

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Council

WEDNESDAY, 24 AUGUST 1887

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, 24 August, 1887.

Formal Motion.—Death of the Minister for Works, the
Hon. W. Miles.

The PRESIDENT took the chair at half-past
3 o'clock.

FORMAL MOTION.

The following formal motion was agreed to :—

By the HON. W. H. WALSH—

That there be laid on the table of the House a
Return showing the report of the Auditor-General upon
the divisional board of Booroodabin, dated 23rd July,
1887.

DEATH OF THE MINISTER FOR
WORKS, THE HON. W. MILES.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. W. Horatio Wilson) said: Hon. gentlemen,—It is with deep regret that I have to announce what is already well known to every member of this House—the death of our friend, and my late esteemed colleague, the Hon. William Miles. His presence was so familiar to us and his energy so great, that it is not strange if we had forgotten that he had lived to the ripe age to which he had attained. But though he had reached the allotted term of threescore years and ten, and though we knew of his latterly failing health, we feel that we were not ready to lose his well-known face and bright example. He was a man of whom every Queenslander may well be proud, and whose memory it will be well to cherish, for he bore his part as a pioneer in the colony's early days; served his country loyally in the fullness of his manhood, and was still at his post when he died. His single-mindedness throughout a long political life, his constant attention to duty wherever it lay, his well-nigh proverbial honesty and spotless integrity, have served to engrave his name upon the hearts of his fellow-colonists. Whatever may be our political opinions, whatever may be our estimate of his ability, whatever our former relations with him may have been, I am sure that every member of this House and every Queenslander will combine to honour those virtues which he could not hide, and which made him before all things a man. He now rests from his labours. I beg to move—

That out of respect to the memory of the Hon. William Miles, Secretary for Public Works and Mines and to enable hon. members to attend his funeral, this House do now adjourn.

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR said: Hon. gentlemen,—We have very little work before us, and in the present state of ministerial unrest I do not think it would be of any advantage if we were to go into that work this week. If we do, members from the country will have to come down to-morrow. I therefore move as an amendment that there be added at the end of the motion the words “till this day week.”

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—I always like to consult the wishes of hon. members in that respect, and if it is the opinion of the House that it will be better to adjourn till Wednesday next I shall offer no objection to the amendment.

The Hon. W. H. WALSH said: Hon. gentlemen,—I am glad my hon. friend has risen to speak to this question, and I think he might have added something to the panegyric which the representative of the Government in this House has paid to his late colleague the Hon. W. Miles. I was disappointed to find the hon. gentleman following out what has seemed to be the rule of the other side of the House this session—the practice of proposing prolonged adjournments. I do think it is most unfortunate that hon. gentlemen who are supposed to watch the Government in the course they are pursuing should take up that position. I cannot conceive anything more unfitted to their position as representatives of the country in this Chamber. I cannot conceive anything more unfortunate than that members on that side should be constantly getting up in this Chamber and, upon some motion of the Postmaster-General for an adjournment, proposing a further adjournment, thereby aggravating matters by a prolonged extension of the time. I do warn hon. members in this Chamber that they are weakening the position they occupy as watch-guards—I do not use the term in a derogatory sense—and as the guardians of the public in this

Chamber. It does seem to me so unfitting and so improper to find hon. members on the other side of the House always doing what leads to an unnecessary delay in the business of this House by extending the time asked by the Government for the consideration of that business. I think that every time the leader of the Government proposes an adjournment we should ask him when the Government are going to give us any business to consider—when they are going to consider that we are capable of initiating business in this place. Are we merely to be recording clerks, or what are we to be reduced to? As I said before, it seems to me an unfortunate circumstance that we should be constantly acceding to their proposals to postpone business in this Chamber, simply because, apparently, we have neither energy nor patriotism enough to demand that we should take a part in the initiation of the business of the country. But I see that I must not further trespass on the time of the House. I may, however, remark that I was rather astonished that my friend the Hon. T. L. Murray-Prior did not avail himself of the opportunity he had of addressing the House to pay some tribute of respect to the memory of the gentleman whose loss we now all so much lament. I am quite sure the omission was unintentional on his part, and I believe I am expressing the opinion of every member of this House when I say that we as deeply regret the necessity for the early adjournment this afternoon as it is possible for any people in the country to regret it.

The Hon. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON said: Hon. gentlemen,—The unexpected observations which have just fallen from the Hon. W. H. Walsh with respect to the question of adjournments will prevent me from taking up a moment more of the time of the House than I can help, and I will not therefore say all I intended to say. I cannot, however, allow the occasion to pass without expressing my deep and personal regret at the death of my old and much-respected colleague, the late Hon. William Miles. I believe that the place he occupied in the country can never in our time be filled again, and I can heartily endorse every word that has been said by my hon. friend the Postmaster-General with respect to the career of the deceased gentleman.

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

The House adjourned at fourteen minutes to 4 o'clock.