

of the Premier that I intrigued with the other side to join them.

THE PREMIER: There is no doubt about it.

MR. HARPER: If the hon. member accuses me of an untruth, I cannot help it.

THE PREMIER: Oh, I will not do that.

MR. HARPER: I have no hesitation in saying that my position is a distinct one. I have everything to lose by it. I have not the slightest wish, and never had, to take office in this country. I have several times been asked, and as frequently refused; and I should distinctly refuse now, and am prepared to refuse, if any other combination can be brought about. I do not want office. Do not imagine that I do. It is nothing to me. If hon. members on this (Government) side of the House think I cannot help the position. I am quite prepared to remain as I am and as I have always been. I again say I entirely repudiate the imputation cast on me by the Premier, and I think it comes with very ill grace from the Premier to say what he did.

MR. LEAKE: I desire to offer a personal explanation as representing a party in the House. I understand—

THE SPEAKER: There is no question before the House.

MR. LEAKE: I know there is not, but I understand the late Premier—I beg pardon, the Premier—said that there were traitors and spies in the camp, and he seemed to intimate that they acted with my connivance.

THE PREMIER: I did not say so.

MR. LEAKE: If the hon. gentleman does not accuse me of anything, I am satisfied.

THE PREMIER: I do not accuse you of anything of that kind.

THE SPEAKER: If this motion be carried, the House will not meet again until Tuesday. I do not know if that will be convenient or not.

Question put, and passed without dissent.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 5:29 o'clock, until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 24th December, 1901.

Political Situation: New Ministry—Notices—Personal Explanations (two)—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

POLITICAL SITUATION—NEW MINISTRY.

THE SPEAKER: I have received the following letter from the Colonial Secretary:—

Sir,—In compliance with Section 30, Sub-section 3, of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act 1899, I beg to notify you that His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to make the following appointments:—

George Leake, Esq., M.L.A., to be Premier and Attorney General.

Walter Kingsmill, Esq., M.L.A., to be Minister for Railways.

Frederick Illingworth, Esq., M.L.A., to be Colonial Secretary and Treasurer.

Henry Gregory, Esq., M.L.A., to be Minister for Mines.

C. H. Rason, Esq., M.L.A., to be Minister for Public Works.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your obedient servant,

FREDERICK ILLINGWORTH,
Colonial Secretary.

These gentlemen having accepted offices of profit, their seats now become vacant. Before I can issue writs for filling the vacancies, it is necessary their seats shall be declared vacant by the Legislative Assembly.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (East Fremantle): I beg leave to move, without notice, that the seats of the members for West Perth (Hon. G. Leake), Pilbarra (Hon. W. Kingsmill), Cue (Hon. F. Illingworth), Menzies (Hon. H. Gregory), and Guildford (Hon. C. H. Rason) be declared vacant.

MR. F. WALLACE (Mt. Magnet): I second the motion.

Question put and passed.

NOTICES.

HON. J. J. HOLMES: I move that the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Tuesday, the 14th of January.

MR. W. J. GEORGE (Murray): I want to give notice of a question.

THE SPEAKER: I do not know whom the hon. member can give notice to. There is no Minister in the House.

MR. GEORGE: There is an honorary Minister, sir. I want to give notice of a question for the next sitting of the House, that I shall ask the honorary Minister in charge if it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill this session to amend the Judges' Pensions Act.

MR. R. HASTIE (Kanowna): I also wish to give notice of motion for the next meeting of the House. Shall I have an opportunity of doing so?

THE SPEAKER: It will be inconvenient to do it at present, considering that there is no Minister here to reply to questions.

MR. DOHERTY: There is the leader of the Labour party. He is as good as a Minister, any day.

THE SPEAKER: We cannot meet here again until the 14th of January, by which time there will be a Minister in the House, and he will be able to reply to questions.

MR. HASTIE: But mine is a motion which needs to be put on the Notice Paper.

THE SPEAKER: Very well; give notice of your motion.

MR. HASTIE: I wish to give notice that at the next meeting of the House I shall move "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into all conditional surrenders of gold-mining leases on the East Coolgardie Goldfield, wherein the fee simple of Crown lands was given in exchange for such surrenders."

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS (2).

MR. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret): With the permission of the House, I should like to give an explanation of the position I now occupy in this Chamber (on Opposition cross-bench). At a meeting of the Labour party, of which I am a member, it has been decided, on the casting vote of our chairman, that we should leave the Opposition cross-bench and take a position on the Government side, on the back Government cross-bench, which we formerly occupied during the tenure of office of the first Leake Ministry. I object to that. As a Labour man and a representative of Labour, my five months' experience in Parliament has taught me that it is proper for the Labour party not to be allied to either of the other parties in

Parliament. Our proper place is on the Opposition cross-benches, where we should vote for measures and not for men. [**OPPOSITION MEMBERS:** Hear, hear.] As I said, it has been decided to take a position on the back Government cross-bench. I am single-handed in declining to do so, and I wish to say that I enter my protest, and I shall continue to sit here, on the back Opposition cross-bench, while I remain in this House.

MR. DOHERTY: Till you get on the Treasury bench.

MR. TAYLOR: That is different. Contingencies can be met when they arise. My strong objection to sitting behind the present Government is on account of the recent inclusion of Mr. Rason in the Ministry. I had the pleasure of stumping the country to oppose the Ministry of Mr. Morgans. In North Murchison, I opposed them with some degree of success. I opposed them there on the ground that two men from the Leake Ministry had left their party and were considered "rats." They were traitors to their party. And I wish to let the House know that what was a crime in Mr. Morgans is no virtue in Mr. Leake. [**OPPOSITION MEMBERS:** Hear, hear.] If it were a crime for those men to leave their party and go over to Mr. Morgans and become Ministers of the Crown, I say it is wrong for one of Mr. Morgans's right-hand supporters, at the price of a portfolio, to go over to Mr. Leake; and that is my reason for taking the position I now take. That position I believe to be unique in the history of the Labour movement in Australia—[**MR. GEORGE:** Hear, hear]—and my friends in the Labour party, of which I am still a member, have a constitutional remedy, a remedy which has been tried by Labour in practically every Australian State in which there is a Labour party. They can question my right to sit here. I will defend my position; and if I fail to satisfy the people whom I represent, the Labour party, my resignation will be placed in the hands of the Speaker at the earliest possible moment. I shall not deal farther with the question; but I wish to say that when I came into Parliament as a Labour man, I came with the understanding that it was possible for a man to enter Parliament

and "go straight." And I thought it was the duty of the Labour party to endeavour to clean politics, and not to lend themselves to corruption or to Cabinets composed of men who have sold their manhood for a thousand a year. That is my reason; and I will never associate myself, in this Chamber or out of it, with traitors. (OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear.)

MR. H. J. YELVERTON (Sussex): As my name has been rather freely used by the newspapers during the last few days, without their consulting me in any way whatever on the question, I too desire to make an explanation in this House. Personally, I have had no communication whatever with Mr. Leake or his party regarding this matter. I may say that on Friday morning last I was approached by a prominent member of our (Opposition) party, and asked whether, under certain conditions which I need not name, as they are well known, I would join a coalition Government. I asked for time to consider that question, but at once said that I thought it would be very difficult indeed for me to entertain such a proposition. However, within ten minutes I sought my leader, Mr. Morgans; I asked him what was the present political situation; and he told me that a dissolution had been refused him by the Governor, and farther that he (Mr. Morgans) and his Ministers were about to resign their positions in this House. I then told him of the manner in which I had been approached, and said to him: "You, sir, are still my leader. If you are still prepared to fight on, I will be with you till the last; but if you think it desirable that this coalition Government should be formed, do you wish that I should be one of the Ministers if the opportunity is afforded me?" He answered me at once, that I had been loyal to him right through, and that, so far as I was personally concerned, if a coalition were formed, he would not only concur with my being one of the Ministers, but would wish it. Then I asked him to refer the matter to his colleagues. He did so; and those colleagues told me, a very short time afterwards, that they concurred with what Mr. Morgans had said to me. Then, after farther consideration, I placed my service at the disposal of the gentle-

man who had approached me, subject to the exact conditions laid down by my party, who were really Mr. Morgans's party. Those conditions were clearly defined. They were that our party should have equal representation in the proposed Ministry, with a voice as to who should be appointed to represent the Ministry in the Upper House. It was only on those conditions, and with the concurrence of my leader, that I gave my adhesion to that scheme. I may say, one of the conditions made by my party was that Mr. Rason should not be a member of any Government we might join; and for my part, I was not prepared on any conditions other than those laid down by my party, to join the coalition Ministry; and then I was not prepared to join them save with the approval of my leader, Mr. Morgans. (OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear.)

ADJOURNMENT.

On motion by the HON. J. J. HOLMES, the House adjourned at 12 minutes to 5 o'clock until Tuesday, the 14th January.

Legislative Council,
Thursday, 2nd January, 1902.

Ministerial Re-election—Adjournment.

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

MINISTERIAL RE-ELECTION.

THE PRESIDENT reported the return of election writ for filling the vacancy in the Metropolitan-Suburban Province (Hon. A. Jameson having been appointed Minister for Lands), and that the Hon. A. Jameson had been re-elected.

HON. A. JAMESON (introduced by Hon. G. Randell), having taken the oath and subscribed the members' roll, took his seat.