

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Council**

**FRIDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 1885**

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

*Friday, 13 November, 1885.*

Appropriation Bill—message from the Legislative Assembly.

The PRESIDENT took the chair at 4 o'clock.

### APPROPRIATION BILL—MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

The PRESIDENT read the following message from the Legislative Assembly :—

“ Mr. PRESIDENT,

“ The Legislative Assembly having agreed to the following resolutions, namely :—

“ That the Legislative Council be invited to join this House in the appointment of a joint select committee to consider the present condition of public business, in consequence of no Supplies having been granted to Her Majesty for the service of the current financial year ;

“ 2. That this House propose that the number of members to serve on such committee be ten, and that six members do form a quorum thereof ;

“ 3. That such committee have leave to sit during any suspension of the sittings of either House, notwithstanding that the House may not have adjourned ;

“ 4. That the following members of this House be appointed to serve on such committee—namely, Mr. Griffith, Mr. Dickson, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Foxton, and Mr. Hill ;

“ 5. That this proposal be communicated to the Legislative Council by message, in the usual form :

Beg now to communicate the same to the Legislative Council, for their concurrence.

“ WILLIAM H. GROOM,  
“ Speaker.

“ Legislative Assembly Chamber,  
“ Brisbane, 13th November, 1885.”

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. T. Macdonald-Paterson) said : Hon. gentlemen,—  
You have heard the message read by the hon.

the President, and I now beg to move that this House concur in the proposition of the Legislative Assembly for the appointment of such committee.

Question put and passed.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY said: Hon. gentlemen,—I now beg to move as an addition to the motion of the Postmaster-General that the following members of this House be appointed to serve on such committee, namely:—The Hons. T. L. Murray-Prior, F. H. Hart, A. C. Gregory, A. J. Thynne, and W. Forrest.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—The committee which has been proposed by the Hon. F. T. Gregory appears on the face of it of one composition, and I rise to make this one observation, which I think it is my duty to make—namely, that I think the minority in this House should have been considered in the formation of the committee. I know it is quite useless to attempt to alter the names of that committee. There may be reasons external to my knowledge for the course that has been taken, but I think that at the least some consideration should have been shown to the minority in this Chamber with regard to the question at issue between the two Houses.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY said: Hon. gentlemen,—In reply to the Postmaster-General, I may at once state why the five hon. members whose names are mentioned in my motion have been proposed as members of the Joint Select Committee. It would simply be unwise to appoint the minority to discuss with members of the Assembly a question on which they differ from the majority in this House. It would be just as reasonable to select a committee from the minority in the other branch of the Legislature. They have not done that; but have rightly, I think, selected their representatives from the leading members of the majority who differ with this Chamber. The only way to arrive at a solution of the difficulty is to have the matter discussed by the majorities who are contending.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: The other House is unanimous.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY: Well, even allowing that the other House is unanimous, it would be meaningless to contend that those who are in agreement with them in this Chamber should be appointed to serve on the Joint Committee. I may go a step further and point out that in a similar case, when there was a conference between the two Houses on a previous occasion, the representatives of this House were expressly selected because they differed with the majority of the Assembly. There is no intention whatever on the part of members on this side of the House to cast the smallest reflection on any hon. gentlemen on the other side. Far from it; there are members on that side who can discuss the question at issue quite as well as we can, but they have already expressed opposite views to those entertained by the majority, and if there is to be any utility in the course proposed the conference must be between those who differ.

The Hon. W. GRAHAM said: Hon. gentlemen,—I myself believe that as a matter of courtesy it would be a good thing in the appointment of a committee or conference to appoint some leading member from the opposing side, so that it should not be a committee of men representing one side of the question. I say that as a matter of courtesy it would be well to do that; but, as has been pointed out by the Hon. F. T. Gregory, it is a mere question now between two majorities, and it is preferred to fight it out between those majorities. I should like to know why this is called a committee and not a conference. I myself can

see no reason why it should be called a joint committee, and I should much have preferred a joint conference of the two Houses. I should be glad if the Postmaster-General would explain the difference between the two, for I am perfectly certain that there is some difference, although it may perhaps be too abstruse for us to understand. A simple way of dealing with this matter would have been to have had a conference, and I think a proposition for a conference would have been assented to by all the members on both sides of the House. I really cannot see why the ordinary form should be departed from on this occasion by appointing a joint committee instead of a conference of the Houses.

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR said: Hon. gentlemen,—I rise to ask the House if they will be good enough to take my name off the Committee. My reason for doing so is not that I wish to be away from the Committee, but that in a few days I shall very likely be leaving the colony, and I think that, under those circumstances, it would be far better, for many reasons, that some hon. gentleman who is likely to remain here and be present when his services are required should be appointed in my stead. I shall not, I trust, be very long away from the House, but I think it is very desirable that I should not be on this Committee, and I shall therefore be glad if hon. gentlemen will substitute some other name for mine.

The Hon. A. C. GREGORY said: Hon. gentlemen,—I think I may just add a few words on the question of the constitution of the Committee. If this Committee is to come to any decision, it is important that when they return with their report they should have the greatest amount of influence with the majority of their respective Houses. The Legislative Assembly naturally selected their members from the majority of that House in regard to the vote on which this question arises. It is not in consequence of having any feeling against hon. members on the other side, or any disinclination to see them represented on this Committee, that none of their names has been proposed, but because, in a case of this kind, it would only imperil the object we have in view by appointing members who are not in harmony with the views expressed by the majority of the House. It is not because any hon. member is such a violently extreme man that the names of hon. members on the other side are omitted on this Committee, but because it is desirable that when the Committee return they shall have sufficient influence to induce the majority of the House to agree to whatever recommendations they may make. In any other case nothing would give me greater pleasure than to see the Postmaster-General appointed on the Committee, or some other member on the other side of the House.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE said: I think there is a little more to add to the reasons given for the selection made. It seems to me quite out of the question that the Postmaster-General or any of those in the minority on this question should be appointed on the Committee, because if they were appointed it would be their duty to advocate the position which the House has taken up, and it would have been a very awkward position indeed for any hon. gentleman who does not agree with the position which the House has taken up to be obliged to support the views which we have insisted upon. There are instances on record in which members of a conference have offered arguments at a conference which were contradictory to the arguments used in the House which they represented, and they have been severely censured by the House of Commons for doing so.

The HON. G. KING said : Hon. gentlemen,—With regard to the constitution of the Committee selected by the Legislative Assembly, I do not think the question of a majority or minority entered into the matter at all, because I do not think there is one member in the House of Assembly who would give up the right to us of making amendments in money Bills. Therefore it is a matter of perfect indifference from which side of the House the gentlemen representing the Assembly on the Committee are chosen.

The HON. J. F. McDOUGALL : As the Hon. Mr. Murray-Prior has intimated his desire not to serve on the Committee, I beg to propose that the name of the Hon. F. T. Gregory be substituted for that of the Hon. T. L. Murray-Prior.

Amendment agreed to ; and question, as amended, put and passed.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved that the following message be transmitted to the Legislative Assembly :—

Legislative Council Chamber,  
Brisbane, 13th November, 1885.

MR. SPEAKER,

The Legislative Council, having under consideration the message of the Legislative Assembly of this day's date, requesting the appointment of a joint committee of both Houses to consider the present condition of public business in consequence of no Supplies having been granted to Her Majesty for the service of the current financial year, beg now to intimate that they concur in all the propositions contained in the said message, and that they have appointed the following members to serve thereon, namely :—The Hon. F. T. Gregory, the Hon. F. H. Hart, the Hon. A. C. Gregory, the Hon. A. J. Thynne, and the Hon. W. Forrest.

They further beg to name Legislative Council Committee-room No. 1 as the place, and 5 p.m. this day as the time, of meeting.

The HON. A. J. THYNNE : I scarcely think the message as proposed is quite sufficient for the purpose. Unless expressly authorised, no committee of either House can sit during any suspension of the sittings of the House ; and if words empowering us to do so are not inserted in the message we may not be able to deal with the question during any suspension of the sittings of the House.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL : I apprehend, hon. gentlemen, that the question is that we concur in the propositions of the Legislative Assembly.

The HON. A. J. THYNNE : In the appointments only. Our Committee has not been given power to sit during the suspension of the sittings of the House.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL : We have heard the message from the Legislative Assembly, and we agree with the propositions contained therein. A proposal is made containing certain formula, and we concur in that proposal—we concur in the whole of it.

The PRESIDENT : You had better say so.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL : There is no objection to making that amendment.

The HON. A. J. THYNNE : If the House will allow me, I wish to point out that we concur in the proposition which gives the members of the Committee appointed by the Legislative Assembly power to sit during the suspension of the sittings of the House, notwithstanding that that House may not have adjourned. We assent to that ; but in our resolution there is no authority given to our Committee to do the same, and, according to the Standing Order, when the House resumes its sitting, no committee can sit ; the committee must adjourn.

The HON. A. C. GREGORY : The message sent from the Legislative Assembly proposes that "such committee have leave to sit during

any suspension of the sittings of either House, notwithstanding that the House may not have adjourned." We have concurred in their message, and I presume—although it would be better to add some words to our message—that we have actually concurred not only in that we meet this Committee, but also that we adopt the rest of the conditions. It would be very easy to amend it.

The PRESIDENT : I called the attention of the Clerk to the omission at once.

The resolution was amended by the insertion of the word "all" after the words "concur in," and, as amended, put and passed.

The PRESIDENT : I shall resume the chair at 8 o'clock.

On the House resuming,

The HON. F. T. GREGORY said : Hon. gentlemen,—On behalf of the Joint Committee of the two Houses, I now report that we have met and discussed a number of preliminaries connected with the matter in question, and that we have adjourned as a committee until Monday next, and hope to be able to bring up a satisfactory report for adoption by this House on Tuesday next.

The House adjourned at five minutes past 8 o'clock.