

It will be found on page 336 of the Journals of the House, 1886. In 1887, as a result of the report of the Committee (on which no action was taken by the House), there was a correspondence between the then Premier (Sir Robert Stout) and the Speakers of the two Houses on the subject of the Committee's report. (*Vide* Appendix, Session 1, 1887, A.—14.) That correspondence referred to the expenditure of both Legislative Departments, and as to whether a reduction could be made, and it resulted in a general reduction of expenditure and in the staff. The next stage was in 1888, when the whole question of the estimates and control was the subject of a long day's debate in the House of Representatives on a resolution proposed to the House by Sir Harry Atkinson—"that this House is of opinion that the Government should be responsible for the Legislative estimates," but on division by a majority of fourteen it was resolved that the House and the Speaker should continue to be responsible for the Legislative estimates.

7. Was it defined what should be done as to the estimates?—Any further information can only be gathered from the speeches in the course of the debate. (*Vide Hansard*, Vol. lxii, pages 139 *et seq.*)

*Sir J. Hall*: After that Sir Harry Atkinson refused to take any responsibility for the Legislative expenditure.

*Hon. R. J. Seddon*: The whole question of expenditure was raised on that occasion.

*Mr. Friend*: In 1887, when the estimates were before the House and general reductions were made, Sir Maurice O'Rorke persisted in moving these reductions himself in order to assert his authority as Speaker.

*Hon. Mr. Rolleston*: There is a change in that now?

*Mr. Friend*: The present Speaker sat at the table in 1891. In 1891, a motion that the Government should be responsible for the Legislative estimates was negatived on the motion for going into Supply, but in Committee of Supply a reduction of £1 was moved to indicate the wish of the House in the same direction. That was in 1891, and brings the matter up to the present stage.

8. *Hon. R. J. Seddon*.] Since that the Government have had charge of the estimates?—Yes.

*The Chairman*: Mr. Friend just now stated that a resolution he referred to was in the Journals for 1886, and Mr. Rolleston asked for its production. Here are the terms of it: "Motion made, and question proposed, That Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair. Mr. O'Connor moved, That the question be amended by the omission of all the words after the word 'that,' and the insertion of the following words in lieu thereof, 'the Government should be directly responsible for all Parliamentary expenditure, and that all officers should be under the direct control of the Government.' And the question being put, That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question, it was resolved in the affirmative."

9. *Hon. R. J. Seddon*.] In 1888 that debate was in Committee on the estimates?—No, in Committee of the whole House on Sir Harry Atkinson's resolution. By agreement between the then Premier and the Speaker, the Premier brought down the resolution in Committee of the Whole in order that the Speaker might take part in the debate.

10. Are you a Civil servant?—I can only quote from memory an opinion of the present Chief Justice in 1872, that all officers appointed by the Governor are officers of the Civil Service. I think I have that opinion in my possession. We have got the Chief Justice's opinion, and Sir Robert Stout's, that all officers appointed by the Government are Civil servants.

11. Did Sir Robert Stout give an opinion on that?—I think so. I have the papers.

12. Will you look up those papers—it has an important bearing on the question?—I will.

13. Are you aware whether the Law Officers have given an opinion as to whether the officers of the House are Civil servants in the ordinary term?—That was Sir James Prendergast's opinion as Attorney-General. It had simply reference as to whether they were entitled to pensions. We were exempted on a later date. That was before 1866. In that year the Legislature was exempted from the Civil Service Act, and has remained exempt ever since.

14. In the session of 1891 the Legislative estimates were placed under the control of the Government?—Yes.

15. Are you aware of any alterations having been made in the salaries of officers?—The estimates of 1892 came down exactly the same as they were in the previous years, but with a slight reduction in the Contingency vote. There was no alteration in salaries. In the present estimates considerable alterations have been made, but they are not yet before the House.

16. Then the control of the estimates, which would give power of altering, decreasing, or increasing salaries, will have a bearing as to the status and retention of officers?—I have always been of the opinion that where the power of fixing the remuneration is there the control must be; but that is only my own opinion.

17. Are you aware of some instances where the Chairman of Committees has made the recommendation and appointments have been made outside the Speaker?—Absolutely none. I am not aware of cases of the kind.

18. You stated here that some appointments were made by the Governor on the recommendation of the Chairman of Committees?—That was in 1862. It was absolutely decided that no recommendation should be made except that of the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees. That was the only case.

19. Is there any case where he has recommended and the recommendation has been refused?—No, I know of no such case.

20. The Government, being desirous of appointing some person to an office, would consult the chief officers, the same as in other departments; but is it mandatory for the Government to accept the person recommended?—If you ask me as a matter of opinion, I should say it is not mandatory; but if the recommendation was refused, the matter would be referred back to the Speaker for further recommendation.

21. Would the Speaker have power to appoint any of the officers without reference to the Government?—Not any of the officers I have mentioned; only the subordinate officers.