

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Council

FRIDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 1894

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

FRIDAY, 30 NOVEMBER, 1894.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt of messages from the Governor intimating that His Excellency had assented to the following Bills:—Rabbit Boards Act Amendment Bill, Schools of Mines Bill, and Friendly Societies Bill.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. A. J. Thynne) said: In consequence of the division which took place in the Legislative Assembly yesterday upon the question of going into Committee of Supply, affairs in the other House have assumed a critical form, and under the circumstances I do not propose to proceed now with the business upon the paper. I would ask the President to be good enough to resume the chair at a later hour of the day—say, 5 o'clock. I hope that will suit the convenience of hon. members, and that they will, at any rate, be able to form a House at that hour.

The PRESIDENT: Of course it is my duty to act with the Government so far as I consistently can on all occasions. There will be no hindrance to public business, because, I presume, we can go on with no business in the meantime. I shall resume the chair at 5 o'clock.

The PRESIDENT resumed the chair at 5 o'clock.

SUGAR WORKS GUARANTEE.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt of a message intimating that the Assembly had approved of the estimate of probable guarantee required for the present financial year, under the Sugar Works Guarantee Act, in which they invited the concurrence of the Legislative Council.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: If there is any business to be transacted later on I shall give notice of motion.

NEW SWANBANK COLLIERY COMPANY RAILWAY BILL.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt of another message, forwarding this Bill.

On the motion of the HON. A. C. GREGORY, the Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I regret that the Government are not in a position to further proceed with the business of the House at this stage; and, in view of the fact that this is the concluding day of the month, it is my duty to request the President to be good enough to resume the chair at a later hour of the evening—say, 7 o'clock.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: That is too early.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: If a later hour will better suit the convenience of hon. members, I shall say 8 o'clock.

The PRESIDENT: Any hour will do for me if it will help the Government in any way. I shall resume the chair at 8 o'clock.

At 8 o'clock,

ABSENCE OF THE PRESIDENT.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I have to announce to the House the absence of the President this evening, and in accordance with the Standing Orders the Chairman of Committees will take the chair as Presiding Chairman.

ACTING CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: With the consent of the House, I move that the Hon. W. G. Power act as Chairman of Committees for this day.

Question put and passed.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I have to inform the House that the difficulty which arose in another place has happily been settled, and the House is therefore in a position to proceed now with its ordinary business. However, as it was understood in the early part of the day that the Government would not ask the House to proceed with business other than the Appropriation Bill if it should come up to us, I do not feel at liberty to proceed with the business as it stands on the paper. What I intend to do is, that we should take one or two measures in committee, on the distinct understanding that, in order that no hon. member who has returned home for the day shall be in any way prejudiced, on Tuesday, if any hon. member desires any of the Bills we now deal with to be recommitted, I shall be prepared to move accordingly. That will protect the rights of hon. members who happen to be absent. There are two measures on the paper which appear to me to be quite non-contentious—Orders of the Day Nos. 7 and 10—the Musgrave Wharf Bill and the Queensland Coast Survey Bill. In order to enable us to take these Bills in committee, I move that Orders of the Day, Nos. 1 to 6, inclusive, be postponed until after consideration of Order of the Day, No. 10.

Question put and passed.

MUSGRAVE WHARF EXTENSION BILL.

COMMITTEE.

The various clauses were passed without amendment.

The schedule was passed with a verbal amendment; and the preamble was passed as printed.

The House resumed; the ACTING CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with an amendment; and the third reading was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

QUEENSLAND COAST SURVEY BILL.

COMMITTEE.

The various clauses of the Bill and the preamble were agreed to without amendment.

The House resumed; the Bill was reported without amendment, and the third reading made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

SUSPENSION OF BUSINESS.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: The other measures on the paper are matters upon which I have no doubt hon. members who are not here would desire to express their opinions upon, and I do not therefore propose to ask the House to proceed with those measures this evening. I have received information that in the course of half an hour we shall have an Appropriation Bill to deal with, and under the circumstances I will ask the Presiding Chairman to be good enough to resume the chair at 9 o'clock.

At 9 o'clock,

THE FEDERAL COUNCIL.

The Hon. C. H. BUZACOTT: I intend to conclude with a motion. As the other House is delaying the Appropriation Bill—no doubt a necessary delay—I take the opportunity of speaking for a short time on what I consider a subject of the utmost importance to Australasia. I think it is perhaps a good thing for us to look a little beyond the boundaries of our own

colony and consider our position in relation to the other colonies of Australasia. I need not remind hon. gentlemen that some nine years ago an Act was passed by the Imperial authorities, at the suggestion of the colonies, for the establishment of a Federal Council of Australasia; also that several sessions have been held and three measures have been passed through. I think about four sessions have been held in nine years. It is a very small record for nine years' work; and having taken a great deal of interest in the question, I have looked forward with a great deal of hope to the result of the session which is intended to be held at Hobart in January next. Hon. gentlemen will remember that the Queen was moved last year to authorise each colony to send five members to the Federal Council instead of two as before. There were five colonies connected with the council, each sending two members, making ten altogether. There was something a little absurd about a formal session with a membership of ten opened by the Governor, with all the solemnity with which our Parliament is opened, and these ten members meet together and talk about one or two subjects, and pass any measures dealing with matters on which the legislatures of the component colonies had passed Acts authorising them to legislate. Well, that is a very cumbersome mode of procedure. They had no power to legislate on any subject whatever, unless a referring Act is first passed. When I found that the Government here, in concert with the other Governments, had obtained the authority of the Queen to return five members each, I thought we might look forward to a Federal Council this year with twenty-five members, which would be a very respectable preliminary body; and consisting, as it would, of the most prominent men in Australasia, we might have expected some valuable suggestions and information from them, even if there was no legislation. No steps, so far as I am aware, have as yet been taken to increase the number of members, and no referring Bill has been passed in any legislature authorising the Federal Council to legislate on any question whatever.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Yes.

The Hon. C. H. BUZACOTT: The Postmaster-General corrects me. Hon. gentlemen must excuse me. This is an impromptu deliverance, and I may not be strictly accurate. The Postmaster-General says he thinks one or two Bills have been passed on the subject. However, if they have, they are very small and unimportant Bills, and I had hoped we would have had some important subjects of legislation brought before us to authorise the Federal Council to legislate on certain questions. Nothing can be done now. I understand the members of the council meet and have a desultory discussion and a few picnics and then go home. I move the adjournment of the House to put myself in order, and I will defer the remainder of my remarks to a more suitable occasion.

Question put and negatived.

APPROPRIATION BILL No. 3.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN announced the receipt of a message from the Assembly, forwarding this Bill for the concurrence of the Council.

The Bill was passed through all its stages, and ordered to be returned to the Legislative Assembly.

ADJOURNMENT.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Hon. C. H. BUZACOTT: Before the House adjourns I would like to take the oppor-

tunity of correcting the Postmaster-General in a remark he made when I was speaking before the Appropriation Bill came up. When I observed that there had been no referring Bill passed this session, the hon. gentleman interjected that there had been; but on looking the matter up I find that my statement was perfectly accurate, and that there has been no referring Bill passed this session. I profoundly regret that something has not been done by Parliament during this session to make the Federal Council a really living institution.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I understood the hon. gentleman to refer to referring Bills generally. I did not know that he was speaking of this session.

The HON. P. PERKINS: Possibly we may not meet again this session, but whenever I attend here I am not in the habit of reading the parliamentary reports. I get quite enough of a dose by listening here. I do not know who controls these reports. Certainly I have nothing to do with them. I do know of a case. What I rise to complain of is, that they are inaccurate, that they are untruthful. I know perfectly well that an attempt has been made to economise and to condense *Hansard* reports, and of that I do not complain in any way whatever. I was one of those who complained of the length of the reports that used to appear in years gone by. But I happened to look at some occurrence that took place in this House two nights ago, and I looked in *Hansard* for it. I did not look elsewhere for it, because I do not suppose the newspapers keep a staff of reporters here to report accurately what is done. I am not complaining about them. I am complaining of the *Hansard* report, and I say that whoever has control of that report—whether it is a committee, or the Ministry, or anybody else—that those reports are unfair and one-sided. They are biassed, and they are made to suit certain people. That is all I desire to place on record about it. It is no use having a *Hansard*—we would be just as well without it altogether—if there is not some fair play. I recollect a distinguished man who cost more in correcting his reports than in printing them. I never ask *Hansard* to correct me. If I am an ass let me be written down one. I recollect the time when one of the reasons for altering the issue of *Hansard* was that it encouraged some members in another place to say too much. I do not think we say too much here. I do not know whether they have had too much this session in any way, but I recollect getting specimens of reports that go in, and the alterations that were made upon them. They were brought under my notice because I occupied a certain official position at the time, and the alterations in those reports cost twice as much as the original printing of them. If a debate occurs here on important questions, and if we are supposed to do so much business as is pelted down at us, to be transacted in two or three days, I do think that whatever is said—whether a member speaks to the question or not—that it should be reported. If the country can afford to report what is going on in another place at length as they do, I do think our proceedings here ought to be reported faithfully, especially on important subjects; and I complain to you, Mr. Presiding Chairman, and to the House, that there have been most untruthful reports printed in *Hansard* the last two or three days.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at twenty-six minutes past 9 o'clock.