similar action in the future.

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD (Metropolitan-Suburban): This matter had not the seriousness that was given to it, though on hearing Moojebing mentioned, he had for the moment associated the hon. member with it—[*Hon. W. Maley*: That was the point]—being under the belief that the hon. member was about the only person living in that district, and that he would certainly know something about the telegram, and about the meeting held. However, the hon. member's denial was sufficient.

Hon. M. L. MOSS (West) hoped the House would not put itself in the position the mover and Mr. Kingsmill advised by appointing a select committee. Members should picture the effect, when it was telegraphed to Melbourne that the Western Australian Legislative Council had thought it of sufficient importance to

call for a select committee to inquire into something the hon. member disclaimed, and which Dr. Hackett said was a hoax. It was to be hoped the House would have more sense, and would not make itself look stupid in the eyes of the world. It was to be regretted if the slightest stigma had rested on Mr. Maley, because the hon. member was held in high regard, and the House would accept the disclaimer the hon. member made that he had nothing to do with the telegram.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): Having had such a full discussion on the matter, having drawn attention to the position he occupied, and having explained that he had nothing to do with the telegram, Mr. Maley should withdraw the motion. Members knew that the hon. member would not lend himself to that sort of thing.

Hon. W. MALEY (in reply): Being so well known, it would go without saying among members at any rate, whatever people with less knowledge would say, that he had nothing to do with the message sent from Moojebing. People there told him that certain persons at Katanning had said they would get to the bottom of the matter, and one gentleman in particular, who was connected with the Press, had stated it was his (Mr. Maley's) duty to get to the bottom of it. Aspersions had been cast on him which he did not deserve, and he had come to the conclusion that action must be taken. However, in the circumstances, he would ask leave to withdraw the motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

MOTION—FEDERATION AND INDUSTRIES. TO INQUIRE.

Hon. J. T. GLOWREY (South) moved—

That a joint committee from both Houses of Parliament, consisting of five members from each, be appointed to consider the position of Western Australia in relation to the Commonwealth Constitution, particularly as to how it affects our industries and resources, and to report to both Houses.

He said : In moving the motion, I feel it will be unnecessary to speak at length to convince members that Parliament should inquire into the reasons for the unrest and turmoil in Western Australia owing to the Commonwealth Constitution. We are not alone in this respect. There is a great deal of dissatisfaction existing in our sister States, more particularly in Queensland, New South Wales and Tasmania; in fact in each of the States there appears to be a certain amount of dissatisfaction about the Commonwealth Constitution. This has been brought home to us more clearly owing to the recent tariff. There is a considerable amount of stagnation in every branch of trade and commerce in Western Australia. I know that in making a statement of this kind I may be taken to task by some of our friends, but I venture to say our position to-day is a very serious one indeed. I consider the outlook is black, very black indeed, and if matters continue to go on as they are now doing I do not know what is going to happen to this State inside six or twelve months. Less than a year ago there was a motion in this House—I forget the exact wording of it—but it was brought forward in opposition to the Federal Union. I voted for the motion and, like some other members I suppose, I did so as a protest against the action of the Commonwealth Government in throwing out the Trans-Australian Railway Survey Bill. We are one great nation, we are all federated, and I think that is the proper thing. Australia should be federated, and when I say that I feel sure that most of the people of Western Australia and most of the members of Parliament entertain a similar feeling, while that is so, still when we entered into Federation we did not know what our requirements were, and we did not give due consideration to what they were likely to be. It was admitted that we were in a somewhat different position from any of the other States and we were granted special consideration by being allowed to retain the inter-State duties subject to a reduction of 20 per cent. each year. That fact alone is evidence that it was realised we were entitled to some consideration. That however was not enough. If we had

looked sufficiently far ahead we would have stipulated for much better advantages than we have received. As to the inter-State duties, it is a very wise thing that those have disappeared, for there should not be duties on many necessaries of life, such as butter, bacon, cheese, and all articles which go to make up “a free breakfast table.” When the concession as to the inter-State duties was being obtained we should have gone farther as to our own tariff. We should have been allowed to regulate our tariff on oversea goods for a certain term of years. This was not done and we are suffering for it to-day. The present tariff is most unjust to Western Australia and is hampering us in every possible way. The few manufactories and industries which were springing up have been ruined and many of them have disappeared altogether. My object in moving this motion is to try and see if it is possible to get a committee to inquire into our Constitution and see if we can devise a way to get better advantages than we have at the present time. There has been a considerable amount of talk about secession and a great many complaints from various sources have been received; but, with one exception, we have not approached the Commonwealth Government with those complaints. I maintain that it should be an easy matter for us to get some concessions that would be fair and equitable to Western Australia and at the same time would be quite just to the Commonwealth. I feel certain that in moving in this direction nothing but good would result. We know that we will have all the people of this State supporting us and in addition we shall have the support of many people in the sister States. At the present time it is useless for us to make any protestations to the Commonwealth Government unless it is done in a constitutional way, because Sir William Lyne will not take the slightest notice of us. He has a lot of followers who have evidently sold themselves for a paltry £200 a year and who follow him blindly. The tariff recently imposed seriously affects the mining industry of which I claim to have some slight knowledge. The trouble is caused by the heavy duty on mining ma-

chinery, a great deal of which cannot be obtained except directly from the manufacturers. There is a great deal of machinery which it would be quite impossible to make in Australia, because the plant to manufacture it would cost a very considerable sum of money, and there is no possibility of the market for that machinery being so extensive as to warrant the erection of the plant. This machinery has to be obtained from England where they have the markets of the world at their disposal, and it is useless for one moment to expect that a high tariff would result in its manufacture in Australia. The agriculturist is also complaining of the heavy taxation and the merchants are acting similarly, while the householders are complaining of the increased cost of living. It appears to me that the tariff is most unjust. If our Federal Constitution were framed on equitable lines we should have had at least a chance of retaining the manufactories which were started here, and we would have been able to induce many other persons to come here to compete in the manufacturing industry. Owing to the existing conditions, however, this is quite impossible, and I am afraid we shall never have these manufactories established here during our lifetime. All the manufacturers are going East and the life blood of Western Australia is going away to benefit Melbourne. We are not alone in this matter, for many of the other States are complaining similarly. I hope this committee will be appointed. Of course it may be said that the work is too much for a committee to undertake, but surely if a committee were appointed and sat only for one afternoon, they could bring in a recommendation of some kind that would assist us in approaching the Commonwealth Government in a constitutional manner. If that committee finds out, after making a few inquiries, that its task is a very big one and might occupy several months to complete, it is not to be expected the committee would do that. On the other hand, however, it might find that no alteration in the Constitution was desirable. In a matter of this kind the Gov-

ernment should give every support possible, for it is a question of the most serious importance to Western Australia. I can assure hon. members, and I have a pretty fair knowledge of the present position of affairs, that as far as the metropolitan area is concerned, things are in a very bad state indeed. I hope the Government will lend their support to this motion. It is the duty of Parliament to protect the interests of the people, and I am sure the Government must realise how important this question is. I must confess that the Government have been somewhat slow to give any expression of their feelings, and they do not appear to have done all they might have done in the circumstances. I should have liked this motion to have been moved by someone who would have done more justice to it than I can; but I feel I am acting in the best interests of the State in moving the motion; and I hope members will give it due consideration. If the committee sits only one afternoon per week, some good will result to justify my action.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): It is hard to judge how members will deal with this motion. For my part I think it will not do much good if passed in its present form. On such a committee we need men who are in touch with the industries affected: and so far as I know, few members of Parliament are in that position. There will be great difficulty in picking out five members of either House who have a practical knowledge of the industries of this State. I cannot possibly support the motion unless the committee be enlarged so as to enable outside men to sit on it, in order that the verdict of the committee may stand the light of day and be of some service. The remarks of the mover have been listened to with great interest, and will no doubt bear fruit in another way, even if the motion is not passed; but it seems to me that to limit the committee to members of both Houses is a great mistake.

Hon. C. SOMMERS (Metropolitan): Probably Mr. Glowrey was not aware

when he tabled the motion that a public meeting was to be held last night in the town hall. The public, it now appears, have in whole-hearted fashion taken up the matter, and are fully alive to its importance; so I think the hon. member may well leave the question to manufacturers and other citizens who have a special knowledge of our industries. His able speech has sufficiently ventilated the matter here, and I think he will be wise if he withdraws the motion.

The PRESIDENT: Will the hon. member accept the motion in this amended form?—

That a select committee of five members be appointed to consider and report on the position of Western Australia in relation to the Commonwealth Constitution, particularly as to how it affects its industries and resources.

The Council has no power to appoint a joint committee consisting of members of both Houses. The sense of the motion will be the same, though the form is different.

Hon. J. T. GLOWREY: I accept the motion as amended.

On motion by the *Hon. G. Bellingham*, debate adjourned.

RETURN—TIMBER TESTS, OVERTIME.

On motion by the *Hon. M. L. Moss*, ordered: That all papers relating to overtime worked in connection with the timber tests by officers of the Railway Department be laid upon the table of the House.

BILL—COLLIE-NARROGIN RAILWAY AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly) in moving the second reading said: The second reading debate on this Bill need not occupy much time, seeing that the measure seeks only to add three words to the Act passed in 1904, which Act provides that at any time after its passing, until the expiration of twelve

months from the date of publication of a notice in the *Government Gazette* declaring the railway open for traffic, the Government may compulsorily purchase land within twelve miles of either side of the railway. The line has been opened in two sections, the first from Narrogin to Darkan; and therefore some doubt has arisen whether this constitutes the opening of the railway. Three words are added to the Act to make the meaning clear; that is, the Act will apply to the railway as a whole, from Narrogin to Collie. That it should apply on the opening of the first section would be contrary to the intention of Parliament. The term of twelve months will begin to operate from the opening of the whole line. It is, by the way, anticipated that the line will in about a month's time be open for traffic from Collie to Narrogin. I move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, report adopted.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 5.27 o'clock, until the next day.