

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 23 AUGUST 1910

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LONGREACH SCHOOL OF ARTS LAND
SALE BILL.

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. PAYNE (*Mitchell*), as chairman, brought up the report of the Select Committee on the Longreach School of Arts Land Sale Bill.

Ordered to be printed.

The second reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Thursday, 1st September.

QUESTIONS.

MEAT AND DAIRY PRODUCE ENCOURAGEMENT
FUND.

Mr. FOX (*Normanby*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

1. What are the amounts to the credit of each division under the Meat and Dairy Produce Encouragement Act of 1893—

(a) By way of principal;

(b) By way of interest?

2. Is it intended to pay to the certificate holders under the Meat and Dairy Produce Encouragement Act of 1893 the accrued interest received from the mortgagors, less the cost of management and other expenses; if so, when is it intended to make the first payment in respect to any one of the divisions, or how is it intended to dispose of the said interest?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE
(Hon. W. T. Paget, *Mackay*) replied—

1. (a and b.) BALANCE.

	Meat Fund.	Dairy Fund.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Southern	10,183 19 0	1,848 9 11
Central	10,849 0 9	525 14 4
Northern	4,773 17 5	1,823 8 9
Carpentaria	355 15 4	444 19 2

2. The assessment under the meat fund has been repaid in full to all who have applied. A Bill has been prepared for presentation to Parliament dealing with the balances in the interests of the contributors.

ROUTES FROM SOUTH COAST LINE TO
CANUNGERA.

Mr. STODART (*Logan*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. Is it the intention of the Railway Department to cause a full report to be made on the three projected railway routes from the South Coast line to Canungera before a trial survey is made to that centre?

2. If so, when will an officer be available to make such reports and survey?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS
(Hon. W. T. Paget, *Mackay*) replied—

1. The officer in charge of surveys has already inspected and reported upon the various proposed routes to Canungera, and it is upon his recommendation that it has been decided to complete the trial survey (commenced some years ago) from Logan Village. On completion of the trial survey the matter of route will be further considered.

2. In about three months.

PRICES OF LAND ON MARYVALE.

Mr. MULLAN (*Charters Towers*), for Mr. Allen, asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

What was the object of the Lands Department in charging the selectors on Maryvale £113,470 17s. 8d. for land purchased for about £87,906 14s. 6d., being an advance of nearly 30 per cent., when the Land Act provides for an increase of only 10 per cent.?

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, 23 AUGUST, 1910.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (W. D. Armstrong, Esq., *Lockyer*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

QUEENSLAND NATIONAL BANK
REPORT.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER reported that he had received from the Auditor-General a letter, dated 19th instant, covering his report on the balance-sheet of the Queensland National Bank, as laid before the shareholders in general meeting on the 18th instant.

Ordered to be printed.

PAPERS.

The following paper, laid on the table, was ordered to be printed:—Report, dated 6th July, 1910, from the Agent-General on the subject of Savings Bank securities held in London.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Return to an Order, made by the House, on motion of Mr. Coyne, on the 16th instant, relative to the recent stealing case at Hutton's Zillmere Factory

Return to an Order, made by the House, on motion of Mr. Coyne, on the 4th instant, relative to the conduct of a police sergeant at Beaudesert.

CORRECTION IN HANSARD.

Mr. FERRICKS (*Bowen*): I wish to correct the report of an interjection which appears on page 295 of *Hansard*. During the speech of the hon. member for Gympie I am reported to have interjected, "We can have a second referendum." What I said was—and that is how I would like it to read—"We do not want a second referendum."

[*Hon. T. O'Sullivan.*]

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. D. F. Denham, *Oxley*) replied—

The Maryvale Estate was opened on valuations furnished in the usual way by responsible officers, and the readiness with which the land was selected is evidence that it was not overvalued for selection. The Act provides a minimum advance, not a maximum. The department is improving the estate by erecting certain bridges and culverts which otherwise could not have been done had values not exceeded 10 per cent.

TEA SUPPLIED AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

Mr. MULLAN, for Mr. Allen, asked the Home Secretary—

1. Is it a fact that numerous complaints are being made by the inmates of the public institutions under the control of his department about the poor quality of the tea supplied?

2. Is it a fact that in some of those institutions tea has had to be bought outside the contract in order to get quality fit to drink?

3. In reference to tenders called for on 3rd February, 1910, for the supply of 1,500 lb. of tea to be delivered on 18th May, 1910—

(a) Was the tea supplied up to the standard?

(b) Was there any dispute as to quality between the storekeeper and the contractors?

(c) Was the tea ultimately taken delivery of?

(d) Were the contractors paid the original price tendered at?

(e) Have the Government any officers in their employ capable of distinguishing between the tea actually supplied and the standard upon which the contract is based?

(f) Can that officer tell the difference of, say, $\frac{1}{4}$ d. or $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. in tea?

(g) At what price was the above contract accepted?

(h) Do the Government expect to get tea fit to drink at this price?

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. G. Appel, *Albert*) replied—

1. No.

2. No.

3. (a) Yes.

(b) There was a difference of opinion between the Government Storekeeper and the contractor with reference to three chests, which were rejected.

(c) Yes, except the three chests mentioned in (b).

(d) Yes.

(e) An independent expert is employed by the Government Storekeeper to test tea for the public service. He is not an officer of the public service.

(f) Yes.

(g) $6\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb.

(h) The tea supplied has always been satisfactory so far as is known. When landed it is carefully tested against the standard by a qualified expert, whose certificate is accepted. I might state that the contractor landed a quantity of the same tea over and above the quantity specified in the contract. This surplus they were able to dispose of to the local trade at prices ranging from $\frac{1}{4}$ d. to 1d. per lb. more than the price specified in their contract with the Government. I might also mention that the Government recently raised the standard of tea. Under the last contract made, tea must be supplied to the new standard, and the contract price is $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb.

MR. SYDNEY DODD, VETERINARY SURGEON.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

Will he lay on the table of the House all papers and correspondence in connection with the appoint-

ment and resignation of Mr. Sydney Dodd, veterinary surgeon?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE replied—

Yes. I now beg to lay on the table all papers and correspondence referred to.

TOTALISATOR LICENSES.

Mr. COTTELL (*Toowong*) asked the Chief Secretary, for the Attorney-General—

1. What number of totalisator licenses has been issued during the past three years—

- (a) To *bona fide* racing clubs?
- (b) To proprietary racing clubs?

2. What amount of tax has been received from each club during the said three years?

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Kidston, *Rockhampton*) replied—

This information is in course of preparation, and will be supplied as soon as possible.

BREACH OF FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT.

Mr. BARBER asked the Secretary for Public Works—

1. What is the number of employees at Bundaberg who were, according to the lady inspector for factories and shops, paid a less wage than that prescribed by the Factories and Shops Act?

2. Has the balance of the said wages been paid up yet?

3. If the employers refuse to pay the back wages, what action does the Government intend to take?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Bulimba*) replied—

1. Seven.

2. Arrears due have been paid in three cases, and receipts are held by local inspector.

3. Employers will be prosecuted on receipt of evidence of refusal to pay arrears.

RETURNS UNDER THE TRADES UNIONS ACT.

Mr. MACARTNEY (*Brisbane North*) asked the Chief Secretary, for the Attorney-General—

1. What trade unions (if any) required to transmit returns to the registrar under section 20 of the Trades Unions Act, 1886, prior to the first day of February, 1910, have failed to transmit such returns?

2. Has any action been taken in respect thereof, against whom, and with what result?

3. Are the powers of the registrar in regard to compelling the delivery of such returns, and in respect to ordering audits, considered sufficient?

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Kidston, *Rockhampton*) replied—

1. (a) The Brisbane United Coal Workers' and Lightermen's Union.

(b) The Toowoomba Bread Carters' Union.

(c) The Western Workers' Association.

2. Proceedings taken against Doyle, the secretary of (a) on 1st August, who was fined £1, with 3s. 6d. costs of court, and £2 2s. professional costs (total, £3 5s. 6d.), at the North Brisbane Police Court.

Further proceedings are being taken against Doyle to require the immediate furnishing of these returns.

The secretaries of (b) and (c) have been warned. This action is considered sufficient for this occasion, as these are new unions.

3. The registrar has hitherto experienced little difficulty in obtaining the requisite returns, and any representations made by that officer for increased powers will receive consideration.

EMPLOYMENT OF ABORIGINALS IN GULF DISTRICT.

On the motion of Mr. NEVITT (*Carpen-
taria*), it was formally resolved—

That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing—

1. The number of aboriginals registered in the districts of Normaanton, Burketown, and Camooeal.
2. The name of each station which has aboriginals registered.
3. The number of aboriginals registered by each station.
4. The average wage paid to each aboriginal.
5. The amount of money held in trust by the Protector in each of these districts for the aboriginals.
6. For what purpose this money is available.
7. How much of this money has been spent by the Protector during the last five years.

NEW SESSIONAL ORDERS.

TIME LIMIT OF SPEECHES—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

On the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of adjourned debate on Mr. Kidston's motion—

That the following rule be made a Sessional Order for this session:—

TIME LIMIT OF SPEECHES.

No member shall speak for more than half an hour at a time in any debate in the House except in the debate on the Address in Reply, or on a direct motion of want of confidence, when a member shall be at liberty to speak for one hour.

Provided that this rule shall not apply to a member moving the second reading of a Bill.

Provided further that with the consent of the House (to be determined without debate) a member may be further heard for a period not exceeding thirty minutes

In Committee of the House, except as hereinafter provided, no member, other than the member in charge of a Bill, or Minister in charge of an estimate, shall speak for more than three times on any one question, nor more than ten minutes on the first occasion, and five minutes on the second and third occasions.

This does not apply to a Minister delivering the Financial Statement, or to any member debating the same. Members debating the Financial Statement may speak for one hour, but not more than once. A reply, however, is allowed to the Minister who has delivered such Statement. Such reply not to exceed half an hour—

Mr. BLAIR (*Ipswich*) said: In the absence of the hon. member for Croydon, who secured the adjournment of the debate, but who unfortunately is away through the lamented death of his sister, I desire to say a word or two on this motion submitted by the Premier. I shall not occupy very many minutes in speaking on this matter. I simply wish to lay stress on one particular point which I think hon. members ought seriously to consider before passing the motion. As hon. members are aware, the idea of this motion is to limit speeches. Against that idea I have nothing to say. Possibly every member of this House is in favour of limiting speeches with regard to duration of time.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BLAIR: The only question that occurs to my mind is whether the limit sought to be imposed by this motion is a fair one. (Hear, hear!) The question of fairness is, I take it,

[*Mr. Blair.*

the only thing about which there will be any debate on this matter. I, for one, quite realise that possibly some members may take up a great deal of time, and that in consequence there is a possibility of other members being precluded from speaking; although when sitting on the other side I found that silence there was not always traceable to that, but that it was sometimes due to a desire to allow business to go through by not hampering the side which members supported. So that really the suggestion that because members get up and speak at considerable length other members are prevented from speaking is not warranted by the facts. By this proposed new Sessional Order it is suggested that members should be restricted to half an hour at a time in a debate on any matter in the House, except the Address in Reply, a want of confidence motion, and the Financial Statement. To my mind, the one defect in the proposal is that the limitation is applied to a speech on the second reading of a Bill. I do not know what other members' opinions are in regard to this, but it seems to me that to restrict a speech on the second reading of a Bill to half an hour is infinitely too drastic. If the motion goes through in its present form, I am perfectly certain that it will operate oppressively, harshly, and in a way that has not quite occurred to the framers of the proposed new rule. If the motion is amended to the extent of allowing, say, one hour for second-reading speeches, then possibly I should be more in favour of it than I am at present. Consider the nature of the business that will have to be discussed during this session. Suppose, for example, the Police Offences Bill comes on. I do not know if members have taken the trouble to go through that measure, but I am perfectly certain that any member who has taken the trouble to consider the innovations involved in the different clauses could not possibly in half an hour do justice to the subject-matter or to his constituents. It is an absolute impossibility. You may take the first twenty clauses, and speak as concisely as you could on those clauses, and you would certainly exceed the limit of half an hour. I hope the hon. gentleman in charge of the motion will, on his own motion, alter the half hour in the case of second-reading speeches to at least an hour. If the Land Laws Consolidation Bill comes before us for discussion, or if we have a Licensing Bill to deal with, how is it possible for a member to deal faithfully and justly with either of those measures in the time proposed in this motion? I am aware that in certain cases a member may, with the consent of the House, be heard for a further period, but I may point out that such consent depends very often upon the caprice of the House—on the temper of the House; it depends on matters which ought not to be operative in deciding whether a member be further heard or not. If a certain number of members rise in their places and object to an extension of time being allowed to a member, then that extension will be refused, and the refusal of time for the serious discussion of important matters is not a good thing, nor is it likely to result in good legislation. I do not wish to take up any further time now. I rose particularly to emphasise the one point,—that is, that the time limit to second-reading speeches, I think, ought—in fairness to hon. members, in fairness to the House, and in fairness to the constituencies, as well as in the interest of good legislation—to be extended at least half an hour, in order that our legislation may receive that discussion which should be given to it.

Mr. MAUGHAN (*Ipswich*): I beg to move that the motion be amended by the insertion before line 1 of the following words:—

That the House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolutions:—

I need hardly say that in moving this amendment I am not actuated by a desire to obstruct business, but propose it rather with a desire to facilitate business, and not only to facilitate business, but also to get the best possible results from the matters discussed. Any alteration or amendment of our Standing Orders is a very important matter for this House. As the leader of the Government pointed out the other day, the proposed new rule is simply a progress report from the Standing Orders Committee. Having regard to that statement, I think the hon. gentleman might have accepted the suggestion that after due deliberation and discussion on this proposed new Sessional Order it should be referred back to the Standing Orders Committee for their further consideration. I think pretty nearly every member who has spoken on the main question has admitted the principle of a limitation of speeches, very little reserve having been shown in the expression of opinions on that phase of the subject. At the same time, we are frequently reminded that greater men than ourselves saw in their wisdom a better way of doing things than the one adopted in this instance, and I think I cannot do better than quote what Sir Samuel Griffith said in a similar case in this House in the year 1892, at which date that hon. gentleman was the leader of the Government. As hon. members will no doubt remember, the Standing Orders which we are working

[4 p.m.] under at the present time were introduced by Sir Samuel Griffith, and, in introducing them, he wound up by moving, as reported in vol. lxvii. of *Hansard* of 1892, page 951, the following resolutions:—

1. That the draft Standing Rules and Orders submitted by the Standing Orders Committee, and laid upon the table on the 19th of July, be adopted by this House.

2. That the rules of practice submitted by the said committee be approved by this House, and that the same be printed with the said Standing Rules and Orders in their appropriate places, as recommended by the committee.

Hon. members will notice that a very brief debate took place on that proposition, after which Mr. Salkeld, a member of the Griffith party, moved—

That the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolutions.

Sir Samuel Griffith, speaking to the amendment, wound up his few remarks by saying—

On the whole, unless the House really desires that we should not go into committee, I am disposed to assent to the amendment.

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

The House thereupon resolved itself into a Committee and discussed the Standing Orders in detail. Of course, whereas we have to deal with only two or three Sessional Orders, they had a very much larger contract in hand. I quite admit that. At the same time, the principles involved in the Sessional Orders that we are discussing at the present time are very large ones, and quite new to the House; and nothing, I submit, can be lost by a full debate on the merits or demerits of the question. I do not think that we can do better, if only from the point of view of convenience of debate, than take the precedent—a very wise precedent, I think—that was laid down by Sir Samuel Griffith in 1892.

Might I say, as a member of the Standing Orders Committee, that, so far as I remember, the matter of referring back the Sessional Orders to that committee was never even brought up, and I question very much indeed whether it was even anticipated. At the same time, I must admit, from what I can judge of the feeling of the committee, that no serious objection would have been taken by members of that committee if the House had sent the Standing Orders back for future consideration. But it would appear that the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government had made up his mind that the committee shall not sit again to deal with this particular question, although, as a matter of fact, I consider that the whole of the Standing Orders, from Alpha to Omega, want thorough consideration, and to be brought up to what may be termed modern requirements. However, as one member of the Standing Orders Committee, I am not going back on the general principle we adopted—that was to make the time limit proposal a Sessional Order. I am going to respect the will of the majority; at the same time, I am also going to do my best to get the very best concession we possibly can from the House.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Get a concession?

Mr. MAUGHAN: Yes.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Reduce the limitation.

Mr. MAUGHAN: I am here to get the very best possible concession I can—

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Conditions.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Conditions, or whatever you like to call them, from this House. It is really not a party matter—it is not a Government matter. The hon. gentleman at the head of the Government has no right, I submit, with all respect—he has no right to make this a Government matter. This matter belongs to the House—it is a House matter.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear! It should not be discussed at a caucus meeting at all, you know.

Mr. MAUGHAN: The hon. gentleman should be the very last one to talk about what is a proper thing to discuss at a caucus meeting. However, we are not dealing with that question now. As I pointed out before, the whole proposal involves an absolutely new departure in connection with the history of this House, and I think that every possible facility should be given to hon. members to thoroughly thrash the matter out. If this matter does not go into Committee, the debate will be very restricted indeed. Everybody knows that it is in Committee that the actual work is done. A member may get up, and, perhaps, in a few words throw a good deal of very valuable light on a certain clause or on a certain line of a clause; and what we are going to gain by not going into Committee I do not know. I think that the hon. gentleman should view this Sessional Order as a Bill. Having delivered himself of his opinion on it, we should have gone into Committee and dealt with the matter in a proper way. We could not have, as I pointed out already, a better example than that set by the present Chief Justice of the Commonwealth, who knows more about parliamentary practice and constitutional law than any man in Australia. It is a convenient way, and as far as I can see, in reading through the debates, no undue time was lost in the consideration of those very valuable Standing Orders, which were then agreed to. I should like to say that, with regard to the general principle, we are all agreed, I think, that a limitation of

Mr. Maughan.]

speeches is a desirable thing; but as my colleague, the hon. member for Ipswich, has already pointed out, there are occasions—especially in connection with the consideration of Bills in the second-reading stage—which justifies a much more elastic provision than that embodied in the present proposal of the Premier, and I shall certainly support an extension of time in a matter of that sort. Another thing, we must remember that sometimes an hon. member may carefully prepare, say, a one-hour's speech, and in consequence of interjections, especially from the Ministerial front bench, he is compelled to extend his speech to undue length. As an instance, I am shown as speaking 154 minutes on the Address in Reply, and I took the trouble to count up the number of interjections I had to submit to during that speech, which numbered no less than eighty, the majority of which were from the front Ministerial bench.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: Eighty minutes.

MR. MAUGHAN: Yes. I do not wish to be misunderstood; I do not say I object to all interjections, as sometimes they are very helpful to argument, but at the same time if we are to have a limitation of speeches in this House, we should also have a limitation of interjections, and our discussions will have to be carried on in a much more orderly way than they are carried on on occasions. I have no desire to labour the matter. I will simply content myself by moving the amendment standing in my name.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member told us that he had no desire to obstruct by merely taking up time, and the reasonable speech he made—reasonable as to its length—is fair evidence of that.

MR. MAUGHAN: Did you say "as to length"?

THE PREMIER: At the same time, I would point out to him, and to hon. members generally, that this is the second motion that has been made before coming to the question itself. Instead of the House discussing the proposal submitted, two amendments have been moved. The other, moved by the leader of the Opposition, and which was subsequently withdrawn, was to refer the matter back to the Standing Orders Committee.

MR. COYNE: This is a new proposition altogether.

THE PREMIER: I am only pointing out that instead of coming to a discussion on the question itself, two motions have already been made to avoid any discussion as to the merits of the question itself, and suggesting some other way of dealing with it. The hon. member, in moving the amendment, said that the leader of the Government had evidently determined that this matter was not to be again considered by the Standing Orders Committee. No one knows better than the hon. member that the leader of the Government has no power to determine what the Standing Orders Committee will consider when they are met in committee. The hon. member told us what happened under Sir Samuel Griffith's régime—1892—how, when they were revising the Standing Orders they went into Committee, and, after elaborating on that, the hon. member nullified all he had said by saying, "Of course this was only a Sessional Order." Did he ever know the House to go into Committee on a Sessional Order?

MR. HARDACRE: Where there is a compound one.

MR. LESINA: Is there any precedent to go on?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Make a precedent.

[Mr. Maughan.

THE PREMIER: We have a Standing Orders Committee considering certain amendments of the Standing Orders, and the intention is that they will revise the whole of the Standing Orders and bring them up for report, and the House may then—very sensibly, I think—go into Committee and consider the whole report in detail.

MR. RYLAND: Why not now?

THE PREMIER: And then we can get the revised Standing Orders printed.

MR. J. M. HUNTER: Why all this haste?

THE PREMIER: These are merely Sessional Orders which may not apply to any session except this one—(Opposition laughter)—and of course will not apply—

MR. BOWMAN: That is too thin.

THE PREMIER: Then there will be this to be considered: That when the general report of the Standing Orders Committee comes up—if the House goes into Committee on the matter—this particular thing that we propose to make a Sessional Order will then come up for review along with all the other proposed amendments which the Standing Orders Committee may suggest to the House. All that we are dealing with now is a Sessional Order for this session.

MR. J. M. HUNTER: A special gag for this session—that is what we are dealing with.

MR. MANN: A special gag to pass the Bible in State Schools Bills.

THE PREMIER: My own opinion is that the salutary effects of this Sessional Order, if adopted, will be so manifest that the House will not seriously revise it at all when they have a further opportunity of considering it.

MR. J. M. HUNTER: You did not favour it in 1900.

THE PREMIER: Did I favour anything in 1900? (Laughter.) I would suggest, in spite of all the talk there has been on this matter, there really has not been any concrete proposals as to amending these Orders to make them acceptable to the whole House.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: You have not given us time.

THE PREMIER: We talked for a whole day on Thursday over the matter, and I presume if there had been a very large number of amendments which members wished to move, we should have got some hint of some of them.

MR. BOWMAN: I gave you a hint of some of them.

MR. J. M. HUNTER: You got several hints. The hon. member for Clermont gave you hints.

THE PREMIER: We did get several hints, and the result of those several hints is that there are only two or three proposed amendments in regard to this motion. I think it would be better to begin at the top of this motion, and let someone move amendments. I have no doubt the hon. gentlemen opposite have discussed it, and considered what they want to do, and they can put up someone to move the first amendment, and we can deal with it and get on with business. That would surely be more sensible than this waste of time in a general discussion that gets us no further forward. Here is a concrete proposal which everyone understands. If hon. members opposite want to modify it in any particular, let them move an amendment setting forth one specific alteration: the House will consider that, and there will be some reason in that—some pretence of getting on with

business in an ordinary business-like way. I hope that the hon. gentleman will withdraw his motion, and some member, either on his own side or on this side, suggest some concrete amendment, and the House can deal with it. I am quite willing to take the matter according to the judgment of the House. I might like to move an amendment myself, but I cannot.

Mr. HARDACRE: No; you could not.

The PREMIER: So far as the wording of this is concerned, I could now agree to an amendment. I think I could agree to two amendments.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: What are they?

The PREMIER: They would be quite out of order on this motion.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Let us get to business.

The PREMIER: That is an excellent suggestion. The only fault with the hon. member is that he does not put it in practice himself, and get to business.

Mr. MAUGHAN: He is trying to.

The PREMIER: He is now trying to stop us from getting to business, and he knows that quite well.

Mr. HARDACRE (*Leichhardt*): If the Premier had the desire to get on with business which he expressed, he would have accepted this very reasonable amendment proposed by the hon. senior member for Ipswich. We have already wasted a great deal of time in the discussion of this matter, and it is solely because of the irregular way in which the Government has brought in the proposal.

The PREMIER: There is nothing irregular at all.

Mr. HARDACRE: Irregular in this way: I think it is different to the way in which things have been done before, and it has been pointed out that on the only time we know of when Standing Orders were considered, the method proposed by the hon. senior member for Ipswich was adopted. It is irregular in this sense—that it necessarily leads to an irregular debate. If the Premier had wanted to get on with business, he ought to have accepted the suggestion by which he could have really discussed the matter in detail. As stated by the leader of the Opposition, practically the whole of the members on this side agree to the general principle; but we want to discuss the matter in detail, with the view of moving amendments and considering various details.

The PREMIER: Why don't you move them?

Mr. HARDACRE: For this reason: The doing of it now would be making the House into a Committee, and preventing members from putting forward the very amendments we want to discuss. The Premier says he has put before us a concrete proposal, but he has put before us half a dozen proposals. The first resolution contains at least half a dozen different proposals, some of which we may agree with, and some of which we may differ with; but in the House we cannot get the chance of moving the amendments we wish.

The PREMIER: Do you agree with any of them?

Mr. HARDACRE: Yes.

The PREMIER: Well, move an amendment where you disagree.

Mr. HARDACRE: I want to show that the Premier, by adopting this procedure, has

prevented himself from moving an amendment on this, no matter how much he may desire to do so. Let me give another illustration. The leader of the Opposition has already spoken to the main question. Being in the House, where we have only the right to speak once, the leader of the Opposition, by that very fact, has excluded himself from any opportunity of moving any little amendment on the whole of this proposal.

Mr. CORSER: There are other members here to do it.

Mr. HARDACRE: But why should not any member do it?

The PREMIER: That is just the ordinary rule in a motion made in the House.

Mr. HARDACRE: When we have one concrete proposal before us it is quite right, but when we have half a dozen different things, the right way is to go into Committee to discuss the different proposals. Here is the first resolution, consisting of over five separate clauses, practically a Bill in itself. Now, if I agree to the main question, I prevent myself from moving an amendment on any of those five clauses. I intend the proper thing to do is to go into Committee, so that members will not exclude themselves from that right. Going into Committee does not take away from the Government any control over the consideration of this at all; it rather facilitates discussion and helps us to get to the particular point we are going to consider rather than discussing the thing in an irregular, haphazard kind of way. I submit that, in order to preserve the rights of hon. members in moving amendments, we should go into Committee, as suggested by the hon. the senior member for Ipswich, and discuss the matter in detail. It is no longer a question of general principle at all, but a question of Committee work, and we should get through the business much better if we went into Committee.

Mr. BOWMAN (*Fortitude Valley*): I think the proposition of the hon. the senior member for Ipswich is a very reasonable one, and it is one which I suggested to the hon. gentleman before the House met. I think it would facilitate the business of this discussion very materially if the Premier would agree to the proposition. The Premier has stated that the Standing Orders submitted by the Standing Orders Committee might never apply to any other than this session. Now, that is altogether too thin, coming from the hon. gentleman; for every member on this side, and in the House, I believe, thinks that these are here as a permanency if they are passed. I think the mistake has been on the part of the Standing Orders Committee in bringing up this progress report. It has been admitted by the Premier this afternoon that there is a necessity for the Standing Orders Committee to go through the whole of the Standing Orders, and I think that if the whole matter had been gone into it would have been much more satisfactory to the House than simply bringing in a Sessional Order, which is introduced for the express purpose of curtailing the privileges of members of this House this session.

Mr. MANN: To pass the Bible in State Schools Bill.

Mr. BOWMAN: Well, I suppose that is one of the Bills that perhaps directly affected them.

Mr. MACARTNEY: You ought to be above making a statement of that kind.

Mr. Bowman.]

Mr. BOWMAN: The object of those who have moved in the matter is to facilitate the business of the session. There may be a syndicate railway coming along. There is a forecast in the air that we are likely to have a syndicate railway, and we know what has taken place on the discussion of syndicate railways in times gone by. The object of the Government is simply to curtail the rights of hon. members this session. They have a very big programme. When speaking on this matter on Thursday last, I pointed out that there has been, with few exceptions, no long speeches from either side of the House. The Bills that have passed have gone through in as quick a time as in any previous session that I have been in the Chamber. It seems to me that the Hon. the Premier is altogether unreasonable. This is a matter that concerns perhaps himself at the present time in his desire to get business through the House, but I think he should look at it from a broader point of view than that. He is there to-day as the leader of the Government, but no one knows how long he may be there. He may be on this side at some future date, and I think the spirit which should animate hon. members in dealing with the Standing Orders is the spirit of fair play; that we should not consider what side of the House we are on, but give ample opportunity for discussion without unduly prolonging the debate on any particular question that may come before the House. I have much pleasure in supporting the proposition of the hon. senior member for Ipswich.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER (*Maranoa*): I do not think there is any doubt in the minds of hon. members as to the necessity for some limitation to speeches. If the Premier was only willing to allow this matter to go into Committee, as suggested, I believe that it would be settled very quickly.

Mr. MAX: We should have been half-way through it by this time.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: It is only natural that there is some difference of opinion between Opposition and Government members as to what this limitation should be. Personally, I am opposed to one or two of the proposals submitted by the Standing Orders Committee. The time limit is, to my mind, rather short; but the real purpose, as demonstrated by the Premier this afternoon, is that the Government have a desire to specialise this session, and to gag this House for that term, at any rate. I do not know whether it is held that this is not Government business, but it is being distinctly treated as party business. The Premier rather jocularly stated that this matter was being made a party question by being discussed in caucus by this party. I am not aware that this is the case, nor do I believe that because it is discussed in caucus it makes it a party question. It is only natural, however, to find the Opposition opposed to the privileges of the House being taken from them.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I would remind the hon. member that there is an amendment before the House. The main question is not before the House. I would ask the hon. member to confine himself to the question—That this House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the matter.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: There are many reasons why the House should go into Committee. There are a number of amendments to be dealt with, and it is not possible to deal with them in the House.

Mr. BOWMAN: It is not so satisfactory.

[*Mr. Bowman.*]

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: It is certainly not so satisfactory, and opportunity is not given to deal with the matter in a proper spirit.

We are entirely opposed to the [4.30 p.m.] time limit suggested, and if we were to go into Committee the various amendments which are in the hands of hon. members would be dealt with on their merits. If the proposed new Sessional Orders are adopted without amendment, an injustice will be done to hon. members sitting on this side who are desirous of criticising Government measures. It is not to be supposed that Government members wish to criticise Government measures the same as Opposition members. They look on them with a friendly eye, and are prepared to let them go by the board to a large extent. I have very much pleasure in supporting the amendment moved by the hon. senior member for Ipswich.

Mr. MACARTNEY (*Brisbane North*): I am not altogether out of sympathy with the amendment, because I look upon the proposed Sessional Orders as seriously affecting the privileges of hon. members on both sides of the House, and I think the matter is one that should receive the very fullest consideration. (Hear, hear!) I happen to be a member of the Standing Orders Committee, though, unfortunately, I was not present at the last meeting of the committee, and I would like to take part in the discussion of the proposed amendments before the new Sessional Orders go through; and I think it is convenient that they should be discussed in Committee. I do not look on it as a party matter; and I would like to see a meeting between the leaders on both sides and an arrangement come to for a reasonable consideration of the matter in Committee. I do not suppose that a stonewall is intended in connection with this debate.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It might, however, develop into that; and a common-sense arrangement between the leaders of the House would no doubt bring about what is desired.

Mr. NEVITT (*Carpentaria*): I am extremely sorry that the leader of the Government was not present to listen to the remarks of the hon. member for Brisbane North. I may inform the House that a suggestion was made to the Premier, before the House sat to-day, on similar lines to the suggestion of the hon. member for Brisbane North; and, when that was refused, one looks with a certain amount of suspicion on the introduction of these new Sessional Orders.

Mr. MAUGHAN: It becomes a Government matter instead of a House matter.

Mr. NEVITT: Precisely so. The last time there was an addition to the Standing Orders it was said on the Opposition side that the amendments had been discussed by the Government side before they were introduced, and afterwards it was proved that such was the case; and I think we can look with the same amount of suspicion on the present proposed addition. No doubt some of the amendments will deprive members of this Chamber of the opportunity for free and ample discussion, and it will be the means of hasty legislation, and is likely to have very serious results. No one can say that there has been undue opposition to Government business this session, because the two Bills that passed their second reading went through each at one sitting. I think that proves that we are prepared to do the country's business, and that we are treating the business of the country seriously. I am satisfied that the primary

object of the Premier is to stifle debate, and I do not think any hon. member should allow Standing Orders like these to be put through without proper discussion. It has been suggested that there is a possibility of syndicate railways being introduced this session; and, strange to say, when syndicate railways were introduced in a previous session a new Standing Order was introduced to stifle discussion. That should not be. We consider that no matter what business comes before the House, we should have ample and free discussion as long as we do not abuse the privileges contained in the Standing Orders. If the Premier will accept the amendment, he will be doing the right thing, and it will be the means of getting the business through much more quickly than the attitude he has taken up to the present time.

Mr. COYNE (*Warrego*): I am surprised that no Minister has got up to reply to the arguments adduced in favour of the amendment. The Premier introduced this new Sessional Order with the alleged object of facilitating business; but, if he really wished to facilitate business, he would accept the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Ipswich. It is characteristic of the hon. gentleman to bring forward something to disturb what harmony exists in this Chamber, and he has brought this forward in order to give himself an excuse later on, with his tongue in his cheek, of accusing the Opposition of—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have already pointed out, and I must again point out, that these recommendations for new Sessional Orders came, rightly or wrongly, from the Standing Orders Committee; and I would ask hon. members not to regard the proposal as the action of the Government, but as the action of the Standing Orders Committee.

Mr. COYNE: I quite agree with you, Mr. Speaker, that they came from the Standing Orders Committee; but I was under the impression that the Standing Orders Committee were instructed by the Premier, as head of the Government, to deal with these things. I would like to know if the Standing Orders Committee, of their own volition, without any instructions whatever, brought down these amendments to the Standing Orders.

Mr. NEVITT: They are the Premier's own amendments.

Mr. COYNE: The hon. gentleman has refused to listen to any amendments by saying that he is going to do it in his own way, and he is making Government business of it. The reason why I am supporting the amendment is because I am not in favour of curtailing the rights and privileges of hon. members. That is what members on both sides should have in view—that no rights and privileges which they possess should be curtailed. I agree that any hon. member who abuses the privileges given under the Standing Orders should be brought to book.

Mr. FORSYTH: How can he be brought to book?

Mr. COYNE: We have already a Standing Order by which the Premier or any other hon. member can move that an hon. member be no longer heard.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The proposed new Sessional Order is not before the House at present. The question is that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole. I hope hon. members will discuss that question, and not the merits of the main question.

Mr. COYNE: I was drawn away by the irrelevant observation of the hon. member for Moreton. I do not want to see any member, even in connection with this matter, lose his rights and privileges. Further than that, though the Standing Orders Committee recommended these amendments of the Standing Orders, they did not say they should be dealt with in the manner proposed by the Premier. It is for the House to adopt, reject, or amend them; and they can be best dealt with by going into Committee. Bringing the matter forward in this particular way is most offensive to any member who has the spirit of freedom. As the hon. member for Leichhardt said a while ago, it is most irregular to deal with a number of matters under one heading, and we are entitled to have some reason why the Government will not agree to go into Committee. I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment.

Mr. FERRICKS (*Bowen*): I have waited for some time to see if any reason was forthcoming from the opposite side as to why the amendment of the hon. member for Ipswich should not be accepted by the Government. As no move has been made in that direction by any hon. member on that side of the House, we must conclude that there is no good reason available. With regard to the proposal before the House, I must say that during the short time I have been a member of this Chamber I have not seen any reason for the introduction of such a Sessional Order as that to which we are asked to agree, and I can only assume that the Government have some ulterior motive in submitting the motion.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The question now before the House is that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the proposed new Sessional Order, and I must ask the hon. member not to discuss the principle of the motion, but to confine his remarks to the amendment.

Mr. FERRICKS: I think the Government should agree to accept this amendment. It is a bit too much for the Standing Orders Committee on their own initiative, or at the instigation of somebody else, to bring forward drastic proposals of this nature, and seek to ram them down the throats of hon. members. If there is no desire to stifle discussion or to make this a party question or a question introduced in the interest of the Government, what is the object in refusing to allow the House to go into Committee, where the proposal can be discussed in detail? I submit that if there were any valid reasons for such an obstinate refusal, the Premier or one of the Ministers should have the courtesy to give the House those reasons. We have heard no argument against the amendment, simply, I believe, because there is no argument that can be advanced against it. We have been given absolutely no reason for the attitude which the Government have taken up on this matter, and I say it is altogether unreasonable that we should be subjected to the indignity which the Premier proposes by his motion to inflict upon hon. members. The proposal is nothing more or less than "gag" machinery, and the Premier in effect says, "That is my proposal; take it. I will give you no reason why you should take it." In my opinion this is "gag" legislation purely and simply, and it has been introduced to enable the Government to escape the odium of actually putting on the "gag," and if that be so—

Mr. Ferricks.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! When the proper time comes the hon. member may discuss the main proposal, but he must now confine his remarks to the amendment. I may point out that the proposal in the motion is not a Government proposal, but a proposal which has come from the Standing Orders Committee, and I ask hon. members to consider it in that light.

Mr. FERRICKS: I thought, and still think, that I am justified in referring to this proposal as a Government proposal.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. FERRICKS: If it be not Government business, why does it appear under the heading of Government business? Why is it proposed by the Premier as the head of the Government? Why is it not brought forward by some member of the Standing Orders Committee, who would have the common decency to advance some argument in support of the proposal? I have no idea of continuing my remarks on the subject; but I say, if the Premier refuses to accept the amendment of the hon. member for Ipswich, that will show that it is a Government proposal; and if we go to a division on the question it will be seen whether it is a party question or not. Later on it will be seen that this proposal has been introduced to play into the hands of the Government—that it has been introduced in order to facilitate the passing of certain measures with the aid of the second edition of the gag, in preference to the old-fashioned gag.

Mr. COLLINS (*Burke*): I wish to say a few words with reference to the amendment before it goes to a division. To my mind, this proposal is an attempt to curtail my liberty of speech in this House, and also to curtail the liberties of the people I represent. That is a thing which I must very strongly object to. I do not think members have committed any crime in making unduly long speeches since I have been in the House. As a comparatively new member I, in common with other members, have endeavoured to put my views before the House in a reasonable way, and I do not think any Government should attempt to take away from us the rights and liberties which members of Parliament possess, and have possessed for a number of years. There has been a curtailment, little by little, of the rights of members of Parliament.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The question before the House is that the House should resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the proposed Sessional Order, and I must ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to that question.

Mr. COLLINS: I was trying to the best of my ability to advance arguments in favour of the amendment to go into Committee to consider the proposed new Sessional Order. There are several amendments that we are desirous of moving and discussing in order to prevent undue curtailment of speech. The proposition embodied in the motion is to a certain extent to curtail discussion. Surely Sessional Orders which curtail the rights and liberties of members should be considered in Committee! Surely no one will argue that everyone in this Chamber can expound his views on an important subject in five or ten minutes! At any rate, I am not prepared to vote for a curtailment of the right of free speech in this House. How has it happened in ancient civilisations that Parliaments have disappeared

[*Mr. Ferricks.*

and given place to autoocracies? Because little by little the autoocracy have curtailed the rights and liberties of members of Parliament, as it is proposed to do in this case. I hope the Government will see their way to accept the amendment proposed by the senior member for Ipswich, and allow a full and free discussion of the proposal now before the House

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*): I am surprised that the Premier does not accept the amendment, because in dealing with the question in Committee we should be able to deal with it far more intelligently than we shall be able to do in the House. The disadvantages of discussing such a proposal in the House are many. In the first place, any member who has spoken on the original question is debarred by the Standing Orders from speaking a second time or moving an amendment. That in itself is a handicap. Another reason why we should consider this proposal in Committee is that it is another instalment of the system of curtailment of our speeches. If this motion is put through and made a Sessional Order without discussion in Committee, the next thing we shall see is the application of the same principle to Bills, and Bills will be passed without being considered in Committee. I maintain that this proposal will curtail discussion, and I see many objections to the proposed curtailment of speech. I should like to move several amendments on the motion. If we go into Committee there are half a dozen amendments that I should like to move, but I shall be debarred from moving those amendments if the motion is dealt with in the House. Because the Premier will not allow us to avail ourselves of one of the usages of this House and one of the usages of the British Parliament, we shall not be able to move necessary amendments. The hon. member for Ipswich, in moving his amendment, pointed out that Sir Samuel Griffith, when Premier of this State, agreed to a similar proposal, and Sir Samuel is the best constitutional and legal authority we have in the Commonwealth today. As Chief Justice he holds the highest judicial position in the Commonwealth, and he has the reputation of being the first constitutional authority in Australia. The Premier may say that when Sir Samuel Griffith was the leader of a Government in this House and agreed to go into Committee to consider Standing Orders in detail, it was the whole of the Standing Orders that the House had to deal with, but I contend that, leaving out Standing Order 136A, there is more curtailment of speech proposed in this motion than was contained in the whole of those Standing Orders. Consequently, I think that, in fairness to the Opposition and in fairness to the Government—for they will not always be on the Treasury benches; they will be there only till the members of this party take their places—they should agree to the amendment. The iron fist which they now show to the Opposition may be used against them when in opposition if this Sessional Order is passed as it stands. I notice that the Chief Secretary at that particular time was the Hon. Sir Samuel Griffith, and the Colonial Treasurer was the Hon. Sir Thomas McIlwraith—another man well known in this House and in this country. The Secretary for Mines in that Administration was the Hon. William Oswald Hodgkinson; the Secretary for Railways was the Hon. Theodore Unmack; and the Secretary for Public Lands was the Hon. Alfred Cowley, who afterwards honourably filled the position

of Speaker in this House, and whose decisions were practically submitted to on nearly every occasion; and who regards the present Standing Orders as obsolete, and that this particular one is an attack on the privileges of this House. The Secretary for Public Works at that time was the Hon. Sir Horace Tozer, practically a townsman of mine—(laughter)—and who has since held the position of Agent-General—the highest position in London. Surely that in itself ought to be enough to

make the Premier agree with this [5 p.m.] proposal to go into Committee and let us have a fair and intelligent debate. The Solicitor-General was the Hon. Thomas Joseph Byrnes, an Australian. He was in the Ministry that allowed the Standing Orders to go into Committee and be discussed in detail. The Minister without portfolio—I am surprised that this last name is not the Hon. W. H. Barlow. However, it is not; it is the Hon. Walter Horatio Wilson. Those are the gentlemen who formed the Ministry at that time, and I think our present Ministry should follow the example set by a Ministry like that, and give us the opportunity of discussing this question in Committee. I am well acquainted with our Standing Orders, and I cannot give this question the discussion I should like to; and how about new members, who are unfamiliar with our Standing Orders? In fact, I notice you, Sir, have called them to order several times already, which would not happen when we get into Committee. Hon. members should have an opportunity of altering the proposed Sessional Orders so as to make them more in keeping with the spirit of liberty and order in debate. There is a good deal more I might say on this question, but I do not want to weary the House, as I should like to see some business done. At the same time, I am disappointed at the Premier, who poses in this House and in the country as the democrat of democrats, as the Premier of a progressive and democratic country, and all that sort of thing; and now he will not allow this to go into Committee. If it had gone into Committee, it would practically have gone through by now. We are tied up so now that we cannot get at the real question before the House.

Mr. FERRICKS: And they say it is not a party question.

Mr. RYLAND: Yes. Why not go into Committee, the same as on a Bill, and allow members an opportunity of moving amendments, and the matter could then be reported to the House when we have had an opportunity of dealing with it? I am not going to say any more. The Hon. the Minister for Railways is democratic enough, and so also is the Treasurer, and I am very sorry that the ultra-democrat on the front Treasury bench is not in the Chamber at the present time—I refer to the Secretary for Mines, as I am sure he would assist me in this matter. I think in all fairness we should allow this proposal to go into Committee, as we could then discuss it in a far more intelligent manner than we are able to do at the present time.

Mr. MANN (*Cairns*): The amendment before the House, as I take it, is that we go into Committee to discuss these Standing Orders set before us by the Standing Orders Committee, and it seems to me that I can give reasons for going into Committee or against going into Committee. For example, I can go through this list—there are five different paragraphs—and find fault with what is set out therein, and give reasons why we should go into Committee and amend them.

On the other hand, I may agree with them all and argue against going into Committee because I might say it is not required. On this occasion I think we do require to go into Committee, for this reason: There is a disagreement on the Government side. For example, the Premier said this afternoon that these were only Sessional Orders, and his colleague, speaking on Thursday night, at page 512 of *Hansard* No. 12, of this session, on the same debate, said—

It will be necessary to provide new copies of the Standing Orders, because if there was a general election there are not sufficient copies of the Standing Orders to go round.

The senior member for Rockhampton argued that the reason why these were brought before us was because they want to bring up and issue a more up-to-date set of Standing Orders, while the Premier said these Orders were merely Sessional Orders, and if we pass them on this occasion they may drop into disuse and may not be used after the present session. The senior member for Rockhampton, who is one of the Standing Orders Committee, framed these Standing Orders under the impression that they would be printed and embodied in the general Standing Orders; while the Premier, who has moved this motion, does not intend to have them printed in the general Standing Orders, but merely to have them put in use for the present session. Which is correct? I leave it to themselves to settle. Both are members of the Standing Orders Committee, and apparently both of these members came away from that meeting of the Standing Orders Committee with an entirely different impression as to what was to be done. I notice that you, Sir, called an hon. member to order for saying this is Government business. I do not wish to transgress by saying it is Government business. I say it is Standing Orders business, and I am going to ask the members of the Standing Orders Committee, Have they given the Premier a free hand to cram this down the throats of the House without any amendment? I am going to ask that question of each and every member of the Standing Orders Committee.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I should be glad to know how the hon. member intends to connect his remarks with the question before the House. He is now discussing Standing Orders.

Mr. MANN: I am not discussing the Standing Orders.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. member was discussing the application of the Standing Orders. The hon. member must confine his remarks to the question as to whether this House shall resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole.

Mr. MANN: I am not discussing the Standing Orders.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. MANN: Except the Standing Orders before us now, which I claim are open for discussion.

Mr. BOWMAN: Sessional Orders.

Mr. MANN: Because we are asked as to whether we should go into Committee in order to discuss them and see whether they are well enough drafted, and pass them *en bloc*, or whether—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! That is not the question before the House.

Mr. MANN: Would you kindly state the question?

Mr. Mann.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the House should go into Committee to consider the motion. The main question will come up for discussion later on, as the hon. member for Cairns knows.

Mr. MANN: I am not discussing the main question. The question is that the House should go into Committee to discuss this in detail. That, I take it, is your ruling, Sir, and for that reason I was asking the Standing Orders Committee if they had given a free hand to the Premier to pass this *en bloc*, or did they desire the Premier to have the matter discussed in Committee? That is the point I am getting at.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! The report of the Standing Orders Committee is before every hon. member, and that is the only document available. I hope that the hon. member will not pursue the line of debate he is pursuing. It is unworthy of himself and distinctly unparliamentary.

Mr. MANN: I was told by one member of the Standing Orders Committee that the whole of the Standing Orders Committee were present at the meeting, and then the member for Brisbane North got up and said he was not at the meeting, and apparently he does not agree with the Premier in wishing to pass them *en bloc* without discussion. He said so only this afternoon, and I admire him for his courage. It has been asked by the Premier why we did not move amendments to these Sessional Orders, and the reason is that if we moved amendments it may limit discussion. For example, if I moved just now to alter half an hour to one hour—of course I could only do it if the present amendment were withdrawn—if I moved such an amendment, then other hon. members getting up after me could not discuss the main question, and it is for that reason that I am now pleading with the Premier to go into Committee and discuss the whole thing in detail; and the reason is clear, inasmuch as in Committee very often information is given which reopens the whole discussion. Hon. members will remember on one occasion, when we were discussing the hours for carters, the Committee had practically finished the discussion, and they intended to limit the hours for carters and draymen, when it was pointed out that perishable products came to the Melbourne-street Station at all hours, which had to be removed immediately to save loss; and that practically reopened the whole discussion, and the whole thing was thrashed over again; and the same reason should animate members in discussing this in detail. It is a very serious proposition. For example, if you will permit me to mention it, it has been suggested that the leader of the Opposition—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MANN: I wish to say the leader of the Opposition should get more latitude—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. MANN: And if it is a fair thing—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. member appears to be desirous of coming into conflict with the Chair, and I should be sorry if he does so. That is not my desire. There is a specific question before the House, and I cannot allow him to discuss amendments which have been voiced to some extent by the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. MANN: No; I was not dealing with the leader of the Opposition in particular, but with a general case. We will assume Mr. Deakin was the leader of the Opposition. He might get certain rights which might be

[Mr. Mann.

refused to a man like Sir Josiah Symon, a man whose reputation and intellectual ability is a household word all over Australia. Under these Standing Orders, Mr. Deakin would get more latitude than would Sir Josiah Symon.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MANN: I have not the slightest desire to run counter to the Chair, but I desire to live up to the fullest limit of my powers in this House.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MANN: I am saying that under the amendment I can discuss the whole of these things, and give reasons why we should go into Committee.

Mr. BOWMAN: And the restriction you are under now is the best proof that you should do it in Committee.

Mr. MANN: I have no desire to fight with anyone—I feel too sad this afternoon—but I insist on having my fullest rights as a member of this House. (Hear, hear!) If you rule me out of order, and give me a good reason for so doing, I will submit, but if you rule me out of order and you are wrong I will stand suspension. I will stand any penalty you have a right to inflict, and if you are right and I am wrong, I will apologise, but if I am right I will stand up for my rights while I am in this Chamber.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. MANN: I have no wish to pursue this matter any further, because I am getting a bit warm, but I hope the Premier will listen to the words of wisdom which fell from the hon. member for Brisbane North this afternoon, and allow this to go into Committee to be threshed out in detail, and then there will be no necessity to pull me or any other member up.

Mr. LENNON (*Herbert*): I rise for the purpose of supporting the amendment moved by the hon. the senior member for Ipswich, whose sole object is to facilitate the full and intelligent discussion of the proposal made by the Standing Orders Committee. Now, as this is only a Sessional Order, if we are satisfied with it we might try it as an experiment, but I think it is a dangerous thing to rush and establish precedents in the management of the affairs of this House. Therefore, it is very desirable that we should not put this hastily through, but should have an opportunity of discussing it in detail in Committee, and of arriving at a proper solution of what is necessary. The discussion which has taken place this afternoon will show that on all sides of the House there appears to be a great desire that we should go into Committee. For myself, I think it is desirable that it should bring us down a consolidation of the Standing Orders—a full and complete report instead of this progress report; but since they have brought in a progress report, I suppose that we can only deal with it by an amendment such as that moved by the hon. the senior member for Ipswich, or by adopting the suggestion of the Hon. the Premier and moving amendments on the proposal set forth, but that would obviate the desire which we have to get into Committee. I think that it would be much more desirable to discuss it in Committee. We see how much hon. members are tied up in the House at present; we are limited so much by the rules of the House that we have no opportunity of discussing the side issues in connection with very important proposals submitted by the Standing Orders Committee. I think the

Chief Secretary would be well advised in the interests of the House if he were to accept the suggestions made from this side. This is a matter that does not involve the dignity of the Government; it does not concern the prestige of the Government; it is a matter that has simply to do with the privileges of members of this House, and already we have sufficient of the gag and the guillotine, without passing hastily, without full consideration, measures of a like character. Now as to the limitation of speeches. I suppose if I were to enlarge upon it, I would be told that I could not go into the general question at all, and that I have to restrict myself to this particular amendment to go into Committee. As I have already stated, we know that we have not the proper facilities for dealing with it in the House, as we would have in Committee. I know that there is no desire on the part of any hon member on this side to do anything to conflict with the Standing Orders, if we can all feel that they confer not only due power to each individual member but will also tend to the proper conduct of business in this House. I am sure no member on this side desires to do anything more than that, and we think there is no need whatever for a progress report being brought down and rushed through, as it appears to be the desire of the Hon. the Chief Secretary to do, in one day. The business of this House has gone on very satisfactorily indeed this session; we have passed the second reading of the Redistribution of Seats Bill and also the Mines Regulation Bill with brief debate. Had there been any exhibition of undue verbosity on the part of members in delivering long speeches, I think the action of the Hon. the Chief Secretary might have been justified, but, so far as the business of the House has gone this session, it reflects credit on the members that they have abstained from any undue length in their speeches, and the measures named have passed through in record time. I hope that the Chief Secretary will see his way to accept the amendment of the senior member for Ipswich, which I have much pleasure in supporting.

Mr. THEODORE (*Wootthakata*): I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment. I thought of it before it was moved by the hon. senior member for Ipswich, but not being thoroughly conversant with the rules of procedure, I thought it was perhaps not the best way of dealing with the question before us. I was rather surprised the other day that something of this sort was not introduced. It was the opinion of some hon. members that the correct way of dealing with the alterations would be to go into Committee, and anyone who gives the matter any thought can see that that will be the best way of dealing with the question, because on the main question, as moved by the Premier, a member can speak only once, and if he moves one amendment he cannot move a second amendment, nor speak again to the main question, and other speakers who come after are confined to that amendment. It must be admitted that the best method of dealing with the matter would be in Committee, when members would have ample opportunity of discussing the principles of the proposed alterations, and of moving amendments themselves. The position at present is this: If there are thirty members on this side who wish to speak, and twenty of them speak to the general principle of the proposed Sessional Orders without moving amendments, they then forfeit the right to move an amendment afterwards, or to speak

again upon the main question. Then the ten members who are left can move only ten amendments. That is the awkward position the House finds itself in. Hon. members on the front Government bench should look at the matter in a reasonable light, and allow members full opportunity of getting in any amendments they desire. This matter was under discussion in 1892, when there was a proposal to alter the Standing Orders, and, after four hon. members had spoken, it occurred to one hon. member that the best way would be to consider matters in Committee. They probably found themselves in the same difficulty in which we find ourselves now—hon. members who had spoken had forfeited their right to get in any alteration of the Standing Orders in the way they desired. Mr. Salkeld at that time gave arguments as to why it should be considered in Committee, and the proposal was accepted by the then Chief Secretary.

Mr. MAUGHAN: And the whole House.

Mr. THEODORE: He gave such logical arguments that I think I can support my case by quoting them. Mr. Salkeld had decided to move an amendment that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the proposed alteration. At first, apparently, the Chief Secretary did not seem disposed to accept the proposed amendment, but after arguments had been adduced he accepted it. Mr. Salkeld said—

I think that in such an important matter as that of amending the Standing Orders we ought to have an opportunity of considering it in Committee. I have never been present in the House when new Standing Orders have been passed.

And that is the position of the majority of hon. members now. He goes on to say—

And I am not aware whether it is the rule to pass them *in globo*, as we are asked to do this evening.

Exactly the same position as we find ourselves in now; we do not know whether it is a set practice. They laid down a precedent there that can well be followed by the present Administration if they have any influence in this matter. The Deputy Speaker has assured us that in the matter of the introduction of the proposed alteration the Chief Secretary is not responsible; that he is merely carrying out the procedure adopted on other occasions, and bringing the report forward on behalf of the Standing Orders Committee. But still he can surely see the logic of this, and, if he is the disinterested person he would have us believe, allow the House to go into Committee to discuss the clauses of the proposal in detail, and allow us an opportunity of making any amendments we desire. Mr. Salkeld goes on to say—

I see no reason why they should not be considered in the same way as Bills brought before the House.

That is the position in this case. The proposed amendments of the Standing Orders amount to something of more importance to the Opposition than any Bill that is likely to come afterwards, or any Bill that is likely to be rushed through the House in consequence of the altered Standing Orders; and surely we should have the same privilege of discussing the general principles of the proposed alteration, and a fair opportunity of getting any amendments we desire as we have in connection with a Bill. Mr. Salkeld went on to say—

The whole code is far more important than one-half the Bills brought before the House, as some of its provisions affect the very principle of deliberative assemblies.

Mr. Theodore.]

Exactly the same thing applies in this case. He goes on to say—

I remember one case in which the hon. gentleman himself, as leader of the Opposition, led the members stonewalling the vote of £1,000,000 for unspecified railways.

If any inquiring member were to go into records of the past, I have no doubt he could find any amount of instances [5.30 p.m.] where the present Chief Secretary led stonewalls of a similar nature, and I think he should accept the suggestion to go into Committee on this occasion. Mr. Salkeld, towards the conclusion of his speech, used these words—

It is manifestly impossible to discuss the whole of these rules in second-reading speeches, and the best way would be to take them one at a time in Committee. For their own sake, and for the sake of the rules themselves, the Government ought to adopt that plan.

Exactly that argument can be applied in this case—not from any selfish standpoint, but with the desire to see the Standing Orders made as perfect as possible. He says—

The rules would certainly get through far more quickly. Some of the most objectionable rules are like needles covered up in a bundle of hay, and surely the Government do not want to carry them under cover of the more innocent ones.

Is there anything in the proposals that so suits the Government that they would like to have them debated *in globo* in order that the apparently innocent ones may cover up the more insidious ones? He goes on to say—

Why not let each rule stand on its own merits, as is done with regard to clauses in Bills?

I do not know whether that is the intention of the hon. member who moved the amendment, but I think it is a very wise provision. While Mr. Salkeld was speaking, the Chief Secretary interjected—

That would give an opportunity for 336 separate debates in Committee.

To that Mr. Salkeld replied—

That is no argument against it. If there are 500 clauses in a Bill they are all taken one after the other; and it has been found that that is the best way of getting on with business, and at the same time giving to the majority of members the opportunity of deciding what they wish. I have often heard the hon. gentleman himself, after listening to suggestions and arguments in Committee, amend clauses in accordance with the fresh light that has been thrown upon the subject during the discussion. Something of the same kind may happen with regard to these Standing Orders. But if we are to be confined to a second-reading debate, no practical suggestions can be offered. I will not delay the House any longer, but will conclude by moving—That the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolutions.

That is exactly the position now. Under the Premier's proposal we might have full discussion on the general principles, but we would not have an opportunity of advocating any amendments we may think necessary to bring the Standing Orders up to what we think they should be. When the proposal was put in that light by Mr. Salkeld, the Chief Secretary replied—

Mr. Speaker,—I should be very sorry if the House adopted the Standing Orders without fully considering them. The House ought to know exactly what it means. I have always taken up that view. The only thing I am afraid of is that there may be some intention of getting into Committee and there obstructing so as to take up so much time that we cannot get through the work at all. If I thought there was any intention to do that, I should be disposed not to assent to the amendment.

[Mr. Theodore.

The Chief Secretary this afternoon did not raise that objection. He has enough faith in the Opposition to think we are anxious to get on with business in a legitimate manner; and as long as the Government proposals are fair enough, and we get a fair opportunity of moving amendments, there will be no obstruction.

Mr. RYLAND: The Opposition on that occasion did not obstruct in Committee.

Mr. THEODORE: No. The thing went through all the more amicably, and the result was all the better for the Standing Orders; and I think the same will apply in this case. In conclusion, the Chief Secretary said—

I am quite sure the hon. member who moves the resolution has no such intention, and I am therefore disposed, unless the House is of a contrary opinion, to assent to the amendment; but I should say that I think that when we get into Committee it will not be necessary to take all the rules *seriatim*. They may be taken in chapters, and in that way we can discuss the really debatable ones. On the whole, unless the House really desires that we should not go into Committee, I am disposed to assent to the amendment.

I think the Chief Secretary took up a reasonable attitude in 1892; and I may say that in that year they revised the whole of the Standing Orders. It was all done in a short space of time, without recrimination or accusations of ulterior motives; and I think the same friendly spirit will prevail in this case if the Government will assent to the suggestion of the hon. member for Ipswich and allow us to go into Committee.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (*Kennedy*): I am entirely in accord with the amendment moved by the hon. member for Ipswich; and I look upon the proposal of the leader of the Government as being ineffective for the treatment of the matter in an effective form. To my mind, the proposal of the Premier is what I might term emasculating the powers of this House. I do not think that is a very nice proposal for us to adopt, and I think the best way is to thrash the matter out in Committee of the Whole. It is a serious matter, and we can do it far more effectively in that way, because there may be many amendments necessary to protect the rights and privileges of members in debate. If these matters were adopted in the drastic manner in which they have been presented, it would very much curtail full and free discussion; therefore, the matter would be very much better discussed in Committee. When we hear such professions of democracy from members on the other side, one would think they would be glad to accept this amendment. The Home Secretary prides himself on his great democracy—I believe many people outside take him to be so, though I do not—and if he would use his influence with his colleagues in this matter with the object of going into Committee, we would be able to give him credit for putting into practice a few of those professions of democracy which we generally smile at. As the hon. member for Woothakata pointed out, when the leader of the Government in 1892 heard the arguments advanced in favour of going into Committee, without any loss of dignity he complied with the wishes of members; and I think hon. members opposite should assist to maintain their rights here on this occasion. They may shortly find themselves in the position of the fusion party in the Federal Parliament—fighting for their lives. It is all very well for

them to smile at us here; but though they have the upper hand at present, they do not know what may happen, and we are willing to give to members opposite what we are trying to get for ourselves.

The PREMIER: Then it will not do us any harm.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Not much harm, but you will be squealing just the same. When they see the broad way we are looking at it—that we are protecting the liberties of the whole of the members by asking that this be discussed in Committee—they will rise up and bless us when they are here in Opposition a short time hence. If you snatch away the liberties of the representatives of the people, there may soon be a serious onslaught on the liberties of those whom we represent; and we should go into Committee to discuss these new Standing Orders effectively, and make them as good as we can. Speaking as a new member, I do not think I have trespassed on the goodwill of the House, and I do not think any member I have seen here has done so. I think it is the duty of any member speaking on the business of the country to do so in the best possible manner he can, and, therefore, I ask that we may be allowed to go into Committee so as to deal most effectively with these new Standing Orders. I think we have shown that we do not wish to do anything detrimental to the progress of business; and, had the reasonable request of members here been conceded, we might have had this argument over by now. The country would be benefited, and I do not think there would be any loss of dignity on the part of hon. gentlemen occupying the Treasury benches if the Government accepted the amendment without further discussion. I hope they will see their way to do so, and that when we get into Committee those objectionable features of the motion will be amended so as to meet the reasonable wishes of members on this side of the House. The whole matter can be more fully and effectively dealt with in Committee than in the House, and I hope to hear the hon. members on the other side advocating that course. They ought not to be silent when their liberties are being practically snatched from them, and they should not allow government in this State to become what I may call Cabinet government. I trust that we shall have the pleasure of seeing that they intend to maintain the privileges of members of this House, and that we shall waste no more time over the discussion of this amendment. The country wants to see work done, and members on this side have shown that they desire to work. There has been no waste of time up to the present, and there will be no waste of time if the amendment is accepted in the same spirit in which it has been proposed. I hope the Government will agree to go into Committee to consider the details of the proposed Sessional Order.

Mr. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): I do not think the manner in which the Premier has received the amendment is conducive to the expediting of the business of the House. The procedure proposed by the senior member for Ipswich is the same procedure as was adopted by Sir Samuel Walker Griffith when he was Premier of Queensland and introduced amended Standing Orders. There are a lot of propositions contained in the new Sessional Order that we are asked to agree to, and those propositions can only be thrashed out in detail in Committee. Hon. members on this side of the House have shown that they are not against a curtailment of the length of speeches in a reasonable way, and surely we can differ in opinion as

to what is a fair and reasonable curtailment of speech. There are some of the propositions in this motion which are considered by members on this side to be rather drastic, and I think the best way to deal with them is to go into Committee and deal with them in the same way as we deal with the clauses of a Bill. There is no member on the other side, not even a Minister, who has given the House any reason why the amendment should not be accepted. It seems that members over there are all muzzled, and that the Premier has said to them, "This motion has got to go through as I have presented it to the House, or not go through at all." That seems to be the attitude of members opposite.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Except the member for Brisbane North.

Mr. HAMILTON: I believe the hon. member for Brisbane North, Mr. Macartney, spoke in favour of the amendment, but I did not hear him speak, and while I have been in the Chamber no member on the Government side of the House has spoken on the proposal. It seems to me that they are muzzled. Neither the hon. member for Wide Bay nor the member for Warwick nor any other member is game to get up and say whether they approve or disapprove of this proposal. Why do not hon. members opposite get up and say whether they approve or disapprove of the proposal? If they approve of the amendment of the member for Ipswich, let them get up and say so, and if they disapprove of it let them give their reasons for doing so. I think the proper way to deal with this matter would be, not to bring up merely a progress report from the Standing Orders Committee—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HAMILTON: I may be out of order in referring to that, but I think the whole matter should be dealt with, and that we should follow the procedure adopted some years ago, and go into Committee and consider the Standing Orders in detail, not as one proposition, as we are asked to do in the motion before the House. The amendment of the hon. senior member for Ipswich is a fair one. Even in the first motion there are three or four different matters which should be dealt with in detail, and we know very well that in the House a member can speak only once, and having spoken he forfeits his right to move an amendment later on. I do not think that the proposal of the Premier is a good way to expedite the business of the House, and I think hon. members opposite should resent the attitude adopted by the hon. gentleman in saying, "You must be quiet; you must not open your mouths; you must be like dumb dogs, and not express approval or disapproval of the proposition." I hope the amendment will commend itself to members opposite, and that it will be carried.

Mr. FOLEY (*Townsville*): I have been trying to find some reason why hon. members opposite do not think it worth their while to speak for or against the amendment, but I can find none. There has been one exception in this respect; the hon. member for Brisbane North, Mr. Macartney, has spoken, but he is the only member on that side who has spoken on the amendment.

The PREMIER: You might explain why every member on the other side thinks it necessary to repeat that.

Mr. Foley.]

Mr. FOLEY: In reply to the hon. gentleman, I may say that members on this side see the necessity of moving several amendments to the motion proposed by the leader of the Government. In fact, there are no less than three amendments necessary in the first paragraph of the motion, and the reason for the amendment which the hon. senior member for Ipswich has moved is that in Committee we shall have a better chance of bringing forward those amendments than we should have in the House. If the House went into Committee there would be a better chance of discussing those amendments. I feel sure that members opposite cannot agree with the proposition which has been introduced by the Premier, because they must know that the present Government will not hold office for ever. There have been changes of Government in the past, and there will be changes in the future. I do not know how short or how long the time may be when we shall see the present Government party sitting on this side of the House. They have sat here before, and there is no reason why they should not sit here again. It has always been the Opposition who have complained about the curtailment of speech when the gag has been applied, and when the party now in power are in opposition they will no doubt complain about the curtailment of speech, especially if this new Sessional Order is passed; so that there is every reason why members opposite should state whether they are in favour of or against the proposed new rule. In my opinion, the only way in which we can get the question properly discussed is by going into Committee. I certainly am in favour of the amendment, and I trust that members generally will see that it is a fair proposal. As has been pointed out by several speakers on this side, there is a precedent for what we are asking. In 1892 the same course as that now proposed was adopted, and it was adopted by men who had been in parliamentary life for many years, some of them very good authorities on constitutional law and parliamentary practice. And if they considered the procedure a good one, then there is no reason why it should not be a good procedure to-day. Every fair-minded man must admit that in order to make this proposed Sessional Order as good as we can make it, it is necessary that members should have an opportunity of moving amendments. I therefore urge upon all members the wisdom of accepting the amendment. If the amendment had been accepted when it was proposed, I feel sure that half of the proposed Sessional Order would have been finished by this time, and the whole business would not have occupied more than a couple of hours. The proposed new rule is a two-edged sword, which can cut both ways. It may cut the Opposition to-day, and if it does it will cut the Opposition in the future in the same way. Therefore, it behoves every member on both sides of the House to give the matter the fullest and most serious consideration. With regard to the amendments that we propose to move, it is not intended that every member shall take full advantage of his opportunity to discuss every amendment.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. FOLEY: Well, I shall say nothing further about what was intended. I think the matter should be dealt with in Committee, and I urge members to accept the amendment.

Mr. McLACHLAN (*Fortitude Valley*): I desire to say a few words in support of the

[*Mr. Foley.*

amendment moved by the hon. member for Ipswich. I am certainly of the opinion that the means proposed by the amendment is by far the best manner in which we can discuss the recommendations submitted

[7 p.m.] to us by the Standing Orders Committee. A good deal of time has been occupied already since these proposals were brought down, and I am certainly convinced that had a means, such as is proposed in the amendment, been adopted at the earlier stage of this discussion, the debate would not have lasted nearly so long, and the probability is that the whole of the Sessional Orders as submitted would have been passed—in an amended form, no doubt. At all events, the matter would have been finished and the House would have been able to get on with other business. It has been argued that there is no precedent for the course suggested by the amendment, but the hon. member for Woothakata, in the course of his very able speech, pointed out conclusively that there is a precedent to be found in the annals of this House for the taking of the suggestions of the Standing Orders Committee in Committee of this House, inasmuch as in 1892 the whole of the Standing Orders were then considered in Committee, even although they were first introduced in the House practically in the same manner that we are asked to discuss the Sessional Orders at the present time. If it were right to discuss the whole of the Standing Orders when they were being amended in Committee, surely it is equally right, when we have such important amendments to our Standing Orders as is proposed at the present time—that it is equally logical to ask that they be considered in exactly the same way; and if no precedent could be found for considering the Sessional Orders in this way, I think this House would be quite within its rights in establishing a precedent as on a previous occasion. I have noticed in the course of that debate that arguments were brought to show that no precedent could be found for the course then adopted, but the wisdom of the House on that occasion went to show that the better way to consider matters of this kind was to take them in Committee of the Whole, and, that being so, on the occasion referred to a precedent was established. I am of the opinion that we should again, if it is necessary, establish a precedent to give effect to the amendment moved by the hon. member for Ipswich, and that the Premier and the hon. members sitting behind the Government should be prepared to allow this motion to be carried and the House go into Committee and consider the many amendments that will be moved, some of which have already been foreshadowed in the speech of the leader of the Opposition. In discussing the proposals as we are asked to discuss them at the present time, we cannot give that full and free consideration to the drastic amendments to our Standing Orders which are contained in the motion, which should be given to them by a deliberative Assembly such as this is. This proposal is one that will very materially interfere with the right of members, not only for the present session but probably for a much longer period, and, that being so, I think members of this House should very seriously consider any proposal which will have the effect of curtailing the privileges of members in this Chamber. To give that ample discussion to these proposed Sessional Orders which is necessary, the only way it can be secured is by going into Committee. If we consider them in the House we can only address ourselves to the main question once, and, having

spoken to the main question, we will not be in a position to move amendments, as has already been pointed out.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! I would ask the hon. member to connect his remarks with the question before the House.

Mr. McLACHLAN: It is very necessary to bring in amendments to this particular Standing Order that can only be brought forcibly before this Chamber by having them discussed in Committee. If we go into Committee, as has been suggested, we can take each clause of these proposed Standing Orders as a separate item, and discuss it in the same way as we discuss the different clauses of a Bill in Committee. To my mind this is nothing more or less than a Bill, and a Bill about which all that need be said could be said at the Committee stage. As I stated at the commencement of my remarks, a good deal of time has already been occupied—I am not prepared to say time has been wasted, because I do not agree with the statements made that we, on this side of the House, waste time, because we do not. The time occupied in discussing these matters has been considerable, but it has not been wasted, and I certainly think that even at this late hour the Premier should see the wisdom of withdrawing from the position which he has taken up—and he is practically compelling his followers to take up the same position—and allow the amendment to be passed. We would then get into Committee, and the amendments which will be proposed, I think, will be of such a nature that they will commend themselves to the hon. members opposite, and will practically be accepted without debate. In fact, in some of the speeches delivered by the hon. members opposite, we have had foreshadowed ideas which practically embody some of the amendments which will be moved, so I trust the leader of the Government will see his way clear to accept the amendment, as I feel sure that when the House gets into Committee, if the Premier will permit that course to be adopted, no great time will be occupied in discussing the various amendments that will be submitted.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Charters Towers*): I should like to make a few remarks on the amendment before it goes to a division, and at the very first I should like to say that the "sweet reasonableness" of the amendment should have recommended itself, not only to the House but also to the Premier himself, when we commenced business this afternoon. I am well aware it is not within the province of the present debate to discuss the main question, and I have no desire to do so, except so far as to say that on the general principle I think the House is agreed, and what is really before the House at the present time is the question of method of dealing with the Standing Orders. The opinion has been expressed on this side of the House that the best method would be for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole and deal with these questions *seriatim*, and while many arguments have been used and opinions expressed on this side of the House which go to confirm that view, I think the Premier himself gave some of the best reasons why that method should have been adopted. He admitted when he spoke that it was not very wise, nor did he expect the House to pass these measures *in globo*, but he asked that the measures be discussed in the House. Everyone must know that that is not the usual method adopted in this House in dealing with questions of this kind, and, at the same time, it would be just as reasonable to ask hon.

members to make amendments in detail to Bills with the House as constituted as it is to ask hon. members to make amendments at the present time, and for that reason, if these amendments to our Standing Orders are to be dealt with effectively, they must be dealt with by the House in Committee, for the reason that the privilege of members will be exhausted in all probability before all the amendments that they might desire could be made, and we are dealing not merely with normal conditions but with conditions that may apply not only to the present but also to the future; and, in addition to this, the Premier practically admits that the suggestions before the House at the present time should not be made part and parcel of the Standing Orders. If he had thought so, he would certainly have gone into Committee. He has not done so, and has admitted that he only wants to make them a Sessional Order—that he only wants to give them a trial—he only wants to put them in operation and see how they work, and that is an evidence that the work is not complete. It seems to me rather unreasonable to bring what is practically a half-completed work before the House and expect us to accept it without a free and full discussion in Committee. I think that is a very strong reason, in addition to the previous one, why the House should have gone into Committee at the very commencement. While the time has not been wasted, still, if the House had gone into Committee at the commencement of the business, we would have been able to get on with other business at the present time. Of that I feel quite confident. Then it seems that the Premier has taken up a particular attitude and he does not care to recede from that attitude. The amendment moved by the hon. the senior member for Ipswich, Mr. Maughan, recommends itself to members sitting on this side and also to members sitting on the other side, and I believe if they expressed their opinions they would support the amendment. In times gone by, the Premier has adopted a similar attitude to what he has taken up this afternoon, and has been somewhat reluctant to recede from that attitude, and yet when circumstances have arisen which have compelled him to do so, he has said that the strong man was one who could bend without breaking. Now, I think he could recede without any loss of dignity, or without any undue strain either to his position as Premier or to his manliness, and accept the amendment, and let the House get to business. Whatever members opposite may think about it, the duty of the Opposition is to look after the rights and privileges of this House, and while there may not seem any necessity at the present time for introducing this question, when they are placed in the Standing Orders we want to know that the liberties and privileges which you, Sir, claim for this House at the commencement of each Parliament, are not infringed or curtailed. There is not a member on this side who is desirous of wasting the time of the House, but we think it is our duty and privilege to see that opportunity is given for a full and free discussion on every measure that comes before us, and we want to be quite sure that, not only on ordinary occasions but on extraordinary occasions, these opportunities will not be so curtailed that there will not be free discussion for every member. For these reasons I think that the Premier might well have accepted the amendment, so that the House might have gone into Committee to deal with this question *seriatim*, and I feel sure that hon. members on this side would have

Mr. Winstanley.]

brought forth amendments and adduced arguments for these alterations which would have been sufficient to convince the Premier himself, and the work would have been done much quicker than it will be done under existing conditions. I hope that even now, in the interests of business, the Premier will accept the amendment of the hon. senior member for Ipswich.

Mr. PAYNE (*Mitchell*): I am in favour of this matter being considered by a Committee of the Whole House. I find that in New Zealand the matter was dealt with in such a manner, and not decided in the way in which the Chief Secretary is endeavouring to do it here. The Standing Order will not affect me much one way or the other, as I can say what I have to say in a short time, but I think it is the duty of every member to see that the liberties of the representatives of the people are not taken away. I trust the Premier will see his way to decide this matter by referring it to a Committee of the Whole House, considering that New Zealand adopted that course, and as New Zealand is the only place in the British Empire which has adopted such rules, I think we should act in the same way.

Mr. RYAN (*Barcoo*): Seeing that there is likely to be a division on this question, I would like to say a word in support of the amendment of the hon. senior member for Ipswich. It seems to me that the amendment only contemplates applying to the deliberations of this House the same form that we apply to legislation that we pass through the House to govern the country. Now, the procedure of having a Bill dealt with in Committee is designed to have a free, full, and detailed discussion on every particular proposal in the Bill, and to enable every hon. member to have an opportunity of dealing with it. Now, what is good enough and necessary in dealing with a measure for the government of the country I think ought to be good enough and necessary for governing the procedure regarding the deliberations of this House. We have the precedent conceded, I suppose, by the greatest constitutional lawyer—the greatest constitutional authority—we have ever had here, Sir Samuel Walker Griffith. No doubt the leader of the Government despises constitutional authority and everybody, so long as he has the force behind him to drive through a proposal such as he is trying to drive through to-night. But we have the satisfaction of knowing that this amendment is moved by a gentleman who is thoroughly acquainted with the procedure of this House, who happens to be a member of the Standing Orders Committee, and who no doubt feels that the discussion which took place before that Committee should be referred to this House as the final court of appeal, and he wishes to have it referred in such a way that every member should have the opportunity of discussing the details of this particular proposal.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: In addition to that, we have the satisfaction of the support of the junior member for Brisbane North, who also happens to be a member of the Standing Orders Committee; and I say in all sincerity that in the support of the hon. member we have the support of the gentleman who is most competent, from his professional training and general experience, to be able to pass an opinion on such a matter as this on that side of the House. The Premier interjects why do we keep repeating this?

[*Mr. Winstanley.*

The PREMIER: Because you would have nothing to say. (Laughter.)

Mr. RYAN: The hon. gentleman does not like it. I feel that in having the support of the hon. junior member for Brisbane North we have the support of the most competent man on that side of the House to speak on a question of this kind, and I think that the leader of the Government ought to show that deference to the capacity of the hon. member as to give way to him on a subject where he feels that he is more competent to judge than he is himself. With these few remarks I shall resume my seat.

Mr. ALLEN (*Bullooi*): I think the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Ipswich is a most reasonable one, and that if the Premier was really genuine in his desire to facilitate business in this Chamber he would see the reasonableness of the proposal, and accept it at once. I make bold to say that had this amendment been accepted when it was first proposed we should have finished the discussion now. We would have had time to go through the various clauses of this Sessional Order. There is no necessity for any lengthy discussion on any of them; hon. members would have been prepared to vote and have done with them. But it seems to me that the powers that be on the opposite side do not regard this House at all as a deliberative Chamber. They look upon us as a registration Chamber, to simply put our seal to any proposal brought down by the Government. For my part, I will always make one to object to such a way of dealing with public business. It is only reasonable to grant to those members who will be affected by these rules every facility to discuss the whole matter from every possible point of view, to thrash out every debatable point in the motion, and come to a satisfactory conclusion. Some hon. members opposite seem to think that anything the Premier brings along is right, that there is no need for discussion, and that simply because he says it that is an end to it. That may be very well for some hon. members, but there are some members here who are not prepared to swallow holus-bolus any proposal brought along by the Premier or any of his Ministers. We think that every motion brought before the House, whether it is a Bill or whether it relates to a new law or a Sessional Order, should be subjected to the most severe criticism, and that if we suggest any improvements, the Premier or the Minister in charge should not shut up like a book, and keep all his followers shut up too, but should listen and combat our arguments. However, there seems to be a "conspiracy of silence" on the other side of the House, and it appears to me that during this last week or two the Cabinet are looking for the lash; they don't appear to conduct the business in a rational manner, or in a manner of "sweet reasonableness."

The PREMIER: Of which you approve.

Mr. ALLEN: It is just as well to have our approval as to have our ire. The Premier seems to have taken up the position that he has got a majority behind him, of which he is going to make the best possible use, going even so far as to refuse us reasonable facilities for the discussion of motions. Some members on this side regard this proposal as being very drastic, and that there is no saying where its limits will be. The Premier lends every support to that belief by the manner in which he has been treating the amendment of the hon.

member for Ipswich. I hope that, even at this eleventh hour, the Premier will review his former decision, and meet this side of the House half way at least. If he does that I think he will find that it will be for the convenience not only of himself but of the whole House half way at least. If he does that I ducting business and accepting no suggestion from the Opposition side of the House, simply because it is in opposition, does not tend to produce a good feeling in the Chamber, but if the Ministry are looking for a fight—

Mr. TOLMIE: For a lash.

Mr. ALLEN: For a lash, as the hon. member for Toowoomba says, I have not the least doubt in promising that they will get quite enough from this side of the House, and more than they expect. I do not desire to speak longer on the question, but I hope we shall be successful in carrying the amendment.

Mr. MAY (*Finders*): I had no intention of getting up to speak on this question, but, seeing that everyone on this side has had a turn, I do not see why I should [7.30 p.m.] not have my say. (Hear, hear!) I rise to support the amendment of the senior member for Ipswich; and I think the whole of this discussion could have been avoided if the Premier had accepted the amendment. The whole of the clauses could have been thrashed out as far as this Sessional Order is concerned, and we would have come to some finality. I do not wish to detain the House, but I protest against the Premier's action in not accepting this reasonable amendment. The hon. member for Brisbane North, Mr. Macartney, is the only member sitting on the other side who has spoken, but I believe that there are several others on that side who are in favour of going into Committee. They would like to speak on this question, but they are sitting in the background waiting. They will be whipped in by the two "Whips" on the Government side, whereas we have only one "Whip," and they will carry their point at the point of the bayonet, so to speak. I trust, however, there are members on the Government side who will have the courage of their opinions, and vote with us when the question goes to a division.

Mr. CRAWFORD (*Fitaroy*): I wish to say one word by way of protesting against the manner in which the Premier is treating this House. In none of my reading of parliamentary procedure have I found an instance in which a Premier has attempted to ride roughshod over the liberties of the representatives of the people. I am learning, and I am going to act on my learning in regard to the Premier's attitude. I was not sent here to allow my liberties as a representative to be flched away without entering my protest, which I shall repeat in a more emphatic form whenever I meet my constituents. If these new Sessional Orders are carried, I shall be prevented from making use of the knowledge and experience I was sent here to make use of. I do not wish to incur your displeasure, Mr. Speaker, by going into the details on the amendment or on the motion. The Premier wishes to see the battle set in array, the one side having very long spears, and the other side very short ones; and we can see on whose side the battle will be. I repeat my emphatic protest against the method in which the Premier is attempting to pass these new Standing Orders.

Mr. FERRICKS: Ramming them down the throats of members.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted (*Mr. Maughan's amendment*) be so inserted—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 27.

Mr. Allen	Mr. Lennon
" Barber	" Mann
" Blair	" Maughan
" Bowman	" May
" Collins	" Mulcahy
" Coyne	" Mullan
" Crawford	" Nevitt
" Douglas	" O'Sullivan
" Ferricks	" Payne
" Foley	" Ryan
" Hamilton	" Ryland
" Hardacre	" Theodore
" Hunter, J. M.	" Winstanley
" Land	

Tellers: Mr. Ferricks and Mr. Theodore.

NOES, 34.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Hodge
" Barnes, G. P.	" Hunter, D.
" Barnes, W. H.	" Keogh
" Booker	" Kidston
" Bouchard	" Mackintosh
" Brennan	" Paget
" Bridges	" Petrie
" Corser	" Philip
" Cottell	" Rankin
" Cribb	" Roberts
" Denham	" Somerset
" Forrest	" Stodart
" Forsyth	" Swayne
" Grant	" Thom
" Grayson	" Tolmie
" Gunn	" Walker
" Hawthorn	" White

Tellers: Mr. Walker and Mr. White.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Breslin, Mr. McLachlan, and Mr. Murphy.

Noes—Mr. Fox, Mr. Morgan, and Mr. Wienholt.

Resolved in the negative.

Original motion stated.

Mr. THEODORE: I rise to object to the alteration of the Standing Orders in the direction indicated in the Premier's motion. I think it would be unwise on the part of the Opposition to give assent to such drastic alterations.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. THEODORE: While we recognise the reasonableness of having some limitation of speeches, we cannot discover the wisdom of muzzling ourselves by accepting this motion. I must confess that I am not well acquainted with rules of procedure and parliamentary practice. I have been in the House too brief a time to have a thorough knowledge of all the rules governing debate, but still I know full well the evils of a proposal which will be the means of bringing about an automatic gag. That is how it suggests itself to my mind. I can point out that we have ample provision in our present Standing Orders which are quite competent to provide against any undue waste of time. Since I have been in the House that provision has been put into operation by the hon. gentleman who seeks now to carry these drastic proposals. If there is any occasion for drastic measures to prevent a useless stonewall, then the best thing is to put into operation Standing Orders that have been found ample to meet all emergencies in this Legislative Assembly, and are all that are in force in other countries, and to allow the Opposition to retain that liberty of debate that they should have in discussing public business. The Opposition should be given a fair amount of time in which to express their opinions. I have no sympathy with the hon. member who gets on the nerves of the House by inflicting himself on other hon. members by orating in a desultory manner for three or four hours. Still, every member should be given full opportunity of

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saying what he has to say, even if it takes him an hour or two hours. This proposal is altogether too drastic, both for second-reading speeches and in Committee. I do not agree with the general proposal at all. I have no serious objection, nor have members of the Opposition, as an Opposition, to a time limit to speeches, but let it be a reasonable limit, and do not compel us to accept anything that amounts to an automatic gag that will come into operation whether we like it or not. As soon as a certain amount of time elapses under the proposed alterations, the gag will come into force and we can then say no more. The present Standing Orders protect the Government and protect the House sufficiently in the matter of discussion. I have not heard the Premier give any reason why it is necessary to introduce this Standing Order at this stage of our proceedings. During this session there has been no undue waste of time, nor was there last session, in my opinion. At any rate, he has not attempted to justify this drastic alteration. I know that for many years the Queensland Parliament had no limit whatever to the debate. I believe it was the hon. the senior member for Townsville who first introduced the notorious Standing Order 136A. I know that when he introduced it he expressed his reluctance at introducing it, but the members of the Opposition accepted his assurance of reluctance with a certain amount of salt. Still, he gave that assurance. The present Premier does not give that assurance on this occasion.

The PREMIER: Not the slightest. (Laughter.)

Mr. THEODORE: It was a remarkable fact that after the introduction of that Standing Order of which I have spoken some syndicate railways were introduced. Now, I would not say that the Standing Orders Committee were in collusion with the Government in this matter—I would not say that at all, but I can say this, perhaps: That if the Premier did not invite this Standing Orders Committee to make this drastic alteration, he, at any rate, accepted it with a great amount of pleasure. It is quite possible that, contemplating the introduction of some legislation to which the Opposition will strongly object, and instead of putting his august self to the trouble of moving the gag, the hon. member accepted this and will allow it to work automatically.

Mr. RYLAND: Just like clockwork.

Mr. THEODORE: After the Premier has finished with the Standing Orders and leaves the Treasury benches, it is more than likely that he will not come over into opposition at all, but will disappear from public life altogether. Consequently, the operation of the proposed Standing Order will not adversely affect him.

Mr. FERRICKS: He is in his last trench now.

Mr. THEODORE: After he gets this Standing Order into operation, he will come down with another proposal for an alteration of the Standing Orders whereby the Opposition will be completely effaced. We might just as well stay away altogether. I propose to amend the motion by deleting the words "half an hour" on line 1 of paragraph 1, and inserting the words "forty-five minutes." The object of the amendment is to give hon. members more time when they are discussing any matter before the House other than the Address in Reply. I think, personally, that half an hour is too short for general discussion. There are any number of members who can say all they have to say in half an hour, but there are other members who specialise on particular

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questions who require more than half an hour, and when the average is taken into consideration, debates on the majority of questions will not average more than half an hour. That has been our experience this session. Although two or three members made fairly long speeches on the Address in Reply, the average time amounted to only a little over forty-five minutes. That should be taken into consideration. Members should be given time to place their views before the Assembly, and with that in view I move the deletion of "half an hour," with the view of inserting "forty-five minutes."

The PREMIER: In spite of all the mild thunder we have heard against the Premier with regard to his pushing this proposal down the throats of hon. members and taking away their liberties, I have not the slightest objection to the House making this forty-five minutes, if they are so minded; but I shall endeavour to show members why, in my opinion, it would be unwise to make it forty-five minutes. I think thirty minutes is a very fair allowance, considering the purpose of the Sessional Order. Members on both sides of the House acknowledge that it is desirable to have a time limit for speeches. No person has questioned that. Everybody has recognised that it would be an advantage to most members, or at any rate that it would be more equitable to most members, to have a time limit. I shall quote the statement made by the hon. member who moved this amendment to show the reason for the view I take of the matter. According to this proposal, in the debate on the Address in Reply, and on a direct want of confidence motion, every member is at liberty to speak for an hour, and it is only on ordinary motions, such as the second reading of Bills, that members are restricted to half an hour. The hon. member who moved the amendment told us that even on the Address in Reply the time averaged by members this session was only forty minutes each.

Mr. THEODORE: A little over forty minutes.

The PREMIER: On the Address in Reply, when members are at liberty to review the whole course of public business and all the misdeeds of the Government, they averaged only a little over forty minutes, and under this drastic Sessional Order, for which some members denounce me on the ground that it takes away their liberty, they are to have an hour instead of forty minutes. On ordinary motions they will be allowed half an hour. If hon. members would endeavour to condense their remarks so as to make their speeches more interesting and more readable—and I believe that would be the result of this rule—I think thirty minutes would be sufficient. I know that many of my own long speeches—excellent speeches as they were—were often passed over because they were long, and people were frightened of their length, and did not read them. We all know that speeches in this House would be much better if they were shorter, and when you consider that the general consensus of opinion in the House is that there should be some time limit to speeches, I think the limit of half an hour proposed in this paragraph of the motion is a very fair limitation. If members disagree with me, they are at perfect liberty to do so. If members think that forty-five minutes is little enough, let it be forty-five minutes, but I think that with the other provisions in the motion thirty minutes is a very fair limitation.

Mr. BOWMAN: The amendment moved by the hon. member for Woothakata is a very

fair proposal. The Premier argued that half an hour is sufficient for a second-reading speech.

The PREMIER: That is the New Zealand rule.

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. member has altered the New Zealand rules in other respects, and reduced the time.

The PREMIER: I am prepared to approach them.

Mr. BOWMAN: We are trying to approach them by this amendment, and to liberalise the proposals of the Premier. New Zealand is the one State in Australasia which has a time limit for speeches. With regard to the half-hour limit, the hon. member for Ipswich has pointed out that the first fifty clauses of the Police Offences Bill would require a speech of half an hour, even in the most condensed form. I have in view another Bill, probably one of the largest Bills we shall be called upon to deal with this session—that is, the proposed Land Acts Consolidation Bill. Would the Minister for Lands be satisfied with half an hour for the introduction of that Bill? Could he do the measure justice in half an hour? He could not; and I do not think the House would expect him to do it justice in that time.

The TREASURER: That is provided for in the next clause.

Mr. BOWMAN: We want to have something definite expressed in this Sessional Order.

The PREMIER: Surely you would not on every occasion give a man the same limit.

Mr. BOWMAN: I am not going to trust the hon. gentleman for an extension of time. Perhaps at a critical time in the discussion of a Bill, when the hon. gentleman is on his high stilts and reckons the time has come when the question should be put, he will make a motion to that effect. I do not want to depend upon the hon. gentleman to give me more time. I want the time fixed in the Sessional Order, so that we shall know where we are. I say it would be unfair to ask the Minister for Lands to introduce a Land Acts Consolidation Bill in half an hour, and that it would be equally unfair to limit the hon. member for Leichhardt, who is a specialist on the subject, to that time.

Mr. TOLMIE: We will give him longer.

Mr. BOWMAN: Then there is the member for Gregory, who has also made as close a study of the land laws as any member of this House. I think myself in asking for forty-five minutes we are asking for a very fair limitation of time, and I do not
[8 p.m.] think the leader of the Government ought, for one moment, to refuse to accept the amendment that has been moved on this side of the House. It has been stated that in connection with the Address in Reply there was some slight mistake in regard to the time, and I will give the figures, so that the matter will be put right. The forty-nine members who spoke on the Address in Reply occupied forty-six hours twenty-seven minutes, and the average was forty-nine, forty-three, forty-nine minutes. Of course, there were some members who were very brief in their address and others were fairly long.

Hon. R. PHILP: Some were very long.

Mr. BOWMAN: Yes, some were very long. I think in asking for three-quarters of an hour we are asking for what is fair, and there should be little cavilling about it.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I have great pleasure in supporting the amendment, and I might say here that the only reason that has been adduced by the leader of the Government and those sitting around him in bringing down these Standing Orders is that New Zealand has got them. No doubt New Zealand can get along with Standing Orders like these much better than we can in this House. We all know that the legislation passed by that House did not meet with any great opposition. Take, for instance, if a member wishes to dwell on that Mines Regulation Bill that was tabled the other day, and which went through in one night. All the work that we can put on that Bill, that is under these Standing Orders, will not make that Bill as good as the New Zealand Act. I might say, when that Bill was before the House on its second-reading stage, many of us refrained from extensively discussing the measure, thinking, of course, when it got into Committee, that we would have ample time, under the old Standing Orders, to make a good Bill of it, but now we find that the Standing Orders are about to be revised in such a drastic form that we will not be able to give that intelligent discussion which the subject warrants.

The PREMIER: This amendment will not alter that.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Of course, the hon. gentleman may quibble about this being a second-reading matter, but that does not alter the fact that he is about to undermine the powers of debate in this House, and I object to it. I support very strongly this amendment to further extend the time to forty-five minutes, because you could not do justice to any second-reading speech in half an hour. As has been pointed out by the leader of the Opposition, any member who specialises on any particular legislation could not do justice to himself and to his constituents—his constituents lose by it and the House loses by it. Any man who can get up in this House and give an intelligent second-reading speech of forty-five minutes' duration, should not be restricted to half an hour, and I maintain that hon. members, if they assist the leader of the Government to bring this about, will be very sorry for it before next session.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: They are making a rod for their own backs.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It is all very well for the leader of the Government, with a majority behind him brought about by the fusion, but he is building a political tower of Babel so as to escape from the Labour flood, but the Labour flood will wash him away at the next election, and then he will thank us if we can only get this extended to forty-five minutes, and say we did the right thing for liberty of discussion in this House. Therefore, I hope if this goes to a division that we will have hon. members on the opposite side assisting us to extend the time from half an hour to forty-five minutes, and be not like driven sheep and cattle—simply because the Government want to rush these things, that they will assist them. They ought to know that this will affect their liberties very materially.

The PREMIER: Will fifteen minutes extra save you from being sheep and cattle?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: We will not be your sheep and cattle and be fleeced by the hon. gentleman as he wishes to fleece his supporters. If the House accepts the proposition to limit the time to half an hour, the House will not have time to intelligently discuss the various matters that come before it, and hon. members will say, "As I have only half an hour

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now, I will take the full half an hour," when otherwise many of them would only take ten minutes. I myself only took about twelve minutes on the Mines Regulation Bill, and if I had had this whip behind me I would have taken up the whole half-hour. I do not think it is good for debate to curtail any member to a half-hour speech. Therefore, I have great pleasure in supporting the amendment of the hon. member for Woothakata to extend the time to forty-five minutes.

Mr. FERRICKS: While I intend to support this amendment, I wish to say that I am opposed to any limitation of speeches. I support this amendment as being an improvement on that outlined by the Government in the proposals which they have brought before this House. I contend if there is to be any limitation, the most necessary limitation is a limitation in regard to the six months' recess.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FERRICKS: We have heard echoes and re-echoes of the time wasted in this House, but during my short stay here—

The PREMIER: Will the amendment cure that?

Mr. FERRICKS: The amendment will give us at least the opportunity of expressing our opinions with less curtailment. We have curtailment enough with the six months' recess, and the Government, by this proposal, is endeavouring to increase that curtailment. If the Government in this connection insinuate or hold that there has been any waste of time in this House—during my short stay, at any rate—I deny that. I say the only occasion upon which there was a prolonged discussion was a few nights ago when a very justifiable stand was taken by two members of the Independent Opposition. I say they had every justification for the stand they took, and I do not consider that they wasted any time, because it had a very good effect in that the Treasurer, who refused to give them information, so differed from all his colleagues that they at once conceded information to members of the Opposition afterwards. I was very much surprised at the Premier in his brief remarks a few moments ago—he, a merino anti-socialist—advocating the equality of men, for he said, in reply to the hon. member for Woothakata, that although members had only averaged forty minutes on the Address in Reply, he purposed giving them forty-five minutes. That is to say, that every member of this Chamber is on an equality in debating power and argument, and all the rest of it. That is a very curious stand for the Chief Secretary to take up, but I can quite understand his position in the part he has taken in introducing these proposals, because it is an open secret that he is at present being kicked from pillar to post, and buffeted from one side to the other, by the members of the Bible League on one side and the Brisbane merchants on the other. These proposals have been brought in, in my opinion, to enable the Government to get through the House the amendment of our State Education Act without the application of the gag. I venture to say that, in the view of government by "wowsers," which is fast coming upon us. There is the Licensing Bill and the Bible in State Schools Bill, and others to follow; they are forcing the gag upon the Premier himself in this connection, in order to get these proposals through this Chamber. Now, we have the assurance from the Premier himself and from

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you, Sir, that this was purely a non-party question which was instigated by the Standing Orders Committee, and that the Government took no responsibility. I ventured to say the first division this afternoon would show that it was a party question, and members came up to the crack of the whip in a very humble fashion, in spite of the fact that some of them had previously announced themselves in favour of the amendment.

Mr. TOLMIE: What about the hon. members behind the leader of the Opposition?

Mr. FERRICKS: They came up to the call of their belief in principle. In my opinion it is not a good thing, for it does not conduce to the proper conduct of business in this Chamber when hon. members on the other side can be made to swallow their opinions just because the Premier wants them to do so. Now, on matters outside our platform we have a free hand irrespective of the opinion of our leader.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I fail to see what right the hon. member has to deal with that subject. The question before the House is that the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the clause.

Mr. FERRICKS: In endeavouring to show that it is not a good thing for the House or the country to have hon. members opposite swallowing their beliefs or principles as they have done in this case—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! That does not bear on the question before the House. The question is the extension of the limit of speeches to three-quarters of an hour.

Mr. FERRICKS: If hon. members opposite say that they can explain their belief, and deal properly with all matters that come before the House in the space of half an hour, then I say that their grip of some of these measures—to put it mildly—is rather weak. I ask some hon. members on the other side—whom I might refer to as silent members—in case of such a measure as the Local Authorities Bill, would these members, representing country districts to which this Bill has so wide an application, be able to put before the House all the particular applications which it would have, not only to their district but to other districts? I say they would not; they could not do justice to it. I could speak myself for two hours on the Local Authorities Bill, and I venture to say I could use arguments during the whole of that two hours, and yet it is proposed to limit speeches on such an important measure to the space of thirty minutes. I contend that is altogether too little, and I think the amendment which has been moved is a very moderate one. Personally, I should have preferred to have seen it an hour; but as it has been moved for three-quarters of an hour, I think the Premier, in the absence of any argument which he can advance against it, should accept the amendment. I say the Premier, because I realise that he represents the party opposite. I did think at one time that there were some members on the front Treasury bench who would give expression to their opinions, but I am forced to the conclusion that they are a very mild lot. I give them credit for having an opinion, but we never expect them to express it.

Mr. MANN: Just before you put the question, Sir, I would like to offer a few remarks. I am entirely in accord with the amendment moved, and I think that the Premier should

accept it, inasmuch as I think there is no other member in the House who repeats himself so much. Not that the hon. member requires so much time to say what he has got to say. Knowing his own failings, he should allow a little latitude to other hon. members.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: He is protected.

Mr. MANN: He is not protected. The first paragraph of the rule reads—

No member shall speak for more than half an hour at a time in any debate in the House except in the debate on the Address in Reply, or on a direct motion of want of confidence, when a member shall be at liberty to speak for an hour.

I do not think that the Premier has any more rights than any other hon. member, unless he happens to be moving a Bill, or gets the permission of the House to occupy more time than any other member. I do not say the Premier repeats himself because he cannot put his arguments clearly, but he has a fashion of repeating himself in order to impress his arguments on the House. He knows very well that he does not speak very clearly, and he wishes the *Hansard* staff and the Press gallery to hear what he says, and when he has made a point he repeats it over and over again to make sure that his Press backers have got the exact words. Other members may want to make their points clear, and they have not all got the faculty to marshal their facts, but take a more roundabout way; and, seeing there are so many silent members in the House, I do not think that, on the whole, in any debate there is an average of forty-five minutes, or even thirty minutes, taken up by every member in the House. Now, if the Premier will advance any reasonable argument why he has brought down these Sessional Orders—if he can point out any stonewalling, or any lengthy speeches made on this occasion—members would be inclined to agree with him that it is wise to limit speeches. But, suppose this Sessional Order had been passed last session, we would have missed that splendid three and a-half hours' speech made by the late Minister for Mines on socialism. For about four hours the Secretary for Mines spoke on one occasion and told us that what he saw out West reminded him of how the patriarchs of old lived. If it is fair for a Minister to make a four-hours' speech in moving the second reading of a Land Bill, a Mines Bill, or a Religious Instruction in State Schools Bill, is it not fair that the member whose duty it is to speak in reply to the Minister should be allowed to occupy the same time? The leader of the Opposition may wish to reply to the Minister; but there are other members who may be experts in regard to the matter before the House. For example, the junior member for Ipswich may wish to speak on the Matrimonial Causes Jurisdiction Bill, but under this Sessional Order he can only speak for thirty minutes. It is a serious handicap for a member to be tied to time, more especially if he is of a nervous temperament. He may think he has spoken for half an hour when he has spoken only ten minutes; and when he is all the time watching the clock he cannot make a good speech. If we have the gag and the guillotine I do not see any necessity for this Sessional Order. For instance, the Premier can rise now and move that I be no longer heard. You may refuse to put the motion, but an unfair Speaker might accept the suggestion and put the question, and, if the Premier had his followers well under control, they would vote anything he liked to propose.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Any member may move it.

Mr. MANN: Yes; any member may move it. This is the eighteenth Parliament, and the House has got on so far without these Sessional Orders. I believe that the Queensland Parliament holds the record with the South Australian Parliament for being the most orderly Parliament in Australia; but this proposal is advertising to the world that we cannot conduct business properly, and that the Premier must bring down these stringent Standing Orders. You can forgive a member making a long speech when he does not speak often. I speak often, and sometimes I make long speeches; but the Premier has the power of moving that I be no longer heard; so I see no necessity for this new Sessional Order.

Mr. COYNE: I hope the good sense of the House will agree to the amendment to increase the time from half an hour to forty-five minutes. It must be patent to anyone that there are members who specialise on particular subjects, and it is impossible to reply intelligently to a Minister on any great subject in the space of half an hour. I do not think that the Premier, if he spoke his mind, would deny that. No member of the Opposition can know the details of a Government measure the same as Ministers. A Minister in charge of a Bill is acquainted with every detail long before it is submitted to their own caucus. The Under Secretary and the understrappers of the department so teach the Minister that, though the subject may be foreign to him, he is able to give it an intelligent interpretation. But it is sprung all at once on the Opposition, and you see the disadvantage under which an Opposition member stands as compared with the Minister. I do not think that even forty-five minutes is long enough to allow; and I think there is one reason why there should be no time limit to speeches. Though an odd member may speak at inordinate length, there are members who speak only for a short time. As the hon. member for Cairns said, this will advertise this House as being so unruly, and so given to speaking at inordinate length, that it is necessary to bring down this Sessional Order. It goes to prove that the party opposite are a party of unification. Evidently they are of opinion that the matters to be brought down for discussion are of so little importance that it is necessary to fence in the time in which members are allowed to deal with them. I say that is the best argument that can be adduced by those seeking to do away with State Parliaments.

Mr. TOLMIE: There is a converse to that proposition.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: What about your "Whip"?

Mr. TOLMIE: What about your own "Whip"?

Mr. COYNE: There is no converse. There is no doubt that these Sessional Orders are aimed at the Opposition, whoever may be in opposition. When this proposal was brought in to limit speeches to half an hour, it appeared rather strange to me that since 1892 until now it was not found necessary for the Standing Orders Committee to bring down Sessional Orders curtailing the rights and privileges of members. I mentioned previously that this was a party question. Whatever the Standing Orders Committee may have done, the moment it was brought down here it was made a party question. And we have been

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asked what about our "Whip." We are here to defend our rights as members [8.30 p.m.] representing just as important constituencies as hon. members on the other side. While it may not be necessary in eight out of ten cases to speak for half an hour on a measure, still in the other two cases we demand that we should have unlimited time to deal as intelligently as lies in our power with those matters. Seeing the way hon. members on the other side voted in the last division, it is proof positive that the whip was cracked with such effect that this was made a party question long before it was brought down to the House at all.

The PREMIER: Who made it a party question?

Mr. COYNE: You, Sir, will not allow me to say more than that I have a very strong suspicion that the Premier himself is the gentleman who made it a party question.

The PREMIER: When you have a strong suspicion of a thing, you state it as a plain indisputable fact.

Mr. COYNE: It is certain that there are members sitting on the other side who will find that it is necessary for them to go cap in hand to the hon. gentleman and ask for an extension of time to allow them to deal with questions before the House; and the mere fact of their sitting on the side of the House that has a majority will secure that extension of time for them. But will hon. members on this side get such an extension? They are going to get no extension of time if the Premier is as stubborn as he is now. He has not given one solitary evidence of reasonableness in the debate to-day. He has his party gagged, and there is not a member on the other side who is game to get up and say one word for or against these Sessional Orders.

Mr. RYLAND: They have been brought to heel.

Mr. COYNE: This is but another gag added to the gag already provided by the Standing Orders, and all aimed at the Opposition, who, because of the smallness of their numbers, cannot enforce their rights.

The PREMIER: Do you approve of a forty-five-minute gag?

Mr. COYNE: I only approve of it as the lesser of two evils. I am in favour of unlimited time, as I have already said. If a member deliberately attempted to waste time in this House, he would be brought to book by his constituents on the very first opportunity, and by his own party, too. This is one instance of the evils of party government. If a member deliberately wasted time, under Standing Order 102 any member of this House could rise in his place and move that he be no further heard, and I am sure the good sense of the House would lead hon. members to support such a motion. That being so, there is no necessity for this. The Premier laughs. We have heard him chuckling on many occasions, but he didn't chuckle too much when he had a little majority of one, and when he had about half a dozen "whips" running after that one. The hon. gentleman was then standing in fear and trembling of his position, as members on the other side are now of his frown. I think I have said enough to convince hon. members that it is dangerous to interfere with the rights and privileges of members of this House in the manner proposed by these Sessional Orders.

Mr. MAUGHAN: In rising to support the amendment, I would like to say that I regret

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very much the tone of the debate, which is due to the attitude assumed by the leader of the Government. As a member of the Standing Orders Committee, I protest against this action for the simple reason that he has made this purely a party debate. I object to that. I am quite sure that I express the opinion of the hon. member for Leichhardt and the hon. member for Clermont, who are also members of the committee.

The PREMIER: Would it not be better to offer some better evidence of that than for every member on the other side to get up and repeat it?

M. MAUGHAN: The evidence is too glaring altogether. A most reasonable proposition was made earlier in the day that we should go into Committee to deal with this matter in a proper way, and it was rejected with scorn. Now the hon. member for Woothakata has come along with a most reasonable proposition, simply to add a paltry fifteen minutes to the proposal before the House. If the followers of the Premier have no opinions on such a matter, that is no reason why the hon. gentleman should attempt to force his opinions down their throats.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Cannot they speak for themselves?

Mr. RYLAND: They dare not.

Mr. MAUGHAN: I hope they will. We have been waiting for them to speak. I simply rose to protest, as a member of the Standing Orders Committee, against the action of the head of the Government in seeking to make this purely a party question.

Mr. D. HUNTER (Woolloongabba): It sounds rather strange for the hon. member who has just sat down to agree to every one of these recommendations from the Standing Orders Committee.

Mr. COYNE: How do you know?

Mr. D. HUNTER: He has admitted in this House that he agreed to them in the Standing Orders Committee, and now he gets up and opposes them. We have heard it stated that this is a party question. Well, if ever there was proof given that it is a party question, the *volte face* of the hon. member who has just sat down furnishes that proof.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: What about the hon. member for South Brisbane?

Mr. D. HUNTER: I have been to the trouble of finding out something of what has been done in this House for the last fifty years. The average number of sitting days per year during that period has been sixty-six. For the last twenty years the average for the year has been seventy-five days. That is the average for the whole year.

Mr. HARDACRE: For the last four years the average session has not lasted thirty days.

Mr. D. HUNTER: I am going on the basis of an average session of seventy-five days to show whether we are attempting to gag hon. members or not. The average number of hours worked during those twenty sessions has been 544 hours. Hon. members on the other side have always claimed equal opportunities for all. Well, on the basis of equal opportunities for all, that would give seventy-one members seven hours forty-four minutes to each member in the session. I confess that, when I see hon. members run away and go to the bar immediately an hon. member opposite gets up, I feel that he is doing more than any other member

in the House to encourage that bar by his long speeches. This session we wasted twelve days on the Address in Reply. If any hon. member wants to know how long it took us, and how much was spoken in that time, he will find that it took 366 pages of *Hansard*, and that Parliament sat exactly sixty-six hours. It only sat for ten minutes on one occasion, but, leaving out this day, the House sat for twelve days, occupying sixty-six hours, and members talked 326 pages of *Hansard* during that time. There were 281 pages devoted to the Address in Reply, and this works out at a total of fifty-six hours. Of this number, the Opposition spoke 187 pages, which means that the thirty-one members of the Opposition who spoke occupied thirty-seven hours, or an average of one hour eleven and a-half minutes. This is how it works out, at any rate, and anyone can work it out for himself. The Government supporters number thirty-eight altogether, and they occupied ninety-four pages in *Hansard*. All the Government supporters were not here, because one was away sick, another away in England, and another in the chair. It works out that thirty-eight members on the Government side spoke nineteen hours, or an average of half an hour each, on the Address in Reply, as against one hour eleven and a-half minutes for each of the Opposition who spoke.

Mr. HARDACRE: Is that not always the case with the Opposition?

Mr. D. HUNTER: It was the case last session, and it is the case again this session. It means that members on the Government side, in order to get through the business of the country, have to be gagged by the Opposition, like a certain gentleman, by over-much talking. If I thought it was going to limit our powers, I would be inclined to vote against it, but when I find that my powers under the old Standing Orders are limited by the Opposition speeches, it is time that there was some limitation to the speeches made in this Chamber. The only question which we are asked to settle is whether it should be limited to half an hour or three-quarters of an hour. Taking the duration of sessions for the last twenty years, it will be found that it ran into seventy-five days on an average. The Standing Orders Committee, by this resolution, proposes to allow twenty-one days to discuss the Financial Statement and Supply. Twelve days have already been taken up in discussing the Address in Reply, and eight days more will be allowed to members to discuss private members' business on Thursday afternoons. There are twenty-two weeks in a session, making forty-four hours devoted to private members' business, and, taking five and a-half hours as an average day, this works out at eight days. This makes a total of forty-one days of the session which will have gone, leaving only thirty-four more days for the discussion of the rest of the business, taking seventy-five days as an average session. We know that in one Bill the Labour party has got its eye on it will take up all the time under the recommendations made by the Standing Orders Committee. Take the Wages Boards Act Amendment Bill alone. There are thirty-six clauses in that Bill, and if not one member on this side speaks on that Bill at all it can be debated by the Opposition under this new Standing Order for three days on the second reading.

Mr. BOWMAN: Is it not worth debating?

Mr. D. HUNTER: Yes, it is; but we have got other work to do without spending all the time on the Wages Boards Act Amendment Bill. Well, that leaves us thirty-one days for the rest of the session. When the Bill gets into Committee, if every member on the Opposition side exercises his right and speaks his full twenty minutes on every clause, it will mean that the thirty Opposition members will take two days to debate each clause. There are thirty-six clauses in that Bill, which works out at seventy-two days for discussion in Committee by the Opposition if every member over there exercises his right to talk twenty minutes on each clause. That means that they will take seventy-two days to discuss the Wages Boards Act Amendment Bill in Committee, and we have only got thirty-one days to do it. (Government laughter.)

Mr. BOWMAN: Don't you think you are stretching it?

Mr. HARDACRE: It proves the absurdity of your argument.

Mr. D. HUNTER: It proves that we are not gagging anyone by introducing this Standing Order, because if we go right on until February next, and every member of the Opposition exercises his full rights, we will only have time to get through one Bill, and that is the Wages Boards Act Amendment Bill.

Mr. HARDACRE: It proves that we do not do it.

Mr. D. HUNTER: But the very fact that the Standing Orders gives you the power to do this shows that we are not attempting to gag you. I believe in equal opportunities being given to all members of this House. You know you may have intemperance as much in speaking as in any other thing, and yet we have had to sit here and listen to men making three-hour speeches. If I had my way I would not hesitate to say that I would fix a limited time. I would not allow one member to have more time than another. I would be prepared to give the member who represents the Opposition a longer time, as that would only be reasonable. Take the Police Offences Bill. The junior member for Ipswich, Mr. Blair, would be an authority on that measure, and members would like to hear him, and it would be advisable for the House to give him some opportunity to speak on it.

Mr. LESINA: The House will give him extra time, too.

Mr. D. HUNTER: I do not think that the House has ever been unreasonable with the Opposition. In proof of what I say we have the very fact that the Government raised the salary of the leader of the Opposition by £200 a year. That shows that the Government were not averse to being fair to the Opposition. I did not object to that, and no one on this side objected to it. We believed that it was fair play, and that the leader of the Opposition was entitled to it. If there is anyone in this House who is entitled to be heard always it is the leader of the Opposition, and my vote will always be given to give fair play and give his rights to the leader of the Opposition. But they cannot talk of being gagged when they have unlimited powers to keep talking on only one Bill. We are not gagging them at all. This Standing Order will enable us to get on with the business of the country much more effectively.

Mr. LESINA: The statistical argument advanced by the hon. member for Woollongabba is a very convincing one in so far as it makes it clear that members of this Chamber have

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plenty of time at their disposal for the proper consideration of certain business now on the business-paper and also the Estimates of the important departments—which for years past has not received proper ventilation in this Chamber—and other matters that may come up for consideration later on. That convinces me of the necessity which exists for the curtailment of debate. It has been proposed to limit the time for speeches. That is the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee, of which I am a member, and I agree to recommend to the favourable consideration of this Chamber that in addition to the half hour already allowed another fifteen minutes would be of advantage. I point out that it will not affect the big majority of members at all. There are a number of motions placed on the business-paper from day to day by hon. members; and, during the course of their limited time on Thursday afternoons, they get in two or three speeches on some proposition, such as that introduced by the hon. member for Maranoa, for the amendment of the Agricultural Bank Act, or that of the hon. member for Barcoo for the division of the State into three States—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LESINA: I submit I am quite in order. Or that motion submitted by the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Maughan, in connection with the regulations curtailing the rights of public servants. On any one of those questions—and they are typical of a dozen which might be cited—an hon. member can ventilate all the grievances or express all the opinions he wishes to bring forward in twenty minutes or half an hour. He does not expect to occupy a longer time, and I believe that as a rule members do not speak longer than that.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You spoke for seven hours once.

Mr. LESINA: Yes; I spoke for seven hours on one occasion against a syndicate railway Bill, and I should be prepared to speak as long again if there was need to do so; but I would point out that even under our present Standing Orders a member speaking at undue length can be stopped, as a Minister can move that a member be no further heard.

Mr. COYNE: Any member of the House can move that.

Mr. LESINA: I believe that is so; but it is generally a Minister who takes upon himself the responsibility of submitting such a motion, and I think the responsibility should be taken by a Minister. The adoption of this proposed Sessional Order will enable us to get through a considerable amount of business, and it will probably lead to members concentrating their arguments into a smaller compass and making them clearer. Clearness and brevity are two things which have been lacking in speeches made under our present Standing Orders. I have fought hard for liberty of discussion in the past, especially in connection with the cloturing debate on syndicate railway proposals; but I am satisfied from the experience of New Zealand, where similar Standing Orders to those now proposed are in operation, that you can debate questions at great length under this new rule if you make up your minds to do so and organise for that purpose. If you look up the New Zealand *Hansard* you will find a report of a stonewall which lasted sixty-two hours under their present Standing Orders. That took place not six weeks ago, and it shows that even under these drastic Sessional Orders for the curtailment of debate

—rules which are in existence in one of the most democratic Assemblies in Australia—when a public wrong is to be ventilated, or a public grievance redressed, members can carry on a debate for sixty-two hours in succession. We once carried on a stonewall under our old Standing Orders before they were amended, and the present Premier, who was then acting leader of the Opposition, took part in that stonewall. But, as I have stated, in New Zealand, under much more drastic Standing Orders than ours, members carried on a debate for sixty-two hours on a question respecting the payment of some money to a financial agent in London.

Mr. HARDACRE: What is the good of them, then?

Mr. LESINA: The incident I have referred to shows that the old parliamentary hand who is thoroughly well informed with regard to parliamentary procedure and constitutional government is able to get over the Standing Orders.

Mr. HARDACRE: It shows that the Standing Orders do not prevent waste of time.

Mr. LESINA: They do not prevent waste of time. The tragedy of this discussion is that we are occupying time in debating whether we shall have more time for debate. I am prepared to stand by the recommendations of the Licensing Committee—(loud laughter)—I mean the Standing Orders Committee. We have been talking so much lately about licensing that the slip is pardonable. I shall support the recommendation agreed to by a majority of the Standing Orders Committee, and submitted to this House. Should the occasion arise when it may be necessary to ventilate any public grievance, I think we shall be able to occupy all the time that may be required to ventilate that grievance. At the same time, speeches of members would be improved by curtailment, and the public would then read them more fully than they do at present, and probably be benefited thereby. Finally, I would say that one point suggested by the speech of the hon. member for Woollongabba is that there is a tendency in our time, not only in our Parliament but throughout Australia, to make Parliaments more business institutions than they have been, where men will express their opinions briefly and transact the business for which they are called together promptly and in a business-like method. With the organisation of parties which meet in caucus to arrange their business the time is coming when they will go into the House and pass their business practically without any debate at all. That is the tendency of the time. I do not say it is a good thing for democracy, but I say it is one of the tendencies of the time. Parliament has become more of a business machine than it was formerly. The lackadaisical, irresponsible, go-as-you-please kind of procedure of the old days, when members spoke as often and as long as they liked, is going out of vogue, and Parliament is becoming more and more a business institution. Members view matters from a business point of view, and express their opinions in a practical business-like way, and it seems as if the time is coming when members sitting on the Government side of the House will not speak at all. That is noticeable, not only in this Parliament but in the Federal Parliament, and in all the Parliaments of Australia as democracy becomes more paramount. The political machine is being organised to such an extent that it is becoming

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paramount, and that makes a party paramount in dealing with their own business, and leads other parties to do the same thing.

Mr. HARDACRE: That is not democracy; it is autocracy.

Mr. LESINA: I do not care what you call it. It is an inescapable tendency. The time of lackadaisical, go-as-you-please, free and easy kind of debate in parliamentary business is departing for ever; and just as in all other branches of public business men have discovered the need for concentrated attention and time-saving methods, so must they do it in Parliament. There is no time now for the golden-mouthed oratory of men of the Demosthenes and Gladstone type. With the death of Gladstone, oratory passed out of British politics. That kind of statesman has departed for ever, and the tendency of these times is for men to do business more quickly and speak a great deal less. I cannot say that I rejoice in the new order of things, because I have been bred in another school, but it is coming, and we must recognise the inevitable. Whether it is going to do more harm than good it is impossible to judge at this stage. Later generations will be able to say whether these restrictions on speech have been generally beneficial. But, judging from New Zealand, where they have had experience of a provision of the kind we are now asked to adopt, and from the experience of the Federal Parliament, it appears to me that a great deal of good will result from the adoption of a Sessional Order of this kind.

Mr. RYLAND: They have not got that Standing Order in the Federal Parliament.

Mr. LESINA: I know they have not. It is not necessary there. I do not think any good will be served by discussing this matter from the point of view of our past mistakes. One case was mentioned by the hon. member for Woolloongabba, in which he said that it was likely that under this proposed Sessional Order a longer time would be accorded to a member than is specified in the rule, and that is the case of the hon. member for Ipswich with reference to the Police Offences Bill. If that Bill comes before us, I am sure there is not a member of the House who would not be glad to hear the hon. member for Ipswich on it for longer than an hour, if he cares to speak longer. In that case, under the provisions provided here, which will be determined by the House, the member

[9 p.m.] may be further heard for a period not exceeding half an hour, and he may speak with considerable profit to the House, and I think he should be afforded that privilege. I quite understand that by passing this Standing Order I shall deprive myself of that right, but I am of the opinion that I can deliver a much more effective speech in one hour than in two or three hours. Perhaps it may be rather a late discovery, but I believe I have made better speeches in five minutes than ever I made in five hours. (Laughter.) Some hon. members appear a bit sore at the proposition coming from the Premier, but they ought not to hold the Premier responsible for this matter—he is simply acting on behalf of the Standing Orders Committee. He is only one of the Standing Orders Committee, and we beat him on one or two occasions in committee, and he had to climb down, as other members had to climb down on other motions. It was the Standing Orders Committee which hon. members elected without any opposition—without any attempt to alter

the personnel—which has made these recommendations. I think the House will be well advised if they adopt this Standing Order as it stands. I think half an hour at any time in discussing any ordinary question is quite sufficient, and an hour's speech on the Financial Statement, the Address in Reply, or on a direct want of confidence motion, I think is also sufficient, especially if we can get an extension of time by the permission of the House, which is very probable, if the speech is interesting. I believe an extension of another quarter of an hour is not wise. As a matter of fact, I do not see how any member who does not believe in the limitation of speeches can logically defend the extension of a quarter of an hour. If an hon. member objects to half an hour, where is the virtue in another quarter of an hour?

Mr. BOWMAN: Do you see any reason why the proposed Sessional Orders should be altered?

Mr. LESINA: I believe they might be amended, and I will support some amendments later on. I mentioned one amendment myself, and I believe the Premier will agree to that.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Did you ask the Premier?

Mr. LESINA: After the leader of the Opposition had spoken, I was so impressed with the suggestion he made, that the leader of the Opposition or his deputy should receive more time for the discussion of public business than any private member outside the Ministry—I thought that a very excellent suggestion, and I immediately made up my mind, if no one else did it, that I should move an amendment to that effect, and I asked the Premier if he did not think it a very strong argument, and he said, "I do. I am prepared to accept an amendment to that effect." I will have great pleasure in supporting it if it goes to a division. I believe, and every member in the Chamber believes, that the leader of the Opposition should have more time than an ordinary member. He has a big responsibility on his shoulders, because he may have to get up a couple of times in an afternoon and reply to measures introduced by different Ministers, and, for that reason, I think the leader of the Opposition should get more time than an ordinary member. Hon. members seem to fear that this Standing Order will prevent discussion. It appears to me there is no danger at all. If there was, I should not only oppose it now, but I would have opposed it before ever it came here at all. I am inclined to support it as it stands, and I trust it will pass in its present form.

Mr. MULCAHY (*Gympie*): I did not clearly understand the attitude of the hon. member for Clermont until he was just about finishing his speech, and then he informed the House and the country that he had gone into a little conference with the Premier and he has fixed matters up. I have had to sit and listen to him for four or five hours in a morning, and I shall never forget the way he used to hold forth as to the liberty of speech and the curtailment of members' rights and all that. Apparently as he gets older he is beginning to think that in the past he has inflicted too much on hon. members. However, nothing he has said will alter the opinion I hold, as one, at all events, who has never taken up any great length of time—never more than an hour—in making a speech, I still believe that we should be very careful before we put a time limit on the speeches made here. There are hon. members who go very fully into matters, and it will take them a considerable time. I have

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listened to speeches in this House of an hour to two hours' duration, and have been very much interested, and hon. members find, in dealing with matters that they thoroughly understand, it is necessary that they should have ample time. But all along the line we can easily see the hand of the Premier in this matter. For a number of years since the hon. gentleman joined the Conservative party, it has been his sole aim and object to curtail speeches and have short sessions of Parliament, and do the work altogether by administration, and it is the fear of having that administration criticised that is bringing about this change. I am not going to labour the thing, indeed I do not know that I should have spoken at all but for some remarks passed by the hon. member—I must use the term "honourable" because it would be out of order if I used any other term—the hon. member for Woolloongabba. It pains me to have to use the word "honourable," but still to conform to the rules of the House I must do that. I am bound to say I have been thinking over that member's character for some years, and I must compliment the Government in having such a follower. Apparently, as Sir Thomas Mollwraith said on one memorable occasion, "In politics you have to use very dirty tools."

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. MULCAHY: I am only giving a quotation.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. member is not in order in implying imputations.

Mr. MULCAHY: The hon. member tonight made slighting reference to the leader of the Opposition. There is no hon. member in this House who would stoop to that except that hon. member. Had that gentleman been in Ireland in the old times he would have been confined with Carey, the notorious informer. That would have been his proper place. I do not know whether to compliment the Government, but I think the Government must be in very sore straits when they have to employ such a scavenger.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! If the hon. member continues in that strain I will have to take action.

Mr. MULCAHY: I feel strongly on this matter, because when I see an hon. member using his position in this House to try and belittle someone on the opposite side without having any occasion for it at all, I feel and speak strongly. However, I will pass that matter over. The people, when they get to know him better, will treat him as he deserves. I will support this amendment moved by the hon. member for Woothakata, believing that three-quarters of an hour is a quite short enough time for a man to go fully into some matters which come before the House. I think these three of four hour speeches are unnecessary, but there are occasions when it is absolutely necessary for a member leading the Opposition, and other members, to go fully into different matters, and that applies with greater force when we come to criticise the Estimates, which is a more serious matter to me even than going into Bills. I am quite sure that if the Premier had his way he would do away with discussion altogether, and then he could carry out the administration in his own way, and he could so arrange matters that he would always have a following, because he would pacify men in some direction, whether by monetary considerations or grants at the expense of the Crown.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Order, order!

Mr. Mulcahy.

Mr. MULCAHY: Of course, he would; it is being done now. I am quite satisfied the whole thing is done to prevent criticism on the Estimates and other matters, to keep up a lot of queer work that is being done.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HARDACRE (*Leichhardt*): I was one of the members of the Standing Orders Committee which agreed to the proposals brought down. I did that because I recognised that there have been occasions now and then when individual members have spoken for three or four hours, and even longer, resulting to some extent in waste of time. I recognise that there should be a limit, at any rate, to that kind of undue talk. At the same time, whilst I agree with the proposal, I was not then, nor am I now, in any way enamoured with the general principle of a time limit, because, if we are not careful, we are going to do more harm than good. The real trouble is, not going to be avoided to any great extent by a time-limit provision. It is true that, if we have a fair maximum it will prevent unduly long speeches of three or four hours, but if we draw it too fine we are going to do more harm than good. After all, where the real wisdom comes in, as every hon. member recognises, is not so much in the long speeches, as in the number of times hon. members speak, and with the needless repetition. A time-limit speech is not going to prevent that; it is not going to prevent stonewalling either in case of necessity, because amendment after amendment will be moved, and every man can get up and talk half an hour each time. Just the same as in New Zealand, where the time limit is half an hour, they can talk sixty-two hours on a stonewalling debate if necessary.

Mr. LESINA: We can do it under these Standing Orders.

Mr. HARDACRE: Of course we can, and it is not going to conserve the time of members of Parliament.

Mr. LESINA: No; but the adoption of it may indicate the temper of the House.

Mr. HARDACRE: The Opposition can move amendments, and every man can speak half an hour. It will do a minimum of good, with a maximum of harm. If we draw it too fine, it is going to prevent the most effective speeches of members, and not the waste of time. Some of the best speeches I have heard in this House have been one and a-half hours and two hours long. I am extremely afraid of what the hon. member for Clermont has pointed out—the growing party machine politics—and particularly what has been pointed out in the English Government, the encroaching powers of the Cabinet, and the minimising and limiting of the powers of the ordinary member of Parliament. I would like to quote from an important book on this matter, entitled "The Governance of England," by Sidney Low. It points out the trend of opinion. This is one of the speeches quoted—

The Constitution had undergone a serious change. It had ceased to be government by Parliament; it had become government by Cabinet.

The only security given was in the discussion and deliberation of Parliament, and if they came to the conclusion that this deliberation and discussion could not be expended upon their measures, then they were abandoning one of the most important functions which the House had hitherto exercised.

That points to a growing evil in Great Britain, and we know what has happened in the United States, where the machine in politics has gone to such lengths that practically

it has left no independence at all in legislation, and I think that we should be very careful before we go too far in this direction. I consider that the proposal to allow half an hour on ordinary debates is too short—it will prevent effective debate. What would have happened if we had had the half-hour limit when the Premier made his great historical speech on the Constitutional question some two years ago? It was one of the finest speeches ever made in this House—at any rate the finest I ever heard in this House. A really great speech could not have been delivered on an occasion like that if we had this limit of half an hour.

Mr. MANN: It was very insincere.

Mr. HARDACRE: Never mind what it was. Then again, how could members deal with such big questions, say, as the adoption of federation, moved in 1900, with a time limit of half an hour? Take the question of separation. I remember hearing the speech of Mr. Curtis on separation, and Sir Thomas Mellwraith's magnificent reply to the demand for separation, which occupied something like two hours. If we are going to have a half-an-hour limit, we are not going to prevent waste of time; what we are going to do is to prevent big speeches on big occasions, which have previously been the most important speeches delivered in this House. We are now following the example of New Zealand with a time limit, and even making it more drastic than it is there. New Zealand is the only State in the British Empire where there is a time limit at all. So far, we have no report from New Zealand as to the working of the time limit.

Mr. LESINA: The *Hansard* there is pretty thick.

Mr. HARDACRE: If that proves anything, it proves the absolute worthlessness of this proposal.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Did not you recommend it?

Mr. HARDACRE: No. I understood that I was supporting a resolution to present the report to Parliament, not that it was a recommendation. The hon. member for Woolloongabba reckoned up the average time taken up by the speeches of members; but I may point out that it is not proposed to apply this to the speech of average length, but to the more important speeches made on particular occasions. I may make a long speech on one occasion and other members may make short speeches. On another occasion I may make a short speech, and another member may make a long speech. This will not prevent waste of time, but it will prevent members who know something of the subject from making a valuable contribution to the debate on important occasions. This time limit will do the minimum amount of good and the maximum of evil.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The speech of the hon. member for Leichhardt strikes me as somewhat extraordinary, considering that he is a member of the Standing Orders Committee and was present when the resolution was adopted by the committee. If it had come from one who was not present at the meeting, one might have understood it. I think the speech of the hon. member for Gympie, Mr. Mulcahy, is one to be deplored, and I think his remarks were practically a disgrace to any member of the House.

Mr. RYLAND: I rise to a point of order. Has the hon. member any right to say that

an hon. member made a speech which is a disgrace? I think you are the one to decide that, Mr. Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. member was out of order.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I do not think my remarks were at all too strong to apply to the personal remarks the hon. member applied to the hon. member for Woolloongabba, or to his imputation in regard to the introduction of these Sessional Orders. No more foul charge could be made than that made by the hon. member for Gympie; and even he, though accustomed to making speeches of that sort, will admit, on reading his remarks in cool blood, that he had no right to make them. I am surprised also at the attitude taken up by members opposite. The principle of these Sessional Orders has received support from members on both sides; and at present it is only a matter of the time to be allowed—the difference between thirty minutes and forty-five minutes. It has been suggested that this is more or less a party matter, but so far as I can judge there is not a scintilla of room for the suggestion. Last session it was pointed out by the Premier that an amendment of the Standing Orders was fast becoming necessary by reason of the practice of making long speeches which prevented full discussion. This matter was referred to the Standing Orders Committee, and the recommendations we have before us are the result of the consideration of the Committee without any dictation or direction from the Premier or from the Government. As a member of the Committee, I am in a position to make that statement. If any further evidence were wanted of the position taken up by the Premier it was offered by him in reply to the amendment now before the House. The hon. gentleman distinctly said that whether it was thirty minutes or forty-five minutes he was quite prepared to leave it to the pleasure of the House.

Mr. FERRICES: Do you think we swallow what he says?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MACARTNEY: I know that if the Premier makes a statement of that sort in my presence, I understand that I have the privilege of voting for or against the question, irrespective of party associations. That was the position, and there can be no room for the suggestion that this forms part of a party proposal. If hon. gentlemen on the other side were willing to allow this matter to go without continuing the course of conduct adopted this afternoon, speaking one after another—if they would allow the matter to go to a division after reasonable discussion, they would probably find supporters of the amendment on this side, irrespective of party. But by the continuance of this discussion we are prevented from introducing other amendments; and I think before we go much further it will be found that members on this side have substantial amendments which will show that we are not going to treat this matter as a party matter. Personally, I regret that there should be any necessity for these amendments at all, because I have a jealous regard for the privileges of members, and I do not like to see our privileges gradually disappearing. Though a Government supporter, I do not see why I should be deprived of the right of criticism; and there are things done by all Governments which cannot receive the approval even of their own supporters. But we must all recognise that the liberty of speech enjoyed for so many

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years has for the past five or six or seven years been very much abused—to such an extent as to justify the proposition now before the House. I have given the thing very careful consideration since the discussion started, and I think that with the provisions which are to follow in regard to extending the time, the rights of members in this regard will be sufficiently protected. If a member is delivering an important speech of particular interest, no matter on which side, there is not a member who would not be prepared to allow him an extra half hour. I think the privileges of members are protected as far as they can be in the circumstances which exist in the House to-day, and I intend to vote against the amendment; at the same time, I am prepared to propose other amendments later on, and to consider other amendments as they are proposed.

Mr. RYLAND: I am sorry the hon. member who has just resumed his seat has not the courage of his convictions, and will not vote for the amendment? He has [9.30 p.m.] admitted that he does not think this is necessary. His inner consciousness tells him that this legislation is not necessary at the present time, and yet he will not vote against it. With the hon. member for Leichhardt, I think that it will be a big mistake to pass this Sessional Order. It will simply mean that we shall not get as good speeches as we have got in the past. Great speeches by big men—speeches on historic occasions—will be a thing of the past. There have been speeches delivered in this House—second-reading speeches, in particular—that have become works of reference, and in some cases they have been sent out in pamphlet form, and have been an education throughout the country. I remember the speeches delivered by Mr. Frank McDonnell, now a member of the Upper House, on the Factories and Shops Bill, which were practically an education to the people; and also speeches delivered by Senator Turley in connection with the question of State railways *versus* private railways. The present Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, Mr. Fisher, also delivered speeches in this House on two or three matters that were an education.

Hon. R. PHILP: What were they? Mention one.

Mr. BOWMAN: His speech on the Workers' Compensation Bill was one. It was a credit to this House.

Mr. RYLAND: According to this proposal, there will be no opportunity for delivering speeches such as those I have referred to. Except on the Address in Reply, and on a direct motion of want of confidence, no member can speak for more than half an hour. Even in the three-quarters of an hour proposed by this amendment, it will hardly be possible for hon. members to express themselves as they would wish on a big occasion like the second reading of an important Bill.

Mr. LESINA: Forty-five minutes is only for ordinary matters, like the abolition of the Parliamentary refreshment bar. (Laughter.)

Mr. RYLAND: Well, the abolition of the refreshment bar is a very important question to some hon. members. I do not think that hon. members realise the restrictive effect this proposal will have. It will give practically no opportunity for the proposed legislation before the country. If the proposal did not interfere with discussions in Committee there would, perhaps, not be so much objection to it; but we find that there is to be practically no discussion in Committee at all, so that more debate is required at the second

reading stage. We have some very important legislation forecasted for this session in the Governor's Speech. What hon. member could reply effectively to the Secretary for Lands on such a measure as the Land Bill in half an hour? Again, we are to have a Railways Bill, involving an expenditure of, perhaps, £5,000,000 or £10,000,000, and one man is supposed to deal with a proposal of that kind in half an hour. It has been stated that all he will have to do is to ask for an extension of time. But see how it will prevent him doing justice to his subject in debate. He knows that his time is nearly expended and he has only five minutes or so left, and he tries to rush through with what he has to say, with the result that he does not deal with the subject as he should. Under the circumstances, even an extension of time will not meet the case. With regard to the figures given by the hon. member for Woollongabba, they were based on the assumption that every hon. member will speak. Now, every hon. member does not talk, although this proposal will have a tendency to make more members talk, and members who do not know much about the subject on which they address the House. What we want is members who have expert knowledge to expound their views in an intelligent manner. But this proposal is going to prevent that, and that is why I am against it. This session the average time occupied by members on the Address in Reply was only forty-nine minutes. Some members talked more, and some talked less. In addition, we have passed the second reading of two Bills. The Mines Regulation Bill was a measure of great importance to the mining industry. Yet there were only twelve members who spoke on it, and their speeches averaged only twenty-nine and a-half minutes. Were they abusing their privileges in any way? Hon. members should talk about something that they understand. Of course, if every hon. member talked, it would take a long time to pass legislation; but it is not the experience of this House, or of any Parliament in Australia, for every member to talk. I have heard it said with reference to the importance of the little word "it" that you could put the whole of London into a lillycan, if the lillycan was only big enough. It would take a long time to pass legislation if every member talked. But every member is not going to talk. In addition to passing the second reading of the Mines Regulation Bill, we also passed the second reading of the Electoral Districts Bill. On that measure only four members spoke, and they averaged thirty-eight and a quarter minutes. Was that abusing the privileges of the House? It is proposed to allow members half an hour to discuss measures brought before the House, and we ask for forty-five minutes. If that is granted to us, it will give us more opportunity for discussing the various matters to be brought before the House. There is the Licensing Bill, which it is necessary we should discuss, and also the Mineral Oils Bill. This will be a most important piece of legislation, seeing that we have oil areas in our State which we should prevent from getting into the hands of private companies, and should see that they are kept in the hands of the State itself. One of the most important matters which we can discuss is the effect of the Standard Oil Company in America. I believe that this Bill provides for the handing over of our mineral oil areas to this company, and, if so, we should have time to discuss it so that we can prevent it if possible.

The PREMIER: Would another fifteen minutes save the Standard Oil Company?

Mr. RYLAND: The Standard Oil Company want to get these oil measures into their own hands, and if we are restricted to half an hour on

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the second reading, we will not be able to get that expert knowledge and other information to enable us to make our protest here and put it in an intelligent way before the country. I hope this House will accept the amendment. It is only a reasonable one, as surely forty-five minutes is little enough. Half an hour is too short a time altogether. You have all the machinery—the gag and everything else—and there is no necessity for cutting members down to half an hour. It is most unreasonable, and I hope this House will reject the proposal.

Mr. DOUGLAS (*Cook*): As this is the first occasion I have taken the opportunity of expressing my views to this House this session, I think it cannot be alleged that I am one of those who take up an unnecessary length of time in debate. But there is no gainsaying the fact that there are many members in this House—particularly members of the Opposition—I am not particularly referring to this Opposition, but all Oppositions are the same—who take up a great deal of time in discussing matters in a useless sort of way. I am one who believes that the time has arrived when it is necessary to consider the means to be adopted for bringing about some different method of discussing matters of public importance in this Chamber. But I do not agree with the method adopted by the present Government in bringing forward this motion to restrict discussion of important matters, particularly second-reading speeches, to half an hour. The question of limiting speeches, in my opinion, is a very debatable question altogether. (Hear, hear!) It is one which should be dealt with with very great caution, because those who have the privilege of sitting in this Chamber are sent here to voice the opinions of the people, to bring about matters of legislation, and to discuss the administration of the country, and I think we ought to have the fullest opportunity of discussing in detail everything that is brought before us, either the policy of the Government that may be in power or the methods of administration. I would not for one moment agree to support this motion; and upon calm and deliberate consideration I have come to the conclusion that there is a different method altogether than by curtailing the debate to half an hour or even three-quarters of an hour. The amendment which we have before us seeks somewhat to widen the time which is to be allotted under this motion of the Premier's to three-quarters of an hour, and that will certainly have my support. If it is not possible to maintain to the full the right to speak on all and every occasion to the utmost extent, I shall do my best to increase the time from half an hour to forty-five minutes. While I take the opportunity of discussing this matter briefly, I think I can show the Government a better method of bringing about some more equitable state of affairs than exists at the present time in this Chamber in dealing with measures which are brought before us. It is a well-recognised fact that the Opposition, whatever party are in opposition at the time, are there more or less to oppose the measures brought forward by the Government. In order to bring about their desires it often becomes necessary to make long speeches in order to force home their arguments, and do the best they can to get a majority, perhaps through the absence of those who are on the Government side. For some time past I have felt that it is necessary to bring about a different system of discussing our public business. Many members sit behind the Government who find themselves in a position of having to assist to get through public business, and they feel obliged to sit there in silence and listen often to a great deal of talk from

members on this side of the House, which is perhaps not relevant, and which very often we can do without. (Hear, hear! and Government laughter.) I am not referring to any particular party in opposition, as when members of the now Government party were in opposition they made long speeches, while members of the Government party remained in their places keeping a majority, and sat there all hours of the morning.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: They are gagged over there.

Mr. DOUGLAS: Yes, they are gagged. The remedy for limiting speeches should be approached from a different standpoint. I would suggest something that is in the public mind at the present time, and that is in the direction of abolishing altogether our system of party government.

Hon. R. PHILIP: Abolish *Hansard*.

Mr. LENNON: We might if we had decent newspapers.

The PREMIER: What has this to do with the amendment?

Mr. DOUGLAS: The Premier is endeavouring to limit speeches to half an hour, and there is an amendment to make it forty-five minutes, and I was suggesting that the matter might be gone about in a different way altogether, so that, if we abolished the party system of Government, measures brought forward here would be dealt with by all members of the House on their merits, and every member would have an opportunity for speaking just what he thought and for as long as he liked. I consider that every member on every second reading should be obliged to give some reason for voting one way or the other. (Hear, hear!) I would make every member who has the privilege of representing the people in this House get up and express his opinions for at least five minutes on every matter of public importance that comes before the Chamber, and would allow him to speak as long as he liked. It would be very much better for the country if we had the benefit of the expert knowledge which many members possess, and which they feel constrained to keep to themselves at the present time, owing to their having to assist to further the business of the Government, than to curtail the length of speeches as proposed. There are many ways in which we could limit long speeches besides that which is proposed in the motion before the House. If we adopted the method I suggest, we would have no Address in Reply, we should meet earlier in the day, and earlier in the year, and we should then have ample time to discuss public business. Liberty of speech is one of the greatest liberties we possess as representatives of the people, and we should be very careful how we curtail it. I did not intend to speak as long as I have done, but I felt it to be my duty not to give a silent vote on an important matter of this kind. I shall certainly support the amendment, and, if it is not carried, I shall do my best during the remaining stages of the motion to oppose it in every shape and form, and to maintain to the fullest extent the privilege we now possess of discussing every matter brought before us as long as we like. We know very well that the Government have brought this motion forward at this stage of the session with the view, later on, of gagging through certain Bills which may be of a contentious character, and of saving them the trouble of putting on the gag when the Estimates are going through. It simply means that many members will be deprived of the privilege of criticising the actions of the Government when the Estimates are under consideration. My vote, therefore, will be cast in favour of extending the time

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from half an hour to forty-five minutes, and, if that amendment is not carried, I shall do my best to get the matter referred back to the Standing Orders Committee, or else to defeat it altogether.

Mr. BOUCHARD (*Brisbane South*): I think the speech delivered by the hon. member for Cook is about the best argument that has been offered in favour of the motion. The hon. member stated that it is the duty of the Opposition really to waste time. The Government bring forward certain measures, and the Opposition, simply because they are in opposition, deem it necessary to talk in order to obstruct the passage of those measures. We have had an illustration during the present session of the manner in which time is wasted. During this session, as well as during the numerous sessions that I have had the honour to be in Parliament, there has been a lamentable waste of time. One hon. member gets up and makes a speech lasting perhaps an hour. Another member follows and vies with the one who preceded him, and makes a speech of an hour and a quarter. Then another member deems it his duty to vie with that hon. member and makes a speech lasting two or three hours.

Mr. LENNON: Give us an instance.

Mr. BOUCHARD: We have had many instances during the present session, and I say the Government have done the proper thing in bringing forward a motion which will fix a time limit for speeches. We are here for the purpose of doing business, and it is a lamentable thing to find members taking up time talking trash. The new Sessional Order will have the good effect of causing members to compress their opinions and ideas into as few a words as possible, in order that they may convey them to the House within the time limit. I am very glad indeed that the Government have moved in this matter, because I think it is high time that something was done to curtail a privilege which has been exceeded and almost become a license. I shall certainly oppose the amendment, as I believe that the offer which the Premier has made to the House to allow the leader of the Opposition three-quarters of an hour, just the same as a Minister on the second reading of a Bill, is a good one. I think three-quarters of an hour will allow the leader of the Opposition ample time for the criticism of a measure, and I am quite sure that the House will readily afford any member who is advancing arguments for or against a measure to exceed the time limit prescribed in the Sessional Order.

Mr. NEVITT: This debate has elicited some peculiar expressions of opinion from hon. members opposite. The hon. member who has just resumed his seat stated that he was delighted that the Government had brought down these resolutions. We have been told very frequently that it was not the Government who had brought down the resolutions.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not take any notice of what the hon. member for South Brisbane said. The Chairman of the Standing Orders Committee has repeatedly told the House, and other members of that Committee have told the House, that this proposed Sessional Order has been introduced on the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee. I hope I shall not have to make this statement again. It seems absurd that after I have made such a statement members of a deliberative assembly should persist in saying that the motion is brought down by the Government.

[*Mr. Douglas.*]

Mr. NEVITT: Am I to understand that I am not allowed to reply to a remark made by a member on the other side of the House?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, nothing of the kind.

Mr. NEVITT: I am replying to the statement made by the junior member for Brisbane South when he said he was delighted that these resolutions were brought down by Government, and I think I am perfectly within my rights in doing so. On the other hand, the junior member for Brisbane North said he was more or less sorry that it was necessary to bring in these resolutions. Some few years ago the senior member for Townsville brought in similar restrictions on debate, and expressed a similar opinion to that expressed by the member for Brisbane North. Thus we have two members on the same side expressing directly opposite opinions with reference to the resolutions before the House. The hon. member for Brisbane North also said there was no evidence of arrangement in bringing forward this proposal. Still, as I remarked before, we can only judge the actions of hon. members sitting on that side

by their actions in years gone by, [10 p.m.] because we have it in evidence that the last time these Standing Orders

were discussed in this House they had been discussed by members then on the Government side of the House before they were introduced into this Chamber by the then leader of the Government, the senior member for Townsville, and I think that is a very good argument why members on this side of the House should consider that we should not have our liberties curtailed. During this discussion, practically only two members on that side of the House have taken any part or voiced their opinions in any shape or form, which shows beyond all doubt this has been discussed in caucus, and a resolution come to as to what they are going to do in this House, such as was done in 1900.

Hon. R. PHILP: That is not true.

Mr. FORSYTH: You discussed it in caucus.

Mr. NEVITT: The hon. member for Townsville says it is not true. A little time ago we heard him state that *Hansard* should be buried and done away with. I will give him one of the reasons why he said *Hansard* should be buried. On the 3rd December, 1900, the hon. member introduced certain resolutions in connection with our Standing Orders.

Hon. R. PHILP: And I took the sole responsibility myself.

Mr. NEVITT: I do not say you did not take the sole responsibility, but I say it was discussed by other members on that side of the House before they were introduced.

Hon. R. PHILP made several interjections.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! This debate between the hon. member for Townsville and the hon. member for Carpentaria is entirely out of order. Will the hon. member for Carpentaria address the Chair.

Mr. NEVITT: I am sorry if I have transgressed, but, as I stated, we are somewhat suspicious in this matter when we have evidence on record that they were discussed the last time the Standing Orders were revised before they came before hon. members. I think we are perfectly justified in believing that. On the 3rd December, 1900, Mr. Chas. McDonald, as reported in *Hansard*, said—

Then somebody must be lying in this particular instance.

He made the same statement as I do. He goes on—

Here is the *Norman Chronicle* of Wednesday, 21st November, 1900, which contains the following paragraph, headed "Our Member":—

Writing privately to Mr. Mathers, our member, Mr. James Forsyth, says: "Re Railway Bills. I may say that, even with the *clôture*, we could not possibly put through the private Railway Bills this session. The Government, therefore, propose, on next Tuesday, the 13th instant, introducing a resolution limiting the time to each Bill. For instance, they will give, say, two nights to the Burketown Bill, and, if all the clauses are not passed at, say, 10.30, the debate closes, and the whole of the clauses go through *in globo*. It is not expected, if this works properly!"—

They evidently had some doubt whether it would work properly, and they were discussing the details—

"it will take more than nine nights to put the four private railways through. I will advise you by wire when the Burketown Bill goes through. We have had a very hard session—late nights and all-night sittings—still I feel I shall be amply repaid if I can get these two private Railway Bills through, which I believe will benefit the district so much. I propose taking a run up next year, when I hope to see all friends."

That proves beyond all doubt that the matter had been previously discussed. That letter was written early in November stating that the Government were going to take certain action, and that action was not taken until the 3rd December.

MR. FORSYTH: What on earth has that to do with the question?

MR. NEVITT: To prove, as I stated before, that you discussed this thing in caucus before you came to this Chamber, and have to swallow it and say nothing.

THE PREMIER: Will a quarter of an hour extra remedy all that?

MR. NEVITT: It is the principle we are fighting for, and had you acceded to the proposition made from this side of the House earlier in the day, I believe the whole of this thing would have been through and settled before now. The senior member for Toowoomba interjected—

THE PREMIER: This is your revenge, is it not?

MR. NEVITT: It is not a question of revenge as far as I am concerned. It is very rarely I occupy the time of the House at any length. The senior member for Toowoomba said members on this side of the House had made this a party question. I give that a most emphatic contradiction, because it was never made a party question in any shape or form.

HON. R. PHILP: Did you discuss it in caucus?

MR. NEVITT: Does that constitute a party question? Many things are discussed in caucus. As the hon. member for Rockhampton knows, things are discussed in caucus and then members come to this Chamber free and unhampered, and that is the position to-night. (Government laughter.) The senior member for Toowoomba we know perfectly well—in fact he has expressed himself as being in sympathy with the amendment, and he was also in favour of the amendment moved this afternoon, to refer the question to a Committee of the whole House, but did he vote according to his opinion? No, the whip was cracked and he had to go to that side of the House. And then they say we have made this a party matter. It is only the members on that side of the House who have made this in any way a party question.

MR. LENNON: They have not come to heel over there.

MR. NEVITT: The hon. member for Clermont, in speaking on this question the other day, said this was the first time the Standing

Orders had come up for discussion since he had been a member of this House. It simply shows how short is the memory of the hon. member, because it was shortly after the member for Clermont came to this Parliament that a similar motion was moved by the hon. member for Townsville, and it resulted in the hon. member for Clermont being expelled from this House. One would have thought that a thing of that kind would have fixed it on the memory of the hon. member.

THE PREMIER: It was a common thing at that time.

MR. NEVITT: I am rather inclined to think that if the present leader of the Government had his own way, it would be a very common thing even to-day. A good deal has been said about the unnecessary time, or obstruction, that has taken place. In reading and looking up in connection with this matter, I came across a discussion which took place in the British House of Commons, and to show you what they can do there in the way of obstruction, we find when the Criminal Law Amendment Bill was before the House it occupied seventy-four days in the House and fifty-four days in Committee. That is on record; and I say the Government cannot point out any one case this session where there has been any attempt at obstruction, and I think the least they can do is to accept the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Woothakata. However, I certainly intend to support it.

MR. TOLMIE, who, on rising, was received with Opposition laughter, said: Mr. Deputy Speaker—

MR. MULCAHY: A race with the hon. member for North Brisbane for a portfolio. (Renewed Opposition laughter),

MR. TOLMIE: I wish to make a few remarks in regard to some of the statements that have fallen from the hon. member for Carpentaria in relation to the particular amendment before the Chamber. I would like first of all to support your ruling given on very many occasions since the debate commenced last Thursday afternoon, that these Sessional Orders are not the work of the Government, but the work of the Standing Orders Committee which was appointed by this House.

MR. RYLAND: Are you ashamed of your work?

MR. TOLMIE: As a member of that Committee, I desire to state that these Standing Orders were discussed fully by the committee, and they arrived at a certain decision, which is now before the Chamber. In connection with any debate that takes place the leader of the Government, who has been accused of being the father of these Sessional Orders, had no more power than any individual member.

MR. MULLAN: Do you think he inspired them?

MR. TOLMIE: The most powerful man in the committee was yourself, Sir, and you had the conduct of the whole of the debate under your control.

MR. MANN: Yes, but they were inspired.

MR. TOLMIE: There was no inspiration at all. The members of the committee expressed themselves fully, and divided in such a way that showed that they were absolutely independent, and were doing what they considered was the best for the State.

MR. MANN: There was a little caucus with the Premier at the end of last session.

MR. TOLMIE: I possibly did not agree with all the resolutions that were arrived at—I may in some respects have desired to take a wider range of thought in connection with some of them—

Mr. Tolmie.]

but the Standing Orders Committee came to certain resolutions, and as a member of that committee I supported the resolutions when they were finally agreed upon by the whole committee, and I am here to support them now. If the Chamber in its wisdom sees fit to alter them, well and good. With regard to the statement made by the hon. member for Carpentaria that there is a control of this side of the Chamber by the Premier making this a party vote, I desire to say that, personally, I know of no such control. There appears to me to be less control on this side of the House than there appears to be on the other side. There is a remarkable unanimity of feeling on the other side of the Chamber with regard to these resolutions.

Mr. FERRICKS: Hear, hear!

Mr. TOLMIE: The hon. member for Bowen, who is so very fond of interjections, some of which are entirely wide of the mark, in the course of his remarks this evening accused members on this side of being governed by the Premier.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. TOLMIE: If that was so, then judging by the unanimity of feeling exhibited on the other side, there are no members more bound by the rule of the caucus than the hon. member for Bowen.

Mr. LENNON: In what way is he more bound?

Mr. TOLMIE: Because he has not departed in the least from the dictum which has been laid down by the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. FERRICKS: By his platform.

Mr. TOLMIE: It has been pointed out by the hon. member for Leichhardt and the hon. member for Clermont that there is a tendency in the present age to machine-made politics. The hon. member for Leichhardt took the opportunity of quoting a passage from an important work, pointing out that there is a tendency to Cabinet Government. That we all recognise, but Cabinet Government is only a reflex of caucus government from the outside.

Mr. FERRICKS: Caucus government is Cabinet government from outside.

Mr. TOLMIE: If we are governed from outside, we are governed by public opinion. The hon. member is governed from inside by the caucus, which tells him exactly what he has to do.

Mr. LENNON: We are not governed by the *Courier*, as you are. (Laughter.)

Mr. TOLMIE: I do not think the amendment of the hon. member for Woothakata, extending the time for fifteen minutes, is going to be of any service to the House. There is a full opportunity of half an hour given to members to speak on second-reading debates, and there are many other opportunities when members can speak if they feel so disposed.

Mr. MANN: I am going to speak even on the motion that the Bill be printed.

Mr. TOLMIE: One of the reasons why probably members on this side do not speak more frequently is because all members on the other side speak, and if any business is to be done it is necessary for some members to be silent. I am in accordance with the hon. member for Leichhardt when he says that probably the same amount of time will be absorbed in speeches now as there has been in the past; but the only difference is that by the limitation of the eloquence of members on the other side an opportunity will be given to members on this side to give expression to their views also. This is not a party measure, but that is a sound reason why intelligent men on this side will

[Mr. Tolmie.

support it—so that they may get back some of the rights which have been taken from them by hon. members on the other side. I shall oppose the amendment.

Mr. COLLINS (*Burke*): I may say here that I am against any curtailment of free speech whatever, but recognising that to some extent this is the only way out of the difficulty, I shall support the amendment. The hon. senior member for Townsville said, by way of interjection, "Abolish *Hansard*." I do not know why he is so anxious to abolish *Hansard*.

Hon. R. PHILP: I am not anxious.

Mr. COLLINS: It is the only means that members have of letting their electors know what they are doing in Parliament, and, so far as my electors are concerned, I wish they did know all that is taking place in this House. The hon. member for Woollongabba this evening said that owing to such long speeches being delivered many men sought refuge in the bar. I am sorry that the hon. member should make use of that expression, because I am one of those who do not believe in the bar. (Laughter.)

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: It is a reflection upon the House.

Mr. COLLINS: It is a reflection upon the House, and I am sorry to think that the hon. member should have made use of that expression, because I do not want my electors to know that we are not a sober lot of men here in this Parliament, and the only inference that they can draw from the remark of the hon. member for Woollongabba is that we are not. In looking up the records of the past, I find that whenever the Standing Orders were amended the Government intended to do something drastic. I do not know whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce syndicate railways in my electorate, but I notice that Mr. Frew, the representative of the Chillagoe Company, is now in Brisbane. I do not know whether it is a coincidence or not, or whether he is in the confidence of the Government, or whether the Government are consulting him; but one of the reasons why I am raising my voice against the curtailment of speech here is because I want to be in a position to oppose syndicate railways for all I am worth. To my mind we do not make as much use of Parliament as we ought from a propaganda standpoint. The German socialists would not be in the position they occupy to-day if they had not made use of Parliament. How am I to let my electors know the position of affairs if this Standing Order is passed? And how are they to know that the member for Burke said anything at all, if we are to depend on the newspapers? If we had anything like fair newspapers in Brisbane, it would be different. The hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Philp, cannot complain of the newspapers, because they report his speeches, but other members have reason to complain in that respect. I am against the curtailment of speech, and I intend to support the amendment.

Mr. LENNON: I think the proposed alteration of our Standing Orders by the introduction of new Sessional Orders is conceived with the idea of causing us to swallow the alteration without proper discussion. It is not a Sessional Order which may be regarded as a temporary expedient to meet a temporary difficulty; and hon. members must not think it is not to apply to future sessions, because in any session the Premier may move it as a sessional order, and it must be passed without debate. That is putting power into the hands of the Government of which some hon. members may not be aware. I want hon. members also to consider what is the reason for this Sessional Order. There must be

some motive. No such alteration would be proposed by the Standing Orders Committee without some motive.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I must call the attention of the hon. member to the fact that the major question is not now before the House. The question is that the words "half an hour" stand part of the question.

Mr. LENNON: I wish to give reasons why we should have three-quarters of an hour rather than half an hour, and I say there has been no reason why there should be any curtailment of the speeches of hon. members. The Electoral Districts Bill, for instance, was discussed and passed in very quick time. Then there is the Police Offences Bill. Could any hon. member undertake to address himself intelligently to an important Bill of that nature and restrict his remarks within the limits of half an hour? It is not possible, and therefore it is necessary that there should be an extension of time. There is also the Local Authorities Bill—a most important measure. Members are asked to restrict themselves to speaking half an hour on the second reading of an important measure like that. There is also the Land Acts Consolidation Bill, which is a consolidation of the Acts and amending Acts passed during the last twenty-five years—we are asked to restrict ourselves to half an hour in speaking on such a measure as that. The Minister for Lands himself must acknowledge that it would be utterly impossible for any man who considers himself an authority on land matters to discuss so important a Bill intelligently and effectively in a second-reading speech of half an hour. There are not many members who consider themselves as experts on the land question; but we have some experts in the House, and they reside chiefly on this side; and they would require two hours at least to express themselves fully and effectively on this consolidating measure. That is another reason why speeches should not be restricted to half an hour. Take also the Religious Instruction Bill—so called. I am sure many members would like an hour and a-half to discuss that Bill effectively. In this matter members on the other side are probably making a whip for their own backs in time to come. The hon. member for Toowoomba has put all the blame in regard to making long speeches on this side; but possibly in the near future he may be on this side and be desirous of giving vent to the natural eloquence with which we are so much charmed. I have been in the House for three years, and I do not think I have ever given reason for a proposition to impose a curb on the expression of my opinions; and I can apply the remark to many hon. members. There may be one or two cases, perhaps, where members have offended in some degree; but it is not fair that seventy-two members should be restricted and curtailed simply because one or two members have offended in regard to the length of their speeches. I hope members will weigh that, and not give a vote simply to please the Standing Orders Committee or the Government. You have ruled, Mr. Speaker, that this is not a Government measure; but I ask to be permitted to say that though the Standing Orders Committee made a progress report, we see by the heading that the Premier has practically put his imprimatur upon it, and I hope you will permit me to say that it is practically a Government measure.

I believe, Sir, that, if you had time [10.30 p.m.] to consider it, you would see that, once this left the hands of the Standing Orders Committee and the Premier submitted it to the House, it practically became a Government measure. However, as you have ruled otherwise, I shall not ask you to alter your

opinion. I content myself with the few remarks I have made up to the present, and express the hope that hon. members on the other side who have expressed their opinions already in opposition to some portions of the proposal will not do as they did in the last division—express themselves one way and vote the other. I ask them for a fair and square vote, without regard to what the Government may think, or what the Government "Whips" may threaten, and to vote honestly and straightforwardly for the amendment, and we shall carry it against the Government and the Standing Orders Committee.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted (*Mr. Theodore's amendment*) stand part of the question—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 31.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Hunter D.
" Barnes, G. P.	" Kidston
" Barnes, W. H.	" Lesina
" Booker	" Macartney
" Bouchard	" Mackintosh
" Brennan	" Paget
" Bridges	" Petrie
" Corser	" Philp
" Cottell	" Rankin
" Denham	" Roberts
" Forrest	" Swayne
" Forsyth	" Thorn
" Grayson	" Tolmie
" Gunn	" Walker
" Hawthorn	" White
" Hodge	

Tellers: Mr. Hodge and Mr. Roberts.

NOES, 22.

Mr. Allen	Mr. Lennon
" Barber	" Mann
" Bowman	" May
" Collins	" Mulcahy
" Coyne	" Mullan
" Ferricks	" Nevitt
" Foley	" O'Sullivan
" Hamilton	" Payne
" Hardacre	" Ryland
" Hunter, J. M.	" Theodore
" Land	" Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Winstanley.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Fox, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Wienhoit, and Mr. Somerset.

Noes—Mr. Breslin, Mr. McLachlan, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Crawford.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I desire to move an amendment. I do not propose to take up very much time. The amendment is to insert after the word "Bill," at the end of the second paragraph—

Mr. BOWMAN: There are two or three amendments before that.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The following words:—or to the leader of the Opposition or any member deputed by him—

Mr. RYAN: I rise to a point of order.

Mr. MACARTNEY: or any member deputed by him—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Barcoo.

Mr. RYAN: I have an amendment to move before that.

The PREMIER: That is no point of order at all.

Mr. BOWMAN: Are you finding another form of gag?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

The PREMIER: No; but it has to be done in the right way by asking the hon. member for Brisbane North to withdraw his amendment.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I am here to protect the rights and privileges of hon.

Mr. Macartney.]

members on both sides, and, when the time comes, I shall see that the amendments are put in proper order if notice is given.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MACARTNEY: We are taking this matter in the House and not in Committee. I recognise that I would forfeit my right to speak if I were to sit down at this stage, therefore I am only prepared to sit down on the understanding that I do not deprive myself of my privileges later on.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MACARTNEY: The amendment comes in at the end of paragraph 2, and it reads as follows:—

or to the leader of the Opposition, or any member deputed by him, to speak first in reply to such motion, who shall each be at liberty to speak for an hour and a-half.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understand that there are amendments prior to that of the hon. member for Brisbane North.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The difficulty is that we are in the House. As there are prior amendments, they must be taken first, and the hon. member for Brisbane North will be allowed to move his amendment afterwards. Of course, I understand it will not be taken that the hon. member for Brisbane North will lose his right of speaking on his giving way now.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: I desire to move the adjournment of the debate. I have an amendment to move prior to that of the hon. member for Brisbane North, but I understood that this House was to adjourn at half past 10 o'clock, and on that understanding I gave a pair to a Government supporter, and I remained outside the bar of the House on the last division, although it was half-past 10 o'clock. Is the Premier going to accept the motion for adjournment?

The PREMIER: State your amendment first.

Mr. RYAN: I moved the insertion of the words "the second reading of a Bill" after the word "Reply," on line 2.

Hon. R. PHILP: We settled that question with the last division.

Mr. RYAN: In the ordinary course members speak for more than half an hour on the second reading of a Bill, and this amendment gives them the right to speak for an hour. It places speakers on the second reading of a Bill on the same footing as speakers on the Address in Reply and on a direct want of confidence motion. It seems to me that the leader of the Government wishes to embarrass me in some way or other, but I am prepared to go on with my amendment.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: In what way am I trying to embarrass you?

Mr. RYAN: I think the hon. gentleman knows that himself perfectly well.

The PREMIER: No, I do not.

Mr. RYAN: It was understood that this debate was to be adjourned at half-past 10 o'clock and on that understanding I gave a pair to a Government supporter, and although it was after half-past 10 o'clock I respected that pair.

Mr. MULLAN: Perhaps he will accept the amendment.

Mr. RYAN: Will the hon. gentleman accept the motion for adjournment?

The PREMIER: I am prepared to accept the adjournment after I have heard your amendment, which I think is quite out of order.

[Mr. Macartney.]

Mr. RYAN: I rely on the Speaker, and I am quite prepared to let him decide that.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: I move the adjournment of the debate.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: It was the expressed wish of the House, when the amendment was moved by the hon. member for Brisbane North, that other hon. members who wished to do so should move amendments prior to his, and, that being so, I cannot consider a motion for the adjournment of the debate an amendment on the question.

Mr. RYAN: Very well, I shall go on with my amendment. I move the insertion of the words "second reading of a Bill" after the word "Reply." I am well aware of the fact that a desire has been expressed on both sides of the House to have a time limit to speeches. Certain arguments have been put forward by those on the Government side that there has been an average of forty-nine minutes to each member in speaking on the Address in Reply. I submit that that is a fallacious argument. The fact that there is an average of forty-nine minutes on the Address in Reply does not necessarily mean that the Government only intend to allow an average time for speaking. We know that certain members occupy five minutes and some ten minutes, and as a rule members on this side of the House occupy the time necessary for putting before this House the views which they may hold on any particular subject. I regret that the amendment was not accepted to refer the matter to Committee to be dealt with in the ordinary way. Seeing that that was impossible, the next best course is to endeavour to get amendments which would enable members of this House to have an opportunity of expressing their views on the second reading of important Bills. As the proposals stand at present, a member can only speak for half an hour on the second reading of a Bill. Why should I have to ask members representing other electorates for an extension of time to forty-five minutes? We should have more opportunity during the second reading of a Bill for expressing our views and the views of our constituents, but according to the proposals brought up here we are not allowed to do that.

Hon. R. PHILP: I rise to a point of order. I maintain that the amendment submitted by the hon. member for Barcoo is not in order. We have just decided that question. The amendment is to extend the time beyond half an hour, but we have already decided that we cannot extend the time beyond half an hour.

Mr. MULLAN: It didn't state what questions were confined to half an hour.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Hon. R. PHILP: I maintain that the amendment is not in order, and I ask your ruling on the question.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: In regard to the point of order raised by the hon. member for Townsville, the House has definitely stated that half an hour shall be the time limit for speeches, with two exceptions—the debate on the Address in Reply or a direct want of confidence motion. That was done with the full knowledge of the House, and I therefore rule that the point of order raised by the hon. member for Townsville is quite good, and I cannot put the amendment of the hon. member for Barcoo from the chair.

Mr. HARDACRE: It is entirely wrong. The half an hour was asked for some things and not for others. This is a proposal to except some things from the half-hour rule.

The PREMIER: It was proposed to make it forty-five minutes on the second reading of Bills, and half an hour was accepted.

Mr. HARDACRE: No. What we have done is that we have decided that no member shall speak for more than half an hour in any debate. Now, we are going to propose some exceptions to that. We are going to propose some exceptions in the rule itself. The resolution itself proposes exceptions to what the House has already adopted. The hon. member for Barcoo wishes to propose some exceptions.

The PREMIER: And the House has already refused to give another five minutes to it.

Mr. HARDACRE: No; it either limited it to everything or it did not.

The TREASURER: It says, "except in the debate on the Address in Reply, or on a direct motion of want of confidence."

Mr. HARDACRE: We have not carried that yet. All we have carried is the first part of the paragraph—"No member shall speak for more than half an hour at a time in any debate in the House." Then the paragraph provides certain exceptions. We propose to add to those exceptions the "second reading of Bills." That amendment is not excluded by the vote just taken in the House.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: The second reading of Bills has been mentioned throughout the debate.

Mr. HARDACRE: If it was mentioned it is not included in the resolution so far as it is passed. All we have passed is the sentence "No member shall speak for more than half an hour at a time in any debate in the House."

The PREMIER: "Except."

Mr. HARDACRE: Yes, "except," and I submit that we are absolutely in order in inserting any exceptions the House thinks desirable to include in the resolution. If the ruling of the Speaker is agreed to, then we shall be debarred from including any other exceptions than those mentioned in the resolution. If we make any exception at all, I contend that we are at liberty to add to those exceptions. I therefore submit that the Speaker's ruling is incorrect, and, with the greatest reluctance, I move that it be disagreed with.

Mr. RYLAND: I second the motion. We have not decided anything with regard to the exceptions. There was certainly a great deal of talk on the previous amendment regarding the second reading of Bills, but no decision was arrived at on the subject. The motion now reads—

No member shall speak for more than half an hour at a time in any debate in the House, except in the debate on the Address in Reply, or on a direct motion of want of confidence.

And the hon. member for Barcoo proposes to add to those exceptions "the second reading of a Bill."

The PREMIER: Which the House has already refused.

Mr. RYLAND: The House has not decided the question. The House has simply decided on the half-hour limit, and has not dealt with the exceptions. If we cannot insert another exception to the half-hour limit, then we cannot omit any of the exceptions mentioned in the paragraph, but must accept the clause as it stands.

Hon. R. PHILP: Do you want to take out an exception?

Mr. RYLAND: I do not; but if the hon. member wants to omit one of the exceptions he will be in order in proposing such an amendment.

I entirely disagree with the ruling of the Speaker, and I think that on reading the context he will himself see that the amendment of the hon. member for Barcoo is in order.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The argument used by the hon. member for Gympie is hardly logical. The amendment proposed by the hon. member for Barcoo has been substantially discussed for the last two or three hours and has been definitely decided by the House. The question which was discussed and decided was whether a longer period should be allowed to a member in debating any matters other than the exceptions thereafter expressly mentioned, and right through the discussion the question of the time to be allowed on the second reading of special Bills was very much in evidence. Practically the whole thing was discussed, and it is perfectly idle for members to say that it was not discussed. The amendment really asks the House to say whether a greater amount of time shall be allowed for the discussion of a matter which the House has already decided should have a lesser period. It is only a waste of time discussing the matter. I think there can be no question that the amendment is not in order.

Mr. COYNE: I cannot agree with the hon. member who has just resumed his seat. I contend that it is quite within the rights of hon. members to deal with the exceptions mentioned in the paragraph, and that they have a right to add to those exceptions. If it is right to except one of these things, it is also right to insert fresh exceptions.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Except that hon. members have already decided otherwise.

Mr. COYNE: The point of your ruling, to my mind, is this: That this was decided [11 p.m.] by the vote taken a little while ago.

If that is so, why is provision made later on for dealing with matters for a less time in Committee than what we have decided? There is another departure.

Mr. FORSYTH: That has to be decided by the House.

Mr. COYNE: It has to be decided by the House, but it makes two exceptions, and it is quite within the rights of the House to decide that other exceptions shall be inserted. There is also a proviso in the third paragraph which is not in accord with the ruling already carried, and so right on to the end of the report which we have before us for consideration. We have already decided that half an hour should be the time allowed to deal with certain things, but the second reading of a Bill is not mentioned. Leave to introduce a Bill may take up half an hour of this House, according to what we have decided. The motion that you leave the chair may be discussed for half an hour by each member, if each member so desires it. Those are the things we have decided, although they have not been specifically mentioned here. It says—

No member shall speak for more than half an hour in any debate except—

on some things, and a couple of exceptions are made. Why is it not right that members of this House should decide that another exception should be inserted? According to the motion moved by the hon. member for Barcoo, and which you have ruled out of order—and I say with all due respect I think you are wrong in your ruling—the question asked by the hon. member for Barcoo is whether we are going to add to the exceptions already included. I think it is within the rights of this House to provide that other exceptions may be included.

Mr. LESINA: I came to this House as a member of the Standing Orders Committee with

Mr. Lesina.]

strong faith in the proposition as laid before the Chamber. I have been looking very carefully at this proposition, and I can see no reason for supporting the proposition that your ruling be disagreed to. No hon. member shall speak for more than half an hour in debating any question in the House except the debate on the Address in Reply, and on a vote of want of confidence. That has been approved of by the House.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS : No, no !

Mr. LESINA : I want to ask those hon. members who say "No, no," where does the decision stop? No member shall speak for more than half an hour at a time.

Mr. HARDACRE : On anything or any debate?

Mr. LESINA : I say the sense of the House has determined by implication that no member shall speak for more than half an hour, with two exceptions. What is the particular reason why hon. members wanted three-quarters of an hour? I know the Premier laughed at the proposition for another quarter of an hour, and really it was absurd. Those who object to the limitation of debates, and who object to a limit of half an hour to any speech with certain exceptions—their case is not made any stronger by asking for an extension of a quarter of an hour.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER interjected.

Mr. LESINA : I know the hon. member who interjected made a very ingenious defence and pointed out several clauses in our Standing Orders under which responsible Ministers or any private member might move that a member be no longer heard. Careful attention to the speeches delivered by hon. members and to the interjections leads me to the conclusion that members were anxious to get forty-five minutes. For what purpose?

Mr. HARDACRE : For what purpose?

Mr. LESINA : A general debate, and consequently it was insisted on by every other speaker.

Mr. HARDACRE : I never mentioned it once.

Mr. LESINA : The hon. member is an exception. I do not think any injustices would be done if the proposition were agreed to. I maintain your ruling is correct, because by the general implication made by the decision of the House, half an hour is sufficient to devote to a discussion on any debate in the House. At present that decision applies to second readings of Bills. Now, what the hon. member for Barcoo desires to do is this, and it is just as well that members of the House should clearly understand what he proposes to do. He is perfectly right to attempt to do it, but if he had been here all through the debate, I do not think he would take up the position he has taken up.

Mr. RYAN : I have been here all through the debate.

Mr. LESINA : That being so, I withdraw what I said. I have no desire to make any imputations against the hon. member. Still, I think if he had paid more careful attention to the arguments used, he would not adopt the attitude he takes up at the present time. The amendment which is ruled out of order is not justifiable. If forty-five minutes is considered a reasonable time for a second-reading discussion—

Mr. HARDACRE : We did not say so.

Mr. LESINA : Nearly every hon. member who spoke did say so, and as the hon. members cannot get that in, they will have to put up with half an hour. The Standing Orders Committee recommended that half an hour is sufficient for the second reading of a Bill.

Mr. HARDACRE : No, no !

[*Mr. Lesina.*

Mr. LESINA : The thing was read over half a dozen times by the Clerk and by the Deputy Speaker sitting in the chair at the committee meetings, and no member noticed the omission of second readings, and no protest was made—no dissent was recorded. I agreed with the general scheme laid down by the committee. It was considered by that committee that half an hour was sufficient, and the House has since confirmed that after hearing arguments by a number of members.

Mr. HARDACRE AND OTHER OPPOSITION MEMBERS : No, no !

Mr. LESINA : I will put it another way. The House has been asked to accept the forty-five minutes for second-reading debates. The House refused to give forty-five minutes, and determined to stick to half an hour for that purpose; and now the hon. member for Barcoo wants—not three-quarters of an hour, he wants a whole hour. Here is the position : I recommended, as a member of the Standing Orders Committee, that half an hour was sufficient, and I objected to a bigger time being given even by implication, and now the hon. member wants a whole hour. How can I support the motion to disagree with your ruling after such a decision, backed up by the attitude I have taken up in the committee and in this Chamber? It would be a complete stultification of the work of the committee.

Mr. BOWMAN : For a specific thing.

Mr. LESINA : The easiest and clearest way out of the difficulty, as far as I am concerned, is to vote against both propositions.

HON. R. PHILP : I wish to appeal to the common sense of hon. members. We have been discussing this first paragraph the whole of this afternoon—

Mr. BOWMAN : The first portion of the first paragraph.

HON. R. PHILP : That—

No member shall speak for more than half an hour at a time in any debate in the House except in the debate on the Address in Reply, or on a direct motion of want of confidence, when a member shall be at liberty to speak for one hour.

I maintain that the whole afternoon has been spent in discussing this first clause. We tried to increase the half-hour to three-quarters of an hour, and the House voted against it.

Mr. COYNE : For several things.

HON. R. PHILP : For one specific thing. Every argument was for the second reading of a Bill, and nothing else. What other things are there?

Mr. MANN : Reports.

Mr. LENNON : What about the Financial Statement?

HON. R. PHILP : Is there not an hour given for that further on?

Mr. LENNON : No.

HON. R. PHILP : Of course there is. It is proposed further on to give an hour for the Financial Statement.

The TREASURER : "Any member debating the same."

Mr. HARDACRE : You are saying we are only getting half an hour for everything.

HON. R. PHILP : I say we are giving half an hour, mostly for second readings; it was mentioned by every member who spoke this afternoon. If the House won't give three-quarters of an hour, is it likely to give an hour? The House by thirty-one votes to twenty-two has decided that it will not give more than half an hour, except for the questions mentioned here.

Mr. HARDACRE : They have not decided it.

HON. R. PHILP: Except on a vote of want of confidence and the Address in Reply, when they will be able to speak for one hour. I hope the hon. member for Barcoo will withdraw his amendment. The hon. member for Leichhardt moved to disagree with the ruling of the Speaker. No one knows better than the hon. member for Barcoo that it is quite correct, and you cannot possibly go over the same thing after the House decided by thirty-one votes to twenty-two that they will not grant more than half an hour.

Mr. TOLMIE: I maintain that you are correct, Sir, in your ruling, and that it can be maintained by the Standing Orders. After the amendment of the hon. member for Woothakata, the whole of the debate centred in one question only—the second reading of Bills. The leader of the Opposition a few minutes ago emphasised that point. He went over a number of Bills that have been read in this House a second time, and the same line of argument was taken up by almost every other speaker on that side of the House, who supported the amendment of the hon. member for Woothakata. I maintain you are justified in your action by Standing Order 71, which says—

A question or amendment shall not be proposed which is the same in substance as any question which during the same session has been resolved in the affirmative or negative.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It has been done before.

Mr. TOLMIE: The hon. member for Kennedy says he has done it before, but he appears to be so wanting as to what is due by members to the Standing Orders that he is under the impression that he ought not to be bound by the Standing Orders.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I do not take your interpretation of them.

Mr. TOLMIE: We are here under their guidance, and we are only doing honour to the House in submitting ourselves to the Standing Orders. It may be unfortunate that the hon. member's amendment is out of order, but he will recognise the fact that it is substantially the same as the amendment we have been discussing this evening, and, therefore, the Speaker is justified in asking him to withdraw it, or ruling it out of order.

Mr. MANN: I am sorry to disagree with the hon. member for Toowoomba. My interpretation of the position the House finds itself in is this: The House passed a certain amount of the paragraph we are now dealing with up to half an hour at a time, and it was in the province of any hon. member to move an amendment at that point, and to put in "in Committee," and it would read—

No member shall speak for more than half an hour at a time in Committee.

But under the amendment of the hon. member for Barcoo, in the debate on the Address in Reply, or on a direct want of confidence motion, or on the second reading of a Bill, a member would be permitted to speak for an hour. I maintain your ruling was wrong, Sir, inasmuch as the House has full possession of the paragraph to make such amendments as it pleases, and if any hon. member chooses to move that the words "debate in the House" be deleted, with the view of inserting "in Committee," then we can discuss the whole thing over again. I maintain that that amendment will be perfectly in order, and that we can limit the half an hour speeches, which the House has agreed to, to Committee only, or to the Estimates. If that amendment is moved, I claim the support of all those members who are saying that we have decided that there shall be more than half an hour given for second-reading speeches. I never agreed that we should limit speeches on the Estimates to half an hour

or three-quarters of an hour. I argued in favour of a longer time to discuss reports such as the forestry report, the railway report, and the education report. I do not think that any member can deal with those reports effectively in half an hour.

The PREMIER: I regret that the hon. member for Barcoo has moved this amendment—

Mr. BOWMAN: It is his right.

The PREMIER: Which the Speaker has old him is not in accordance with the sense of the Standing Orders, and I am trying to show him my reasons why I think he does that. Suppose the hon. member for Barcoo is permitted to move this amendment and carry it, then it will be quite competent for any other member to move that notices of motion and first and third readings of Bills be included. After two days' discussion the House decided to keep to the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee of half an hour instead of increasing the time to three-quarters of an hour. Hon. members know just as well as I do that there have only been two arguments used against this recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee, one from those who object to any limitation of debate, and the other that half an hour on the second reading of Bills is too short a time. The hon. member for Gympie pointed out that while half an hour might be fair enough on ordinary motions, for the second reading of Bills it was too short. The hon. member for Leichhardt, the leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for Woothakata—almost everyone who has spoken with any attention to the real question—has specified the difficulty of dealing with those large Bills on the second reading in half an hour.

Mr. HARDACRE: I never mentioned it; I mentioned motions.

The PREMIER: Any member who has sat and listened to the debate could not help being impressed with the fact that why more time was wanted was to permit fuller discussion on the second readings of Bills.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: But had the House any notion, when they would not consent to the extension of a quarter of an hour, that there was to be an amendment to include notices of motion and third readings of Bills and first readings of Bills? Does not the House understand that if you permitted that to go on you would simply be permitting open and manifest obstructive waste of time?

Mr. HARDACRE: Many members understood that amendment was going to be proposed afterwards.

The PREMIER: To permit such an amendment would be to nullify what has already been done. It is an insult to the business intelligence of the House. One might as well say, "As you would not permit us three-quarters of an hour, we will now try if you will grant us an hour. I am sorry your ruling, Sir, has been questioned, and I hope the hon. member will see the wisdom of withdrawing the amendment, and allowing his fellow members to get to their little beds."

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I really think we are in order as long as we do not go beyond "Address in Reply." Though the argument was on the intelligent discussion of the second reading of a Bill, I think it will be seen that to have over half an hour for the first reading would be what the House does not wish; and to extend the time for leave to bring in a Bill to more than half an hour is not what we wished. What we wish is to give an opportunity of having it in the Standing Orders that the second reading of

Mr. O'Sullivan.]

Bills will be included in this exception; and I think we are entirely in order according to the spirit of the Standing Orders. We do not want to fritter away forty-five minutes in moving that a Bill be printed, or that a Bill be read a third time; we want second readings specified in the exceptions; and I am sorry to say that I must oppose your ruling.

Mr. FOLEY (*Townsville*): If your ruling is agreed to, Mr. Speaker, what is to become of the amendment given notice of by the hon. member for Brisbane North in the next paragraph, providing that the leader of the Opposition or somebody appointed by him shall have the right to speak for more than half an hour?

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order! That question is not now before the House.

Mr. FOLEY: If your ruling is agreed to, then no member but the mover of the second reading will be allowed to speak for more than half an hour. The object of the amendment of the hon. member for Barcoo is to give members the right to speak for more than half an hour on the second reading of a Bill, but it does not follow that every member is going to speak half an hour. Since my introduction to this House I have noticed members speaking not more than fifteen minutes, or ten minutes, or five minutes; and some members have not spoken at all during a debate. I feel bound to oppose your ruling, because, if it is upheld, there will be no chance of providing in the next paragraph that any one but the mover of a second reading may speak for more than half an hour.

Mr. FORSYTH (*Moreton*): I have not got up to discuss the question, but the last speaker stated that if your ruling is agreed to it will keep out the amendment to be moved by the hon. member for Brisbane North. He does not appear to understand that we have already passed this half hour.

Mr. RYAN: Supposing forty-five minutes had been agreed to what would have been the result? You could take forty-five minutes for everything.

Mr. FORSYTH: If every hon. member were going to speak forty-five minutes on the introduction of a Bill, and on the report stage, and on all the other occasions that were [11.30 p.m.] mentioned, we would simply require to have another Standing Order. These things are always formal. It is on the second reading of Bills that the principal debate takes place, and that has been the whole question that we have been discussing.

Mr. HARDACRE: The resolution does not say so.

Mr. FORSYTH: Does the hon. member imagine that the House is going to stultify itself, after the discussion that has taken place, when it was practically decided that only half an hour should be allowed for second-reading speeches?

Mr. HARDACRE: It is not a question of what you think, but of what the resolution says.

Mr. FORSYTH: The amendment proposed by the hon. member for Barcoo simply asked the House to stultify itself. I think that your ruling, Sir, is absolutely correct, and no hon. member can show that it is not correct.

Mr. HARDACRE: There is not a single word about second readings of Bills in the resolution.

Mr. FORSYTH: If the hon. member will refer to the second paragraph, he will see that it reads—"Provided that this rule shall not apply to a member moving the second reading of a Bill."

Mr. FOLEY: We have not come to that paragraph yet.

[*Mr. O'Sullivan.*]

Mr. FORSYTH: But the House has practically decided the question so far as second readings are concerned. Hon. members on this side distinctly understood that the speeches of hon. members on the other side were directed to securing an extension of time for the second readings of Bills. That was the crux of the position; and do hon. members opposite imagine that the House is now going to change its opinion? Let us hear some reasons why we should change our opinions. I am waiting for an opportunity to bring forward some amendments myself to give hon. members some more liberty of speech, but I have not had a chance yet, there has been so much talk on the other side, member after member getting up and repeating the same thing over and over again. I would suggest that the hon. member for Leichhardt should withdraw his motion. If it should go to a vote, I shall certainly support your ruling.

Mr. BOWMAN: To listen to the Premier and the hon. member for Moreton, one would think that the only question that had been discussed was the length of speeches on the second readings of Bills. Now, the amendment moved by the hon. member for Woothakata was a question of time—the difference between half an hour and forty-five minutes. There are other things besides second readings to which that applied, such as the report stages of Bills and several others that could be mentioned. Even if hon. members used the second readings of Bills as an argument in support of a longer time than half an hour, that should not debar the hon. member for Barcoo from endeavouring to secure an extension of the time allowed for second readings. Standing Order 83 reads—

A question having been proposed may be amended by omitting certain words only, by omitting certain words in order to insert or add other words, or by inserting or adding words.

Now, we have endeavoured to do that with reference to the first part of the motion—not in connection with second readings only, but many other things that are of just as great importance.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Second readings were practically alluded to by every speaker.

Mr. BOWMAN: Supposing they were, does that deprive us of the right to add them to the exceptions set forth in the motion? To hear those who are supporting your ruling, Sir, one would naturally conclude that the only question that had been dealt with was the second reading of Bills. The hon. member for Cairns referred to discussions on reports. We get some reports that you could not read through in less than two or three hours. Take, for instance, the report on the Department of Agriculture. When the present Secretary for Agriculture sat on this side, the hon. gentleman sometimes took two hours in discussing that report, and he was always listened to with interest, because he understood the questions that he was discussing. Although certain hon. members have alluded to second readings in support of the amendment of the hon. member for Woothakata, that should not deprive the hon. member for Barcoo of his right to move his amendment. I shall certainly vote against your ruling.

Mr. LENNON: I will only take a minute or two in what I have to say in disagreeing with your ruling. At a later stage of this matter I propose to ask you to accept an amendment to add the words hour and a-quarter or hour and a-half, and I think those words would be perfectly admissible.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes, on a want of confidence motion.

Mr. LENNON: I submit that it is open to any member of the House to alter the time in regard to the last line. It cannot be argued that the whole clause has been accepted by the House, because that has not been done. It has been accepted to limit the general discussion to half an hour, and then the exceptions are specifically named, and we claim that we have a right to include any further exceptions. I claim to be able to move at a later stage that the time be increased to an hour and a quarter or an hour and a half, and I ask you to give your careful consideration in regard to this matter.

Mr. RYAN: I regret personally that I have to support the motion to disagree with your ruling, because I feel perfectly certain that you have arrived at the decision you did in a perfectly impartial way and with all integrity.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: I also feel that the senior member for Townsville, who rose to a point of order, did it with all integrity, and that all his remarks were *bona fide*.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: I may also say that I think that all the other members who spoke on this question no doubt expressed their personal views. I can assure you that I listened to the debate during the whole evening, and I had it in my mind to move this amendment when the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Woothakata was disposed of. For that reason I refrained from speaking on that amendment, so that it might not be said that we were wasting time. As to whether your ruling is correct or not, I consider that the test is this: What would be the effect of passing the amendment of the member for Woothakata? Suppose that amendment had been carried, we would have had the right to speak for forty-five minutes on every conceivable subject that could be discussed in this House. The hon. member for Woothakata's amendment was for forty-five minutes for everything, but my amendment is only for one thing, and that for the second reading of a Bill. (Hear, hear!) Unfortunately the Government side of the House are weak in constitutional authorities. I have no hesitation in saying that the Chief Secretary, the Minister for Lands, and all the other Ministers were under the impression that because the second reading was argued, therefore that was the real issue that had to be decided. That may have been in their minds, but I do not consider when I sit in my place in this House that I am going to be bound by what hon. gentlemen opposite may think. When I came into my seat in the House I saw that there was a motion before the House and an amendment. I applied my intelligence to the question and I saw that if the amendment were lost a certain result would follow. I came to the conclusion that the amendment of the hon. member for Woothakata meant something. When the hon. member for Leichhardt spoke on that amendment he spoke about the time required for a question as to whether we should federate or on a separation question, and he referred to the speeches delivered by Mr. Curtis and Sir Thomas McIlwraith. But that hon. member did not refer to second-reading speeches at all. I thought the Government would be prepared to accept that amendment, but instead of that the Premier broke faith with the arrangement which he made to adjourn at half past 10 o'clock, and is prepared to keep us here debating a motion of this kind. I regret that I have to vote against your ruling because I always feel inclined to support the ruling of the Chair. I feel that if this matter were submitted to an independent

constitutional authority I have no hesitation in saying that he would find that both the amendment of the hon. member for Woothakata and mine were quite different, and that the amendment of the hon. member for Woothakata could have been defeated and mine carried.

Question—That the Deputy Speaker's ruling be disagreed with (*Mr. Hardacre's amendment*)—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 20.

Mr. Allen	Mr. Land
" Barber	" Lennon
" Bowman	" Mulcahy
" Collins	" Mullan
" Coyne	" O'Sullivan
" Ferricks	" Payne
" Foley	" Ryan
" Hamilton	" Ryland
" Hardacre	" Theodore
" Hunter, J. M.	" Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Hardacre and Mr. O'Sullivan.

NOES, 26.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Lesina
" Barnes, G. P.	" Macartney
" Barnes, W. H.	" Mackintosh
" Bouchard	" Paget
" Bridges	" Petrie
" Corser	" Philip
" Cottell	" Rankin
" Denham	" Roberts
" Forsyth	" Swayne
" Grant	" Thorn
" Hawthorn	" Tolmie
" Hunter, D.	" Walker
" Kidston	" White

Tellers: Mr. Swayne and Mr. Tolmie.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Breslin, Mr. McLachlan, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Crawford, Mr. Mann, and Mr. Nevitt.

Noes—Mr. Fox, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Wienholt, Mr. Somerset, Mr. Gunn, and Mr. Grayson.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. FOLEY: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. MACARTNEY: I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is manifestly impossible for the Speaker to catch sight of a member if he rises while members are standing or crossing the floor of the House after a division, and on that account I missed the hon. member for Townsville, who, I understand, rose to address the House.

Question put and passed.

The resumption of the debate was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at five minutes to 12 o'clock.