

114. I want a somewhat more distinct answer to the question whether it is impossible for the Government to control legislative expenditure?—My answer to that is that it is not impossible to control it, because the Government might do it if they would take the responsibility; but Governments never do that, but leave it entirely to the House to deal with the legislative estimates.

115. *Mr. Garrick.*] Do I understand you, Mr. Reynolds, that the difficulty of dealing with these estimates is that, because they are considered the Speakers' estimates, they should not be interfered with?—Yes.

116. Do I understand you that the Government so regard it that they do not interfere?—Yes.

117. Are you able to say whether it is the privilege of the Speaker to give any Clerk leave of absence, at full salary, or otherwise, as he pleases?—I believe it is.

118. Do I understand you to consider—or, are you able to say—that it is the privilege of the Speaker to give a holiday to a Clerk, and to say whether he should have full pay or not?—Yes; I think it is a privilege, seeing that the Clerks are not under the Government, but entirely under the Speaker.

119. There is one other subject to which you referred: Did you give a full reply to the question as to whether the members of your Chamber had other emoluments or allowances, or whatever you term them, besides the honorarium?—I think there is only one, that is, the Chairman of the Public Petitions Committee.

120. Referring to the indexing of the statutes: Did you say that any member of the Council had anything to do with that?—No; I was referring to the Clerk. There is only one member of the Legislative Council that has anything in connection with the votes for legislative expenditure, that is, the Chairman of the Public Petitions Committee, who has £50 for the session. What I said was that the Clerks had other emoluments. I cannot state to what extent; but I know there were payments to one or both of them. I do not know how many of them; but that you can easily find out.

121. Are you able to say which Clerks get emolument in addition to salaries: Can you specify them?—I could not say how it has been divided: whether they got it between them, or whether it was only given to Mr. Stowe, the Clerk of the Council.

122. What was given?—It was a sum for preparing the index to the statutes; also in connection with work done in connection with the census. That information will be better got from the Assistant-Clerk of the Council: he can give the information.

123. Do you know that the duties of the Clerks cease with the session?—They have nothing to do; they do not take up work in any of the other offices. Their work is done as soon as they get out their books.

124. You mean the Journals?—Yes.

124a. Are you able to say how long a time making up the Journals will occupy?—I cannot say how long they take here; but they certainly should not take more than a month.

125. Then, the only duty they have is that which you call making up the Journals?—As far as I know, that is so.

126. *Mr. Barron.*] You say that the legislative estimates are looked upon as the Speakers' estimates, with which the Government does not deem it to be within its duty to interfere?—I say Governments: I do not say the present Government.

127. But you say they are looked upon as Speakers' estimates, with which the Government do not consider it to be their duty to interfere?—Yes.

128. But the House sometimes interferes?—The House has a right to interfere.

129. But the Government is supposed to lead the House?—The Government is supposed to lead the House, but not in the expenditure of the House itself—that is, if the Government were to say, "We will not bring down the Speakers' estimates but our own," the House would be justified in resenting interference with the Speakers' recommendations.

130. Would it not be better if the Government should interfere for the purpose of giving the House guidance in enabling to discriminate between what is necessary and what is excessive expenditure?—I do not think it is ever done by any legislative body—I have never known that any Government interfered with legislative estimates. The Speaker is supposed to be the executive officer of the House; it is supposed that the members have confidence in the Speaker, otherwise they would not have elected him. If the Speaker really does his duty, the members would not care to interfere with what he has recommended. That is the position of the matter. The Speaker, as I have said, is the executive officer of the House, and as such his estimates are submitted to Parliament.

131. Then, you do not think that the Government is in any better position than members of the House to discriminate between what is necessary and what is excessive expenditure?—They may discriminate as members of the Government, and say these estimates are too high or they are extravagant. They may do that. But in the House, while as private members they might be prepared to strike them out, they would say as a Government, "These are the Speakers' estimates, it is for you to deal with them."

132. Would the Government endeavour to get the House to alter them?—I do not know what the Government would do. If I were in your House I would say, "They were too high or too extravagant, but it is for you to reduce them." But a Government does not like to fall out with the Speaker; it is a serious thing to have the Speaker against you.

133. *The Chairman.*] Do you wish to give any evidence with regard to the House of Representatives?—I will give any evidence I am asked; but you can get it better from members of the House. My own impression is that the House of Representatives is just as extravagant as the Legislative Council.

134. Will you point out on what you base that assumption?—The Speaker has by Act £600 a year. I think it is unreasonable that he should expect £200 by vote. All these extra votes, where there is provision made by Act, I think should be struck out.