

wealth Government to the State Government for a period of five years for the purpose of employing a tobacco expert? 2, In view of the importance of instructing people in the correct variety of tobacco to grow, the class of soil in which it should be grown and the curing of the leaf, will applications be called over as wide a range as possible to ensure the appointment of the most suitable adviser, and, if so, when?

The PREMIER replied: 1. A grant of £833 has been made available to this State to cover the cost of an instructor in connection with tobacco growing. The matter will be reviewed at the end of the year and probably an amount will be again provided for the following two years. 2. The Prime Minister's Department has been communicated with regarding the terms of appointment.

QUESTION—UNEMPLOYED, ASSISTANCE.

Mr. SLEEMAN (without notice) asked the Premier: Is he aware that the wives and families of the men arrested for window-breaking at Parliament House have been refused any assistance, and will he use his influence with the Minister for Employment to ensure that the wives and families are given assistance?

The PREMIER replied: So far as my knowledge of the case goes, they have been refused assistance, and certainly it is not the intention of the Government to give assistance to men who refuse to accept work in the country.

Mr. Sleeman: What about the wives and children?

The PREMIER: The husbands are responsible for the wives and children.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.32]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Wednesday, 24th January, at 4.30 p.m.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.33 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 24th January, 1934.

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The DEPUTY PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

ELECTORAL.

Administration of Oath of Allegiance.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I have to announce that I have received from His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor a commission to administer the Oath of Allegiance to members.

FINANCIAL EMERGENCY BILL— SELECT COMMITTEE.

Witnesses' refusal to attend.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [4.33]: As Chairman of the select committee, I have an interim report to present but, before doing so, I desire to report to the House that the select committee to which the Financial Emergency Bill was referred found it necessary to summon a number of witnesses, among whom were the following:—A. Berkeley, Under Treasurer; S. Bennett, Government Statistician; T. Kenafiek, general secretary, Western Australian Railway Officers' Union. The three persons above-named refused to attend the committee. A letter in reply was received from each of the three persons above, stating the following reasons for their non-attendance:—

A. Berkeley—"I have been directly instructed by the Hon. the Treasurer not to do so."

S. Bennett—"I have been directly instructed by the Hon. the Premier not to do so."

T. Kenafiek—"After consultation with my executive it was decided that it would not be convenient for me to attend."

I submit that this action on the part of the above-named persons constitutes contempt of the committee.

The **DEPUTY PRESIDENT**: Hon. members have heard the statement of the chairman of the select committee; and though it is not mandatory, it is customary, whenever it is considered that the powers, privileges and prerogatives of this House have been flouted or ignored, for the Leader of the House to take whatsoever action he may think fit.

The **CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.35]: In view of the special circumstances, the only resolution I feel justified in moving in connection with this matter is—

That this House do excuse the non-attendance before the select committee of the persons mentioned in the select committee's interim report, namely Messrs. Berkeley, Bennett, and Kenafick.

It may be considered a lenient view for me to take; but such action is permissible under Section 7 of the Parliamentary Privileges Act; and the discretion given is more definitely expressed in Section 8, paragraph 1, of the same measure, where disobedience to an order of the House or of any committee is dealt with. Section 7 reads:—

If any person ordered to attend or produce any paper, book, record, or document to either House, or to any committee of either House, shall object to answer any question that may be put to him, or to produce any such paper, book, record, or other document on the ground that the same is of a private nature and does not affect the subject of inquiry, the President, or Speaker, or chairman of the committee as the case may be, shall report such refusal, with the reason thereof, to the House, who shall thereupon excuse the answering of such question, or the production of such paper, book, record, or other document, or order the answering or production thereof, as the circumstances of the case may require.

The paragraph of Section 8 to which I have referred reads:—

Disobedience to any order of either House or of any committee, duly authorised in that behalf to attend or to produce papers, books, records, or other documents, before the House or such committee, unless excused by the House in manner aforesaid.

Those who absent themselves can be excused under the Parliamentary Privileges Act. It seems to me that there is good reason why the House should excuse the non-attendance of these persons. Mr. Berkeley is not in control of the Treasury; and in my opinion an

effort should be made to secure the attendance of the Treasurer, who is charged with the administration of that particular department. That course has been avoided. The Treasurer has not been called; his principal officer has been summoned instead. No doubt unintentionally, the committee have placed the Under-Treasurer in an awkward position. Conversations of a confidential character may have taken place between the Treasurer and the Under-Treasurer on policy matters connected with the Bill; and all these might possibly—though I do not think they would—be dragged out into the clear light of day. If such a thing occurred, or could occur, the life of any Government would, under such conditions, be intolerable. The Treasurer is the Minister responsible for the Bill; he is fully acquainted with the financial side; he has given consideration to phases which do not come within the province of Mr. Berkeley; and surely first-hand evidence, if it can be obtained, is better than second-hand evidence. Much of the evidence which Mr. Berkeley could give would be second-hand. All that I have said in relation to Mr. Berkeley applies with equal force to the other Government officer. Mr. Kenafick is in a somewhat different category. He has a grievance against the Bill. It appears to me that he should have been asked, in the first place, whether he had any evidence to tender to the select committee; and if he said he had not, then, in my opinion, the matter should have ended there. Mr. Kenafick could only have been called upon to give reasons for the attitude taken up by his association, as indicated by him in the public Press; and if he did not choose to give those reasons, the select committee need not have been further concerned about the matter. I do not think a bad precedent will be established if Mr. Kenafick is excused also. The Parliamentary Privileges Act will still be possessed of all its powers, which can be invoked at any time if considered necessary. I trust that the select committee will adopt this view and will not press for the punishment of those persons who have clearly violated the provisions of the Parliamentary Privileges Act.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [4.44]: I am afraid I cannot accept the Chief Secretary's motion. The hon. gentleman referred to the power of this House to excuse people for non-attendance, but we have to look farther afield than that. The refusal came first, and the excuse for relief came after. It is suggested that the select committee should have called the Treasurer. The committee rightly or wrongly were under the impression that we could not call the Treasurer, except with the consent of another place or by order of this House. I want to make it clear that we are not out on a fishing expedition.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: It looks very much like it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We are trying to find out the position of the finances of the State. What we are now concerned about are the rights and privileges of this House, which have been set at defiance. The Leader of the House, even during this short special session, introduced a small Bill to amend the Pearling Act, which was done in order to assert the rights and privileges of this House. What the select committee are at present concerned about is that the rights and privileges of this House have to be given effect to. One other matter I should like to clear up: I do not propose to say any hard words about anybody; indeed, I think we might sit down and reason together; but what should be cleared up is this, that these State servants who have refused to give evidence are public servants, not the servants of the Government in power. I do not think this House should tolerate any public servant setting Parliament at defiance; if we do, then in my opinion it will perhaps be the end of constitutional Government.

The Honorary Minister: It appears we have nearly reached the end of that now.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES. May be; probably the hon. member knows more than I do. I want to repeat that there is no victimisation intended against anybody; I am certain the select committee think just as much of Mr. Berkeley as they ever did. But that is not the point; the point is that we cannot have Parliament set at defiance. It has been said that the select committee might have gone on and acted. That is no use. The committee were appointed to call for persons and papers. We did so, and some

of the persons called have refused to attend. We now come back to the House, for it is a matter for the House to deal with, the select committee they appointed having been set at defiance. I move an amendment—

That all words after "That" be struck out and the following inserted in lieu:—"Messrs. Berkeley, Bennett and Kenafick be ordered to attend the select committee on the Financial Emergency Bill at such time and place as the committee may desire."

I am more concerned about compliance with the request made by Parliament than I am about the evidence those persons may or may not give if they come before the select committee. I do not think I need say anything further.

The **DEPUTY PRESIDENT**. When a motion and an amendment have been moved it is customary for the discussion to be taken first on the amendment. For the purpose of this debate I cannot, so to speak, separate the motion and the amendment. There are two issues before the House. The issue of the motion is the rights and privileges reserved under the Parliamentary Privileges Act, but that those persons named in the report be excused from attendance. The amendment is that the House direct them to attend. Therefore, I will allow the discussion to go on whether or not they should be excused or whether or not they should attend. This will obviate the necessity for having one discussion on the amendment and another on the motion as amended.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [4.50]: I second the amendment. I should like to take this opportunity to express my regret, and I am sure the regret of every member of the House, that an occasion such as this should have arisen.

Hon. T. Moore: You have brought it on yourselves.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I question that; indeed, instead of this having been brought on by the select committee, it has been brought on by the refusal of those persons who have been called to give evidence before the committee and have not attended.

Hon. C. B. Williams: It went back further than that.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Everyone must regret this occasion, regret that it should be necessary to move in the direction indicated by the amendment. The Leader of the House has put forward certain reasons why the

gentlemen referred to should be excused from attendance. The Minister's excuse is mainly based in relation to the Under Treasurer, Mr. Berkeley, and he suggests that the Treasurer himself should be called upon to attend.

Hon. C. B. Williams: He might prove hostile.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: No one knows better than the Leader of the House that it would be impossible for the select committee to summon the Premier or any other Minister to attend before them without the consent of his House. Up to the present there has been no suggestion on the part of any Minister to offer evidence in place of that of any of the officers summoned. I should imagine that when those officers received their instructions, the one announcing that he had received instructions from the Treasurer and the other from the Premier,—one and the same person holding both offices—that at least an overture would have been made to the select committee by the Premier and Treasurer to say that, in place of those particular witnesses summoned, he himself would proffer the necessary evidence. No such suggestion has ever been made to the select committee and therefore the committee have been led to the step taken this afternoon. I wish it clearly to be understood that I, and I think the other members of the committee, echo the words of Mr. Holmes, who said the select committee were not out on any fishing expedition. It is not for the purpose of doing injustice to the Government or to anyone else, but it is to inquire into ways and means whereby this House can be satisfied that we would be justified in passing the Bill.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Nothing would satisfy you. Why not be honest?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I should also like to assure the Leader of the House that there is no desire on the part of the select committee to search into the policy of the Government. If for a moment it might be suggested, as the Leader of the House said by way of excuse or reason for moving the motion, that there might have been conversations between the Treasurer and the Under Treasurer relative to certain matters which might involve something in connection with the policy of the Government, I for one, and I am sure the chairman of the select committee also, would immediately prevent any such question being proceeded with. So the Leader of the House can rest assured that

the select committee are going along on reasonable and proper lines, and not with the suggestion which is rather conveyed by that reason which has been given. For one thing we are there to try to find the best way of solving this great difficulty and maintaining the prosperity of the State by passing legislation which will be in the best interests of the State. Having regard to that, I can see no alternative to supporting the amendment and asking members to realise the necessity for obtaining the evidence, so that it may be furnished to the House for their enlightenment and guidance in determining this legislation.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.57]: With Mr. Nicholson I can genuinely regret the necessity for the motion and the amendment before the House. I think, when we look a little deeper into the subject than the hon. member has done in his few remarks, we might find every justification for the motion moved by the Chief Secretary. Both the mover and seconder of the amendment have tried to impress the House with the statement that the select committee are not on a fishing expedition. To my thinking it is nothing else.

Hon. W. J. Mann: What do you call a fishing expedition?

The HONORARY MINISTER: And I am guided by the remarks of Mr. Holmes when moving for the select committee. His words on that occasion were, "We have been told this and that"—he mentioned several things—"We can make the necessary inquiries and find out whether or not they are correct; we can find out whether the Government have made arrangements for this thing and the other; we can make inquiries as to where they are going to get this money from: in short, we can inquire into the financial policy of the Government." No self-respecting Government can tolerate action of that kind, whether by this Chamber or anybody else.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Are you quite certain I said all that?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes, the words are in "Hansard" this time.

Member: And they should have been last time.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not want to deal with the previous incident, else

we might give some more information to the House as to that incident.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Leave it alone.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Keep cool.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I hope I shall keep as cool as any other member. The position is that certain members of the Public Service have been called upon to give evidence before the select committee, and, at the direct request of the Premier, they have declined to attend.

Hon. V. Hamersley: A request or an order?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The position has been made clear to the select committee that, as those public servants cannot take the responsibility for the actions of the Government in this instance, and that as there may be phases of policy with which those servants are not familiar, the right thing to do is to call the man who has to carry the responsibility, in this case the Treasurer. It is futile for Mr. Holmes to say that the refusal came first, and to my way of thinking, it savours of the ridiculous for Mr. Nicholson to make the statements he uttered in regard to the Treasurer. We know the position. We know what action has to be taken if a select committee desire the attendance of a Minister. In a matter of this kind, so vital to the Government, surely the first thing the select committee should have done was to approach the Premier and either ask him to attend or ascertain the attitude of the Government towards the giving of evidence by members of the Public Service, whether Mr. Berkeley—the Under Treasurer—or any other officer. The select committee have been lacking in their duty to that extent. They had no desire to approach the Treasurer on this matter. All that they were desirous of doing, in my opinion, was to hold up this legislation, knowing full well that the longer it was held up, the more would the Government be financially embarrassed.

Hon. J. J. Nicholson: That is unfair.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! I hope that the trend of this debate will not broaden out to a general discussion of the financial position. The question before the Chair is whether or not the Council should assert its rights by calling certain witnesses, or whether it should excuse them.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have no desire to depart from the subject matter

of the question before us. I have indicated that, in my opinion, the correct procedure for the select committee would have been to approach the head of the Government, and they would have learnt immediately whether the Premier himself was prepared to give evidence, or whether he was prepared to allow public servants to give evidence. To any reasonable man, that would appeal as being the right procedure.

Hon. T. Moore: The fair way.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Certainly. It might also have provided an indication of the attitude of another place, because we are aware that it would first be necessary for another place to agree to a Minister from that House giving evidence before a select committee. Therefore, when the mover and seconder of the amendment suggest that because the refusal came first, it is a reason why the amendment should be carried and the motion disagreed to, it does not carry much weight. I believe that the Public Service of this State is as loyal as is the Public Service of any other State. The officers concerned are simply carrying out the wishes of the Government. One could deal with many phases of this question in a way that would perhaps be rather enlightening to those who are not directly associated with the administration of affairs in this or any other country, but in view of the nature of the motion, I must limit my remarks according to the ruling of the Chair. It seems to me that, in regard to those public servants, the right thing to do, even now, is to say that in view of the attitude of the Government, this House should agree to their being excused from attending the select committee.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Do not you think the attitude of the Government should be to give the fullest and most adequate information? They have not done it.

The HONORARY MINISTER: This Chamber has been supplied with all the information that it was possible to give at the time the measure was before us, that is, in so far as it is possible to give information during the second reading debate. We had one member after another stating that he wanted information. That was repeated time after time, and notwithstanding that information was given, one member after another stood up in his place repeating statements that had been corrected & time

after time. What is the use of giving information to men who are not prepared to accept it, though tendered by a responsible member of the Government? Then a lot of detail was asked for, and members were advised that when the Bill reached the Committee stage, the detail would be supplied as far as possible. Members in effect said, "No, we are not going into the Committee stage; we are going to refer the Bill to a select committee." May I also remark that this is the only occasion during the time I have been in the House when a desire by any member or members to refer a given Bill to a select committee has not been communicated to the Minister in charge of the Bill previous to the question coming up for discussion. I should like to remind members of that fact. It might not matter very much, but it is another pointer in the same direction, and I may advise Mr. Holmes that I have taken particular notice of it, too. I have suggested that the public servants concerned might very well be excused on the grounds put forward by the Leader of the House. Now we come to Mr. Kenafiek, a private individual, not an employee of the Government, a gentleman representing a large body of men who are employed by the State. I submit that the usual practice of select committees of which I have been a member has been that when they desired evidence from a certain person, they asked him whether he desired to give evidence. Very seldom indeed has the matter been carried further when the person concerned intimated that he did not desire to give evidence. In this instance, what evidence had the select committee hoped to get from Mr. Kenafiek that they have not got at present?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We do not know until we get him.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Quite right; nothing but what they have got at the present moment.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I say it is going too far to ask the House to concur in the amendment. In any event it seems to me that, notwithstanding the protestations of the select committee, and notwithstanding the intimations given from time to time by the Government of their attitude to the Bill, the select committee are determined to go the full length of their authority under the Parliamentary Privileges Act.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: It will not be the select committee that will go to the full extent of the Parliamentary Privileges Act if those witnesses are ordered to appear. It will be the House.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Do you contend that this Bill is one with which this House cannot deal?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member had better give notice of that question. In my opinion there is not sufficient in the reasons put forward by the mover of the amendment, particularly when we remember the statement of the Leader of the House in moving the motion, to warrant our going to that extreme.

Hon. SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM (North) [5.12]: Must I speak on the motion or the amendment?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The hon. member may speak on either the motion or the amendment, but he must confine his remarks to discussing whether the persons named shall be excused from appearing as witnesses or be ordered by the House to appear.

Hon. SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM: Cannot I speak on the Bill?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: No.

Hon. SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM: Then I shall sit down.

Hon. J. J. Holmes rose.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: What is the desire of the hon. member?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: To speak and close the debate.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The mover of an amendment has not the right of reply.

HON. R. G. MOORE (North-East) [5.13]: I am more concerned about the passing of the Bill than about the discussion of the matter before us at present. This House appointed a select committee to obtain, if possible, certain evidence to place before members so that they might have a little more information than was available to them previously. The select committee have called for certain evidence, and it has not been forthcoming. Having gone that far, the select committee, in my opinion, have done their duty. If the evidence is not forthcoming, or has been withheld, it is not their fault. I should like this matter cleaned up so that the Bill may be

dealt with in the light of the evidence before us, rather than strive to get the evidence that has been withheld from the select committee. I am concerned lest we lose sight of the main issue, and be side-tracked into issues that are not so important as the passing of this measure.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You are one of the reasonable members of the House.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I have given the matter a great deal of thought. Even at this stage, if we adopt the right attitude, we might effect a reasonable compromise, and get the Bill through without any more heated argument or any more side issues.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: You are very optimistic.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I would rather be an optimist than a pessimist. I am not going to support the amendment, because I think the select committee have done their job and secured all the evidence they could. If the Premier has told public servants not to give evidence the onus for that refusal is on him and not upon the public servants. I support the motion moved by the Chief Secretary.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [5.17]: I support the amendment. Witnesses ought to comply with the request of the select committee to appear before it, when they can say they have received instructions from the Premier of the State not to tender any evidence.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: I am of opinion the Government should never have brought down this Bill.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes	..	..	..	17
Noes	..	..	..	8
				—
Majority for	..	..	..	9
				—

AYES

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. H. V. Piesse
Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. E. Rose
Hon. J. T. Franklin	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. Sir E. Wittenoom
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	Hon. C. H. Wittenoom
Hon. W. J. Mann	Hon. H. J. Yelland
Hon. G. W. Miles	Hon. E. H. H. Hall
Hon. J. Nicholson	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale	Hon. R. G. Moore
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. W. H. Kitson	Hon. G. Fraser
(Teller.)	

Amendment thus passed; the question, as amended, agreed to.

Interim Report presented.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [5.22]: I now submit an interim report of the select committee to which the Financial Emergency Bill was referred. I move—

That the interim report of the select committee be received and read and ordered to be printed.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Under the Standing Orders a report of a select committee shall be presented to the Council by the Chairman, and may be read. In this case the report will be read by the Usher of the Black Rod.

Question put and passed; report read and ordered to be printed.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [5.30]: I move—

That the time for bringing up the select committee's main report be extended to Wednesday next, the 31st January.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.31]: I oppose the motion. The Government's attitude on the Bill has not altered since the last meeting of this Chamber, and is not likely to alter. The unprecedented action of this House in referring a matter of this kind to a select committee is naturally having the effect that, I believe, it was intended to have, namely, of embarrassing the Government in their financial administration.

Hon. H. Seddon: I rise to a point of order. Is the Honorary Minister justified in imputing motives to a select committee of this House?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: No. I take it the Honorary Minister is opposing the motion for extension of time, which I think he is bound to do, without making any suggestion of an alternative date. If the House refused to grant an extension of time, the position would be that the House would now have all the report that the select committee could furnish. Perhaps

the Honorary Minister will close his remarks with a suggestion of another suitable date in the event of any further evidence being called. If the motion were defeated, nothing further could be done by the select committee, and the interim report would be the committee's report.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The proposal before the House, as I understand it, is that the select committee should be given till Wednesday next, an extension of a week.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It can be a little earlier, if you like.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not know whether or not the hon. member is going to get the evidence he wants; but I do know that some of the evidence he asks for he will never get, because it is impossible to get it.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I would remind the Honorary Minister that an extension of time must be granted, because the House, by an emphatic majority, has ordered that Messrs. Berkeley, Bennett and Kenafiek shall be notified to appear before the select committee. Therefore the select committee must be given some extension of time, so that the order can be carried out. I suggest, therefore, that the Honorary Minister confine his remarks to suggesting another period.

Hon. A. Thomson: Next Monday is a public holiday.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I think I am perfectly in order in speaking to the motion. I am desirous of pointing out how the Government stand in regard to the motion. Naturally I agree with your observation, Mr. Deputy President, that the select committee must have some extension of time; but I certainly do not agree that it is necessary they should have until next Wednesday. I propose to give the reasons why, from the Government's point of view, the motion should not be carried. I have already said that the appointment of the select committee is having the effect of embarrassing the Government in their financial administration of the State, embarrassing them to the extent of £1,000 per day, approximating £30,000 per month.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Has anybody sought to do that?

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is suggested that nobody has sought to do

that; but what other construction can be put upon the action of this Chamber, whose members have been told repeatedly by the Minister in charge of the Bill that the Government's attitude towards the measure was such that they could not under any consideration whatever accept the amendment mooted by this Chamber in regard to Part V. of the lapsed Act?

Hon. C. F. Baxter: That did not affect your finance, did it?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Of course it did not. However, it having been indicated to the Chamber what the policy of the Government is in that regard, and the Chamber having indicated that it is diametrically opposed to the Government on that aspect of the Bill, surely it was up to this Chamber to make a decision one way or the other. In spite of that, the Chamber has decided on delay. I am pointing out to hon. members that delay means approximately £1,000 per day or, on another basis, £30,000 per month. No Government can stand up to that kind of thing for an indefinite period. I have to inform hon. members that in view of the action of this Chamber and the attitude of those members who have supported the select committee, the Government can come to no other conclusion than that there is little possibility of the Bill being agreed to here. The Government, who have been returned to administer the affairs of State for a period, are not going to fall down on their job, but are going to discharge the duties they have been elected to carry out. In view of all that has taken place, and, I should add, more particularly of the precious document that we have heard read this afternoon, it is absolutely essential that the Government should, without delay, take whatever steps may be in their power to carry on the affairs of State within the Government's financial capacity as limited by this Chamber. This Chamber must take the responsibility for that too. There is no escaping that responsibility.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That is your opinion.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am voicing the opinion of the Government and the opinion of any reasonable individual. It is necessary for the Government to counteract the position which has been created. The Government will not hesitate to take whatever steps are necessary and within their power. It has to be admitted that we cannot secure more money from the Loan Council.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Then you won't drop the Bill?

The HONORARY MINISTER: There has been talk about the select committee's inquiry not being a fishing expedition. I do not understand why the select committee were desirous of finding out what took place at the Loan Council, even going so far as to inquire—

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! Standing Order 297 provides that upon the presentation of a report no discussion shall take place. I cannot allow the Honorary Minister to dive into what appears in the select committee's interim report.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I shall endeavour to confine myself to the motion. I think I have already shown that no Government could possibly carry on for an indefinite period in the circumstances that now exist. I admit quite freely that it will not be possible for the Government to secure additional money to enable them to meet the additional expenditure thrown upon them by the loss of this Bill.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Then you won't re-enact the Act?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The only way by which the position can be adjusted is by a reduction of governmental expenditure. The longer we wait, the longer we delay the receipt of the select committee's final report, the worse the position will be in the final analysis.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Why not arrange for the witnesses to come along?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Therefore I have to submit that the Government cannot agree to the further delay suggested by the motion.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And you also said you could not agree to any amendments.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Certainly I said we could not agree to any amendments regarding Part V.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! We will take Part V. when we get to it in the select committee's report.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Very well, Sir. The Government are not likely to alter the attitude they have adopted up to date, and I oppose any extension of time being granted to the select committee other than from day to day. In view of statements which have been made in this Chamber to-day, and in view of statements made by Mr. Holmes when moving for the select committee, especially the hon.

member's remark that it would be necessary to call only four or five witnesses—

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Yes, and they have not come.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That does not matter. There is no reason whatever why—

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! It is admitted that delay has occurred by reason of the failure of witnesses to attend.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The blame for that lies with the Premier.

The HONORARY MINISTER: We are accepting the responsibility, just as we will have to accept the responsibility for the administration of the affairs of this country when our term is up. That is something more than members of this Chamber can say. They have not to accept responsibility for their action in the House in that regard.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Yes, we have.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Not at all.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Just as much as the Government.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is the very difference between another Chamber and this place. However, I fear I shall be trespassing on foreign ground if I am not careful. I do want hon. members to understand the position. The Government cannot agree to an indefinite extension of time. In view of all the circumstances, we certainly cannot wait until next Wednesday before taking action. Therefore I submit that this House would be wise to grant an extension of time only from day to day.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: As regards the granting of extension of time from day to day, that cannot be done. Such an extension would mean that the select committee would have only another day within the period mentioned, and that day would be to-morrow. Under the Standing Orders the House automatically meets to-morrow, and then automatically adjourns, unless otherwise ordered, until next Tuesday. That is the actual position.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.43]: Prior to the meeting of the House this afternoon I had a conversation with Mr. Holmes, and I agreed to adjourn the House until Wednesday next.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I do not know that that was definitely agreed upon. It was

only suggested. I do not want you to commit yourself.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Since then I have been advised that the House will meet to-morrow. If this question goes to a division, then in view of my previous attitude and my conversation with Mr. Holmes, I shall not exercise my vote.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: It is quite possible to move an amendment, or with the leave of the House to amend the motion, so that the committee be given until to-morrow to report. If to-morrow the select committee are not ready to report, it will be within the province of the House to give them until Tuesday or Wednesday of next week.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [5.45]: May I be permitted to explain the position as I view it? I am not committed to the date mentioned in the motion, but to-morrow is Thursday and then we have Friday. We must get the witnesses. I presume Saturday is a holiday for the public servants, and Sunday intervenes. Then Monday is a public holiday. In the circumstances, I fixed Tuesday because I understood that some of the Ministers are going to Esperance and if we were to call Parliament together on Tuesday they would not be here because they could not get back until Wednesday morning.

The Honorary Minister: Are you sure they are going?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I do not know whether they are going; that was the information I received. I give that explanation to indicate that I am not wedded to Wednesday next. Had the witnesses been available and allowed to appear before us, the select committee would have presented their final report to-day, as agreed upon. The fact that we have not been able to do so is not the responsibility of the committee, for they were not responsible for the delay. The next point is: Will the witnesses we desire appear before us to-morrow?

Hon. G. Fraser: No.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If they appear before us to-morrow, we may be able to get evidence from them and be in a position to complete our work on Friday. In my opinion, we could not complete our work by then. We have to go through the evi-

dence, tabulate it, and then compile our report in accordance with the evidence. The Honorary Minister has made some more or less exciting statements.

Hon. E. H. Gray: But none the less true.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I remember reading on one occasion words I have never forgotten—"Speech has been given to man to conceal his thoughts." In this instance, I do not think I need go any further. I do not see that any good will be accomplished by fanning the flame and I will not be a party to doing so.

The Honorary Minister: You have done your best in your interim report.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! The interim report must not be discussed.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There is one other point. There are not only the Government but the industries of the State concerned in the success and prosperity of the country. When the Honorary Minister tells us that the Government cannot stand up against one-third of the expenditure, and we realise that under the Bill private enterprise will have to stand up to the whole of the expenditure, I will not—

The Honorary Minister: I would like Mr. Holmes to withdraw those remarks because I did not make any such statement.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I may not have quoted the Honorary Minister's exact words, but if I have said anything—

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The hon. member will withdraw.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I withdraw. The Honorary Minister said that the delay would cost the Government £1,000 a day.

Hon. A. Thomson: Yes, or £30,000 a month.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I was merely pointing out, in view of the Honorary Minister's statement regarding the position of the Government, that private enterprise will have to pay a much larger amount.

The Honorary Minister: Again I must correct the hon. member. He knows full well that is not the position. It has been explained several times during the debate, but he will persist in reiterating what are not facts.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The Honorary Minister has misunderstood Mr. Holmes. The Honorary Minister will not dispute the fact that he said the delay would

cost the Government £1,000 a day or £30,000 a month. Mr. Holmes does not suggest that the Honorary Minister used the words he made use of regarding private enterprise. The hon. member was merely quoting the position regarding private enterprise in amplification of what he said.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If I have said anything that I should withdraw, I withdraw it. I have nothing further to add. I do not know whether the Honorary Minister wishes to move an amendment. Obviously it is not a matter for me to say when the House shall meet; that is for the Minister.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Shall I be in order if I move an amendment so that the extension of time will be to the next sitting of the House? I quite see the point raised by Mr. Holmes, and I am prepared to meet him to that extent.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I shall interpret the remarks by Mr. Holmes as a personal explanation and not as having been uttered in reply to the debate. In those circumstances, I can accept an amendment from the Honorary Minister.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move an amendment—

That the motion be amended by striking out "Wednesday next the 31st January" and inserting the words "Thursday the 25th January" in lieu.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I presume it is understood that the select committee have no hope of reporting to-morrow.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The House is aware of that. If members agree to the amendment, it will in no way bind the House, and to-morrow we can start anew. If the report of the select committee is not ready, there is nothing to prevent a further extension of time being granted.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.54]: I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put and a division called for.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I voted with the "Noes" and called for a division.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Mr. Bolton also voted with the "Noes." Therefore there were two voices.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am not in a position to criticise a previous vote of the House, but it seemed to me so absurd for members to meet and then adjourn again. Members have to come from the country—

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! In conformity with our own Standing Orders, the custom is that when there is no further business, the Leader of the House moves the adjournment. The time when the hon. member could have taken the business out of the hands of the Government and moved an amendment, has gone by and, therefore, the House stands adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.55 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 24th January, 1934.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—EAST PERTH POWER HOUSE, EXTENSION.

As to Raising Local Loan.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Premier: In view of the fact that considerable funds are available in this State for investment purposes, will he make representations to the next meeting of the Loan Council whereby a local loan may be raised for the extension of the East Perth Electric Power Station and the extension of cables and reticulation of current in the outer suburban districts?

The PREMIER replied: The whole question has already been fully discussed at the Loan Council. It is not desirable to raise the required money in Australia because