

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 23 DECEMBER 1884**

---

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Tuesday, 23 December, 1884.*

Annexation by Germany.—His Excellency's Address.

The SPEAKER took the chair at three minutes to 4 o'clock.

### ANNEXATION BY GERMANY.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said : Mr. Speaker,—I would like to ask the Premier whether he has received any information from home with regard to the telegrams which appeared in this morning's paper, to the effect that—

“Germany has notified to the European powers that she has annexed New Britain, New Ireland, New Hanover, Duke of York Island, the Marshall, Anderson, and Admiralty Islands, and the northern portion of New Guinea.”

And further—

“That the English Government have been aware of the intentions of Germany since July last. Dr. Flynn will probably be appointed administrator of these new acquisitions of Germany.”

Have the Government received, either from their Agent-General or from the Home Government, any cablegrams bearing upon this ?

The PREMIER (Hon. S. W. Griffith) said : Mr. Speaker,—Last week I sent a telegram to Mr. Garrick stating that the people of this colony had heard with much satisfaction of the extension of the protectorate of New Guinea, and directing him to urge the inclusion of the Louisiade Archipelago with the other islands mentioned. The reply to that I only received to-day, and it was to the effect that he had communicated with the Colonial Office on the subject. His concluding words, as I understood them, were an inquiry as to whether I intended to send him any instructions as to the north coast of New Guinea.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH : What is that ?

The PREMIER : I say I understand the last words of Mr. Garrick's reply to my telegram to be an inquiry as to whether I intended to send him any instructions as to the north coast of New Guinea. However, to-day I telegraphed to him to this effect : that telegrams had been published here stating that the German Empire had annexed the northern portion of New Guinea, and instructed him to make the strongest representa-

tions to the Secretary of State for the Colonies upon the subject, and to state that the greatest public irritation and apprehension existed upon the rumoured action of Germany. That is what has been done. Mr. Garrick's telegram seems to me quite inconsistent with the telegrams that have been published here, and I believe the Colonial Office could not have been aware that such action was taken.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Have you got the telegram?

The PREMIER: I have not got it with me. I cannot recollect the exact words just now, but instructions have been sent, as I have said, to Mr. Garrick to make strong representations on behalf of the Government to the Secretary of State for the Colonies to have the north coast of New Guinea included in the protectorate, and stating that much irritation is caused here by the apprehension of that part of the island being taken by a foreign power.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Will the hon. gentleman, through the Press, give the public those telegrams? I suppose there is nothing in them which he has an objection to publish?

The PREMIER, I see no objection to that; in fact, I intended to have brought the telegram with me now, and I do not know how I forgot it.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I will ask the hon. the Premier this question—and I ask it because I have some knowledge on the subject myself: whether he was not made aware, some five or six weeks ago, at any rate, that the corvette "Elizabeth," which started from Sydney, left there with the intention of annexing New Britain and New Ireland on behalf of Germany? I will ask the hon. gentleman whether any information of that sort has reached him?

The PREMIER: I saw some remarks to that effect, but I never believed them. I believe I saw something in the papers about it, but only in the way of a vague rumour.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I must say it is very strange that I should have had information from the Acting German Consul in Sydney to the effect that the "Elizabeth" had gone up with the probable intention—that was the way it was put—of annexing New Britain and New Ireland. If that information reached me in the smoking-room of a club in Sydney, it is very strange that the Premier of this colony should have no information on the subject.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: I can only say that if these telegrams are true I think it marks an era in Australian history. It is the grossest piece of treachery on the part of the English Government to the colonies that has ever been perpetrated.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Hear, hear!

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: That is if that cablegram is true—and I have no reason to doubt it from what the Premier has stated—I do not see any inconsistency between it and the telegram he has received. I will reserve any remarks I have to make until we have fuller information. But so far as the information that we have received at present is concerned, I say a grosser piece of treachery on the part of the Imperial Government to this colony was never heard of. I wish now to ask the Premier whether the Government have decided as to who is to be the second member of the land board?

The PREMIER: The Government have not been able to come to any conclusion upon that this morning, although we were engaged in its consideration during the morning. I sincerely hope this telegram in the *Courier* is not true.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I confess I do not like to use hard words against absent persons, but I certainly should not have introduced into this House a measure guaranteeing any expenditure for the maintenance of the protectorate of a part of New Guinea if it had been understood that the action of the British Government was to be accompanied by the giving up of another portion of New Guinea to a foreign power. I trust the statement is not true.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: I hope I shall not be accused of anything but patriotic motives—certainly not of parsimony—when I say that we should insist upon the principle, and should not allow the English Government to have one penny under the Act that was passed until we have come to a better understanding.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I think, while giving credit to the hon. the Premier for what he has said just now, that if he had taken a less half-hearted position in the matter we would not have had this trouble now. However, it may be the beginning of the end. We may have a separation question, beyond the separation question that is now being worked up in the North. I think the English Government, and Lord Derby in particular, have done all they could to alienate the affections that ought to exist, and which I hope to a certain extent still exist, between this colony and the mother-country, and I believe it will lead to much graver things than we have had yet. And the action of the Imperial Government, I must insist, has been assisted to a certain extent by the half-hearted action of the Premier.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON: I think the last speaker was in error in speaking of the action of the Premier as half-hearted. No man in the colony has shown a larger amount of earnestness in the matter than he; but where the weakness and half-heartedness have come in has been through the miserable vacillation of the British Government, and Lord Derby in particular.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: And those who have best defended Lord Derby have been the Colonial Treasurer and the Premier.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—With regard to the appointment of the second member of the land board, we had a distinct promise last night that the name should be announced to-day. I think the Premier might, at any rate, let us know who is to be appointed. The Cabinet can surely settle that question; surely the counsels there cannot be so divided.

#### HIS EXCELLENCY'S ADDRESS.

The USHER OF THE BLACK ROD presented himself at the bar of the House and stated that His Excellency the Governor requested the attendance of Mr. Speaker and hon. members of the Legislative Assembly in the Council Chamber.

The SPEAKER, accompanied by hon. members of the Assembly, accordingly proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber and heard His Excellency read the Address proroguing Parliament.