

[MEMBERS: Oh!] I never said it was correct; but if hon. members got that impression from what I did say, I am very sorry indeed, and I withdraw unconditionally. I said such a report was about. I was not trying to charge anyone, but I said that at the present time Ministers who are not responsible might do certain things. [MEMBERS: Oh!] With regard to the Treasury bills, I said most distinctly simply this, that I understood steps were about to be taken for the issue of a million of Treasury bills; and if that is incorrect, I withdraw it. But I never said they were signed.

THE PREMIER: I consider the explanation of the hon. member most satisfactory, and I do not wish to pursue the matter any farther. I can only say that I am prepared to accept the amendment of my hon. friend—and that is that this House should adjourn until Friday at half-past four, or if he chooses until half-past seven, because I do not think it will be necessary, provided we get this dissolution, to meet in the afternoon.

MR. LEAKE: What will you do, if you don't get it?

THE PREMIER: That is for me to decide when I know the decision of the Governor. I do not think I can be expected to say what I would do in a hypothetical case. Therefore, as soon as I know the decision of the Governor, it will be for me, on Friday evening, to decide and state to the House what I am prepared to do. I wish to say, and I will repeat it with all emphasis, that my desire is, although I am not sure I am in entire accord with members on this side of the House as to a dissolution—my desire is that this State should decide this question that is now occupying the attention of the House, that this State should decide who is to rule in this country, and that this State should decide by the votes, through the dissolution, whether or not the Government are to stand. (Applause.) I do not fear a dissolution. That is what I am asking His Excellency the Governor to give. That is what I shall impress upon His Excellency with all the energy in my power.

MR. LEAKE: Would it not be necessary to mention an hour in the amendment?

THE SPEAKER: I think it would be desirable.

MR. EWING: I will make it 4:30.

THE PREMIER: Do you (Mr. Leake) object to 7:30?

MR. LEAKE: No.

MR. EWING: I would like to point out that some goldfields members wish to get away; therefore I would like to make it 4:30.

THE SPEAKER: Then it will not be necessary to mention the hour if it is to be 4:30.

MR. LEAKE: Friday is not an ordinary sitting day: that is why I mentioned it.

THE SPEAKER: Oh, yes.

Amendment put, and passed without dissent.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 21 minutes past 9, until the next Friday afternoon.

Legislative Council,

Friday, 20th December, 1901.

Leave of Absence—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 5:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by HON. G. BELLINGHAM, by leave without notice, leave of absence for one fortnight was granted to the Hon. J. D. Connolly (North-East), on the ground of sickness, the hon. member being laid up with measles.

On motion by HON. A. G. JENKINS, by leave without notice, leave of absence for one fortnight was granted to the Hon. C. Sommers (North-East), on the ground of absence from the State on private business.

HON. G. RANDELL moved that leave of absence for one fortnight be granted to the Hon. C. A. Piesse (South-East). He took it that neither the President nor the House would, under the circumstances, think of bringing a member to book who happened, during the period of crisis through which we had been passing, to go beyond the term of leave granted by the House.

THE PRESIDENT: That was so. There was no business before the House, but simply meetings for adjournment.

Question put and passed.

THE PRESIDENT left the Chair for a few minutes, and resumed it.

ADJOURNMENT.

On motion by the Hon. G. RANDELL, the House farther adjourned until Thursday, 2nd January.



Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 20th December, 1901.

Lands Office: Tendering for Additions—Guano Export, Select Committee's Report—Personal Explanation (Hon. T. F. Quinlan)—Political Situation: Statement by the Premier (Resignation)—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

LANDS OFFICE—TENDERING FOR ADDITIONS.

MR. DAGLISH, without notice, asked the Minister for Works: Whether it is a fact that the Chief Architect of the Public Works Department has invited tenders for additions to the Crown Lands Office, which will cost some thousands of pounds, by private letters to a few builders whom he knows. If not, why are tenders not invited by public advertisement in the usual manner?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. T. F. Quinlan): As Minister for Works, I am dead; but I have ascertained the nature of the question, and it is a fact that Mr. Jull (Under Secretary) has recommended that certain firms be asked to tender for this particular work, for the reason that the department has had such trouble in the past; that is to say, contractors have failed financially in some instances, and loss has occurred. It was stated that certain firms had been asked to tender for the work. I took exception to that course; but in the circumstances I could think of only one other firm which I knew to be a good one, and the name of that firm was added. I was told this mode of inviting tenders had been the custom in the past, and I did not feel justified in making any variation at the present time.

GUANO EXPORT—SELECT COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

MR. RASON brought up the report of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the export of guano from Abrolhos Islands.

Report received, and ordered to be printed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. T. F. Quinlan) said: I desire to make a personal explanation, and in doing so I feel somewhat pained at having given offence the other evening, when I spoke under strong provocation. I had an altercation with an hon. member opposite just a few minutes before, in respect to my private business, and I was then told I had no right to act as I did in my private affairs in dismissing an employee. To that I answered that I would be only too glad to give the information if it were sought in this House, but that I did not consider that my private affairs concerned the public; and I was then challenged as to what would happen if I took a similar course on another occasion. Therefore, I felt very much aggrieved, and gave expression to one or two offensive words, which I wish to-day to retract, and I do so unconditionally, because I have been grossly misrepresented, in so far as I have been placed before the public in a false light, for it was asserted that, being a capitalist, I was opposed to labour. I