

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 14 APRIL 1874**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

*Tuesday, 14 April, 1874.*

## Supply.

## SUPPLY.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved—

That the Speaker leave the chair, and the House resolve itself into a Committee of Supply.

Mr. MILES said, before the question was put, he would make a suggestion to the honorable the Colonial Secretary, which he hoped he would accept. He thought, seeing that three honorable members of the Opposition were not in the House, it would be only a matter of courtesy if the honorable member would postpone this motion until to-morrow, especially as there was other important business on the paper they could proceed with. He trusted the honorable member would take the matter into consideration. He believed this was the proper time to get some explanation from the honorable the Colonial Treasurer with respect to the Estimates. He was very much delighted when he heard that honorable gentleman declare in his financial speech that the Government would not resort to the practice of borrowing money for the construction and repair of roads and bridges. He was quite gratified when he heard that the Government had come to that determination, because the principle of borrowing money for such purposes was about the most vicious that was ever introduced into that House. It was so for this reason: it placed a large sum of money in the hands of the Secretary for Public Works, which he could expend as he thought proper; but if the money were placed on the Estimates it would

be appropriated by the House for whatever work it was intended. On looking over the Estimates, however, his gratification vanished at once, because he found there was proposed to be placed in the hands of the honorable the Minister for Works a sum of £12,000 for other roads and bridges. He would like that honorable member to explain how it was that while considerable sums were put down for various districts, he reserved to himself such a large sum as £12,000 for other roads and bridges. This sum stood in exactly the same position as if it were included in a loan Bill, although the Government had expressed their determination not to expend money for such purposes without the authority of the House. Another question he would like to ask the honorable member was—on what principle had the Government framed the Estimates? He found that several officers were to have their salaries increased, others were to be reduced, and a great many were passed over altogether. He could discover no principle at all, and he would, if he thought he had any chance of carrying the motion, move that the Estimates be referred back to the Government for reconsideration. They were the most profligate Estimates ever introduced into that House. He thought, however, that they ought to satisfy the grievances of the honorable member for Bowen so far as money was concerned, and that they had heard the last of that honorable member's grievances. He also found that Maryborough came in for a good round sum. In fact it was impossible to find out on what principle the Estimates had been framed. He found that in the Works Department the sum put on the Estimates for Maryborough alone was £17,000. Then in the Railway Department he found fifteen station-masters put—

The SPEAKER: I think the honorable member is departing from the correct practice. When the Speaker is moved out of the chair for the purpose of going into Committee of Supply, the whole conduct of the Government is open to discussion, but it is not competent for an honorable member to refer to Estimates, item by item, which have been discussed or which will probably be discussed. I will read what our authority, "May," says on the subject:—

"It is also a common practice, without moving any amendment, to call the attention of the House to particular subjects, on the question for the Speaker leaving the chair, the rules of relevancy in debate, as well as amendments, being wholly ignored on these occasions: with these exceptions, that a member may not discuss any previous or intended votes of the Committee of Supply or items in the Estimates."

The honorable member may discuss the general policy of the Government, but he cannot, I think, comment upon particular items.

Mr. MILES said he bowed to the ruling of the honorable the Speaker. All he wanted to do was to make out a case to show that the Estimates should be referred back to the

Government for reconsideration. He often noticed the honorable the Minister for Lands, when on the Opposition side of the House, propose a motion of that kind. He (Mr. Miles) had, however, no intention of doing so at the present stage, because he was still under the impression that the honorable the Colonial Treasurer would agree to his suggestion and postpone going into the Estimates until to-morrow. There were three members of the Opposition absent; and he hoped the honorable member would consent to this proposal.

The question was then put and passed, and the House went into Committee of Supply.