

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Council

WEDNESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 1885

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, 4 November, 1885.

Absence of Chief Messenger.—Leave of Absence.—Joint Library Committee.—Pacific Island Labourers Act Amendment Bill.—Licensing Bill.—South Brisbane Gas and Light Company (Limited) Bill.—Adjournment.

The PRESIDENT took the chair at 4 o'clock.

ABSENCE OF THE CHIEF MESSENGER.

The PRESIDENT said: On my arrival at the House this afternoon, I found the chief

messenger absent, and he did not arrive till within four minutes of the commencement of business. On inquiring, I found that he had been sent by the Postmaster-General to whip up some of the Government members. Now, that is a thing I will not suffer under any circumstances. The messenger of this House is not to be sent out by the Postmaster-General or by anybody else. If it was the beginning of the session I should have taken a great deal more notice of it; but as it is I will only say that it is most irregular and highly improper.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—I was unaware that it was irregular, and I was informed by those who ought to know very well what his duties are, that the messenger was at the service of the Postmaster-General. I asked the messenger to take a cab and call upon two members of the Council who were in town, to say that I would like to see them here at a quarter before 4 o'clock; but I certainly did not wish to infringe upon the comfort of the President. I will take very good care that the time of that messenger shall not be occupied by me at any such hour in future; and had I any idea that he would have been absent so long I would not have sent him.

The PRESIDENT: I will take very good care that his time shall not be taken up, for if he dares to go again I will dismiss him. The servants of this House are under the direction of the President.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: It has been done frequently before.

The PRESIDENT: I am not aware of it.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY said: Hon. gentlemen,—In moving—

That leave be given to the Hon. Gordon Sandeman for the remainder of the session—

I will only add a very few words to what I said on a previous occasion. Hon. members are perfectly well aware of the serious nature of the accident which prevented his presence in this Council. It was his intention to have been present early this session, but he was unable to put in an appearance. I have not hitherto moved in any way in the matter of asking leave, because I heard that he might arrive here at any time; but latterly that seemed to be out of the question. As I stated yesterday, a telegram has been received saying that it is his intention to be out in time for the session, but that, I think is impossible, because I do not hear that he is on the road. I sincerely trust that the motion will meet with the approval of the House; I have reason to think that steps are being taken elsewhere to make a much more substantial move in favour of the Hon. Gordon Sandeman. We know that the House does not possess the absolute power to give leave of absence outside the limitation provided by the Constitution Act, and it is only as a friend of the Hon. Gordon Sandeman that I would not wish him to be outside the forms of the House in neglecting to have such a motion brought forward. I therefore move the motion standing in my name.

The PRESIDENT said: It is my duty to state, as I have stated before, that leave of absence given by this House at the end of the second session to absent members will in no way interfere with the vacancy of the seat if the question is brought before the proper tribunal, in the event of an hon. member being absent for two sessions. I stated this when leave of absence was given to the Hon. Mr. Walsh. Hon. members are at liberty to do as they like, but I warn them that leave of absence is of no avail as to preserving a seat.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—I understood the Hon. Mr. Gregory to say that the Hon. Gordon Sandeman was coming. If that means that he has started I shall be glad to hear whether he (Hon. Mr. Gregory) has any knowledge of that fact, because, if so, there must be a contradiction between the information he has given and that which I have received elsewhere. A telegram came this morning to the Colonial Secretary from the Agent-General intimating that the Hon. Gordon Sandeman was in London, and that he had ascertained it was the intention of that hon. gentleman to stop there until the end of February or the beginning of March. I have nothing more to add.

The Hon. W. FORREST said: Hon. gentlemen,—I rise to speak with reference to something that has fallen from the Postmaster-General in regard to the Hon. Gordon Sandeman's movements. I was talking to a gentleman recently who saw a telegram stating that the Hon. Mr. Sandeman had started or was starting about a fortnight ago.

Question put and passed.

JOINT LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved—

1. That the Hon. P. Macpherson and the Hon. A. Raff be appointed as members of the Joint Library Committee, in the room of the Hon. G. King and the Hon. T. L. Murray-Prior, resigned.

2. That such appointments be notified to the Legislative Assembly by message in the usual form.

The Hon. W. FORREST said: Hon. gentlemen,—When I was called to order yesterday, what I wanted to point out was that the Hon. Mr. King had not actually resigned. The Hon. Mr. Murray-Prior first stated that as he was going away he could not attend the meetings, and the Hon. Mr. King then stated—it is reported in *Hansard*, and can be verified—that he had not attended any of the meetings, and gave as a reason that they were called on days when the House was not sitting. I was going to call attention to that most inconvenient arrangement. Members are appointed to act on joint committees, but meetings are called on most inconvenient days—that is to say, days on which the House is not sitting. That arrangement wants altering, and, as the Hon. Mr. King did not actually resign, I was going to suggest, and I now suggest, that the matter be reconsidered so far as he is concerned. Probably there is no gentleman in this Chamber who reads so much and so carefully as the Hon. Mr. King, or who would be of so much assistance on the Library Committee; and I hope that if he has not distinctly resigned he will remain on the Committee, and that the meetings will be held on days when he can attend.

The Hon. G. KING said: Hon. gentlemen,—The Hon. Mr. Forrest misunderstood me. I did resign, and I asked the Postmaster-General to substitute some other hon. gentleman for me; at the same time I stated my reason for resigning—that the days of meeting were days on which the House did not sit.

Question put and passed.

PACIFIC ISLAND LABOURERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Assembly intimating that the Assembly did not further insist on their disagreement to the Council's amendment in clause 11 of this Bill.

LICENSING BILL.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Assembly intimating that the Assembly did not insist on their

disagreement to the amendment omitting the word "one-tenth" in clause 115, line 11, but insisted on their disagreement to the proposed insertion of the word "one-fourth," and proposed to insert instead the word "one-sixth," in which amendment they invited the concurrence of the Council; did not insist on their amendment on the Council's amendment in clause 115, subsection 2, and did not insist on their disagreement to the amendment in clause 119.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the President left the chair, and the House went into Committee to consider the message.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved that the Committee agree to the amendment of the Legislative Assembly upon the amendment of the Council in clause 115, line 11, the effect of which was that the word "one-sixth" be substituted for the word "one-fourth." All the other amendments of the Council had been agreed to by the Assembly.

The HON. A. J. THYNNE said that no reason was offered in the Assembly's message why they should change their views. The matter had been fully discussed, and it was not necessary to discuss it further. He thought that the word "one-fourth" should be adhered to unless some very good reason could be shown to the contrary.

The HON. A. C. GREGORY said the amendment was one of policy, but did not involve any great party question. It was a question upon which every member might act independently and take that course which he thought proper. At the same time he must say that he thought that one-fourth was the proper number of ratepayers who should be at liberty to call for a poll, and he thought they had better adhere to that number.

The HON. F. T. GREGORY said he could only add to what had fallen from the last speaker, that no reasons had been advanced by the other House why the number should be altered. In the course of the day he had heard that it was possible that such an alteration might be suggested and come before the Council, and he had an opportunity of speaking to a considerable number of hon. gentlemen on the subject. He thought the feeling of a decided majority of hon. members was in favour of maintaining the number "one-fourth."

Question—That the amendment of the Legislative Assembly be agreed to—put; and the Committee divided:—

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The Hons. Sir A. H. Palmer, T. Macdonald-Paterson, A. Raff, W. H. Wilson, W. Pettigrew, J. Swan, G. King, P. Macpherson, J. Cowlishaw, F. H. Holberton, A. H. Wilson, W. Aplin, and E. B. Forrest.

NON-CONTENTS, 12.

The Hons. T. L. Murray-Prior, J. Taylor, W. Graham, F. T. Gregory, J. E. McDougall, A. C. Gregory, A. J. Thynne, J. C. Smyth, W. G. Power, F. H. Hart, W. Forrest, and W. D. Box.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the CHAIRMAN left the chair, and reported to the House that the Committee had agreed to the Legislative Assembly's amendment.

The report was adopted, and the Bill ordered to be returned to the Legislative Assembly by message, intimating that their amendment had been agreed to.

SOUTH BRISBANE GAS AND LIGHT COMPANY (LIMITED) BILL.

The HON. A. J. THYNNE said: Hon. gentlemen,—In moving the second reading of this Bill, I will content myself by saying that the Bill is in the usual form adopted by our Parliament in passing gas companies Bills. It is, I think, almost exactly similar to the one recently passed—the Townsville Gas Company Bill—with some slight improvements, which have been made in another place. I think there can be no question as to the desirability of there being a gas company established in South Brisbane, as the supply of gas there is not sufficient for the requirements of the people. The population is increasing very rapidly, and it is difficult to keep them supplied with either gas or water. The city on the north side is also extending so very rapidly that it is beyond the power of the present gas company to keep both sides fully supplied. The population of the south side has been estimated at something like 20,000, and that is a community which is quite large enough to support a gas company. In fact, I think it is quite as large, if not larger than the population of Brisbane was at the time the present gas company was established. I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

The Bill was passed through its remaining stages without discussion, and ordered to be returned to the Legislative Assembly, by message in the usual form.

ADJOURNMENT.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—In moving that this House do now adjourn, I wish to state that I hope there will be a House to-morrow, in order that we may be able to proceed with some necessary business. We shall very likely have the Licensing Bill back from the Assembly, in consequence of an error—a printer's one, I think—having crept into the Bill. We cannot exactly trace how the error arose, but it is necessary that it should be corrected. I hope, therefore, that we shall have a quorum to-morrow, in order that that business may be disposed of.

Question put and passed, and the House adjourned at ten minutes to 5 o'clock.