

than weary members at another time, of expressing my very great sense of gratitude for the attitude which members have adopted towards me ever since I have been leader of the House. I do not think anybody who has not tried it realises that there is a greater amount of difficulty in leading a House which is absolutely a non-party House, than leading one that is cleaved in two by strong party lines; there is no doubt about it that there is a greater difficulty. You never know exactly where you are. With strong divided party lines you do; but I find, and I have found in my experience in this Chamber, while that is a difficulty, still there is one, and a very great, compensating advantage. I find that, as as there is no party, members in this House have lost all that tinge of bitterness that party government is apt to bring about. That is replaced by a sense of fairness, a sense of justice, and a sense fair play, for which I cannot sufficiently thank members. When I first came into this Chamber, it was under circumstances perhaps that might have led to some friction between myself and members. I was a new importation, and relatively a somewhat young man, and perhaps it would not have been very surprising if members had not received me with open arms. But I must acknowledge my appreciation of that justice and sense of fairness which I have already alluded to, and which has been extended to me by every member of this House. I cannot express my gratitude to those members who have been so kind as to refer to me in terms I feel are far too flattering. And if I have at times been at variance with any members, still I think that the variance has been such—I know it has been so far as I am concerned—that when it was over it left no rancour—[MEMBERS: Hear, hear.]—that whatever our differences may have been, once they were finished they were finished. I would like, Mr. President, to thank you most heartily for the kind assistance and advice which you have very often tendered me, and which have rendered the task of leading this House pleasanter than it would otherwise have been. Members will understand that it is scarcely competent for me at the present juncture of affairs to indulge in any criticism of our successors, whoever they may be. That I reserve to

myself for future occasions. But in supporting the Address-in-reply I would like again to reiterate the thanks that feel are due to you and the members of this House for the kindness, consideration, and courtesy shown to me on occasions. (General applause.)

Question (to adopt Address) put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the House at its rising adjourn till 4 o'clock on the next afternoon. The business which would occur at the attention of another place on the next afternoon would be very short indeed, and he thought it would tend to the convenience of all parties concerned if the Council were to meet at 4 o'clock.

Question passed.

The House adjourned accordingly 13 minutes past 6 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 11th August, 1904.

	PA
Urgency Motion, Reporting Speeches	...
New Minister, Seat vacated	...
Adjournment (Ministerial elections)	...

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair 4 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

URGENCY MOTION—REPORTING SPEECHES.

HON. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): move "That this House do now adjourn." For moving this I have one of the strongest reasons it is possible to have for taking the serious step

moving the adjournment. I claim that under Standing Order 92—

An urgent motion, directly concerning the privileges of the Council, shall take precedence of other motions as well as orders of the day.

The subject I intend to bring before the House must take precedence of any other business.

THE PRESIDENT : The Standing Order gives the hon. member the necessary power. Let him state his reason for moving.

HON. C. A. PIESSE : I claim that above all things, members' speeches made in this House should be correctly reported by the *Hansard* reporters. From what I can gather, and from what I have seen in the Press with reference to my esteemed friend Mr. Randell and from what I have heard outside, the acoustic properties of the Chamber are not such as will enable the *Hansard* reporters to catch what speakers have to say. I was very much surprised indeed yesterday to learn from you, sir, as President of this House, a gentleman whose wishes I have always tried to meet, that you had not heard, according to your own statement, anything I said when speaking on the floor of the House a few days ago. As President of this Chamber I have always bowed to your ruling, and I take it that one of your first duties is to inform a member whether he is heard by the House, or whether you yourself can hear him; for if you do not hear a member, how is it possible for you to know whether the member is conforming to the rules of the House or not? The acoustic properties of the Chamber will not enable business to be conducted properly, and I have taken the extreme step of moving the adjournment of the House with the object of having the matter discussed so that some remedy may be found during what I presume will be a fairly long adjournment. The first alteration in this Chamber should be to enable speakers to be heard, and correctly reported by the *Hansard* reporters. One does not expect the newspapers of the State to report members speeches fully, and if I am not reported at all I do not care, neither do I mind. I am not going to ask the newspapers to report me, but I think every member should be reported in *Hansard*, and I

think every member desires that. In making that statement I am echoing the wish of every member of the House; all of us desire that our speeches shall be reported in *Hansard*. On the day that I spoke, and when you, Mr. President, could not hear me, I might have taken advantage of a privilege which I believe every member has; that of walking up to the table and making a speech from that position. I think I have said sufficient on this matter to draw attention to the urgent necessity which exists, among other things, of some alteration being effected, not only for the benefit of the *Hansard* reporters, but also for the benefit of the reporters for the Press. We might bring them down, so to speak, from the clouds. I understand they complain, and if common report is to be relied upon it is difficult to hear what is said from the galleries. I know that visitors have complained that they cannot hear what is said, but on the other hand others have said that they can hear distinctly. In regard to the speech I delivered, I know I was suffering from a bad cold, and some members told me they heard what I said, while others have pointed out that they had some difficulty in following me. I am prepared to take my share of the blame, but I object to being made the scapegoat for the bad acoustic properties of this Chamber. I thank members for listening to what I have said, and I think I have said enough to draw attention to the unsatisfactory state of affairs which exists in connection with the acoustic properties of the Chamber. I move that the House do now adjourn.

HON. G. RANDELL (Metropolitan) : I certainly must support Mr. Piesse. I do not know what to suggest myself; it is not my business to suggest anything; but I hope that something will be done before the House meets again to enable us to be easily understood. To myself it is always painful to speak in a loud voice, and I am told by one of the Press reporters that it was almost impossible to hear what I said on the occasion that I spoke. Under these circumstances I have to express my thanks to the *Hansard* reporters for the very nearly correct report of what I said. There were two or three mistakes in the report, and I have asked for corrections to be made.

It is not right that hardship should be inflicted on anyone if the matter can be amended. I regret exceedingly that the acoustic properties of the Chamber are most unsatisfactory. It has occurred to me that curtains hung across the end of the Chamber might do something to effect an improvement. I do not suggest that, I leave it to the architect of the building. Still I think some consideration should be given to what we have said. The fact has come to our knowledge that we are not heard by the Press reporters, and *Hansard* had to guess a good deal of what was said; therefore it is highly creditable that *Hansard* succeeded in giving the sense of what I intended to convey. I do hope, and we look to you to some extent as President of the House, that what has been said by members in this respect will be remedied. No doubt you will do the best you can under the circumstances, and give us as nearly as possible perfect acoustic properties in the House. I second the motion formally.

HON. H. BRIGGS (West): I beg to support the motion before the Council. I think it is not so much the acoustic properties of the Chamber as it is the position in which the reporters are placed. In the Legislative Assembly *Hansard* reporters are placed on the floor of the Chamber. In this Chamber there is even more room than in the Legislative Assembly; and instead of lowering the galleries, which would be a very expensive and costly work, and which would spoil the similitude of the building from an architectural point of view, I suggest that, as we have so much space on the floor of the Chamber, that the reporters be accommodated on the right and left of the President's chair.

Question put, and formally negatived.

THE PRESIDENT, at the close of the day's business, said: Before the House adjourns I desire to say, in regard to the question of acoustics, that the matter will come before the Building Committee in a day or two. I am of opinion that there is necessity for improvement. I think that when Mr. Randell spoke the other day he turned his back this way, the reporters having got into the habit of sitting in the gallery opposite the President in the Chamber formerly used; and I believe that if he had spoken towards the

Chair it would have been better. The subject is receiving the attention of the Building Committee.

NEW MINISTER—SEAT VACATED.

HON. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan-Suburban), speaking from left-side cross-bench, said: I move "That the seat of the Hon. James Michael Drew be declared vacant, he having accepted an office of profit under the Crown." Hon. members will realise that the change of Government prognosticated yesterday has resulted, and in consequence of that change it has become necessary for the House to declare vacant the seat of the Hon. J. M. Drew, who has accepted a portfolio. In moving this I do not propose to weary members by saying anything of a personal nature, but merely to reiterate the thanks I expressed yesterday for the kind support and consideration extended to me during my term of office. I move the motion.

Question passed.

HON. W. KINGSMILL farther moved that a writ be issued for the election of a member for the Central Province to supply the vacancy so caused.

Question passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

(MINISTERIAL ELECTIONS.)

HON. W. KINGSMILL: As the late leader of the House, and by request of the new Premier, I move that the House at its rising do adjourn until 4.30 o'clock on Tuesday, 20th September.

HON. G. RANDELL: I second the motion.

Question passed.

The House adjourned accordingly at 4.23 o'clock, until the 20th September.