

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Council**

**WEDNESDAY, 29 APRIL 1874**

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

*Wednesday, 29 April, 1874.*

Assent to Bill.—Leave of Absence.—Payment of Members Bill.—Navigation Bill.—Call of the House.

ASSENT TO BILL.

A message from His Excellency the Governor was received, transmitting for enrolment the following Bill, which had received the Royal Assent:—

An Act for granting to Her Majesty certain Duties of Customs.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved—

That leave of absence be granted to the Honorable W. H. Long, for one month after to-morrow.

The Hon. H. B. FITZ said he thought the Honorable Mr. Long was in the House the other day when he gave notice of motion for a “call of the House;” and it was not fair of the Postmaster-General now to move for a month’s leave of absence to that honorable gentleman. When important measures came up to the House, it was the duty of every honorable gentleman who had accepted a seat in the Council to assume the responsibility of dealing with those measures.

Hon. J. TAYLOR: Hear, hear.

The Hon. H. B. FITZ: He should certainly give his reasons for his action; and, meantime, he trusted that the Postmaster-General would ask for only a fortnight’s leave, which was as much as the House could give. Other honorable members had asked for a fortnight’s leave. The Council would meet on the 20th May, if the House should agree to the call; and if other honorable members were bound to appear on that day, the Honorable Mr. Long should appear, too, in his place.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR: Hear, hear.

The Hon. H. B. FITZ: Therefore, he should, with the permission of the House, move, by way of amendment, that only “fourteen days” leave of absence be given to the Honorable Mr. Long.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: He must state that the Honorable Mr. Long had given his attendance in the House for some time past, when honorable gentlemen who now opposed the motion were absent. Had they been in their places to make a quorum, the business of the Council might have been gone on with.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR: No.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: It was all very well for honorable gentlemen to come to the House after a refresher of three weeks’ absence, and now to object to another honorable member who had been in attendance getting leave to be absent. He was astonished at the conduct of certain honorable gentlemen. He did not object to the amendment moved by the Honorable Mr. Fitz; but, to say the least, it did not seem at all courteous to the Honorable Mr. Long that

he should be deprived of the chance of going to his residence, which was at a considerable distance from the Parliament House—unlike many honorable members, who lived within a day’s journey of it, and yet could not give their attendance. It was not courteous to refuse to grant the honorable gentleman one month’s leave when it was asked for—not that he would remain away all that time—he might be here again in three weeks. On the whole, it would be best to agree to the motion, as the Honorable Mr. Long would give his attendance, he (the Postmaster-General) had no hesitation in saying, when any important matters came up for discussion.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR: The representative of the Government in the Council had said he thought it was unfair that any one should object to his motion—that the Honorable Mr. Long had attended all through this long and arduous session! A great number of Bills had been passed! He should like to know what had been done. Had there been one Bill of any importance passed? Not one, as far as he knew. So far as he could see by the papers, nothing had been done this session. He had not attended. Why? Because there had been nothing to do. He was not paid £1,000 a-year to come to the Council—as somebody he knew was. There were, however, important Bills now coming forward:—The Payment of Members Bill, the Dummies Bill, the Land Bill, and two or three others. He said that every man ought to be at his post to take the onus of passing or rejecting the Payment of Members Bill. Did any one suppose that the Council were to be ruled by the representative of the Government, as to how they should vote or conduct their business? Were they to be dictated to, or were they to submit to pressure, or were they to consent to be told that they should not do as they liked? Not if he knew it. Were honorable gentlemen dummies? No. He said that he was sorry for the Honorable Mr. Long; he liked him;—but the honorable gentleman could not have the leave of absence that was asked for on his account. He (Mr. Taylor) hoped that on the 20th May, the honorable gentleman would be in the House to give his vote—Yea or Nay. If the Government chose to stand or fall by it, let them do it. He should support the amendment.

The PRESIDENT: Was he to understand that the honorable gentleman accepted the amendment?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: He had no objection; but he should take the voices.

The question was put and passed, and the amendment was affirmed.

PAYMENT OF MEMBERS BILL.

A message was received from the Legislative Assembly, forwarding, for the concurrence of the Council, a Bill to provide for the compensation of Members of the Legislative Assembly for their services in attending

Parliament, and for the payment of the travelling expenses of members of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the Bill was read the first time and ordered to be printed.

Question—That the second reading of this Bill stand an Order of the Day for Wednesday next,—put.

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR observed that the Postmaster-General was very quick in his motion.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR: A fast man.

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR: He thought the honorable gentleman had better make his motion for the second reading of the Bill for the 20th of next month. However, he should move, by way of amendment—

That the words “the 20th of May next” be added to the question.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL presumed that all the business of the country was not to be delayed until the 20th of May.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR: You may presume what you like.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Honorable members had been in attendance about one week since the commencement of the session.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR: That was just so.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: If the honorable gentleman was anxious that the whole business of the country should be delayed, through his neglect of his duties as a member of the House;—if that was his object, now he had come down, and if it was the object of the Honorable Mr. Murray-Prior, the consequence would be, that the whole of the Bills which might be passed by the House would come up to be dealt with together, and there would be hasty legislation, because, towards the close of the session, the Council would be advancing them through all their stages at the same sitting. The carrying of the amendment would postpone measures indefinitely: it proposed to put off too long the Bill under notice. He had been informed—he did not know—that the Honorable Mr. Taylor and the Honorable Mr. Murray-Prior were anxious to have another fortnight's spell in the country, and that therefore they desired to have the Bill postponed another month. He hoped that honorable gentlemen would see the necessity of passing the second reading of the Bill at once; they must be aware that certain members in another place came great distances—some over a thousand miles—to perform their duty to the country. With the view of discussing the question of payment of members as soon as possible, and deciding it upon its merits, he was anxious to get the second reading of the Bill appointed for an early day.

The Hon. H. B. FITZ: He might state that his object in giving notice of motion for a call of the House, was the probability of the Bill coming up. Honorable gentlemen were all perfectly aware that the subject of payment

of members had been agitating the public mind for two or three years past; it had been affirmed by the other House, on more than one occasion, by a very large majority. He desired that when such a measure, about which the public was so very anxious, came before the Council, every honorable member, as was right, should share the responsibility of either accepting or rejecting it. That was one of the principal reasons which induced him to endeavor to get a call of the House. The Postmaster-General should accede to the postponement of the Bill until the day which he (Mr. Fitz) had fixed for the call of the House. He, for one, thought that the call would be made, and he should vote for postponing the second reading of the Bill until the 20th of May. Therefore it was not worth while to oppose the amendment.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR said he objected to the representative of the Government in the House alluding personally to honorable members. The Postmaster-General had said that the Honorable Mr. Murray-Prior and himself (Mr. Taylor) wanted another fortnight's ease and comfort. They wanted nothing of the sort. There were certain important public measures coming forward, which ought to have the attention of the whole Council; and that object was sought to be gained by the Honorable Mr. Fitz, who was to move for a call of the House for the 20th of May. The Postmaster-General had said that honorable gentlemen were retarding the progress of legislation. He (Mr. Taylor) denied it. That young gentleman who had come up to the House to represent the Government wanted to dictate to honorable gentlemen! He should not for one moment listen to the Postmaster-General when such a tone was assumed by him. He was an older man than the honorable gentleman; he knew more about legislation than he did; and, if the honorable gentleman thought that he was going to bully the House, or talk them into his views, he was very much deceived in his power and ability. There were the Payment of Members Bill, the Dummies Enquiry Bill—in which the honorable gentleman himself was deeply interested—and the Land Bill, on which all honorable members should vote, whether the representative of the Government thought it was necessary or not. Did that honorable gentleman think he was going to thrust his Bill down honorable members' throats? He never made such a mistake in his life, if he did. He must think he was playing with the children of another place.

The Hon. H. G. SIMPSON observed that, after the honorable gentleman who last addressed the House, the few words he had to say would be tame. He thought he could not be accused of wishing to get away further from any work. He had been away long enough, and he had no inclination to be away longer. Nor could he be considered as in opposition to the present Government. He was a supporter of their party when they

they were in opposition, and now, when they were in office, he should support them still, while he was able. He could not but agree with his honorable friends, Mr. Fitz and Mr. Taylor, that the Bill under notice, with the other Bills that they had spoken of, and that came within the same category, because of their importance, ought to be met by a call of the House. It appeared to him that every honorable member of the Council was bound to record his vote one way or the other upon such important questions. To ensure that object as far as possible was the intention of the Honorable Mr. Fitz, who would move for a call of the House on the 20th May. He (Captain Simpson) should therefore support the motion to put off the Bill until that date. If the House did not wish to make the call for the 20th May, he should desire still to see the Bill postponed until there was a full House to deal with it.

**THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL :** With the permission of the House, he desired to state that it was not possible for the other measures mentioned by the Honorable Mr. Taylor, to be up in the Council for a month; and it might be two months before they were ready. It was certain that they could not be ready by the 20th May. That being the case, would the honorable gentleman want another call of the House to consider those Bills also, as they should come up?

**HONORABLE MEMBERS :** Hear, hear.

The question was put, and the amendment was affirmed.

#### NAVIGATION BILL.

The Hon. W. THORNTON, pursuant to notice, presented a Bill to Consolidate and Amend the Laws relating to the Marine Board, Navigation, Pilotage, Harbors, Lights, and the Keeping of Gunpowder, and moved that it be read a first time.

Question put and passed.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR said he should like to know if the Bill was a Government measure? Because, it appeared to him to be a very important Bill to be brought forward by a private member—a nominee of the Council.

**THE PRESIDENT :** The honorable member had better address the representative of the Government.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR : He would. He asked the representative of the Government whether the Bill was brought forward as a Government or a private measure? He never saw such a thing before in the House.

**THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL :** For the information of the House, the Bill was a Government measure. The Customs Act of last session had been brought in likewise by the Honorable Mr. Thornton, when the Honorable Mr. Murray-Prior was the representative of the Government in the Council and Postmaster-General.

The Hon. W. THORNTON said he should merely refer to the 46th Standing Order, on "Public Bills," which was—

"It shall be competent for any member, after notice given at a previous sitting, to present any Bill to this House, and thereupon move the first reading thereof."

This was not the first public Bill he had brought in. The honorable gentleman was in the House when he brought in the Customs Act of 1872.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR said he was quite satisfied, now, that the Bill was a Government measure; but he thought it was a curious thing to delegate the office of introducer of it to the Collector of Customs. The Bill was one of vast importance, whether introduced by the Government or any other way. Why did not the representative of the Government bring it in? The Collector of Customs was not the representative of the Government;—then what had he to do with it? He was no more than other honorable members; but the representative of the Government was something more.

The Hon. H. B. FITZ said he thought he must correct the Honorable Mr. Taylor. The Honorable Mr. Thornton did not sit in the Council as the Collector of Customs. He was a member in his own right, the same as any other honorable gentleman.

**THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL :** Hear, hear.

**THE PRESIDENT :** There was no question before the House.

#### CALL OF THE HOUSE.

The Hon. H. B. FITZ said that, in moving a motion such as the one standing in his name on the Business Paper, he knew it was expected by the House that some reason should be given by him why a call of the Council should be made. Of course, honorable members were aware that it was a very unusual thing indeed for a call of the House to be made; and that it was not made, unless upon some very pressing or urgent matter before the House or one likely to come before the House. There had been only one call made, he thought, since the advent of responsible government in Queensland. That was made on the motion of the President, in the matter of the Council Limitation Bill—of course, a very important measure, and a measure upon which every honorable member should vote or record his opinion. Another call had been proposed by notice of the Honorable Mr. Roberts; but he (Mr. Fitz) had not been able to trace what it was for. However it was never proceeded with, as the honorable member withdrew from the position he had taken up. He rather thought it was some legal matter. As far as he had been able to trace, he had not found that a call of the House was ever made in any of the Australian colonies by the representative branch, or the lower house, of Legislature. A call of the Council had been made in Sydney, but he could not find

whether one had been made in Victoria. The object of his call was, that when honorable gentlemen accepted seats in the nominative branch of the Legislature, they should not shirk their responsibility. And, when a Bill had passed the representative branch of the Legislature about which the public was very anxious, and when that measure had been affirmed by a very large majority of the representatives of the people, a great responsibility was thrown upon the Council, if the Bill should be rejected by them. For this reason and others he moved in the matter. The only call of the Legislative Council of Queensland had been made on the motion of the President; and he thought every honorable member but one had attended. The Honorable W. Hobbs, doubtless, had a lively recollection of that call. He remembered the Usher of the Black Rod had had to bring him to the House afterwards, having taken him into custody. He hoped that his honorable friend, Mr. Long, would not have to be brought up in custody. The House could not very well dispense with the Usher, to send him up to Mackay for that honorable gentleman, if he should fail to attend the call. The honorable gentleman would, as he had accepted a seat in the Council, accept and share the responsibility of his position. The House were perfectly aware that the Bill which was now on the table for the payment of members was one about which the other House and the public were particularly anxious. As an honorable member of another place had said to him, referring to that Bill, that the rejection of it might be pleasure to honorable members of the Council, but it would be death to him and other representatives. He had thought a good deal over the matter, and he had concluded that every member of the Council should share the responsibility of dealing with that important measure, as well as every other measure about which the public was anxious. There were other Bills which the Assembly might pass, and which it was likely the Council would have to deal with. The Land Frauds Enquiry Bill, or, as his honorable friend, Mr. Taylor, had called it, the Dummies Bill, was no doubt another very important measure which would likely come before the Council. Before the House decided on that Bill, which was intended to be applied more to honorable members of the Council—

The Hon. J. TAYLOR: Hear, hear.

The Hon. H. B. FITZ: Than to honorable members of the other House, every honorable member of the Council should be prepared to deal with it. True, members of the Council were not, as he had remarked elsewhere, so eloquent as members in another place; but they always gave conscientious votes, even when they gave silent votes; and they were not, he thought, always dummies. Dummies for land, they had been described to him; to which he had answered, that he did not think there was one in the Council; and, although

the *Darling Downs Gazette* accused him, yet he did not think his honorable friend, Mr. Taylor, was a dummy. He had known him long, and he had found him too outspoken ever to become a dummy; and he thought the honorable gentleman was the last man in the House to be a dummy. Look at him! He did not look like one, and he would not be found to be one. There was another very important measure that would come before the House speedily, the Supreme Court Bill, for the appointment of a third judge, and, perhaps, a fourth judge. Some honorable members must, no doubt, be interested in it. The Honorable Mr. Long was. He would like to see another judge appointed for Rockhampton.

The Hon. W. H. LONG was understood to express a denial in respect to a judge residing at Rockhampton.

The Hon. H. B. FITZ: Those measures that he had named were all very important. He thought that once honorable gentlemen had come to the House from a long distance on the 20th May, they would not be likely to go away again in a hurry. Though the call might bring them to the Council, he knew they could not be compelled to vote; but they must put in an appearance, and to that extent they must accept the responsibility of their position, if they would not share the responsibility of affirming or rejecting a Bill. Most honorable members were perfectly well aware that when the Payment of Members Bill was brought before the Council on a previous occasion, only three honorable members voted in favor of it. The Bill was introduced by his honorable friend, Mr. Murray-Prior, who then represented the Government, and who spoke very much in favor of it.

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR: No, no.

The Hon. H. B. FITZ: He knew the honorable gentleman introduced that Bill, and it would not be surprising to him if he next found the honorable gentleman voting against the measure now on the table. That honorable gentleman divided the House on the question, and voted for the Bill. The only other members who voted for it were the Honorable Dr. Hobbs and the Honorable W. Thornton. However, the public was now anxious about the Bill, which had again received the approval of the representative branch of the Legislature. If the Council thought that a call of the House should not be made to deal with a subject of such importance, let honorable members vote against his motion. He had nothing more to say about it, but to move—

That there be a call of the House for Wednesday, the 20th May, 1874.

The Hon. W. H. LONG: As the Honorable Mr. Fitz had made certain allusions to him, he could only say that he should be exceedingly sorry to be absent from the House when the Payment of Members Bill was before the Council. He sincerely hoped that he

should have the opportunity of giving his voice and recording his vote against that Bill. But the Honorable Mr. Fitz must himself see the inutility, the possible uselessness, of the action he was taking; when he said that though honorable members might be compelled to attend the House on the 20th May they could not be compelled to vote. If the Government saw there was a chance of carrying it, the Bill could be postponed. The House would only be called together for the 20th May; the honorable gentleman could not go on calling the House for a month; therefore, he ought to see the advisability of not pressing the matter. He (Mr. Long) could scarcely support the motion.

The Hon. W. THORNTON said he thought a call of the House ought to be very seldom resorted to, and not at all unless in a case of very great emergency. He saw nothing certainly in the Payment of Members Bill which necessitated the calling of honorable members to attend the Chamber from all parts of the colony, where they were attending to their own business, and whence they could only come at very great inconvenience. The last time a call of the House was made, it was on a question affecting the constitution of the Council. The Payment of Members Bill affected the House in a very small way. It was a matter affecting the representatives of the people;—it was with the Assembly that the Bill dealt, and to whom its principle really applied. It was a matter of taxation to a small amount, and really he could not see that, so far as the Council were concerned, there was the slightest necessity for a call of the House to deal with the measure. As to the other measures, the Dummying Bill and the Land Bill, they might never come before the Council at all. They had not even passed through half their stages in the other House; and if they should come up at all, it would be a long time before they did. Without a call of the House there would be quite members enough present to deal with the Bill that it was asked for. He should vote against the motion, because he did not think that to deal with a question of the kind, it was worth while to make a call.

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR said he should take the opportunity of rising on this question to call the attention of the Postmaster-General to the circumstance that he had a very easy time of it in the House, and to tell him that the only reason why he had such an easy time, so far, was that since his appointment there had been nothing very important for them to do. But, so soon as the honorable gentleman began to run against honorable members, he would find his position very much altered. The honorable gentleman had no right to twit him with non-attendance. He (Mr. Murray-Prior) attended as often as he could; he was not, like other honorable members, within reach of post or telegraph, and he could not easily tell whether there was business to be done or not. But

when business was to come before the House, he would ride all night to attend to it. He was now down for a fortnight, and, although the Postmaster-General had said that business had been impeded by absent members, he could not see that there had been anything to do. He might just as well have remained away, except for this day. The Honorable Mr. Fitz, in bringing forward his motion, had taken a course which was not very often resorted to. The question was merely whether there was a necessity for a call of the House for a certain purpose which they all knew. For his own part, he thought the honorable gentleman was quite right, and he should vote with him. With respect to what had fallen from his honorable friend as to the part which he (Mr. Murray-Prior) took in dealing with the former Bill for the payment of members, honorable members must be aware that that Bill was not a Government measure. It was placed in his hands because it had come to the other House by message from His Excellency the Governor.

The Hon. H. B. FITZ: It was introduced in the other House by the Government.

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR: It was, for the same reason. He had been informed that it was the usual practice for the representative of the Government in the Council to take charge of a Bill so introduced to the Parliament. If the honorable member would look back in "Hansard" he would see that he (Mr. Murray-Prior) did not advocate the Bill, and that in his speech on bringing the Bill before the Council he said very little about it. He brought the Bill before the House, as he was in duty bound to do. With regard to the division, in which he was with the Honorable Mr. Thornton and the Honorable Dr. Hobbs, he was aware that if the House divided on the Bill he had to sit with those who supported the Bill; but he must say that he had never felt so ashamed in his life. Honorable members all knew that he had to vote against his feelings, for he then said to the House that if on another occasion such a Bill should come before the House, he would not feel bound to take the course which circumstances bound him to take on that occasion, when he had charge of the Bill as a public duty.

The Hon. L. HOPE said, that so far from agreeing with what had been urged by the Collector of Customs, he regarded the Payment of Members Bill as a very serious matter—the experiment of compensating honorable members for performing their parliamentary duties. So far from that being a matter of trivial import, he thought it of the greatest importance; and therefore he should vote for the motion. Honorable members would, by the call, be very glad to know that there was some business coming before the Council, and that they could be of service to the country.

The Hon. W. D. BOX said he should support the motion, being of opinion that a call

of the House might possibly do a great deal of good. The Payment of Members Bill was, he thought, a measure of importance; it was one on which every member of the Council should record his vote, and for which he should have notice to come to the House. It might be that in the ordinary transmission of the papers of the Council, they might miss him; an honorable member might not see what an important question was coming forward. But if he got an extraordinary summons to a "call of the House," it would be his duty to come to the Council and record his vote for or against the particular measure upon which the House desired that his opinion should be known.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he was not aware before that the Honorable Mr. Murray-Prior was not a resident of Brisbane, having been under the impression that the honorable gentleman was a resident of Kangaroo Point. But for his absence last week, there would have been a quorum, and the House could have proceeded with business that was before them. As to what had been said by the Honorable Mr. Box, he might tell him that the business of the other House was wired throughout the colony, every day, and honorable members in all parts could know what was coming forward in the Council. The Honorable Mr. Fitz must know that the Supreme Court Bill was not a measure of such importance as to justify the course that he advised the Council to take; nor was the Land Bill, which had not passed the second reading yet in the other Chamber; nor had the Land Frauds Enquiry Bill passed the second reading; and those Bills might not come up to the Council for a considerable period. Therefore, he (the Postmaster-General) could not see what earthly necessity there was for postponing all legislation to the 20th of May. Honorable members might as well close this establishment for a month, and then all legislation would be gone through hastily. They might be allowed to proceed with the measure that was before the House. A week's notice was long enough for honorable members. The only one who was far away was the Honorable Mr. Lambert. The Honorable Mr. Sandeman would be here next week.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: Mr. Brown.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Mr. Brown was not far off. He could come to the House. To the passing of the motion, he (the Postmaster-General) most strongly objected. He did not see what earthly good could result from it.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR: It was very well for the Postmaster-General to talk about closing "this establishment." What did he mean by that? Was that respectful to the President or to other honorable members of the Council? As if they were a shop! The Payment of Members Bill was one of the most important measures that was ever before the Council. The Collector of Customs,

he thought, had stated that it was not an alteration of the constitution of the Council. He (Mr. Taylor) said it was. At the present time, honorable gentlemen gave their services, such as they were, for nothing. In future, if the Bill passed, they would be paid. Out of twenty-eight members of the Council, only eighteen were present, although every one knew the Bill would come up to the House to-day! It was necessary to carry the motion of the Honorable Mr. Fitz, to compel honorable gentlemen to come to the House. It was all very fine for the Honorable Mr. Thorn, who was paid a thousand a year, with others, who were paid, to come to the House and to tell other honorable members that they impeded business. They were watched by the country, it was said; so they might be, and the honorable gentleman was watched likewise. He (Mr. Taylor) and honorable members like him knew very well what they were about. They saw, heretofore, only some trivial measures, not business of consequence to the country, on the paper; measures that they could trust to the young men who had passed them. But when they saw the Payment of Members Bill, the Land Bill, the Dummies Bill, and a few others of like importance, on the paper, they packed their valises at once and came down to town. The Honorable Mr. Thornton had talked about the inconvenience of honorable members being brought down from the country. What did that honorable gentleman care about it? But that was an argument against the motion! He was snug enough in Brisbane. If the honorable gentleman, who, this afternoon, was refused a month's leave of absence, said he would be back from home to take his part in the House, what did the House care about the argument of inconvenience? There were honorable members in the House who would ride hundreds of miles to come to the House when the good of the country was to be served. He (Mr. Taylor) trusted, therefore, that, without one dissentient voice, the motion would be carried. If other measures were not ready by the time the call of the House was made—he meant all the Bills named by his honorable friend, Mr. Fitz—then let that honorable gentleman keep on calling the House together—calling until he compelled honorable members to attend to their duties. That was what he should do. He should vote most cordially for the motion.

The Hon. H. G. SIMPSON said he rose partly to get a little information for himself, and partly to correct an error of the Postmaster-General. The honorable gentleman had said that if the motion was passed, it would stop all legislation until the 20th of May. He (Captain Simpson) did not gather from the Honorable Mr. Fitz, that that was his intention at all. His own view was, that the main object of the call was to deal with the Payment of Members Bill, the second reading of which was fixed for the 20th of

May, and with the measures that had been named, and that were expected to be ready about the same time. Meantime, the Council would be able to get through many measures which were coming through from the other House, and which would give honorable gentlemen plenty to do. He considered it absolutely necessary that every honorable member of the Council should be present to record his vote on the Payment of Members Bill.

The Hon. G. HARRIS observed that, in his opinion, his honorable friend, Mr. Fitz's motive was a very good one, and it was his intention to support the motion. The question for which he proposed the call was of very great importance, and he thought there should certainly be a full House to discuss its merits. It was one in which he had personally taken considerable interest on several occasions—once or twice, when it was brought under the consideration of the Council. On the last occasion, he thought, it was rejected upon a motion of his own. What course he might adopt when the second reading was discussed this time, he had not yet decided; but he considered the question of such importance that he should like to see a full House for the purpose of discussing the Bill. He could not see that any honorable member of the Council could be inconvenienced by the fact of being compelled to attend a call of the House on the 20th of May, especially when it was anticipated that the present session of Parliament would continue for many months to come. An honorable gentleman who wished to leave Brisbane now might feel inconvenienced; but, when he accepted a seat in the House, he must have known certainly that he accepted it with all its inconveniences.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL, in explanation, said that seeing the Honorable Mr. Fitz did ask for a postponement of all the Bills—the Land Bill, the Supreme Court Bill, the Land Frauds Enquiry Bill, as well as the Payment of Members Bill—to accede to his wishes would be to put off all legislation. The Supreme Court Bill was, no doubt, a very important Bill; but there was nothing, he might safely say, to prevent the Council dealing with it when it came up from another place. But to talk of postponing it for a call of the House was not right. The House might just as well postpone the Oyster Bill.

The Hon. H. G. SIMPSON, in explanation, pointed out that in the event of any of the Bills named coming up, they would not be postponed until the 20th of May, but only the one referred to particularly. Consequently, there would be no inconvenience, as there need be no stoppage of legislation in respect to the other measures, unless the House wished it.

Question put and passed.