

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Council**

**TUESDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 1876**

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

*Tuesday, 21 November, 1876.*

Privilege and the Press.—Resumption of Runs.—Construction and Extension of Railways.

## PRIVILEGE AND THE PRESS.

The Hon. A. H. BROWN said it was not very often that honorable members of the Council had occasion to call attention to a breach of its privileges; but he must, on this occasion, direct the attention of the House to something that had occurred recently. It was the privilege of the Press, and to the advantage of the community, that reporters should be present in the chamber during its debates; but honorable members all expected that accurate accounts should be published of what occurred there—that true and correct reports should be made of what honorable members said and did in their legislative capacity. What he was about to refer to appeared in a Brisbane newspaper, on Saturday evening. It described a debate which took place at the previous sitting. Did the writing refer to him or to any other honorable member, individually, no notice would be taken of it; but it referred to the President; and he (Mr. Brown) naturally felt a kind of jealousy that anything inaccurate should be stated in public about that honorable gentleman. It was during the debate of Thursday night that the President, siding

with the Government, gave his support to what they were attempting to introduce in the Council. He (Mr. Brown) should read the passage which he referred to, which was incorrect. He did not complain of the general tone of the article, but that the passage was a decided falsehood, and it was not calculated to do good to the country. The *Telegraph*, of Saturday, after going into some detail about the Opposition in the Council, which was termed factious, said:—

“Led by Mr. Prior, formerly Postmaster-General, but now out of office, a course of factious opposition was adopted, in which Sir Maurice O’Connell seems to have taken an active part. On Thursday night a division was refused, until, at four in the morning, the majority were so utterly wearied and exhausted that, by sheer brute force, they were compelled to adjourn without coming to a division. The same tactics were employed which have done so much to lower the character of the Assembly.”

That had nothing to do with it:—

\* \* \* \* \* “We should have expected that the President would have used his great influence to secure order in debate and promptitude in carrying on the business of the country. We did not expect to find him going in for a faction fight.”

He (Mr. Brown) was sure he could testify, himself, and honorable members in the chamber would agree with him, that the President did, on that occasion, use every effort he could to carry on the business of the country.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

The Hon. A. H. BROWN: He rose merely to call attention to the statement, because, as he before said, it was a falsehood, and he did not wish it to go before the country uncontradicted.

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR: The fact was, that had not the President sat in committee there would not have been a quorum.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Although he thought that, under ordinary circumstances, it was not worth while to refer to what the newspapers said; yet, in this instance, the Honorable Mr. Brown had done an act of simple justice to the President, as the statement quoted by him was in direct opposition to the facts. As a matter of fact, the President did all he could to induce honorable members of the Council to conduct the business to the end, and without any interruption whatever. On more than one occasion the honorable gentleman implored the committee to proceed with the business before it and to bring it to a conclusion; and the whole attitude he assumed on that occasion was in accordance with that course. He (the Postmaster-General) had read the article with great regret. Although the President might hold what persons would call extreme views on certain questions, which he was entitled to do, yet, having given expression to them, no one ever knew him to try to force them on the House; and the honorable gentleman ever

tried to maintain the dignity of, and to procure order in, the Upper House.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY: As a member who was present on the occasion referred to, he must add his testimony, to be put on record, to what had been already stated by his honorable friend, Mr. Brown, and by the Postmaster-General, in support of the President. He was generally an attentive observer of men in high positions, and since he entered Parliament he had noticed the demeanor of the President in his elevated position. On the occasion in question, he was much struck by the calm, dignified, and moderate tone adopted by the President—one suited in every way to the prominent position he held in the Parliament and before the colony. The article was one simply beneath contempt, if it was not that it dealt with the President in his public capacity. As a private individual, he could well imagine Sir Maurice O’Connell scorning to take any notice of it. It emanated from a portion of the Press whose opinions generally were not much valued by the public. He (Mr. Gregory) thought that, from that point of view, it was hardly likely to have done much harm. But, still, the point of privilege was one on which it behoved every honorable gentleman to support the President, where an attack so unjustifiable and uncalled for was made.

The matter dropped.

#### RESUMPTION OF RUNS.

Pursuant to the Order of the Day, the House resolved into Committee of the Whole for the further consideration of the Message of the Legislative Assembly, No. 5, of the 25th October. [See p. 1296.]

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he found that when the committee gave up its labors on the evening of last Wednesday, the 15th instant, it had advanced as far as figure 4 in the first line under East Moreton. It was the wish of a large number of honorable members on the occasion that no further progress should be made until the country was aware of the fate of the Pastoral Leases Bill and the Crown Lands Alienation Bill. These two Bills, honorable members might almost regard as having already become law, so that any opposition on the grounds mentioned ceased to exist. As the matter of the message was very fully discussed, as to the desirability of the resumptions, and a Select Committee of the Council having reported in favor thereof in order to meet the large and pressing demand for land, he need not trespass further on the attention of the committee, but simply request that the Chairman put the question, that the House do agree to the resolution.

The Hon. A. H. BROWN: There were, he thought, one or two runs omitted from the resumptions proposed. Would the Postmaster-General explain the position they occupied, or in what manner he proposed to

deal with them? There might be others in the same position. West Lagoon Creek was one run, near Jondaryan Station; it was a valuable piece of country, which was omitted from the proposed resumptions by error.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: That was the only one; it was accidentally omitted from the schedule furnished by the authorities of the Lands Department, who had thought it was less than eight square miles in area. It was, however, of the proper limits. It would not be open for selection, certainly, as it would be necessary to introduce a resolution for its resumption. There were a few portions of runs still in the occupation of the lessees which were under the area fixed by the Act of 1868—less than eight square miles—which could not be got at by resolution. The only way to throw them open for selection would be to introduce a Bill in Parliament for the purpose.

The Hon. A. H. BROWN: He had obtained what he wished to elicit. He did not think it would be necessary to introduce a Bill for such a trifling thing.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: No; he thought not.

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR: The last time the resolution was before the committee, he asked the Postmaster-General to postpone it until certain Bills had been dealt with. The honorable gentleman refused his request, and he (Mr. Prior) then thought it necessary to carry out what he felt was a proper course—much against the honorable gentleman's inclination. He hoped that on another occasion the Postmaster-General would see fit to meet the wishes of, at all events, a large minority of the House, when time was asked for. There was not much good in now opposing the resolution. His only object in opposing it had been to see what he conceived ought to be passed first made safe before the resolution was agreed to by the Council. He still thought, as he before expressed, that the resumptions were a great injustice to many—there would be a good many sufferers from them;—but to move an amendment would do hardly any good. Therefore, he should not further go against the resolution.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Hear, hear.

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR: Unless there was a division. Of course, if there was a division, he should vote against it.

The Hon. J. F. McDougall: Not that he wished to offer any opposition to the resumptions, but he must say that they were very sweeping and very harsh. He thought that half the country would meet all the requirements of the case; but, in order to settle the question—and he believed it was desirable to settle the question—he should offer no opposition whatever to the resolution, though, at the same time, he must express his belief that a vast amount of injury was being done for no great benefit to the country.

Question—That the House agree to the resolution of the Legislative Assembly—put and passed.

The House resumed, and the Chairman reported that the committee had considered the message, and agreed to the resolution without amendment. The report was adopted, and the usual message was ordered to be sent to the Assembly, informing that House of the concurrence of the Council in its resolution.

#### CONSTRUCTION AND EXTENSION OF RAILWAYS.

On the Order of the Day being read, the House resolved into committee for the further consideration of the resolution sent up by message from the Legislative Assembly on the 10th instant, approving of plans, sections, and books of reference of certain proposed railways, transmitted therewith. [See p. 1320.] When the committee adjourned on the morning of Friday, the 17th instant, the question was on the second division of the resolutions:—

"2. That this House approves of the plans, sections, and book of reference of the Railway from Maryborough to Gympie laid upon the table of this House, being the plans, sections, and book of reference of Railway *via* Antigua.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL explained the position of the question when the committee last sat, and observed that as it was fully gone into then, it was not necessary to discuss it again. He understood that his honorable friends opposite had considerably recruited their powers, and that they were now prepared to go to a division, which they were not willing to do on a previous occasion. If the division should be adverse to him, of course he must submit with a good grace. He did not think anything would be gained by further delay.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY said he had watched to see whether any argument could be adduced in reference to the proposed line of railway, calculated to show that its construction was either desirable or necessary. He had hoped that statistics would be brought forward, to show the requirements of the population, the existing traffic, or the probable traffic that would arise from the railway being opened, based on the condition and circumstances of the population of the localities through which the railway would pass, in Wide Bay and Burnett districts; and, as they were not forthcoming, he was grievously disappointed. The Postmaster-General might have obtained some figures to show that the line or lines would pay. When he (Mr. Gregory) said pay, he meant the interest on the cost of construction. He wanted something from the Government to show that the colony would be warranted in undertaking works of such magnitude on the railways proposed. Beginning with the northernmost railway, the honorable member applied those arguments more or less to the

several lines named in the resolutions; he denied that he had heard authoritatively anything to convince him of the necessity for entering upon most of the works proposed; and he contrasted the absence of information to support the Government proposals with the abundant information furnished to Parliament when railways were inaugurated in the colony ten years past. The extension of the main trunk lines westward was enough for the colony to carry out at present, and would amply justify Queensland's progressiveness in the march of advancement maintained by the neighboring colonies.

The Hon. W. D. Box hoped that the Postmaster-General would comply with the wish expressed by the Honorable Mr. Gregory, and produce statistics for the information of the committee.

The Hon. W. THORNTON contended that the Honorable Mr. Gregory underrated the Maryborough district, and pointed out what had been stated by the Postmaster-General, that the exports and imports of that port were very valuable, the customs duties collected amounted to £70,000. Ninety vessels cleared out last year, which showed that there was a considerable trade to support the railways, and there was a large population in the district to promote and extend the trade, and to provide traffic for the railway.

The Hon. W. F. LAMBERT argued that all the goods that paid duty at Maryborough were not consumed in Gympie, and would not be carried thither by the railway. Until the sugar industry arose, Maryborough was a miserable place, whose trade was done by one steamer a week. An immense amount of the dutiable goods were consumed on the plantations near the town.

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR argued on the general question, that it was not wise for a colony with a population of only 180,000 to go in for such extensive public works as those now proposed; because its already large taxation must inevitably be increased.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY expressed a hope that the Postmaster-General would give some reply to the pertinent questions he had raised, and that the honorable gentleman would furnish the committee with some statistics to afford honorable members an insight into the policy of the Government and an understanding of their anticipations of profit from the railways.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he must congratulate honorable members upon the manner in which they were proceeding this afternoon. He could not consider it, to say the least, as honorable in honorable members of the Council. When similar tactics were resorted to on the last occasion the committee sat, honorable gentlemen who persisted in such obstructive proceedings, one and all asserted that if an adjournment took place to a future day, they would be willing and ready to go at once to a division. He was surprised to find, now, that they were resort-

ing to the same course of procedure as on Thursday night last; and the honorable gentleman who spoke last, under the pretended guise of so-called arguments, had delayed the House for an hour with a wearisome dissertation without facts, or arguments, or anything else bearing on the question before the committee. He asked for statistics. The effect of the honorable member's speech upon him (the Postmaster-General) was, that he was exhausted. He was particularly anxious that the matter should be put to the committee, and he should not weary honorable members by taking up their time further.

The Hon. A. H. BROWN denied that he had been or was ever guilty of factious opposition.

The Hon. T. B. STEPHENS: What was the object of the honorable member putting the cap on his head, if it did not fit him? It was not meant for him at all.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY: The Postmaster-General unmistakably launched it at him. So far from factious opposition, he denied that he had attempted to take up the time of the committee; he had put forward serious arguments from several and different standpoints, and he asked for replies to a few simple questions, for which a very few words would suffice. He contended that mineral districts would not afford much passenger or goods traffic, and that for the carriage of minerals merely a very cheap system of railways would suffice, as in Cornwall, Bohemia and South America.

The Hon. W. HOBBS: Would the honorable member support such railways?

The Hon. J. TAYLOR: Order, order.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY: Yes, he would; if it could be shown that there was traffic.

The Hon. J. C. HEUSSLER: If the question of order was raised, the Honorable Mr. Gregory was decidedly out of order. He had been speaking of all the railways, when the question before the committee was that proposed from Maryborough to Gympie. He thought it had been agreed upon express terms that the committee was to come to a vote on the subject at once.

The Hon. T. B. STEPHENS: Leave him alone; he was talking against time.

The Hon. E. I. C. BROWNE: The question of order having been raised, it must be decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Honorable Mr. Gregory is extremely out of order. The question is paragraph two.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY: With all deference, he dissented from the ruling of the Chairman. It was settled that the resolutions should be put paragraph by paragraph, but the question in the second paragraph was influenced by the whole; and, inasmuch as his arguments were illustrative, they were in order. He commented on the disinclination of the Postmaster-General to reply to

them: the honorable gentleman must be unwilling or incompetent to do so.

At six o'clock,

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR moved the Chairman out of the chair, that the House might adjourn for dinner.

The Committee divided:—Contents, 11; Not-Contents, 10. The House accordingly adjourned; and, re-assembling at half-past seven o'clock, the committee resumed.

The Hon. A. H. BROWN spoke in favor of the railway from Maryborough to Gympie. Not alone the flourishing condition of Maryborough, and the sugar plantations and other agricultural interests in the neighborhood, but the trade of the port and its large contributions to the revenue of the colony, warranted the undertaking; while the opening up of easy communication with the rich mineral district of Gympie would largely increase the material wealth of the colony, by developing its productiveness. The mines could not be profitably worked if the traffic must be by an ordinary road. He regretted much the local feeling that was evoked last Thursday, and that he did not see more northern men in the chamber. He hoped that in future the great claims of the North would be recognised; for he must uphold its importance as an integral part of the colony, and he did this without impugning the merits of the gentlemen representing other parts of Queensland, even that important part, Queen street. He was quite sure that if there were more northern men in the House, he should receive more support for the resolution before the committee, and for both the railways proposed in the Wide Bay and Burnett districts.

The Hon. H. G. SIMPSON said, it had been objected to by honorable members who took the same view as he took, that they would not go to a division this afternoon. When they did object, it was because there were several honorable members absent whose opinions ought to be taken on such a momentous question as that before the House, and that would commit the country to a system of railways which would not pay their working expenses, or the interest of the money that might be expended on their construction. Some of the proposals, honorable members would be very glad to see carried out; others they would not consent to at all. Now, there were present in the chamber within one of the whole number of members of the Council at present in the colony; so that the committee was in the best position to give its opinion on the question before it, and in the same position as if there had been a "call of the House" for the purpose. He hoped nothing more would be heard of obstruction alleged against his side of the House.

The PRESIDENT said he rose to address the committee under a feeling of considerable regret, that what he understood, on the last meeting of the committee, to be an arrangement on the part of honorable members opposite had not been carried

out. He had understood his honorable friends opposite to say that when the question came before the committee again, they would not continue the same tactics in the management of their opposition. It seemed, however, that they had reconsidered their resolution; as, to-night, the Government proposals were met with the same opposition as characterised the procedure on last Thursday night. He would ask the Council to reflect a little on the course it was pursuing in that respect. The policy put before the House was the policy of the Government, as representing the legislature and the country. Of course, honorable gentlemen knew that no vote of the Council would change the administration, however much they were disinclined to agree with the policy put before them by the Government. The railway policy was one in many respects calculated to startle those who were interested in the country, whose interests were involved in it, and who might suffer, perhaps, from any mistake of the Government. But the matter was one of finance more than aught else; it was one which, if it injured the country at all, would injure it financially. There was no doubt that the construction of railroads would improve the means of transit and traffic and benefit the country so far as they were concerned; the only risk was, that too much money would be spent in those operations.

The Hon. G. SANDEMAN: Hear, hear.

The PRESIDENT: Well, a large scheme was before the committee. It was a scheme intended to meet the necessities and promote the interests of those portions of the country which had hitherto cried out for financial separation, and had sometimes gone beyond financial separation and had demanded separation altogether—because their interests were so different and so distinct from the south-eastern portion of the colony. He did not think it was an unwise measure; and the scheme should be carried out. It was evident that all the railways could not be carried out immediately; they must take time. The colony had not the money, the labor, or the appliances, to enable the Government to enter upon them all at once. But he believed that they had been initiated with a wise consideration of what was due to the different districts of the colony interested. He regretted that the Council should take so determined a stand upon the matter as to disallow what was the distinct policy of the Government of the country for the time being; as its opposition would have no effect but that of delaying the carrying into operation of the various railways proposed. Honorable members might now throw out some of the proposals and disappoint some districts; but he had no doubt they would agree to some. He did regret that so determined an opposition was shown to many of the proposals, and to the particular one before the committee now. He knew something of the district affected by the railway from Mary-

borough to Gympie and he did not see why the line should terminate at Gympie: it would be very productive, likely, if carried to Kilkivan and to the rich land about Boonara and the neighborhood of Baramba. There was, he thought, no limit to the requirements of the country in that direction. The line, if carried as far Taroom, would meet the traffic of the pastoral districts in that direction. Therefore it was not to be supposed that the question under discussion was merely a railway between Maryborough and Gympie; as the line might eventually be carried into a country of much greater importance for occupation than what was now contemplated. Honorable members must also consider that the lines into the interior would open up the country to the occupation of the large numbers of immigrants that were now being brought out, and be the means of increasing the wealth of the colony. He did not look upon the question as one to be despaired of entirely, no matter how unpromising the railway might appear to be now. If the committee came to a division on the question, he should record his vote in favor of each of the railways, except the ten miles of railway for the North, which he did not believe in.

The Hon. E. I. C. BROWNE said it was not for him to answer the President's observations respecting the line of conduct chosen by the Opposition for the obstruction of the measure before the committee, as he was not present at the debate which lasted so long, through the night until early next morning, to the great comfort of himself and his honorable friend behind him.

The Hon. T. B. STEPHENS: Hear, hear.

The Hon. E. I. C. BROWNE: They had "paired off," and escaped the discomforts of that night; and very glad he was next morning to find they had so acted. He must say that he was extremely astonished at what fell from the President. The honorable gentleman read the committee a lecture, an uncalled-for lecture, for doing what honorable members believed to be their duty.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

The Hon. E. I. C. BROWNE: The President had really intimated that because the railway propositions before the committee were the policy of the Government—what he called the policy of the colony!—therefore the Council was not to deal with it; and, also, because the policy involved more a matter of finance than anything else. That was really taking a high-flown view of it, to call it the policy of the Government. When the Government came into office, did they put forward such a policy as the proposed railways? If he (Mr. Browne) understood aright, they came forward as a Government of retrenchment, a policy which they had almost forgotten since. Their watchword was, "Rest and caution;" but it had been departed from. Now, they came forward with a great scheme of railways, as the President called

it. What he should call a great scheme was something like that of Mr. Macalister's, for a main trunk line through the colony, even to Carpentaria. But the scheme of the present Government was to catch the constituencies: they looked around to see where they could find support, and there they proposed a railway. He was of opinion that many members of the Government could hardly believe in the scheme of railways as put forward—a number of isolated lines, without any connection with each other, and involving a considerable amount of expense, unnecessary expense, for separate staffs and independent departments. If he was present the other night, he should have been glad to have joined issue on that point, and to have voted the scheme out of the House. Some time ago he thought there was reason to believe that in the Stanthorpe tin mines the colony had a valuable property; but that opinion was a delusion and a snare. Every man in the colony knew, now, that the tin-mines of Stanthorpe had completely failed.

The Hon. G. SANDEMAN: Very nearly.

The Hon. W. H. YALDWYN: No, no.

The Hon. E. I. C. BROWNE: Therefore, to make a railway pay, there was nothing. How was the interest on the cost of the line to be paid? The same argument applied to other lines proposed. The result would be to saddle on the country an enormous debt, to be a burden in the future, and to entail inevitable heavy taxation. No sensible man would admit that they would be paid for by the sale of land. He believed that honorable members who thought with him were prepared to go to the vote.

The Hon. G. SANDEMAN stated that his action on Thursday night last was a matter of conscience. Honorable members were not, he believed, treated as they ought to be treated. They made a reasonable request, for a full House to be got together to consider a matter of vast importance, and it was refused. They were now prepared to fulfil the promise they had made; the House was full, and they were prepared to go to the vote. In answer to the President, he asked, what were honorable members in the Council for but to express their opinions of questions of the kind now before them? It was their duty to prevent the squandering of the funds of the country upon an enormous scheme of railways which they did not believe suitable for the welfare of the colony. He should be ashamed of his position in the House if he did not adopt the course which he had conscientiously pursued on the occasion in question, and if he did not uphold others in it. As a party question he did not regard it; he did not profess to be a party man. In another place, perhaps, he should take a party view of a question; but it was the duty of honorable members of the Council to throw aside party considerations and to do their duty to the colony at large on this and every other question that came before them. The pre-

sent question transcended all others that came before the Council, this session; as it involved an enormous expense which he did not think the colony was in a position to incur. But it was unnecessary to argue further. He retorted upon the Postmaster-General, who had charged honorable members opposed to him with obstruction, that, if that honorable gentleman would not now go to the vote on the present question, he would be liable to the charge.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: All that the Honorable Mr. Sandeman said about obstruction would not affect him in the slightest degree. The honorable gentleman must think him very deficient in perception, if he (the Postmaster-General) did not perceive the motives that actuated such an assertion. His eyes were not shut to what had been going on since Thursday last. Honorable members were well aware of despatches having been sent north, west, and south, to bring up stragglers to vote. Persons who had not thought it to be their duty to assist in legislation during the session, were in the House when matters in which they were personally interested came on for discussion. He saw one gentleman before him who was now present in the House for the fourth time only this session. Another gentleman came down by express train from the west, to vote on this particular question, at the instigation of those who obstructed business the other night. With regard to the Honorable Mr. Sandeman and his being no party man, it was a singular fact that the honorable gentleman never considered it his duty to come down to the Parliament until the great question involving party considerations, the land question, came before the House, and that on every occasion on which he had voted, he had voted with the party that had hitherto been considered as allied together for obstructing the progress of the country. However, he (the Postmaster-General) was not going to imitate the system of obstruction which had been carried out by honorable members connected with that party. He was prepared from the first, if honorable gentlemen were ready, to go to a division. If they thought they had a majority, let them go to a division.

The Hon. H. G. SIMPSON said, it was easy for the Postmaster-General to get up a majority on the spur of the moment, with the aid of the number of honorable members who supported the Government living in or near Brisbane; but he could not do it when other honorable members who lived away in the country had an opportunity of coming down to their duty in the Council. It was wrong and in very bad taste for the honorable member to refer in the way he did to honorable gentlemen who lived at long distances from the capital, and who came down at very great personal inconvenience.

The PRESIDENT, in reply to the remarks of the Honorable Mr. Browne, who had accused

him of reading a lecture to the Council, said that that was a piece of presumption he never was guilty of intentionally. He was there to express his opinions, as any other honorable member of the Council was; and he said what he thought. He asked honorable members to consider the history of railway-making in England, when they approached the present question; and he called attention to the great panic, to the unsettled state of the money market, and to the ruin of many people that ensued in the first instance, from their investments in railways. But what was the ultimate result? Many of the railways were now paying seven and eight per cent., and their stock was beyond par. In this colony there was no railway speculation. The country undertook the works.

Mr. SANDEMAN: English capital.

The PRESIDENT: Never mind. Invested here, it was the country's capital; and the security was so good to stand through any panic that might occur, that there need be no fear of as profitable result as the railways in England now showed. A good many years ago, when the colony was attempting to initiate the railway to Dalby, he said that the construction of railways was merely an investment—the creating of new property for the colony. The railways would not, doubtless, be profitable in their early days; but, in time to come, they would pay good interest on the capital invested in them, and be a source of income and profit to the colony. That was his view of the railway policy. He believed it could not be immediately carried out and so be detrimental to the country; but in time it would be given effect to, and it would be beneficial in its results.

The Hon. T. B. STEPHENS said he intended to vote for the resolution, because he believed the Maryborough and Gympie Railway ought to be made. There was a population at both ends of the line, and in many places along the line; and it was well known that there was a very large amount of mineral wealth existing in the district which could not be developed or utilised in any way until some cheap method of transit was provided to the seaboard. If the railway was made, the district would carry a very large population. There was one other reason he should give for voting for the line. It appeared to him that to vote against any one of the railways proposed was equivalent to voting against all of them. In the Assembly they were all passed together, whether in one or six resolutions; and if the Council mutilated or knocked out any of them the resolution must necessarily go back to the Assembly, and it would not be accepted.

The Hon. A. H. BROWN protested against a threat that, if the Council did not accept the whole of the railways, the resolutions would be thrown out by the other House.

The Hon. J. C. HEUSSLER was in favor of making railways where there was population;



and he should vote for the line from Maryborough to Gympie, on account of the population and the great resources of the district.

The question was put and the committee divided:—

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Resolved in the negative.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: When he introduced the resolutions, he stated that the policy of the Government was, that, in order that justice should be done equally to all the different districts of the colony, the resolutions should be passed in the manner in which they came up to the Council. The decision at which the committee just now arrived practically decided that in some districts the justice that the Government proposed to mete out should not be meted out. Under the circumstances, it was necessary that the Government should consider the position—that he should have an opportunity of consulting with his colleagues as to what course would be taken under the circumstances. He therefore proposed—

That the Chairman leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again to-morrow.

The Hon. A. H. BROWN regretted that the representative of the Government should deem it time to take such a proceeding. It was not because a railway had been denied to the district in which he resided, that the same merciless measure should be dealt out to the other portions of the colony. The committee might deal with the other resolutions, and do some portion of the colony justice.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL was simply asking the House to do what was invariably done under similar circumstances. A measure introduced by the Government had been defeated by the Council; it was necessary that the Government should be allowed time to deliberate; and he was merely asking for what was accorded elsewhere. Honorable members on the other side had very peculiar views of what their duties were: they might, therefore, take upon themselves not to accord him, on this occasion, that courtesy which was invariably accorded under similar circumstances in all other Chambers throughout the world; but he should press the question to a division.

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR: It was anything but refreshing to hear the Postmaster-General get up and speak as he did. It was only a short time ago he asked for a slight consideration at the honorable gentleman's hands, but it was very pointedly refused. The honorable gentleman charged

him and all honorable members on the same side of the House with factious opposition; and he since said they acted dishonorably because honorable gentlemen not being present, from causes over which he (Mr. Prior) had no control—he had asked the honorable gentleman to adjourn the House for an hour, in order that the party might be got together, and the honorable gentleman refused, saying he had a majority now, and would see them out—it was not for them to divide at that time. He had not voted against the last resolution as on a party question. The committee could well go to the vote on the other resolutions, without any more talking, and decide at once which railways should, and which should not pass.

The Hon. H. G. SIMPSON confessed he was rather sorry to have heard the Postmaster-General make the proposition he did; but still, if the honorable gentleman insisted upon it, he did not think the House could refuse to accede, because it was a privilege that was generally allowed. He was ready to believe that the honorable gentleman would adopt a much more objectionable course, and withdraw the rest of the resolutions altogether. He for one should do all he could to prevent that. One very important railway had been sanctioned by the Council. There were two others against which there would be scarcely a dissentient voice. He was not disposed to fling about hard words, as the honorable gentleman had done. To-morrow, he had no doubt, honorable members would be in their places; but he doubted if the Postmaster-General would get the House to do more than it had done in respect to what was passed.

The Hon. W. D. BOX said he was in favor of the extension of the trunk railways, as was the Upper House; and he thought that was in accordance with the opinion of the country.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY: If honorable members adopted the wishes of the Postmaster-General, the Council would be left in a false position before the country. He and many other honorable members were prepared to vote for some lines. It would be quite time for the honorable member to consult with his colleagues after the House had given its opinion, and decided upon the remaining resolutions.

The Hon. G. SANDEMAN was prepared to vote for certain of the resolutions. It was agreed that the resolutions should be put *seriatim*. The committee had come to a decision on two of them; and it was the duty of honorable members in the interests of the country to go on with the discussion of the third resolution.

The Hon. H. G. SIMPSON argued, after what he had heard from the Honorable Mr. Gregory, that it would be as well to go on with the remaining resolutions now, and vote for the extension of the two trunk lines; after which the Postmaster-General could consult his colleagues. It should go forth to

the country that there was a sufficient majority of the Council willing to vote for the extension of the main trunk lines.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL objected to the disorderly discussion going on, and called attention to the question.

The CHAIRMAN said he thought the discussion was out of order.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR objected to some remarks of the Postmaster-General as to the attendance of members, as he thought such remarks impertinent, because they imputed motives. He came down to the House when there was important work to do; he did not come down from interested motives; and he did not attend the House when there was nothing to hear but the charming voice of the Postmaster-General. He thought the conduct of the Opposition perfectly right, and fault ought not be found with it. The railway scheme was nothing but log-rolling—the result of an arrangement amongst certain parties elsewhere, who cried, “Scratch me, I’ll scratch you!”—nothing else.

The PRESIDENT urged that it would be unprecedented to refuse to accede to the motion of the Postmaster-General. A majority of one could not shape the policy of the Government. Honorable members could not expect that any Government, recognised as the Government of the country, could follow in the wake of that majority and do only what that majority desired. That majority would be assuming the office of Cabinet Councillors, saying what resolutions should be given effect to and what not. The Government had placed their railway policy before the House; the House refused to concur in it; the representative of the Government now asked for time to deliberate with his colleagues upon their course of conduct under the circumstances. They might, perhaps, choose to resist the Government, and that the Council should decide upon some other mode of conducting the business of the country. The Government had a right to demand time to consider what should be their action, in consequence of the vote of the Council.

The question, after further discussion, in a desultory way, was put, and the committee divided:—

#### CONTENTS, 9.

The Honorables C. S. Mein, A. H. Brown, Sir M. C. O’Connell, W. Hobbs, T. B. Stephens, J. Mullen, W. Thornton, J. C. Heussler, and W. Yaldwyn.

#### NOT-CONTENTS, 9.

The Honorables T. L. Murray-Prior, F. T. Gregory, E. I. C. Browne, W. F. Lambert, J. Taylor, H. G. Simpson, W. D. White, W. D. Box, and G. Sandeman.

The CHAIRMAN: In accordance with the invariable rule of allowing further discussion, he gave his casting vote with the Contents.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The House then resumed, and the Chairman made his report. Leave was given to the committee to sit again to-morrow.