

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, September 11, 1962.

The SPEAKER (Sir William McDonald) took the chair at 4.9 p.m., and read the prayer.

DEATH OF Mr. NATHANIEL BARCLAY, D.C.M.

Mr. BOLTE (Premier and Treasurer).
—I move—

That this House expresses its sincere sorrow at the death of Nathaniel Barclay, Esquire, D.C.M., and places on record its acknowledgment of the valuable services rendered by him to the Parliament and the people of Victoria as a member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Mildura from 1947 to 1952 and from 1955 to 11th September, 1962.

In addressing myself to this motion, I do so fully conscious of the fact that there is an atmosphere of gloom over this Parliament to-day, not only because of the members' feelings towards our late friend and colleague but also because of the feelings of the staff. I should like to associate the staff with any remarks I make, and I am sure all honorable members desire that I should do so.

The late Nathaniel Barclay was first elected to Parliament on the 8th November, 1947, as the representative of the electoral district of Mildura, in the 37th Parliament, and he entered Parliament on the same day as I did, on the 2nd December, 1947. He retained this seat until he was defeated on the 6th December, 1952. However, it was inevitable that Nathaniel Barclay would return to Parliament. He was re-elected on the 28th May, 1955, as the member for the Mildura electorate, which he served continuously until his death.

Nathaniel Barclay was a Temporary Chairman of Committees for the sessions 1950-52 and 1955-62, and served on several parliamentary committees. He was a member of the House Committee from 1949 to 1952 and from 1961 to 1962; of the Printing Committee from 1947 to 1952 and from 1955 to 1962; of the

Library Committee from 1955 to 1962; of the Statute Law Revision Committee from 1956 to 1958; of the Egg and Egg Pulp Marketing Committee from 1950 to 1951; and of the State Development Committee from 1950 to 1952 and from 1958 to 1962.

In all, our late colleague gave twelve years of service to that electorate which he loved so dearly and which so dearly loved him.

I have often said, in a jocular way, that Mr. Barclay was the most expensive member in this Parliament. I really meant that, because he was such an assiduous worker for his area, which had a number of particular problems that could have been coped with only by a man of Nathaniel Barclay's enthusiasm and willingness to attend to the wants of all the people and all sections of the area. He was "on the ball" all the time. Because of this, Mildura received a great deal of consideration. Every honorable member present knew our late friend well. I think we can fairly say that he was one of the most popular figures who have ever been seen in this Chamber. I believe the staff of this House will echo those sentiments. Referring briefly to our late friend's war record, it was of such distinction that it made all of us proud to be associated with the man who possessed it.

I suppose it would be very rarely that any honorable member who visited the Mildura electorate was not welcomed in Mr. Barclay's home. Most honorable members who have visited that part of the State were entertained in his home by him and his good lady. Mrs. Barclay was at all times a tremendous help to our late friend and a wonderful helpmate in looking after the needs of all the electors of that particular area. I can say little more other than to express how very sad I feel personally, as do all the members of my party, and every other person in and around Parliament House, at the sad passing of Nathaniel Barclay. In a sense our thoughts at this moment are similar to those which we had last week when a motion concerning the late Harold Kane was passed. The

fact that on the first two sitting-days of this session two such resolutions have been placed on record will make many of us think. It should also make a lot of electors think about the continuous strain that is placed on a member who attends to his Parliamentary duties, as did our friend, and the toll that it takes.

I believe that in his Parliamentary service and during the period that he was on a farm at Redcliffs, the late Nathaniel Barclay made a wonderful contribution to everything that is good and decent and proper in Australia. I cannot adequately express my sorrow, which I convey to Mrs. Barclay. I hope she will bear up in the knowledge that she has had a wonderful husband and that she helped to make him so.

Mr. STONEHAM (Leader of the Opposition).—The Premier was right in saying that an atmosphere of deep sorrow pervades this place to-day. Certainly we are as one in our feelings of regret at the sudden passing of one of the most popular persons to enter this House during the past twenty years while I have been a member. The late Nathaniel Barclay was a close personal friend of mine, and years ago when the Mildura express ran at night I regularly travelled with him on the train as far as my home town of Maryborough. Of course, my journey was short compared with his. I can claim to have known Nathaniel Barclay very well. I admired greatly the qualities that he possessed, which have been so eloquently described by the Premier. He was an exceedingly friendly man. It was gracious of the Premier to assert that the staff of this House would, if they could, associate themselves with this motion. I am sure the honorable gentleman could have added that the press, too, would have liked to be included, so universal was the popularity of our departed colleague.

The late Nathaniel Barclay was, by nature, a generous man. He was big physically and he was big in the attitudes that he adopted in dealing with the many problems that confront all men in public life. He was essentially a country man and he strove at all times faithfully to represent in this Parliament and else-

where the people living in his far-flung electorate. He was a champion in the struggle to promote the advancement of rural industry, especially the vine industries in which field he was an acknowledged authority. I am sure that he will be sadly missed not only in this House, but also throughout the vast area of the Mildura electorate. My colleagues and I on this, the Opposition, side of the House join the Government party and members of the Country party in this motion expressing our regret, and we convey to Mrs. Barclay our very deep sympathy.

Sir HERBERT HYLAND (Leader of the Country party).—On behalf of my party, I join the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in expressing our deepest sympathy at the sad loss sustained not only by this Parliament but also by the State and particularly by the Mildura electorate. Of course, the late Mr. Nathaniel Barclay was personally known to us. One cannot be in the same party with any other man without getting to know him and to understand him thoroughly. We understood and appreciated Nathaniel. We realized that he had not an enemy in the whole world. He never said an unkind word about anyone. He was prepared to go right through with his happy smile, always going places and always getting something for the people whom he represented. That was clearly proved by the record absolute majority by which he was returned at the last election.

We all know that in days gone by Mildura was almost a swinging seat, but with the work that Nat. put into it—no one knows better than the Premier and the members of his Cabinet—it became one of the safest seats in the State. This was achieved only by his hard work and the way in which he went around the various Departments seeking help for those he represented. Our late colleague would go along smiling, and if he put up something worth while it was very hard to refuse him, because he was so nice about it. I can assure the House that we will all miss him. The residents of Mildura will find it very difficult to obtain a man to represent them as well as did Nat. Barclay.

Our late colleague enlisted for service in the first world war from Yarram, which is in my electorate—of course, I was not in Parliament at that time. He was well known by the older residents in that district, and he rather gloried in going back and having a look at that territory. Only recently, he realized what must have been almost a lifetime's ambition when he was able to visit Northern Ireland—that meant a great deal to him. He was pleased to do that, and during his absence the other members of the Country party from the northern part of the State looked after the affairs of his electorate for him. He thoroughly enjoyed the whole of his trip overseas.

We regret Mrs. Barclay's loss. Unfortunately, Mr. and Mrs. Barclay had no family. Mrs. Barclay has been a wonderful woman who stood behind Nat. in everything that he did for the good of the district. She never spared herself in this respect. It could safely be said that Nat. Barclay's home was open house to everyone from Melbourne who visited the Redcliffs district. Even Her Majesty the Queen visited Redcliffs to make an inspection of his holding, which was the show place of the whole district. When it was decided that a settler's property should be inspected by Her Majesty, Mr. Barclay's holding was selected.

We regret the passing of Nathaniel Barclay, because we have lost a very dear friend and a man whom we all respected. The hard part of it all is that late yesterday afternoon we were told that he was progressing favourably and that he was getting on remarkably well. Mrs. Barclay was delighted with the progress he was making, and yet, at 7 o'clock this morning she telephoned me to say that Nat. had passed away at 5.30 a.m. to-day. The news of his death was a shock to all honorable members.

I should like to express sincere appreciation both to the Premier and to his secretary, Mr. Macgibbon, who is now the permanent head of the Premier's Department, for what they have done to assist honorable members in connexion with Mr. Barclay's funeral,

particularly from the point of view of meeting Mrs. Barclay's desires. Both gentlemen have been only too pleased to go out of their way to assist her, and we thank them for that. To Mrs. Barclay, we express our deep regrets at the sad loss that she has sustained.

Mr. MOSS (Murray Valley).—I also wish to associate myself with the very sad motion which has been submitted by the Premier. As a very close personal friend of the late Nathaniel Barclay, I realize that his death was indeed a blow to all those people who knew him and grew to love him as a man.

The Premier made reference to Mr. Barclay's splendid war record. Actually, he served in two world wars. He was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal in France during the first world war after having previously served on Gallipoli. The late Mr. Barclay served the people of Mildura, very well, and he represented them in Parliament with a great deal of honour. One of the outstanding aspects of the late Mr. Barclay's life was the splendid service he rendered, first of all to soldier settlers, of which he was one. He was one of the 700 discharged servicemen who settled in the Redcliffs district, and he has always been interested in them and worked for them over a long period. Secondly, his work in connexion with the rehabilitation of ex-servicemen following both the first world war and the second world war was outstanding. He was a life member of the returned servicemen's league. Thirdly, Mr. Barclay did wonderful work in connexion with the Legacy organization. All those activities stamp him as an outstanding man.

As previous speakers have said, the late Mr. Barclay was a man who possessed a very happy disposition. He could speak in the same kindly and friendly manner with Her Majesty the Queen or with a lad walking along the street. All honorable members are much the richer for having known him and having been associated with him. It is with a great deal of regret that I support this motion. I also join with other

speakers in expressing sorrow to Mrs. Barclay and in saying to her that Nathaniel did a grand job. He served this Parliament well and we extend to her our sympathy and our love.

Mr. SCHINTLER (Yarraville).—Once again, within a very short time, it is my unpleasant task to support the remarks of the Leaders of the various parties in relation to the death of a member of this House. On this occasion, I refer to the late Nathaniel Barclay. As all honorable members know, like the late Harold Kane, Mr. Barclay was a member of the State Development Committee of which, for the time being, I am the chairman. During the time I worked with Nathaniel Barclay on that committee, we travelled thousands of miles throughout the length and breadth of the Commonwealth. It was never too much trouble for Nathaniel Barclay to travel the 600 miles from Mildura to Melbourne and back in order to form a quorum for the committee. The members of the committee regret Mr. Barclay's passing very much. If ever a man gave his life in the path of duty that man was Nathaniel Barclay. It was only last week when making inquiries in relation to the bulk handling of oats and barley that it became necessary for the members of the committee to make a physical inspection of a malting industry at Abbotsford. In the course of that inspection, members were required to climb up and down a large number of steps. Mr. Barclay was sick when we got on to the ground floor, and the effort required of him—he was a big man—to climb up and down the stairs possibly hastened his unfortunate death.

It was a pleasure to have known Nathaniel Barclay and a privilege to have worked with him. With other members of my party, I associate myself wholeheartedly with the motion before the Chair and I trust that the sentiments and expressions of sympathy that have been voiced will be conveyed to Mrs. Barclay.

Mr. ROSSITER (Brighton).—Having known the late Mr. Barclay for seven years in one or two fields associated with this Parliament, I feel that I must pay a tribute to his memory. Last year,

with Mr. Barclay, I represented this Parliament overseas and, if one felt a glow of satisfaction in walking down a busy London thoroughfare with Nathaniel Barclay at one's side, because he was immediately recognized as an Australian, one also felt a great glow of satisfaction in accompanying him to Belfast, where he was recognized as a Northern Irishman. He came to this country as a migrant from Northern Ireland and, after serving in the Australian armed forces, he settled in the Mildura district. Nathaniel's greatest moment was when he was received in the House of Parliament at Stormont, Belfast, when the House recognized him as a man who had left the shores of Northern Ireland as a young man and who was returning to his native country as a representative of another Commonwealth Parliament. I mourn his passing.

Mr. K. H. TURNBULL (Minister of Lands).—I should like to add my humble tribute to a very great friend, although no words can adequately express my thoughts to-day. The late Mr. Barclay was not only loved and respected by every man in this Chamber, and by the officers and staff of Parliament; he was also respected and admired by officers in every branch of the State Public Service. I can assure honorable members that there was a feeling of utter gloom cast throughout my own Department this morning when news of his passing became known. He was a man who was keenly concerned with the people he represented. Invariably, he was successful in his approaches to the various Departments because of his complete honesty and cheery personality. I suppose that he had more to do with the Department under my administration than with any other Department. He was a member whom my officers were always pleased to see and one could attribute his great qualities to the success he achieved as a member for the Mildura electorate. He was a man who possessed a strong character and observed high Christian principles. He loved life, people and children and fostered good fellowship. We have all lost a good friend, the people of Mildura have lost a good representative, and Victoria has lost a great citizen.

The SPEAKER (Sir William McDonald).—On behalf of all honorable members I desire to associate myself with the remarks of the previous speakers. Honorable members may have had the opportunity of reading this afternoon's *Herald*, in which there appears a photograph of Mr. Barclay, showing the man as we would all like to remember him, with the smiling face and the warmth of friendship on his countenance—the man whose word was his bond and whose service to his country was his religion. We have all lost a very great friend, and our sympathies go to Mrs. Barclay, with the full knowledge that if ever a wife lost a husband of whom she could be justifiably proud and whose passing might be made a little easier by his previous service, then Mrs. Barclay is the woman.

The motion was agreed to in silence, honorable members signifying their unanimous agreement by standing in their places.

ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. BOLTE (Premier and Treasurer).
—I move—

That as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late Nathaniel Barclay, Esquire, the House do now adjourn until half-past Seven o'clock this day.

The motion was agreed to.

The House adjourned at 5.32 p.m.

The SPEAKER (Sir William McDonald) took the chair at 7.35 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

ACOUSTICS OF CHAMBER.

The SPEAKER (Sir William McDonald).—In the past, members have directed attention on several occasions to the poor acoustic qualities of this Chamber. As a result, we have had a technical survey made of the present amplification system, and it was found to be faulty beyond repair. We have arranged for the installation of a new

system for trial and approval by members. At present, it is an ordinary manually controlled system. In the course of the next few weeks, it will be possible to install automatic volume controls, and we will experiment with other things. With the approval of members, I shall ask the technician to operate the set. I shall be grateful if, over the next few weeks, members will discuss with me the merit or demerit of the installation.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

Mr. BOLTE (Premier and Treasurer).
—By mutual agreement, it has been decided not to proceed with questions this evening. If it were not for the fact that we had printing difficulties in connexion with the Budget, Supplementary Estimates and Supply, we would have proposed the adjournment of the House until to-morrow out of respect for the late Mr. Barclay. I appreciate the fact that the Country party and the Opposition were happy to co-operate in limiting business to-night to the three matters I have mentioned.

COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY AND WAYS AND MEANS.

Mr. RYLAH (Chief Secretary), by leave, moved the following motions, which were agreed to:—

That the Standing Orders be suspended so far as to allow the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means to be appointed this day.

That this House will, this day, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

That this House will, this day, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

FINAL SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES FOR YEAR 1961-62.

Mr. BOLTE (Premier and Treasurer) presented a message from His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor transmitting Final Supplementary Estimates of Expenditure for the year 1961-62, and recommending an appropriation from the Consolidated Revenue accordingly.