

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, September 16, 1971

The SPEAKER (Hon. R. E. Hurst) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

AGED CITIZENS CLUBS (SUBSIDIES) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, by message, recommended to the House of Assembly the appropriation of such amounts of money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

DEATH OF GOVERNOR

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Premier and Treasurer): I move:

That the House of Assembly express its profound regret at the death of His Excellency the Governor of South Australia (Major-General Sir James William Harrison, K.C.M.G., C.B., C.B.E.) and offer its deepest sympathy to Lady Harrison and family in their sad bereavement and place on record its appreciation of his distinguished service to the State of South Australia.

I rise on this sad occasion to move that this House record its regret at the untimely death of His Excellency, Major-General Sir James William Harrison, K.C.M.G., C.B., C.B.E., Governor of South Australia. Sir James was a distinguished Australian who served his country both in times of war and peace. He had a distinguished Army career, and immediately prior to his appointment as Governor of South Australia on December 4, 1968, he was General Officer Commanding Eastern Command. As a soldier, he held many important appointments, including membership of the Australian Military Board, Quartermaster-General, Chairman of the Services Joint Planning Committee and General Officer Commanding Western Command. He also served with distinction during the Second World War. As a result of his distinguished Army service, he was made a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in 1958 and a Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath in 1968. When Sir James Harrison took office as Governor of South Australia, he applied himself most diligently to the duties of that office, and in doing so won the affection and esteem of the citizens of South Australia. His sudden death is a severe loss to the State and will be mourned by all those who were pleased to know him.

His Excellency had, Sir, appeared to have recovered from his severe illness last year and when he left the State on leave he seemed to be in very good health and spirits. He had undertaken, at his own wish, to perform several duties while he was on leave and to promote this State and its interests in Great Britain and elsewhere overseas. He was constantly concerned with the development of this State and the welfare of its people, and all of us who have known him know that they have lost a friend. To Lady Harrison and their sons we extend the deepest sympathy of the people of this State in their sorrow, and I extremely regret the circumstances in which I move this motion.

Mr. HALL (Leader of the Opposition): On behalf of the Opposition, I support the Premier in moving this motion and I, likewise, extremely regret the circumstances in which it is moved. I remember clearly the appointment of Sir James and his arrival here as our new Governor in December, 1968. I remember, too, how the people of South Australia accepted him and the energy that he displayed in doing his job of promoting in South Australians a feeling of pride in their State. We all recognize the service that His Excellency gave and the good cheer with which he gave it, and we all regret very much the severe illness he suffered about 18 months ago. We all extend our deepest sympathy to Lady Harrison and their sons. All South Australians will mourn the passing of His Excellency. This morning I received a telephone call from Sir Glen Pearson, on Eyre Peninsula, expressing his extreme regret and, as a Cabinet Minister when Sir James was appointed, he asked me to associate his name with this motion.

The SPEAKER: Our Legislature in South Australia is a trinity in which the Speaker is the link between the House of Assembly and the Crown. It was in this representative capacity, principally, that I was associated with the late Governor, as, in pursuance of Standing Orders, it is necessary for me to present personally to the Governor, for assent in Executive Council, all Bills originating in the House of Assembly that pass both Houses. I can say that Sir James never performed this duty in a perfunctory way but always with keen interest and great diligence, and he desired to be informed fully about each enactment.

His Excellency possessed a comprehensive knowledge of Parliament and had an abiding faith in its paramount importance. His sunny

disposition triumphed over his indifferent health. A friendly man of infinite personal charm, he was patently anxious to do all within his power to promote the interests of South Australia and its people. I join with the honourable Premier and the honourable Leader of the Opposition in expressing our profound

sympathy to Lady Harrison and family in their sad bereavement.

Motion carried by members standing in their places in silence.

ADJOURNMENT

At 2.10 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, September 21, at 2 p.m.