

SECOND READING SPEECH BYHON. E.G. WHITLAM, Q.C., M.P.TASMAN BRIDGE RESTORATION BILL (NO. 2) 1975

HONOURABLE MEMBERS WILL RECALL THAT ON 10 APRIL 1975 I INTRODUCED A BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE TASMAN BRIDGE FOLLOWING ITS COLLAPSE INTO THE DERWENT RIVER AFTER THE S.S. "LAKE ILLAWARRA" HAD COLLIDED WITH IT. THE BILL WAS PASSED BY BOTH HOUSES OF THE PARLIAMENT AND RECEIVED THE ROYAL ASSENT ON 19 MAY 1975. THE TASMAN BRIDGE RESTORATION ACT 1975 PROVIDED FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JOINT TASMAN BRIDGE RESTORATION COMMISSION TO SUPERINTEND AND DIRECT THE COMBINED SALVAGE AND REBUILDING OPERATIONS.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS WILL ALSO RECALL THAT SHORTLY AFTER THE DISASTER THE AUSTRALIAN AND TASMANIAN GOVERNMENTS AGREED TO ESTABLISH A JOINT EXPERT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON A SECOND DERWENT CROSSING. THIS COMMITTEE HAS SUGGESTED THAT CONCURRENTLY WITH REPAIRS TO THE TASMAN BRIDGE, PROVISION COULD BE MADE FOR IT TO BE WIDENED TO PROVIDE A FIFTH TRAFFIC LANE.

IT IS PROPOSED TO MAKE USE OF THE ROADWAY BOTH ON THE EASTERN AND WESTERN SIDE OF THE GAP FOR FABRICATION OF SOME ELEMENTS OF THE NEW SUPERSTRUCTURE AND FOR ERECTION WORK. IT IS THEREFORE NECESSARY FOR THE WIDENING AND RECONSTRUCTION WORK TO BE CLOSELY CO-ORDINATED AND IT IS CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL FOR BOTH PROJECTS TO BE UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE ONE AUTHORITY IN ORDER TO AVOID DIFFICULTIES WHICH COULD ARISE IF TWO AUTHORITIES WERE TO BE OPERATING IN THE SAME AREA AT THE SAME TIME.

ACCORDINGLY, I AGREED WITH THE PREMIER OF TASMANIA THAT THE WORK INVOLVED IN WIDENING THE BRIDGE SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE TASMAN BRIDGE RESTORATION COMMISSION AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA WOULD MEET THE COST OF THIS WORK ESTIMATED TO BE \$3 M.

THE BILL NOW BEFORE THE HOUSE PROVIDES FOR APPROVAL OF A SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENT BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND TASMANIA TO STRUCTURALLY MODIFY THE TASMAN BRIDGE TO ACCOMMODATE FIVE LINES OF TRAFFIC CONCURRENTLY WITH THE RESTORATION OF THE BRIDGE TO FULL OPERATIONAL CONDITION.

THE AGREEMENT EMPOWERS THE COMMISSION TO PERFORM ANY FUNCTIONS ADDITIONAL TO ITS PRESENT ROLE TO ENABLE IT TO COMPLETE ITS TASK, SUBJECT TO THE SAME CONDITIONS AND POWERS IT EXERCISES UNDER THE TASMAN BRIDGE RESTORATION ACT 1975. I SHOULD POINT OUT TO HONOURABLE MEMBERS THAT FUNDS FOR THIS WORK ARE PROVIDED IN APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2) 1975/1976 UNDER DIVISION 964 ITEM 03.

THE WORKS PROPOSED WILL GREATLY ENHANCE THE CARRYING CAPACITY OF THE TASMAN BRIDGE WHEN RECONSTRUCTION IS COMPLETED AND WILL DO MUCH TO REDUCE TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN THE PERIOD BETWEEN RECONSTRUCTION OF THE TASMAN BRIDGE AND COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION OF A SECOND CROSSING.

I COMMEND THE BILL TO THE HOUSE.