

Queensland



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[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 1906

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ENOGGERA GRANITE IN PUBLIC WORKS.

Mr. HAWTHORN (*Enoggera*) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

Will he endeavour to see that in public works to be contracted for in the future provision shall be made for the using of Enoggera granite where feasible in metropolitan works?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. T. O'Sullivan, *Warwick*) replied—

It has been the practice in the past to use Enoggera granite where feasible, and such practice will be continued.

MINING MACHINERY ADVANCES
BILL.

SECOND READING.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Burke*): In moving the second reading of this Bill I may say that the measure is similar to that which I introduced two years ago, and to that which I had on the business-paper last session; but, unfortunately, on account of a holiday coming along, I lost the position I had on the paper, and did not get to it during that session. I have little to say in connection with the Bill other than what I said two years ago. In New Zealand they have passed a similar measure, which will be found in the New Zealand statutes for 1905. It was passed on 31st October of that year, and deals with practically the same questions as the Bill now before the House. It goes more into detail than this Bill in connection with the working of advances, as I have left a good deal to the discretion of the Minister. Regulations can be drawn up which, if the Minister is sympathetic towards the measure, will enable good work to be done. Hon. members have had fair time to digest the contents of the Bill—both the good and the bad that there may be in it—although I do not think that there is any bad. I hope to get through not only the second reading this afternoon, but the committee stage as well. The Bill has certainly a good deal to recommend it, especially in new mining fields. We want new fields, and those fields want all the assistance we can possibly give them. In other States a good deal of money has been spent in assisting the mining industry. In Western Australia they have spent about £250,000; in South Australia about £120,000; in Victoria a fair amount has been spent; but in Queensland we have spent a very small amount. I have much pleasure in moving the second reading of the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. J. W. Blair, *Ipswich*): I merely rise to say that I am in entire accord with the Bill, and that I sympathise with the hon. member in charge of it; and also to express on behalf of the Government their entire willingness that the Bill should go through its committee stage to-day. (Hear, hear!) It is perhaps necessary for me to advert somewhat briefly to its main provisions, and I can assure the hon. member that in so doing I shall be economical of time. At present we have power in the Mines Department to grant advances by way of loan to companies or individuals in aid of prospecting and deep sinking. But this Bill contains provisions which will enable us, if it becomes law, to grant advances for other purposes. Those purposes are set forth in clause 4—

- (i.) Procuring and erecting machinery for carrying on mining operations;
- (ii.) Procuring and erecting, or removing and re-erecting, plant for treating metals, minerals, or metalliferous ores.

Any person or company—under the Acts Shortening Act “person” including “individuals,” and “company,” a “registered company,” as pro-

THURSDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER, 1906.

The SPEAKER (Hon. Sir A. S. Cowley, *Herbert*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

QUESTIONS.

POLICE RECRUITS.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*) asked the Home Secretary—

What is the total number of recruits taken into the Police Force of Queensland since the year 1902?

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. P. Airey, *Flinders*) replied—

1903	...	...	...	...	29
1904	...	...	...	...	24
1905	...	...	...	...	84
1906	...	...	...	...	59
Total	...	...	...	...	196

[*Mr. Nielson.*

vided in the definition clause—may apply to the Minister, and the Minister can grant an advance by way of loan for these two purposes. I think every hon. member is in sympathy with those purposes. The only question that we have to consider is whether public money granted for such purposes is granted under proper safeguards and upon proper conditions. I have studied the Bill, and I think it will be abundantly manifest to the House that advances of this nature will be amply safeguarded. The applicant has to supply certain information in the prescribed form before the Minister considers his application. Clause 5 prescribes that the applicant must give—

- (i) A description of the mine on or in connection with which the machinery or plant is to be erected;
- (ii) A description and valuation of any machinery or plant already erected on or in connection with such mine;
- (iii) A statement of the encumbrances, if any, affecting such mine, machinery, or plant;
- (iv) A description of the machinery or plant which the applicant proposes to erect;
- (v) A statement showing the duration of the proposed advance, and the time when and the instalments in which the advance is required;
- (vi) Any further information which the Minister may require.

That I take to be a clause affording the fullest protection to the department, and enabling the Minister to obtain absolutely every detail of information which he may possibly require. One safeguard, and a most important one in protecting the department, is a proviso in clause 6, which makes the granting of this advance dependent upon a report of the Government Geologist. I take that to be a cardinal feature of the Bill, and a feature which makes it in a sense more reasonable, and justifies us in accepting it with the least amount of hesitation.

Mr. MURPHY: It will cause delay.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Possibly there may be an element of delay, but I think even the difficulty in all cases of getting a report expeditiously is counterbalanced by the fact of the safeguard of the report before the money is advanced. If the hon. member for Croydon will look at clause 6, he will see how essential and what an enormous safeguard that report is.

Mr. MURPHY: They often refer matters now to the warden for a report.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I should take it that it would be referred to the geologist, or any person who, in the opinion of the department, would be able to satisfy the requirements. "Geologist," in the definition clause, includes the Government Geologist and any public officer directed by the Minister to make inquiries or report with respect to any matter under this Act. I should take it that where a large amount is required, and where a very careful report or analysis is to be made, the Government Geologist would be selected, but in the majority of cases a person authorised by the Minister would suffice, but of the value of that report there can be no doubt. The report is to state—

- (i.) Whether in the opinion of the geologist—

That term including the person approved by the Minister—

- there is reasonable probability that the mining operations in connection with which the proposed machinery or plant is to be erected will be of a remunerative character;
- (ii.) Whether the proposed machinery or plant is of a character and description properly adapted to the proposed operations and works;
- (iii.) Such other information as the Minister may require.

No words of mine are needed to show the value of a clause like that. After the application is made and the report is obtained, the Minister can then, with the approval of the Governor in Council, grant that application, with or without

modification, on the applicant undertaking, by making an agreement with the Government, to return the amount advanced, bearing interest at a rate not exceeding 5 per cent. per annum. That advance is to be payable in instalments, and a very important clause indeed—subclause (3) of clause 7—provides that no instalment of the advance whatever is to be paid until it is proved to the satisfaction of the Minister that—

- (i) For every pound to be advanced the borrower has, out of his own capital, previously, but since the date of the agreement, contributed towards the purchase and erection, or removal and re-erection, of such machinery or plant a like sum of one pound.

I think this is a most excellent provision in the Bill, the reason for which I will seek briefly to give. There is no objection to any applicant going to the Government and asking for money. Applicants can, under various statutes we have in force dealing with other industries which it is not necessary to particularise, obtain money after fulfilling certain conditions. But if the applicant has faith in his venture, or has some credence in the probable success of his experiment, why should he not be willing to show his *bona fides*, and contribute something towards the amount the Government is prepared to give? If he believes in it, and is sincere in his belief that it will ultimately turn out a success, all we ask is that he should put down £1 for £1, and I venture to think that the majority of applicants will not hesitate to take advantage of this provision, but will welcome it; and I believe also that this Bill, if it becomes law, will tend to develop fields that are now undeveloped, will probably lead to new discoveries being made, and will possibly lead to the opening up of mines in places where hitherto it has been impossible to mine. I believe—and the hon. member who introduced the Bill, and mining members I am quite certain will share in the belief—that this measure will largely apply to districts outside the established goldfields, and, as one hon. member interjects, and I quite agree with the interjection, it will apply then to places where the benefits of a measure of this nature have been sadly lacking. Now, the second condition of subclause (3) provides—

- (ii.) The borrower has properly expended all previous instalments advanced under the agreement, and has paid all interest, if any, due on the amount already advanced.

I also draw attention to subclause (4)—

- (4) The agreement shall contain all such covenants, conditions, restrictions, and provisions consistent with this Act, as the Minister may require.

Now, possibly, under that clause, should a battery be erected by a company or by a group of individuals, it will be open to the Minister to make a covenant or an agreement with him that he shall probably crush for other individuals, perhaps at rates fixed. For this and other reasons I deem it a most excellent provision. Clause 8 simply provides what shall be the remedies of the Government, and that all moneys advanced under this Act shall be deemed to be a debt due to the Government, and recoverable in the way provided by the Crown remedies. As a further security, the applicant is compellable, if his application is approved, before the money is advanced, to execute all mortgage charges, encumbrances, and liens as are considered necessary. A report is also to be made of the moneys advanced or expended for any of the purposes of the Act during the preceding financial year, in the month of August, with detailed statement of accounts, and the same is to be laid before both Houses of Parliament; and by clause 10 provision is made for regulations for the more effectually carrying into operation the provisions of this Bill. I may say, in conclusion,

Hon. J. W. Blair.]

that I welcome the measure. I hope that it will become law, and I venture to think that if it does it will help to assist many men of the poorer class who combine together to mine, to win minerals from the earth, and who without assistance of this kind would perhaps court failure. This is a Bill, as I take it, to be sympathetically administered, and I hope it will be as soon as it becomes law. I am sure that it will be so administered as long as I am in the position I hold. It is not a Bill for big companies alone, but rather for the assistance of the poor struggling miner. For that reason I welcome it, and I think it would tend to improve the mining law.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. PAGET (*Mackay*): I think the hon. member who has introduced this Bill this afternoon will be extremely gratified with the reception accorded to it by the Minister for Mines. It is not my wish to prevent the passing of the measure through the House this afternoon, because I consider that some public money, under proper safeguards, could be profitably invested in the way laid down in this Bill. This is not the first time that those who are struggling under adverse circumstances have had an opportunity of having public money advanced to them to assist them in their enterprises in this State. The sugar-growers have had a sum of some £540,000 advanced to them for the very same purpose—the erection of machinery—which is asked for by the miners under this Bill. Under another Act it is possible for co-operative farmers to obtain advances for the erection of flourmills. Meat export companies, or butter manufacturing companies, can obtain advances from the meat and dairy fund. I might be met with the objection that in those cases the stock-owners were actually taxed to raise that fund, but I would like to point out that it is not necessarily the stockowners only who pay the revenue into those funds who are able to obtain an advance for the erection of meat-works. Advances can be made from the fund for the purpose of erecting factories, and it benefits those industries very much. Factories are erected, and there are one or two other ways in which settlers are assisted, and I would like to shortly point them out for the information of members of the House. There is another trust account called the “Central Sugar Mills Account,” in connection with the central sugar-mills, that are at present being controlled by the Government. The sum of £158,906 has been advanced out of that fund; £165,697 has been repaid, so that the fund is £9,000 in credit at the present time. These advances were made to assist people who it was deemed desirable should be assisted by public money. Again, we have the seed grain trust account, which shows that £25,000 was advanced to the farmers for the purpose of purchasing seed grain during a time of very great stress. Again, the sugar industry has been assisted to the extent of £1 for £1 on the contribution to the sugar fund—for the purpose of carrying on sugar experimental stations. At any rate, I think it extremely desirable that assistance should be given in the way indicated in this Bill, and under what seem to be very perfect safeguards, to men who are endeavouring to develop our valuable mining industry. (Hear, hear!) I have nothing further to add except that I have very much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. PAULL (*Charters Towers*): I had not any opportunity of looking at this Bill until the last few moments, but its general principles are such that anyone connected with the mining industry must approve of. It is possible that there are one or two small details that can be improved or altered. The hon. member for Mackay referred

to a matter that I was going to express my opinion on—that is, that large sums of money have been spent by the Government in nearly all the other industries in the State such as sugar, dairying, and so on, but very little has ever been given to mining. One thing that the State has been doing from time to time has been subsidising deep sinking on the same principle as is contained in this Bill—namely, by advancing £1 for £1 under certain conditions. The same principle seems to be set out here, but it very often happens that a man working in the bush or elsewhere may make some discovery, and he is never able to get down to what is known as “deep sinking,” and therefore can obtain no benefit from this Bill. Very often in the early days of a claim a man is more needful of money than when he has sunk to a considerable depth.

Mr. MAXWELL: This Bill will help him.

Mr. PAULL: Yes, this Bill will help him. I notice that clause 4 says that advances may be obtained for procuring and erecting machinery for carrying on mining operations, and procuring and erecting, or removing and re-erecting, plant for treating metals, minerals, or metalliferous ores. The question is whether that is to be under proper supervision or not. I know that clause 6 provides for the Government Geologist attending to this matter, but a great improvement could be made by altering “Government Geologist” to “inspector of mines.” I am aware that the definition of “Geologist” says that it may include “any public officer directed by the Minister to make inquiries,” but still those who have had experience in mining know that the geologist is not always the best man to undertake the duties mentioned here. He could decide on the nature of the rocks, or whether the geological conditions were satisfactory, but that is different to deciding whether machinery or a mining plant is satisfactory, or the mine is likely to prove remunerative. It is rarely that a geologist has any training in that branch at all. In subclause (ii.) of clause 6 it says that the geologist shall report “whether the proposed machinery or plant is of a description properly adapted to the proposed operations and works.” That is also another matter that the geologist rarely, if ever, has had any training in. The inspector of mines would have the training in that respect, and I contend that that officer would be the most suitable man to insert here. In one of the other States in which I have had some experience the duties of the inspector of mines are not the same as those in Queensland. They do not enter into the matter of ventilation or safety of the mines in that State. Their duty is to examine the various mines and report to the Government as to their mineral character or otherwise, and to say if it would be a satisfactory speculation and not of a “wild cat” character, and whether or not, in their opinion, the State would be justified in helping those mines if it is necessary. I have known many instances of people who believe in their own ground, but sometimes, I am sorry to say, if anyone of experience goes to him he finds that he has got nothing in it. I remember in the days of my boyhood there was a case of an old lady who did considerable laundry work for my mother. It was pointed out that she had seen better days. Her husband had worked certain mines on the hillside near by, and after spending all his money for two or three years, he spent his last penny in buying a pound of candles to go on working, in the hope that he was going to make his fortune out of it, but he died broken-hearted. Curiosity led me one day to examine this mine, and I did not consider that it was worth paying a penny into. No man with any experience would have wasted his time on it at all. There are some mines like

that in Australia. The people believe in the ground because they get little bits of rich ore here and there, but they forget that the one great thing to make a mine profitable is quantity rather than quality. I would like to see "inspector of mines" put in this provision instead of "Geologist" to safeguard the Government, because, if he knows his work at all, he will not recommend that money be expended on mines that do not promise to give a fair return. I shall have great pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. HAWTHORN (*Enoggera*): I consider that this Bill is well worthy of the consideration of the members of this House.

Mr. LESINA: Hear, hear! Enoggera.

Mr. HAWTHORN: I was going to refer to Enoggera. The hon. member has not got a monopoly of the mining districts. I hope that the district of Enoggera will benefit materially by this Bill, because there has been a considerable amount of money spent there and the prospects have been very good too, but the cost of machinery has been prohibitive; and although there have been a good many people willing to test the district, and back their opinion, the money required for erecting machinery there has been rather beyond their means. Under this measure they will be enabled, I hope, to put

down sufficient money, backed by [4 p.m.] the Government to the extent of £1 for £1, to thoroughly prove what there is in that district, and I hope it will be proved eventually that Enoggera is a mining district. It is a very fair thing indeed to ask that the mining industry should have some assistance. All the other industries have been very largely assisted by the State, but up to the present the assistance given to the mining industry has been very meagre, although it has contributed large sums to the revenue and provided a large amount of work at times when other work was hard to get. The mining industry has given employment to men who would otherwise have been out of employment. This Bill appears to me to be very well drawn, and to thoroughly safeguard the interest of the Government. Any moneys advanced under its provisions will be properly secured, as the Government will have the report of the Government Geologist with regard to the prospects of a mine before any money is advanced, and they will see that advances are only made where there is a promise of a good show. Although mining generally is of a rather speculative character, I do not think the Government will run very much risk in making advances under the provisions of this Bill. The Bill is a good one, and I hope it will pass.

Mr. HARGREAVES (*Cook*): I have very much pleasure in supporting the second reading of this Bill. When it was introduced on a previous occasion I think I gave it my support. The operation of such a measure will tend to promote the development of the mining industry, more particularly in outside districts. There are provisions in the Bill which amply safeguard the Government. I think the very fact that men are prepared to risk their own money in a mine is ample justification for the Government advancing money in the way proposed in this measure. As a rule, miners are not very ready to risk their own money unless they think there is a fair prospect of getting a return for their outlay. I should like to see the scope of the Bill extended so as to include such matters as water conservation, tunnelling, and other mining operations, in which assistance is equally deserved. As has been pointed out by the senior member for Mackay, many other industries in the State have been assisted; but the mining industry has received very little assistance from the Govern-

ment. Mr. PAGET: The advances to the mining industry have been between £35,000 and £40,000.

Mr. HARGREAVES: Quite so. I think this Bill will benefit the mining industry, and I hope it will become law.

Mr. MACKINTOSH (*Cambooya*): I have very much pleasure in supporting this measure, as I believe it will be of assistance in developing the mineral resources of Queensland, and of that particular part of Queensland which is within my electorate, including North Talgai and Thane's Creek. When Gympie and Charters Towers broke out, they took away miners who were working in that district, and they have not come back. Owing to the lack of machinery, the district has not prospered as it should have done. From recent experience which I have had in connection with mining, I have not the slightest doubt but that the places I have mentioned abound in rich minerals. From the point of view that this measure will tend to develop our mineral resources, and from the point of view that the agricultural industry will benefit by any such development, I approve of this Bill. When I have had occasion to go to the Minister for Mines to ask for assistance to the miners employed in the mining part of the electorate of Cambooya, my request has not been viewed with favour to the extent that I expected. The provision in this Bill requiring applicants for advances to expend an equal amount of their own money will prove an excellent safeguard, because if people are prepared to spend their own money that is a guarantee of good faith. No person will embark in an enterprise and spend money on it merely to borrow money from another person. They must have confidence in the enterprise before they approach a monetary institution or the Government under such terms as are laid down in this Bill. I have the greatest pleasure in the world in supporting the second reading of the measure, and I hope it will pass. I do not think it requires many amendments, and I am pleased to see that the House are inclined to pass it unanimously.

Mr. JONES (*Burnett*): Although I should have been more pleased to have seen a Bill introduced for the establishment of State batteries, still I have very much pleasure in supporting this measure. I am aware that the hon. member who introduced this Bill is not in favour of State batteries. I am also aware that a great many members, who, like myself, are in favour of State batteries, are willing to support this Bill, as it will not interfere with the establishment of State batteries when the House is ready to undertake that work. There are many claims which require assistance in places where it would be unwise for the State to erect batteries, and that is a reason why I am supporting this Bill. The Minister has referred to subclause (3) of clause 7, which reads as follows:—

(3) No instalment shall be paid until it is proved to the satisfaction of the Minister that—

- (i.) For every pound to be advanced the borrower has, out of his own capital, previously, but since the date of the agreement, contributed towards the purchase and erection, or removal and re-erection, of such machinery or plant a like sum of one pound.

I think that clause will make this Bill more beneficial to mining companies and speculators than to the *bona fide* miner. There are very many miners who have discovered claims and mines, and who have confidence in their discoveries and in the knowledge that they contain wealth, who will not be in a position to expend such a large amount as £1 for £1. I should very much like to see that amount reduced, as it might very well be, seeing that clause 6, by which every application is to be referred to the Government Geologist for his report, is a sufficient

Mr. Jones.]

safeguard. With that safeguard it is hardly necessary to expect so large a sum from the miner as £1 for £1. I hope that provision will be made to reduce the amount, or to knock that clause out altogether. Although I should prefer to see a Bill to establish State batteries, I have very much pleasure in supporting the Bill introduced by the hon. member for Burke.

Mr. BARTON (*Carnarvon*): I have very much pleasure also in supporting this Bill. The matter is one of very great importance, and it cannot be denied that mining in this country has not had one-half the support it deserves; and this is a step in the right direction. I believe in State batteries, though not in "assault and battery." (Laughter.) I have looked through the various clauses of the Bill, and I find that, though it is a short measure, it contains very much that we all desire. I speak not only on behalf of my own district, but for the whole State. I did not think the Bill would have been brought forward to-day or I would have had a great deal more to say on the subject. I only wish to state that I shall give it my support, and that I hope every member of the Chamber will do the like.

Mr. KEOGH (*Rosewood*): While I am prepared to advocate and support anything that will help an industry that has been one of the greatest blessings to the State on more than one occasion, I should like to see a helping hand similarly held out to those engaged in an industry equally as important, if not more important—the agricultural industry. I am not going to say it is wrong to give these people money to test properties where they have found gold or other minerals; but I should like to see the same consideration shown to the agriculturists of the State. They certainly have not had that kindness and consideration which they deserve at the hands of our worthy friends—the Labour element on the other side of the Chamber.

Mr. MURPHY: We offered you a land tax.

Mr. KEOGH: That is a matter outside the question before the House. I repeat that while I am prepared to support this Bill in the interests of miners, so that they may have plenty of money to carry out their work, I should like to see the same consideration extended to the agricultural industry, which has often been spoken of by hon. members on both sides as the bone and sinew of the State. Strangers in search of land get any amount of assistance; the farmer who is actually at work on the land gets none at all. In fact, the tendency of recent legislation has been to increase the amount he has to pay. Men are employed by the State to see that he carries out his duties, and he is taxed to pay them. The other day the leader of the Government promised the people at Croydon that he would give them £10,000 in aid of deep sinking, on condition that a similar sum was raised locally. I am not aware that that money has been raised, but I understand that £3,000 has already been advanced, and that the people up there are crying out that the £10,000 promised by the Premier is not forthcoming.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. KEOGH: I only wish to say, Mr. Speaker, that I hope the Premier will carry out his promise, and pay them the £10,000, because they deserve it. As to this Bill, it is only right that help of this description should be given, and I am prepared to support it.

Mr. LINDLEY (*Wide Bay*): There is only one thing that strikes me in connection with this Bill, and that is that, assuming the Treasurer advances money towards opening up or developing a claim, he may do what he has done in connection with the central sugar-mills—as soon as the owners strike gold he may foreclose. He has evidently sat back and waited until the

central sugar-mills paid before foreclosing. I hope similar action will not be taken in this case. There is not the slightest doubt about it that this will be a good thing for the mining industry, and particularly for outside shows. It will enable distant fields to be opened up and developed. I shall support the Bill.

HON. R. PHILIP (*Townsville*): I intend to support this Bill, because it carries out very much the same thing as was carried out by the late Government. I think in four cases they put up plants on these lines; the people interested found half the money, and the Government the other half. The also found half the cost of deep sinking in many cases. One of the plants I refer to was put up at the Cohen and one at the Woolgar, and there were two others. I am sorry to say that those experiments were not profitable to the unfortunate owners, who did not make anything out of them. This is a policy that the Government have been committed to for a number of years, and I think we ought to give this form of it a moderate trial. I must admit that an old plant on an abandoned mine would not be worth very much as security to the Government, but the risk will not be so very great. I want to point out to those who talk about the money advanced under the Meat and Dairy Act and to people for the erection of butter factories, that the Government does not advance a shilling. The money is raised by levy on the stockowners, so that it does not come out of revenue at all.

Mr. BURROWS: What about the grainsheds?

HON. R. PHILIP: That is only part of the railway policy. In the case of the sugar-mills, the people who got the advance provided valuable security by mortgaging their lands to the Government, who can sell, or will sell tomorrow very likely, if they do not redeem the amount advanced. In the case of an abandoned mine you cannot get much for it if it is a duffer, but, all the same, I think that in a highly mineralised country like this we want to do all we can in a moderate way to test the outside shows. It is the small places that want assistance. In the big mining districts there is more machinery than there is stone to crush. I thought it was possible to get an advance for mining plant out of the deep-sinking vote.

Mr. BURROWS: I think not.

HON. R. PHILIP: I think that is so. If a man sinks 500 or 1,000 feet, the Government will advance him half the cost, and the expenses incurred in winding plant are part of the cost. I intend to support the Bill, and I hope the £1 for £1 principle will be adhered to.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

Clause 1 put and passed.

On clause 2—"Interpretation—"

Mr. PAULL moved that on lines 16 and 17 the words "inspector of mines" be inserted. Surely that was the officer who, above all others, was likely to be asked to inspect, and his title should be inserted in the interpretation clause.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is not necessary. He is included under the phrase "any public officer."

Mr. PAULL: There was no necessity to make the thing more difficult to understand than was necessary. If the inspector of mines was included, then let him be named. In Acts of Parliament they did not call trains ships or horses cows. The title of "inspector of mines" was understood by the bulk of the people who were interested in the matter.

Mr. MAXWELL: The amendment would not secure what the hon. member wanted. If

he wanted to provide that the work should be performed by the inspectors of mines, he might achieve his purpose by amending [4.30 p.m.] clause 6, so that all applications should be referred to an inspector of mines instead of to the geologist for report.

Mr. PAULL: I would like to see the geologist knocked out altogether, and leave it entirely to the inspector of mines.

Mr. MAXWELL did not see what would be gained by that. The word "geologist" covered an inspector of mines. If it was the desire of the Committee that the amendment should be made, he could not help it, but personally he intended to oppose it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The amendment was absolutely unnecessary. The word "geologist" included the Government Geologist or any other public officer directed by the Minister to make inquiries or report with respect to any application; and it would simply complicate matters, and make the definition tautological if the amendment were accepted. Clause 6 provided that every application should be referred to the geologist for report, and that brought them back to the definition of "geologist." He trusted the hon. member for Charters Towers would not delay the passage of the Bill by pressing this unnecessary amendment.

Mr. MULCAHY thought the amendment was quite unnecessary, as the clause covered everything the hon. member for Charters Towers had in view. He quite agreed that to leave it to the Government Geologist alone would be a dangerous thing. He had in his mind a case which occurred some years ago where a geologist reported on a claim that he was heavily interested in when the Government were asked to grant a subsidy for deep sinking. He did not say that was wrong, but similar cases might crop up again. To avoid that sort of thing, it was well to leave it wide. He would like to see others included in clause 6. It was not advisable to leave it to the Minister for Mines, because, when the Government were asked to advance money, it was only right that they should be able to get the benefit of the knowledge of all their experts. At the same time it would be a mistake to knock out the word "geologist."

Mr. WOODS (*Woothakata*) hoped the hon. member for Charters Towers would withdraw his amendment. There was a good deal in the point raised by the hon. member for Gympie. In the electorate he represented they were placed in an awkward position at times when relatives of the warden appeared before that officer, and there was no doubt that blood was thicker than water. He hoped the hon. member for Burke would stick to the clause as it was, and, if necessary, divide the Committee on it.

HON. R. PHILP did not think the definition was sufficiently wide. In some cases there might be no public officer who was competent to report on an application. If an application was made for an advance to erect a smelting plant, for instance, he doubted whether there was any public officer who would be in a position to report upon the application, and it might be necessary to get a report from an outside source.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Add the words "or expert."

HON. R. PHILP: The definition might be amended to read, "any public officer or expert."

Mr. MAXWELL suggested that the hon. member for Charters Towers should withdraw his amendment to enable the hon. member for Townsville to move the insertion of the words "or expert."

Mr. PAULL asked leave to withdraw his amendment.

Amendment, by leave withdrawn.

HON. R. PHILP moved the insertion of the words "or expert" after the word "officer" on line 17. That would give the Minister power to get the best skilled expert he could to make a report. The hon. member for Gympie referred to a geologist who reported favourably upon a mine in which he was interested. That geologist was manly enough to inform the department that he was a shareholder in the mine that he reported upon.

Mr. MAXWELL thought the amendment was a good one. He looked forward to the day when the industry would be a very large one, and when there would be many experts engaged in the treatment of metalliferous ores.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

On clause 3—"Source from which expenditure to be made"—

HON. R. PHILP: Before the clause was put he would like to ask the Minister whether he would be prepared to place a sum of money on the Estimates this year for the purpose of the Bill? Would he recommend a certain amount for the purpose, because if the Bill passed now, unless the Government were willing nothing could be done till next year?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: In the event of the Bill becoming law he was prepared to make a recommendation, so that the Act would not be inoperative.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4 put and passed.

On clause 5—"Information to be supplied"—

HON. R. PHILP did not think this clause went far enough. Supposing someone wanted to erect smelting works where there were no mines at all—say, at a seaport—under this clause they could not get an advance. It might be more convenient to smelt ore at a seaport—either at Normanton, Cairns, Rockhampton, Maryborough, or even Brisbane—than at the mine. At the present time there were no public smelting works in Queensland—the only one we had was shut up—and all our minerals had to go to other States for treatment. He thought that if a good case was made out for erecting smelting works anywhere in the State, it would be a fair thing for the Government to assist.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Clause 4 is a pretty fair advance on the present system of assisting the mining industry.

HON. R. PHILP: Did the hon. gentleman think clause 4 would cover it?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I merely say that—it is a big advance.

Mr. MAXWELL: This Bill does not make provision as to where you are to erect your works.

Mr. PAULL: It must be in connection with the mine. He agreed with the leader of the Opposition. Subsection (i.) spoke of the mine; subsection (ii.) of the circumstances in connection with such mine; and subsection (iii.) and following subclauses of machinery and plant, etc. It evidently only referred to plant erected in connection with the mine. He did not know whether, under the clause, there would be power to help in the erection of a battery or smelting works apart from the mine. A company wanted to erect a smelting works in his electorate the other day, and they had no mine of their own. They had £500, and if this Bill was in force it ought to assist them. If clause 5 was carried in its present form, he did not think it would give power to erect a battery or smelting works except in connection with the mine.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: What do you understand by the words, "plant for treating minerals"?

Mr. PAULL: That was under section 4; an application for an advance must be in connection

Mr. Paull.]

with the mine. At the same time, the words "any further information which the Minister may require" might cover it.

Mr. MAXWELL: The Bill had practically no limits as far as smelting was concerned. There might be twenty smelting works and not one battery erected under it—they might all be smelting works. The main feature of the Bill was that in the first place there was power for a company to get money for erection of machinery; in the next place, to get money for the erection of reducing works, whatever they might be. There was no stipulation as to what the reduction works would be. He thought the Bill would cover both what the leader of the Opposition and the senior member for Charters Towers required.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 6—"Report of geologist"—

Mr. PAULL explained that his reason for wishing to alter the definition of "geologist" was because a geologist was a man who studied the strata of the rocks, and who certainly had no training or education in engineering or the management of mines. It was his experience when a youth to go underground with one of the best geologists in England. He had studied in the laboratory and in the lecture-room, and knew a great deal about the rocks in the hills and mountains round about, but not from a mineralogical point of view or an engineering point of view, and when he got underground in the dark and dirty places of the mines he did not know one rock from another, let alone whether the character of the works were remunerative. As a matter of fact, he gave advice totally opposed to the judgment of those who knew better, and the experience of two or three years later showed that his advice was altogether wrong. It would be wrong to leave "geologist" in, unless they put in "expert" as well.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES thought the hon. gentleman's troubles arose from a confusion of ideas. The term "geologist" was used in clause 6, but with a particular meaning—a meaning expressly given to it by the clause amended by the leader of the Opposition. "Geologist" now included the Government Geologist—to which officer the hon. the senior member for Charters Towers seemed to think the clause was entirely and exclusively limited—and any public officer or expert, which words would include engineers, surveyors or any persons who could perform the work necessary when directed by the Minister to make inquiry or report. So that reading clause 6 in the light of the interpretation clause, he thought provision was made for skilled advice of every possible and conceivable character being obtained where necessary.

HON. R. PHILIP was satisfied that the interpretation would be all right. (Hear, hear!) He would like to point out that at the present time Dr. Jack, who had been Government Geologist in Queensland for some time—but, unfortunately for the State and for Dr. Jack too, he left the service five or six years ago—was now in Brisbane, and was going North to look at some mines. The Government ought to take advantage of Dr. Jack's presence to get a report on some of our large fields from him. Everyone knew that Dr. Jack was the best authority on geology in Australia. In fact, his reputation was world wide. Some of the goldfields of the State were languishing, and some others were promising, and it would be money well spent if Dr. Jack's services were retained permanently for Queensland. (Hear, hear!) Failing that, Dr. Jack's services should be secured for, say, twelve months, to report on our languishing fields and some of our mining fields to which the Government were building railways, and which gave great promise. Dr. Jack was

thoroughly reliable, thoroughly capable, and thoroughly honest, which was saying a great deal in connection with mining men. He hoped his remarks about Dr. Jack would be taken notice of by the Minister. He knew from private conversation with the Minister that he would get up and say that the Government intended doing something. He thought they should do more than that, and that Dr. Jack's services should be kept here for some time.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not like to interrupt the hon. member, but I do not think his remarks have any connection with the Bill.

HON. R. PHILIP: This was an important Bill to assist mining, and it was dealing with the geologist especially. He certainly thought that Dr. Jack's services should again be retained for Queensland, at all events for a time. (Hear, hear!) They knew that at the present time Gympie and Charters Towers were not in a good way, and Dr. Jack might assist those fields in some way in trying to make fresh discoveries. They were building an expensive railway to Cloncurry; Dr. Jack was there twenty-five years ago; he was going there now, and it would be a good thing for the State if he gave a general report on that field. No one knew better than the Chairman how much confidence everyone who knew him had in Dr. Jack.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: In reply to the leader of the Opposition he would now say publicly what he informed the hon. gentleman of privately—that the matter was under consideration. More than that he could not say, except that he noticed that hon. members generally seemed to favour something being done in the matter of retaining Dr. Jack's services. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. MULCAHY: He is a man the people have confidence in.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 7—"Advance"—

Mr. JONES moved that in the 1st paragraph of subclause (3) the words "a like sum of one pound," on lines 58 and 59, be omitted, with the view of inserting "the sum of ten shillings." If his amendment were agreed to, the Bill would be a better one for working miners who would not be able to afford to provide £1 for £1. He knew one claim in particular in his district the owners of which sent ores to the Aldershot Smelting Works, and it returned over 2 oz. to the ton, but when the expenses were paid it left no profit. These men required a small battery to work their property, but they would not be able to provide £1 for £1. He had no doubt there were other similar cases to that.

Mr. MAXWELL could not accept the amendment, as it would simply mean that people would expect to have batteries erected everywhere. He did not know if the hon. member realised that if he persisted in his amendment, when the Bill went elsewhere to another place it would probably be knocked out. He considered that half a loaf was better than no bread. If the hon. member persisted in his amendment he would divide the House on it, as he could not accept it.

Mr. MANN was against the proposed amendment for this reason—when they had a Bill before the House to assist the miners to get a railway in the Etheridge district, the hon. member for Burnett consistently voted against it, and would not give the miners the assistance they required to get their ores to market.

Mr. JONES: It was a syndicate railway.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member was going to support advances being given to the miners in his own district, but he refused them to miners in other districts. He hoped the amendment would be defeated.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES hoped the hon. member would withdraw the amendment.

[Mr. Paull.]

The message for appropriation under which the Bill had been introduced covered an advance of £1 by the Government for every £1 that was expended by the other party. Seeing that difficulty, he was sure that the hon. member, no matter how sincere he might be, would not now press his amendment.

Mr. JONES: After the explanation of the Minister, he had nothing else to do but to withdraw the amendment. (Hear, hear!)

Amendment (*Mr. Jones's*), by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. HAMILTON: The Minister, when speaking on this clause, said that possibly one of the conditions the covenanters would enter into would be that they would have to crush ore for other people. He thought that was rather rough. Suppose a small company of men entered into a covenant with the Government and found one-half of the money for a battery. They would have to repay that money, and yet if anyone else came along with 100 or 200 tons of ore to crush they would have to knock off their own work to crush that ore.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. HAMILTON: He understood the Minister to say so.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It might in certain cases.

Mr. FORSYTH: Suppose a small plant was erected by a company at a cost of £1,000, and it became necessary to shift it somewhere else, and it cost another £1,000 to re-erect it, would they get £1 for £1 from the Government on the basis of the first £1,000 only, or on the basis of £2,000?

Mr. MAXWELL replied that in such a case the Government would only be asked [5 p.m.] to contribute £500—half the cost of shifting and re-erecting the plant.

Clause put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with an amendment.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

PROPOSED ABOLITION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

RESUMPTION OF THE ADJOURNED DEBATE.

On the Order of the Day being called for the resumption of the debate on Mr. Lesina's motion—

That, in the opinion of this House, the time has arrived when the Government should take steps to introduce a measure for the abolition of the Legislative Council—firstly, on the score of economy; and, secondly, because it is a useless institution—

on which Mr. Kenna had moved—

That the question be amended by the omission of all words after the word "to," with a view to the insertion, in their place, of the words "bring about a referendum on the question of abolishing the Legislative Council"—

which stood adjourned at 7 o'clock p.m. on Thursday, 30th August—

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. D. F. Denham, *Oxley*): I find myself in this position, that I am able to support neither the amendment nor the original motion. The amendment is to the effect that there should be a referendum on the question of abolishing the Legislative Council. Assuming that the amendment were carried, that a referendum were taken, and that the answer to the referendum was that the Council should be abolished, of what avail would that be?

Hon. R. PHILIP: That would not abolish the Council.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No; it would simply indicate the wishes of the people, and probably this Chamber would yield to the mandate of the people as indicated by the referendum.

Mr. LESINA: So would the other Chamber.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Not of necessity, and this Chamber could not give effect to their wishes. We could give effect to the wishes of the people, as far as this Chamber is concerned, if two-thirds of the members voted for the abolition of the Council, but then if the other House declined to give a similar vote the referendum would be of no avail.

Mr. FORSYTH: It is only fireworks.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Constitution, as has been pointed out, provides for an alteration in the Legislative Council. It provides that the members of the Council shall be appointed for life, but it also contemplates the possibility of a change, either by the election of the members or by an alteration in the period of their nomination. As the Constitution Act makes provision for any alteration in the constitution of the Council, I think it is wiser and better that we should observe the Constitution Act. So I am not inclined to vote for a referendum which, if taken, would be of little avail. There is full power given in the Constitution Act for dealing with the Legislative Council. We can either vary the term or vary the form. It is provided that the Council may be either elected or nominated. Then what is the use of going to the expense and the trouble of taking a referendum when there is full provision made for any alteration in the Council? On the score of its utility I cannot support the motion, nor can I on the score of economy. On all hands it is admitted that the economy would be very trifling, that the saving of money would be very small. It is rather a sweeping assertion to say that the Council is a useless institution.

Mr. LESINA: Centuries ago the Long Parliament wanted to abolish the House of Lords for that reason.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: And the House of Lords still continues as an important factor in the Legislature of the old country.

Mr. LESINA: They have traditions behind them; we have none.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We have no traditions in this State; we are quite a young country. While it is true that the Council is not a representative body, it cannot be denied that they have acted generally in the interests of Queensland.

Mr. LESINA: They only represent property.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They safeguard property to a very large extent, and, as long as that safeguarding does not inflict injury on the common weal, I think they are doing a duty in safeguarding the rights of property.

Mr. J. LEAHY: It is an advantage to the common weal.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: While I cannot see my way to support either the amendment or the original motion, yet I think it is time there was a change in the duration of the period for which members of the Council are appointed; or it may be the view of many that the mode of their appointment should be other than that which now obtains. My own opinion is that it would be better to have a nominated Council than an elected Council. While I cannot support either the amendment or the motion, yet I think there is another course open, and a course that might be adopted with a great deal of advantage. That is that the term for which the Council is appointed—

Hon. D. F. Denham.]

The SPEAKER: Order! I would remind the hon. member that the motion is for the abolition of the Council, not the alteration of its constitution.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That being the case, I have no need to detain the House. I shall vote against both. At the same time, when an opportunity occurs I shall support an alteration in the period for which members of the Council are nominated.

Mr. J. LEAHY (*Bulloo*): Like the hon. gentleman who has just sat down, I am opposed both to the motion and to the amendment. I am opposed to the motion not only in its present form, but to almost any form it could take. I listened very carefully to the hon. member who introduced the motion, and he gave no reasons whatever to the Chamber why it should adopt the course he proposed. He seemed to me to carefully avoid giving any substantial reasons. If there were any, I am certain that a gentleman of his capacity would have been able to discover them. In fact, it seemed to me that he is not particularly desirous to see the Upper Chamber abolished; that he was more desirous that it should remain as it is, so that he could have his annual opportunity for his display of fireworks on the subject. Without imputing any want of seriousness to the hon. member, he seemed to me to be more anxious about that than about the abolition of the Council. While the hon. member gave no reasons why it should be abolished, I submit that there are many good reasons why it should be retained. In discussing this matter, I imagine that both the resolution and the amendment are before the House at the present time. I desire to be in order. As I understand it, the referendum is not for the purpose of abolishing the Council, but it does not do away with the motion that it is desirable to abolish it. I take it the two things may be considered together. If I am wrong, I am prepared to discuss them separately. As pointed out by the leader of the House, there will be very little economy effected by the abolition of the other Chamber. The House is built, and it will have to be looked after in any case. We can save nothing in that direction. The members of that House get no pay from the State like the members of this House. They render considerable services to the State, and give it the benefit of their mature and experienced judgment on questions of great importance to the country free of charge, and waste no time in doing it. That is a very important factor to be considered; so that on the score of expense the motion falls to the ground at once. Then the hon. member takes the point that it is a useless institution. If it is a useless institution, it is an extraordinary thing that in the most prosperous countries in the world, where the standard of government is highest and most advanced, in nearly all cases they have two Chambers. The hon. member used as an argument that in some of the provinces of Canada they are doing with one Chamber. To compare Canada with a country like this only shows his ignorance of modern constitutional history.

Mr. LESINA: We are like Canada.

Mr. J. LEAHY: No. The Constitution of Canada is contained in the British North America Act of 1867, and it is very different from the Australian Constitution. The State of Queensland has far greater powers than any province in the Canadian Dominion. There are nothing like the restrictions under the Commonwealth Act that there are under the British North America Act. There they have no more power than divisional boards in many respects. We have far larger powers, and for that reason there is no analogy between this State and some of those provinces and territories with which the hon. member compares it.

[Hon. D. F. Denham.

Why, this democratic Government that we have in Australia have an Upper House. I point out that the mode of appointment or election is not in dispute. The hon. gentleman does not challenge that. He merely challenges the Upper House under all circumstances and conditions. We do not hear of any movement in the Federal Parliament to abolish the Senate. There is no desire among the democrats to do away with it. The democrats, of which the hon. member is a humble follower, make no declamatory statements of this kind. They even want to retain the Senate. The hon. gentleman's federal leader does not demand it; his leader in this Chamber does not demand it. I never heard the hon. member for Barcoo demand the abolition of the Legislative Council.

Mr. LESINA: He moved an amendment.

Mr. J. LEAHY: Yes, and for what purpose? For the purpose of blocking the hon. member for Clermont, and not for the purpose of supporting him.

Mr. LESINA: The member for Barcoo signed the platform which embodies abolition of the Legislative Council.

Mr. J. LEAHY: I am not dealing with the planks of the Trades Hall at the present time. I am not dealing with the mortgage on it which has not been paid off. I am dealing with the Upper House, and I say that our leading democrats are not clamouring for its abolition. Have we heard a single word about the abolition of the Senate? Take the case of any of those important measures which come before the popular Chamber in Melbourne—the franchise and other matters—we have it continually dinned into our ears what the Commonwealth Parliament are doing, but we do not hear a word from these strong-minded democrats and socialists about the uselessness of the Senate.

Mr. BOWMAN: Because we have the right to appoint them.

Mr. J. LEAHY: The right to appoint whom?

Mr. BOWMAN: The members of the Senate.

Mr. J. LEAHY: I tell the hon. member that he has no such right.

Mr. BOWMAN: We have a say in their appointment.

Mr. J. LEAHY: The hon. member has a voice in the election of members of the Senate, but he has nothing whatever to do with changing the constitution of that body. Changing the *personnel* of an institution is quite a different thing to changing or abolishing the institution itself. That is what is proposed here—not to change the *personnel* of the Council, but to abolish it as an institution. There is no connection between the two things, and I am surprised at the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, or rather I would be surprised if I did not know the way in which he gets boxed up on measures of this kind.

Mr. BOWMAN: I would be surprised if you supported the abolition of the fossils who keep you where you are.

Mr. J. LEAHY: Nobody keeps me where I am except myself. I tell the hon. member that. There is no movement amongst the democracy of England, or even amongst the Liberals of England, to abolish the House of Lords. That very distinguished statesman, Mr. Gladstone, pronounced against the House of Lords on more than one occasion, but it was always before a general election, and as soon as the elections were over they got back to the same conditions as before, and the House of Lords remained on the same serene and elevated pedestal as before. They do not seem to be able to get along without it. We have often heard the Upper Chamber denounced in popular Chambers in countries where the bi-cameral system is in operation; we

have heard thunders against Upper Chambers at election times, but it has not been thought desirable or expedient, or in the public interest or the good government of the State, to take steps towards its abolition. I believe Greece and some other little foreign principalities have only one Chamber, but are we going to frame our system of government on the half-savage conditions which exist in south-eastern Europe? Half-savage conditions, where neither life nor property is secure, would no doubt be pleasing to the hon. member for Clermont, but I do not think such a condition of things will commend itself to the majority of this Chamber or the majority outside. Servia, too, has only one Chamber, but there they commit regicide. That would play into the hands of the hon. member for Clermont.

Mr. LESINA: We have no kings here.

Mr. J. LEAHY: It is very difficult sometimes to distinguish between a king and a dictator. There is very little in a name.

Mr. LESINA: What about Dr. Maxwell?

Mr. J. LEAHY: He is not included in this motion. If he were a member of the Upper Chamber it would be an argument in favour of the hon. member's proposition, but unfortunately for the hon. member's motion he does not happen to be there. I desire to point out that all the progressive countries of the world—Germany, France, England, and America—I am not sure whether I have put them in their proper order—have second Legislative Chambers. Why, in France, which in civilisation, education, and science generally has taken a foremost place, the second Chamber has the power to even turn out Governments, and it has done it more than once. Three years ago it turned out a very powerful Government. I am not at all sure that it would not be a wise proposal to give the Upper House even more power than it has now. As a matter of fact its powers are far greater under the Constitution than they exercise. They defer to the wishes of the popular Chamber in a manner which, under the Constitution, they are not bound to do. Still I think they show wisdom in that respect. A second Chamber is exceedingly useful, and it is necessary to fall back upon it sometimes. In great crises, when the mind of the nation is excited, and when it is not altogether a safe thing to trust the popular will any more than it is safe to trust an excited individual, it is a good thing to have a Chamber which deals with matters calmly and serenely, and without any agitation, until the cooler judgment of the people returns.

Mr. BOWMAN: It was very useful for you last session.

Mr. LESINA: What about the recent nominations?

Mr. J. LEAHY: If the motion referred to them, we would be able to discuss them, but I like discussing things in order, and I do not intend to incur the censure of the Speaker for going outside the motion.

Mr. LESINA: I discussed the matter.

Mr. J. LEAHY: If the hon. member did so, I may have a word to say on the matter before I sit down. Then I point to the American Senate, and without discussing the merits of the scheme, I may say that it is not elected by the people any more than our Upper House is. It is indirect election. I consider it is something to be said in favour of that Chamber that, instead of being elected directly by the people, it is only indirectly elected. The framers of the American Constitution in their wisdom, when they wanted to provide for the election of a President, did not provide that he should be elected amid the clamour and excitement of a popular election, but they provided that he should be elected by electors chosen for that purpose,

which is called by the name of the "Electoral College." We have the very highest form of

election in connection with our Legislative Council. The Ministry

[5.30 p.m.] came back to this House in an overwhelming majority. At all events, they are supposed to have an overwhelming majority—they have it sometimes through the support of those on their own side, and sometimes through the support of hon. members on this side. At all events, they came back possessing the confidence of the majority of the electors—whether the people acted rightly or wrongly is quite another matter—and, having the people at their back, they made certain appointments to the Council, and those appointments must be credited with having behind them all the weight and influence of the people who appointed those who made those appointments. The appointments spring directly from the people, and therefore this is the very highest form of election, and for that reason the other House should be retained. There are Upper Houses in other States, like New Zealand, where, owing to an alteration in the Constitution, some of the members are nominated while others are elected. The form of nomination has ceased since the change was made in the Constitution, and the nominated members remain members until they either die or their presence as members of the Council is otherwise terminated. I submit that is not such a good form of Chamber as we have; and it is not an uncommon thing in our experience to know that what is condemned to-day is the thing that will be adopted in ten or twenty years' time. Such a Chamber is useful in Queensland for the purpose of reviewing—not altogether for the purpose of altering—legislation. There is some legislation which the Council cannot initiate; but for the purpose of correcting errors that are due to the haste with which legislation is rushed through this House, when amendment is piled on the top of amendment at 11 and 12 o'clock at night in a complicated Bill, and it is absolutely impossible for even the man who drafted that Bill to see the consequence of those amendments at the time. You cannot take away the right of hon. members to amend Bills or to propose amendments, and it is therefore a good thing that we have an establishment of this kind to review our work calmly and deliberately while we proceed with other business, and then send it back to us after they have put it in order. Then when it comes back we can do in a few minutes what it would otherwise take us hours and days to do, and which perhaps we might not be able to do at all. That is one of the advantages of a second Chamber. Another point is this: Supposing this House passes this resolution, what force has it?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: None whatever.

Mr. J. LEAHY: Absolutely none. The other House has just as much right to move for the abolition of this House as we have to move for their abolition. In fact, I heard last night from one of my friends sitting here that a member of that House was going to give notice of a motion to abolish the Legislative Assembly. They have quite as much right to move for the abolition of this House, as a useless Assembly that wastes a lot of time and causes a lot of expense, as we have to propose a motion that the other Chamber be abolished. There are two co-ordinate branches of the Legislature. I emphasise that. They have just as much right to move the abolition of this House—except that there is a little difference with regard to the initiation of money Bills—as we have to say that they should be abolished. That is to say, speaking of the two Houses as Chambers. Of course,

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a very important factor is how far the people of the country are behind either House; but that is a question that I am not now dealing with. I am dealing with them now as co-ordinate branches of the Legislature, and, within the limits of the Constitution, one has as much right to propose the abolition of the other as the other has the right to propose the abolition of that House.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Very clever special pleading.

Mr. J. LEAHY: If the hon. member for Ipswich knows anything about the Constitution it will be much more to the point if he gets up when I sit down and shows that what I am saying is not in accordance with the Constitution, than to say that it is special pleading. Special pleading in itself means absolutely nothing. As a matter of fact, it is a compliment if the nature of the special pleading is correct. What I am saying is special pleading in the sense that it is to the point and within the four corners of the resolution. I am not in the habit of rambling all over the country when I get up to address the House upon a particular point. The mover of the amendment agrees with the mover of the resolution, but thinks that the Council should be abolished in a particular way. But what will be the advantage of this referendum? We shall never get anything from it. There is no doubt that the people in any country are the only thing, but in every country there are classes of men who have special knowledge of special subjects. The men on the Darling Downs or Beaudesert have special agricultural knowledge. The people of Charters Towers have a particular knowledge of mining. There are other classes of the community which have special knowledge, or more or less knowledge, of constitutional law and parliamentary practice. Is it to the experts, or to a committee of experts, that we are asked to submit a most intricate problem in constitutional law? No. We are asked to refer it to Tom, Jack, Bill, and Harry, who do not know anything about it. The hon. member for Charters Towers, Mr. Burrows, for instance, will feel bound to go amongst the people and lay his views on the subject before them, and no doubt a great many of them would believe him, and vote on the question, not on its merits, but just as the hon. member tells them to vote. The hon. member might advise them quite conscientiously how to vote, but I venture to say—giving him all due credit for his conscientious motives, and for what knowledge he possesses on the subject—he would woefully mislead them because he has no knowledge of constitutional law. If we refer the question to the people, we are asking them to decide what nine-tenths of them know nothing about. All the members of the Labour party would tell them they know all about it, but they would place it before the people in quite a different light to the real position, and then they would ask the people to vote on it. If that is not setting up a wooden image, I do not know what is. No doubt the conscience and the judgment of the great bulk of the people is always right if a thing is put properly before them; but if you have people who do not understand the thing themselves putting it before the people, how can you expect a proper judgment from the people? It is absurd. The referendum very often gives results quite different from what we contemplate. I was looking up the referendum in connection with Switzerland, which may be said to be the home of the referendum—through which has been brought about some of the most radical legislation which they passed in that country. There are two forms of referendum—first and foremost as to whether it is desirable that a

certain thing should be done, and there is a law in Switzerland by which, after an Act is passed, it does not come into force until a referendum is taken to say whether it shall come into force or not.

Mr. NIELSON: One is the initiative referendum.

Mr. J. LEAHY: This is the initiative referendum, and, in regard to some of the most valuable legislation passed in Switzerland, when they came to see how it worked out in practice they knocked three-fourths of it on the head. Very often a revolutionary measure has turned out in some cases in Switzerland to be a conservative measure.

Mr. BOWMAN: The result in regard to federation was different to what you expected.

Mr. J. LEAHY: What does the hon. member say about that?

Mr. BOWMAN: You advocated it very strongly, and have been disappointed ever since.

Mr. J. LEAHY: I was in favour of Queensland going into a referendum on that question, and we went into federation. How can it be disappointing to me?

Mr. BOWMAN: It is disappointing to you.

Mr. J. LEAHY: There were other considerations introduced afterwards outside the referendum—that is, the election of certain persons to fulfil the constitutional duties entailed by the Constitution; that is the portion that is disagreeable to me, not the result of the referendum itself, and there is a probability that the State will rise up in its wrath some day and wipe it out.

Mr. BOWMAN: It wiped your party out in connection with federal representation.

Mr. J. LEAHY: That is not within the scope of the proposal before the Chamber now. That is a matter which is very soon going to be determined. If we are going to carry on the triangular duel kind of business at the expense of Australia, we shall have another referendum as to whether it shall not cease to exist as an institution, and the hon. gentleman will get wiped out. The only thing that will be heard about him will be that some future historian or student of Australia, on looking up the records of the past, will discover that such a name as "Bowman" crops up occasionally.

Mr. BOWMAN: They will find the bouncing, bullying member for Bulloo in you.

Mr. J. LEAHY: The hon. member does not like it. Why does he not let me proceed with my speech? If it comes to a question of bullying, I am not in it.

Mr. BOWMAN: You have got the record in this House, and in the department you presided over your name stinks there to-day.

Mr. J. LEAHY: There are certain attractions to certain things on this earth. There is the magnet and other things, and the hon. gentleman picks up the particular thing he is referring to. Other people do not pick it up. I am sorry the hon. gentleman cannot conduct a discussion of this kind without making ill-natured remarks, without becoming bitterly personal. It is really an axiom in politics that if a thing is worth doing at all it ought to be done well. It is not a good thing to give a member a knock, but if you can give him one at all give him one that he will remember. (Laughter.)

Mr. BOWMAN: I gave you one that you will remember.

Mr. J. LEAHY: However, this is a very interesting discussion, and I am getting away from the two points under discussion. I will confine myself to what I was saying just now, that there is no reason whatever why this resolution should be passed. Some very strong reasons have been given why it should not be passed, and I submit we are considering this question

[Mr. J. Leahy.]

altogether apart from a party view, and on the merits of the case. If we were considering it as an abstract measure that has taken place in one of the South American republics, we would be much more capable of giving an abstract opinion on the point than on a measure which is mixed up here with a question of party politics which blinds our views. It is a good rule, which a keen observer notes, that when a man's political interest and his moral faculties about justice and right comes into conflict he is incapable of reasoning on a matter of this kind. It is quite clear that parliamentary institutions similar to ours have existed for a long time—existed in the most enlightened and progressive countries in the world. Look at the United States! They have passed through the greatest trials that ever a nation passed through in its course from almost obscurity to greatness, and although measures of various kinds were proposed after the Civil War of 1867, nobody ever proposed to abolish the second Chamber. In America it is the most powerful Chamber in the world. It has come to the rescue at various times, and saved the nation from democracy and socialism, which was playing havoc in other directions. The Senate is not elected in all cases by the people. The States can elect their senators as they like, either by the vote of the people, or they can appoint them. It is entirely a State matter. When they were amending the Constitution they never suggested—I know something about the American Constitution—they never attempted to abolish that Chamber, but to alter it. The latest Commonwealth in the world, which hopes to be a great nation, if it is not so now, was launched with a second Chamber. Nobody at the convention proposed that it should be otherwise than a bi-cameral system—a Parliament with a co-ordinate Chamber. Nobody proposed to alter that Chamber, and nobody proposed to abolish it. The bi-cameral system has come down from time immemorial to us, and countries the most prosperous and civilised, that have protected life and property and given general security, are States that always had a double Chamber. A Constitution lives through centuries; it grows and extends and takes up greater prominence if it is a necessary and useful institution, and the Upper Chamber has been growing, and has proved most useful as an institution. I am speaking now of second Chambers generally. It has been proved by the fact that in Australia the highest intellects of the nation have adopted that system. It is those institutions that are not necessary that are useless—they pass away, and other institutions take their place which are equal to meet the demands which a nation makes upon them. The bi-cameral system of a second Chamber of legislation has proved useful. It was useful to our fathers; it has been transmitted by our fathers to us as one of the most priceless institutions of the nation; and I am quite certain it will be handed down to our posterity in the full vigour in which we hold it now. I shall oppose this motion.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MANN (*Cairns*): After listening to the speech of the hon. member for Bulloo, one can only come to the conclusion that he believes that second Chambers are the things that make for the prosperity of most countries on this globe. He referred to Greece and some of the Balkan States, and urged that the reason those States had not risen to become big prosperous States like France and Britain was because they have no second Chamber. I take it that to have a really great and prosperous nation you want to have the people contented and happy, and the hon. gentleman must know that the House of

Lords is responsible for one portion of the Empire not being contented and happy to-day. We had in this city a few weeks ago the sight of two envoys from Ireland, who had come over to plead with Australia that we should give them our sympathy and financial help in their struggle to get a certain measure of Home Rule from Great Britain.

Mr. KROGH: They are bound to get it in the near future.

Mr. MANN: The reason why the Emerald Isle is not enjoying the blessings of Home Rule to-day is because the people of Britain are cursed with a second Chamber, a Chamber of privilege, which is fighting against the well-being and prosperity and progress of England. It is well known that the reactionary party in Great Britain look forward to the House of Lords to reject every democratic measure that is passed by the House of Commons. Not only have the House of Lords thrown out the Home Rule Bill, but they have injuriously affected another section of the community with whom I have not so much sympathy as I have with the Irish people. I refer to the Jews. The Jewish people were for years debarred from having any of the privileges of citizenship in the British Empire, and the Upper Chamber was again the culprit. It is well known that the Jewish Disabilities Bill was thrown out nineteen times in the House of Lords before it finally became law. A House that refuses to give to any sections of the people their rights as citizens is, I think, a reactionary of the worst type. I am astonished that the hon. member for Bulloo should preside at a meeting in favour of Home Rule for Ireland, and then support a second Chamber, when he knows that it was the second Chamber in England which consistently opposed Home Rule, and is responsible for the fact that Ireland does not now enjoy Home Rule. They not only threw out the Home Rule Bill and the Jewish Disabilities Bill, but they also threw out another harmless little measure, the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.

The SPEAKER: Order! I would remind the hon. member that it is not proposed to abolish the House of Lords. (Laughter.) The motion proposes to abolish the Legislative Council.

Mr. MANN: I was using it as an illustration that Upper Houses might obstruct good and necessary legislation, and I was dealing with the fact that the House of Lords might have had some excuse for refusing to pass the Home Rule Bill and the Jewish Disabilities Bill, but they went further and threw out a small harmless piece of legislation like the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, an Act which had been passed in every colony, and which was badly wanted in England, but which was again and again refused. A more restricted measure has, however, been passed, in order that marriages with a deceased wife's sister out here should be made valid in Great Britain. The hon. member for Bulloo said that Labour people of Queensland were inspired by no desire to abolish the Senate, which is the Upper Chamber of the Commonwealth. I may say that the hon. member for Bulloo is perfectly right in that respect. I believe the Senate to be a necessary Chamber for the reason that it protects, not the privileges of property, but the rights of the States. I do not think that the smaller States would have gone into federation unless they were sure that the second Chamber would look after their rights. Now, the Senate, as you are aware, is elected by the adults of the Commonwealth, but the Chamber which we are alluding to to-night—I refer to the Queensland Upper House—is appointed by the Cabinet, or, as some people say, by the Premier.

Mr. Mann.]

Mr. KEOGH: Do you want an elective Upper House?

Mr. MANN: I object to an elective Upper House for this reason: That I see no basis upon which it can be elected to do any good. I do not believe in a restricted franchise, and I do not believe in seeing the Upper House elected on a property franchise, because I do not think that property should have any special representation at all. And I do not believe in it being elected on the same basis as this Chamber, because it would simply be a duplicate of this Chamber, and as such it would be absolutely unnecessary. The hon. member for Bulloo claims that the Upper Chamber would have to be kept up and lighted just the same as at present, and that we would save very little by that Chamber being abolished. But anyone conversant with this Chamber knows that the library is getting very much over-stocked with books. They have to drag the books up narrow winding stairs, and pile them away in dark corners, where they are getting rotten and moth-eaten, and if we abolished the Upper House we would find it useful as a repository for our books. It would be better to have the use of the Upper House for preserving books instead of preserving fossils.

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. KEOGH: Are you going to talk it out?

Mr. MANN: No. I do not want to talk it out. As a matter of fact, I would like it to go to a vote, but I do not think that the passing of a vote to-night is likely to affect the Upper Chamber in the least. If a referendum is taken—although members of this Chamber claim that a referendum would do no good—I claim that it would do good for this reason: If a huge majority of the people of Queensland declared that they only want one Chamber, it would do good because we would then have a good case to go home to the Home Government, and plead that one Chamber is sufficient for the small population of a place like Queensland. I do not want to prevent this motion from going to a vote, but I would like to see a referendum of the people taken for the abolition of the Upper House.

Mr. KEOGH (*Rosewood*): I have only got two or three minutes, but I would like to say that I am in favour of the Upper House retaining the position that it occupies to-day. The gentlemen who are now occupying the Treasury benches advocated in their platform that they were not prepared to allow any other persons to be put forward for the Upper House, but since they have occupied the Treasury benches they have nominated thirteen members. That shows conclusively that they are decidedly in favour of the Upper House as it is constituted at present. If I had my own way in this matter, I would like to see the Upper House constituted under the same provisions as that of the Upper House in Victoria. It should be a representative Chamber—an elective one. Our Upper House is elected by the gentlemen who occupy the Treasury benches now. My impression with regard to the Upper and Lower Houses is that we should not have the numbers in those Houses that we have got at present.

At 7 o'clock the House, in accordance with Sessional Order, proceeded with Government business.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Question—That the sum of £300 be granted to defray the salary of the aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Governor—stated.

[*Mr. Mann.*]

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (*Hon. J. T. Bell, Dalby*): This has been a long debate. I do not know that we can call it a luminous debate, but in regard to some of its aspects, at all events, I think we may fairly characterise it as a lurid debate. Although the debate has been on the Financial Statement, it has certainly not been distinguished by much financial analysis, and that I think is really a tribute to the Budget delivered by the leader of the House. Having regard to that fact—to the absence of any serious criticism in the multitudinous speeches which have been made—and having regard also to the tone of the remarks made by the leader of the Opposition, who is an old Treasurer, I am bound to say that the whole discussion has been one that rounds as a compliment to the Treasurer. The debate has not been a financial debate at all. It has partaken of the character of a debate on the Address in Reply.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Is it not in order?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I should think that the proper person to address a query of that kind to is the Chairman, and not myself. There has, of course, been some criticism made in regard to the Government as a whole. The action of Dr. Maxwell in connection with the central sugar-mills has been repeatedly dilated upon by hon. members. That matter has been dealt with, and will be dealt with, by the Ministers more particularly concerned. We have had criticisms made upon various departments—the Home Department, the Department of Agriculture, and the department over which I have the honour to preside. Well, I suppose it is rather early to look for the final summing up of my administration of the Lands Department. I know, however much I may respect this Chamber, that when I turn round for the final verdict of my connection with that department, and the work I have done, or tried to do, I shall look for a larger jury and a wider court than is comprised within the four walls of this Chamber. I shall look to the people at large who are connected with land settlement in Queensland, and to a jury of that kind—I say it in no spirit of arrogance—I shall appeal with confidence. I shall also appeal, when the proper time comes, to whatever body of men comprise this Chamber. I say that in order that it may be known that in addition to the representatives assembled here there is a wider arena outside that speaks authoritatively upon these matters. This debate has been characterised by one particular speech that fell from the hon. member for Clermont, that in its type and in its character I declare that so far as my knowledge of Parliament is concerned has never been approached in this Chamber. So far as the absence of courtesy, honour, argument, restraint, or any of those qualities that among educated men are supposed to represent a civilised man are concerned, there has never been a deliverance made in this Chamber that has shown so great an absence of those qualities as the remarks which fell from the member for Clermont. I shall endeavour in the observations I make to keep myself within the four corners of the Standing Orders and the unwritten law of Parliament, but it is not very easy for a man to do so who has been attacked in the way I have been—not merely in that speech the other night, but repeatedly in previous sessions, and after explanations that no reasonable man hesitates to accept. There is this to be said about this subject, that the hon. member for Clermont is the first man who has ever, to my knowledge, wantonly outraged that unwritten law of Parliament—although in recent years the principle has found expression in a general way in our Standing Orders—he is the first man who has ever wantonly outraged that unwritten law, that

those who are against the Government should sit in opposition. That is based upon the British feeling that if a man fights he should fight in front.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: If he is against the Government he should sit opposite to that Government. I have heard the hon. member for Clermont criticise the present method by which Ministers are chosen. I have heard him advocate elective Ministries. The hon. member in his criticisms and his conduct has shown that he does not appreciate the principles of parliamentary government. If the hon. member knows anything about those facts, he would not comport himself as he does, showing that he has not that inherent instinct of a parliamentarian which ought to belong to every member of Parliament. If he had he would never sit on that back bench immediately behind the Government, listening to everything that goes on on the Treasury bench—a miserable eavesdropper posing as a single-minded patriot.

Mr. LESINA: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. gentleman in order in referring to me as a miserable eavesdropper?

The CHAIRMAN: It is certainly irregular, but I do not feel justified in calling the hon. member to order, considering the provocation the hon. member for Clermont has given him.

Mr. LESINA: Shall I be entitled to use the same word?

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. gentleman resume his seat?

Mr. LESINA: I want to ask you a question.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member take his seat?

Mr. LESINA: I want to ask you a question. Will I be ruled out of order if I refer to you as a miserable eavesdropper?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must resume his seat.

Mr. LESINA: If not, I shall use the same language.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member is another exemplification of the saying that "cocktails" never run well under the whip. It is well known that the hon. member has not attacked me and my department for the first time during this debate. He has done it in previous sessions. Before I deal with what he has said, I wish to call the attention of the Committee to the general nature of the hon. member's criticisms and the trouble to which he goes, or does not go, in order to ascertain the fact, or rather the statements, on which he bases his charges, after those statements have been refuted as completely as it was possible to refute anything on this earth; and I invite the Committee to turn their attention to last session, when the hon. member for Clermont brought certain charges against me in connection with North Cooranga—when he said that I or my wife had, to use his own choice language, "choused" out two selectors from the land in order to acquire it for myself. I gave the House, at the time, the facts of the case, and later on in the session I produced from those two individuals letters giving a complete denial to the statement of the hon. member that I had "choused" them out of their selections. If hon. members care to turn up *Hansard*, they will find those letters in the volume for last session, under date the 23rd August, at page 451. Those letters gave as complete an answer to the charge of the hon. member as it is possible to do. The two men wrote themselves, and said the statement had no foundation in fact. What did the hon. member do? Did he get up as a man and apologise, and say he had made a mistake? Nothing of the kind. The hon. member concealed himself behind the

phrase that "where there is smoke there must be fire." He had not the decency to get up and apologise. The Committee will also remember my statement with regard to the small run known as South Cooranga. The hon. member returns to his charge in connection with that holding. I do not propose—it is not necessary—to repeat the explanation I gave last session in connection with the lease of that run, but I turn round now to the hon. member and say this: that I propose to invite my leader, when he returns next week, to move for a Select Committee to inquire into matters connected with South Cooranga, and specifically to ascertain whether in the discharge of my duties as Minister for Lands in connection with that holding I was guilty of any dishonourable act. On this condition, Mr. Jackson: that if the committee says I was guilty of a dishonourable act, I undertake at once to resign my seat. If, on the other hand, the committee do not say so, but exonerate me from such a charge, the hon. member for Clermont will undertake within twenty-four hours to resign his seat. Does the hon. member accept my challenge?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear! That's perfectly fair.

Mr. LESINA: No; you bet he doesn't.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Is there any language within recognised parliamentary usage with which I can characterise such conduct? The hon. member returns to the charge, and accuses me of dishonourable actions, and when I ask for a Select Committee, chosen fairly from all sections of the House, to inquire into the truth of his charges, he is not man enough to stand up to his guns.

Mr. LESINA: Don't get excited. Keep your temper.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There is this difference between the hon. member and myself: that when there is any reflection cast upon my honour I do get excited. The hon. member does not care a "tinker's curse" for his. This Committee understands the bearing of this matter. I hope the wider arena of Queensland, the people who sent us here, will understand the matter, and gauge the hon. member at his proper worth, and realise the consequence of this incident. I have undertaken to resign at once if the committee do not exonerate me. The hon. member has not the manliness to say he will do the same thing. The fact is the hon. member has become alarmed at a recent happening in the Sydney Parliament. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) He has an exemplar there, his employer, the individual who pulls the strings which make him do his dancing in this Chamber, who made a similar challenge in an extremely rash moment, and whom met the fate which the hon. member fears to meet. I venture to say that so long as the hon. member for Clermont is in public life in Queensland—and I am disposed to think that it is going to be a briefer period than he imagines—

Mr. LESINA: Yes, if you can prevent it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The electors of Queensland will never forget that he was not game to respond to my challenge. Now, during the course of his remarks the hon. member said, when he was describing the lamentable departures from the paths of rectitude on the part of this Administration,—when he was deploring the existing condition of things and the absence of principle, which, as he says, is a conspicuous feature of this Administration, that—

We have not had these things in connection with previous Governments. They have spent money in many instances upon things that were not justifiable. They made blunders in connection with tank engines

[Hon. J. T. Bell.]

and things like that, of which we all complained when they were over here; but they never, so far as we ever heard—and there were twenty-two or twenty-three incisive Labour critics sitting on those benches who watched every action of the Government both publicly and privately, and we never discovered that they were working into one another's hands and into each other's pockets in this fashion. If they had done so, the story would have been told, not by me only, but by twenty other Labour members.

In other words, it has remained to this Government to show to what depths of political turpitude they could reach. Now, what are the facts? If you turn up the record of the hon. member for Clermont in connection with parliamentary business you will find that on nearly every subject on which he has delivered himself he has suggested that the Government of the day, no matter who the men were who composed it, were doing some immoral act in order to benefit themselves individually.

Mr. J. LEAHY: He never attacked you as much as he did me.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I do not know why the hon. member should go back on his friend in this way. He cannot throw dust in our eyes. We know exactly what the hon. member for Clermont has done for the hon. member for Bulloo, but we can only conjecture what the hon. member for Bulloo has done for the hon. member for Clermont. (Laughter.) There is no necessity for the hon. member to put his hand to his mouth in that way.

Mr. J. LEAHY: That is a habit I derived from you.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Now, I will give only one or two quotations from an extremely voluminous selection to justify my statement that the whole attitude of the hon. member for Clermont since he has been a member of this Chamber has been one of innuendo and insinuation that the men who composed the Ministries of the day were men who were merely a lot of blackguards taking advantage of their temporary occupancy of the Treasury benches to benefit themselves personally.

Mr. LESINA: There are some exceptions, but I do not include you.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I find that in 1901 the hon. member for Clermont subjected the hon. member for Bulloo to some criticism. He suggested, in connection with the Chillagoe company, that there was collusion between the hon. member for Bulloo in his capacity as a member of the Government and this association.

Mr. J. LEAHY: I had no connection with that association at all.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member for Clermont was asking for information upon the agreement, and he said, referring to the hon. member for Bulloo—

I ask that copies of that agreement shall not only be placed in the boxes of hon. members, and laid on the table of the House, but that it shall be published through the Press of Queensland. If the Minister refuses that we may infer, although it may be said we take a sordid and suspicious view of the matter, that this being a company in which the Minister is interested, he is concerned with his particular pocket interest, and he does not care to make public the agreement which has been made between the Commissioner for Railways and the Chillagoe Company.

The hon. member, in the same year, in July, said—

I say it is an astounding thing that a Secretary for Railways should in his private capacity sign cheques for the Chillagoe Company. The thing is intolerable, and it is only the beginning of a system that will extend its ramifications throughout the colony, unless the people stop it.

Mr. J. LEAHY: That is not true.

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The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I am not suggesting that it is. I am merely saying that the hon. member for Clermont said so. He goes on to say—

If it is not checked the time will shortly come when Ministers will be merely an executive committee acting on behalf of big railway and mining corporations in this Chamber.

Mr. LESINA: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: In August of 1901, when dealing with the question of the repurchased estates, he finds that one of the estates belongs to a full brother of the representative of the Government in the Upper House. You see at once the deduction to be drawn from that. This is the statement made by an hon. member who during the course of this debate deplores, apparently, the purity of vanished days. I find that in December, 1901, the hon. member said—

Then, again, there is the Fitzroy Estate. In view of the fact that one of these estates in particular has been a frightful failure, and the transaction has been characterised outside by very hard names, and probably at election time it will be characterised by even harder names, I think we should take exception to this Bill being passed—to involve ourselves in the additional expenditure, or the additional liabilities which are involved under this Bill.

Then he said again in December, 1901—

I can speak freely on this matter here, because I am not tied to the chariot wheels of any financial institution. I am not like some hon. members—who are shareholders in the Bank of Australasia—who desire to see the purchase of the Durundur Estate rushed through this House. There are wheels within wheels in politics as in everything else, and when a financial institution puts its thumb down and pulls the strings, Parliament occasionally does things that they are sorry for afterwards. I recognise that there are members of this House who are shareholders in the Bank of Australasia, and they wish to get money out of the Treasury for this purpose. I think their action is a disgrace to any Parliament that permits it.

This, I repeat, is the hon. member who asserts that this is the first Government who have laid themselves open to criticism of that kind. He goes on—

He would like to point out, however, that if there had been such a measure on the statute-book in Sir Thomas McIlwraith's time he would have been able to unload all the rotten properties he possessed on this State. He was satisfied that, if the clause went through in its present form, the Durundur Estate, to which reference had been made, would be purchased by the Government, and the Queensland National Bank, which at present had that property in their possession, would be enabled thereby to get rid of an estate they were not particularly in love with.

He had to be corrected, and told that the Queensland National Bank had nothing whatever to do with it. I find that in 1899 he said—

We have not heard enough, and the hon. gentleman will hear more of it. It is a matter which ought to involve the fate of this Government, and probably will, before it is all over. Hon. members should realise that in this we have the beginning of the Tammany system which has made New York a perfect hell upon earth.

The PREMIER: You do not believe in lands for agricultural settlement at all.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Your own side takes so little interest in the matter that you are the only one present.

He also said in December, 1899—

Unfortunately these transactions are practically completed, but we are not in possession of the complete details, and we want more light. An honest Government will never fear more light, but from the tardy fashion in which we have got this correspondence, from the laggard, snail-like pace at which the Government have provided us with information about the Barron Falls lease and similar cases, it seems to me that the Government are desirous of establishing a smother-up policy, a keep-it-dark policy; but that is a policy which the country should set its face against, and we should demand that such a policy should come to an end—a policy which permits Ministers, which permits

small sections, which permits officers in the departments to do as they like, smothering correspondence, which permits of faked correspondence being placed on the table for the purpose of misleading hon. members on this side, so that they cannot form a correct opinion about public questions—

Then he makes a reference to another Minister—as honest a man as ever stood in this Assembly—I mean the Hon. J. F. G. Foxton. He suggests that that gentleman was influenced by considerations of relationship in an appointment that was made. All this could be repeated *ad infinitum*. The observations that the hon.

member made the other evening [7.30 p.m.] about this Government could be repeated *ad nauseam* in the pages

of preceding *Hansards*. I do not wish to weary the Committee, as I undoubtedly should, by giving these quotations at any further length. I can only say that the statement of the hon. member—for he stated that in effect—that this is the first time he has ever had to criticise a Government in the particular way in which he criticised this Administration the other night is absolutely a statement that has no foundation in fact.

Mr. LESINA: You were sitting on the same side as them when I made those statements, and they apply as much to-day as then.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Then the hon. member made an allusion that, under all the circumstances, it would have been wiser for him to have avoided. It was on an occasion when there was a motion for his suspension, and during the division he said—alluding to his colleagues—

The Labour cadgers have gone out instead of staying to vote. They have not the courage to stay. I do not mind you laughing, Mr. Foxton. Your creditors will shake you up by and by. They are banging about the House now. John Leahy, the usurer—

And at that moment the hon. member was properly stopped. This is a quotation that I think it necessary to give in view of later developments in this Assembly and in Queensland politics. Alluding to the hon. member for Bulloo, the hon. member said—

No prominent Labour man and no secretary of any Labour union has been haled before the "beak" on such a charge. The Minister for Railways should be the last man absolutely to talk about criminals and crime in this Chamber. However, we will drop that matter; it is as nauseous as the individual who read out the list. If I were to give the career of the hon. gentleman, as it is known to me and many others, it would make very interesting reading in *Hansard*. If I were to refer to Skibbereen, in Ireland, the no-rent agitation, information given with respect to secret distilleries, and his career since his arrival in the State, including the three-card trick and running a back block shebeen, I would probably raise the hair on the heads of some hon. members. But I do not desire to do that. [Mr. P. J. LEAHY: There is no truth in what you say.]

HON. R. PHILP: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. gentleman justified in publicly slandering an hon. member of this House? Is there any reason why, because he has been slandered by one of his own supporters, he should bring in all these things that have nothing whatever to do with the Financial Statement, and are serious slanders on one of his political opponents?

Mr. P. J. LEAHY: And which are absolutely false.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to understand from the hon. member for Townsville the exact nature of his point of order.

HON. R. PHILP: In quoting from *Hansard* of nine or ten years ago a matter with which this House has not the slightest concern.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It occurred in 1903.

Mr. P. J. LEAHY: You must know that it is false.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Townsville asks whether what the Secretary for Lands is quoting is relevant to the debate. It seems to me that the Minister is defending himself against a charge made by the hon. member for Clermont of personal corruption; and the Minister, in defending himself, desires to show the character of the hon. member who has made that charge.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Hear, hear!

HON. R. PHILP: At the same time, he is slandering a political opponent.

The CHAIRMAN: At the present moment I cannot stop the Secretary for Lands.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No man knows and believes more thoroughly than I do the absolute falseness of the statements that the hon. member for Clermont made; but I am going to show the later developments that have taken place—the *rapprochement* that has taken place between these two individuals in these later days, and the collusion or the conspiracy—if I were to use the proper word—that now exists between the slandered and the slanderer in regard to this Administration.

Mr. P. J. LEAHY: That is quite false.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Of course it is quite false.

Mr. P. J. LEAHY: And so is your statement with regard to the collusion.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Well, we shall see about that.

The CHAIRMAN: Do I understand the hon. gentleman to charge the hon. member for Bulloo with being in collusion with the hon. member for Clermont?

Mr. P. J. LEAHY: Yes, he stated it.

Mr. J. LEAHY: And he made the statement when I was out of the Chamber. That is just like him.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman is not justified in making charges like that against hon. members.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do you say, Mr. Jackson, that I am out of order in saying, with regard to the attitude of the hon. member for Clermont and the hon. member for Bulloo, that there is collusion between them?

Mr. J. LEAHY: It would be a lie.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman is not in order in making a charge of that kind.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I bow most respectfully to your ruling, Mr. Jackson, and I shall endeavour to find some euphemism in order to convey the impression I distinctly wish to convey, and shall convey outside this House as well as in it.

Mr. KEOGH: You are not game to do it outside the House.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: If I am not able to call it collusion, let me say that there is an understanding between them.

Mr. J. LEAHY: Well, I say that is a lie.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That does not disturb my equanimity in the least. I do not believe it is a lie. I believe it is an absolute fact.

The CHAIRMAN: I trust the hon. gentleman will not disregard the ruling I have given.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I shall not use the word "collusion" any longer. I find that in 1903 the hon. member for Clermont said with regard to the hon. member for Bulloo—

I recently went through very carefully the Auditor-General's report for last year. I go through that report carefully every year because they send out inspectors to audit the accounts of schools of arts, hospitals, and

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other institutions, and, by the way, I am reminded that certain books in connection with the Thargomindah Divisional Board disappeared very mysteriously in a fire on the hon. gentleman's premises there. [Mr. P. J. LEAHY: That is absolutely untrue. They are there, and have always been there.] It is very pleasing for me to hear they still exist, but I think their whereabouts is still a matter of considerable interest.

The hon. member for Clermont—and he has repeated this performance more than once—on its being pointed out to him that a statement impugning an hon. member's honour that he has made is incorrect, says—

It is very pleasing for me to hear they still exist, but I think their whereabouts is still a matter of considerable interest.

Here was an hon. member making a charge against another hon. member which impugned his personal honesty—a charge that was about as despicable a charge as one man could make against another; and what do we find? To-day—this only occurred in 1903—the hon. member for Bulloo sits cheek by jowl with the hon. member for Clermont.

Mr. LESINA: He does not.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They are putting their heads together always. They play billiards together. (Laughter.) I say that deliberately, and it is no credit to the hon. member for Bulloo that such is the case.

Mr. J. LEAHY: If you don't take care, I shall get up and give you something—very quickly, too.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I say that when one man has made the reflections on the personal honour of the hon. member for Bulloo that have been made by the hon. member for Clermont, and then in these few months—

Mr. J. LEAHY: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. gentleman in order in opening up a personal affair between myself and another member of this Chamber? I think I am quite capable of taking my own part. I ask for a ruling on the point. It has been ruled in this Chamber frequently that reflections of a personal nature are out of order.

The CHAIRMAN: I have already given my ruling. The Secretary for Public Lands is not in order in making personal reflections upon the hon. member for Bulloo.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Let me refer to the matter in a political sense. The hon. member for Bulloo, who was the object of the criticism on the part of the hon. member for Clermont which I have just read out, is one of those who are doing their best to put out this Administration.

Mr. J. LEAHY: That is a lie.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask the hon. member for Bulloo to withdraw that expression. The hon. member knows that it is out of order to call another hon. member a liar.

Mr. J. LEAHY: I said the statement is a lie. I do not say the hon. gentleman told a lie. Somebody may have misinformed him.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I find that the hon. member for Clermont quite recently addressed a question to the Treasurer, who is now absent, in connection with certain matters, and when these interrogations were ignored, the hon. member made use of these words—

Will I be in order, Mr. Speaker, in moving that the papers in connection with the Native Cat mining syndicate be tabled?

Now I go back to the 23rd October, 1901, when I find that the hon. member for Clermont made a most fervid defence of the then member for Rock-

hampton, the present head of the Government, in connection with the charges in relation with the Native Cat mine.

Mr. LESINA: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He made this defence in reply to the attack of the hon. member for Bulloo, and yet, despite that—although the hon. member for Clermont defended the present head of the Government from any insinuation against his honesty in connection with the mine—yet the hon. member does not scruple when he gets a snub from the Treasurer to allude to the Native Cat swindle.

Mr. LESINA: Yes, I have seen several things since that. The Treasurer signed a document to prevent a criminal prosecution in connection with that very case. I did not know it was in existence then. I have got it now, and I will read it out when you have finished.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Mr. J. LEAHY: It is the most contemptible exhibition we have witnessed yet.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Then, during the course of this debate, the hon. member singled out my colleague, the Secretary for Agriculture, for some criticisms. He read a long extract—which he read out very carefully in order to get it into *Hansard*—headed, "A Sensational Indictment Against Queensland Butter Manufacturers," taken from the *Melbourne Age*. That statement reflected distinctly upon the honesty of the Silverwood Butter Company, one of the chief proprietors of which is the Secretary for Agriculture. And the hon. member, in quoting that extract, went on to comment upon it. All this, of course, was a hysterical statement. He said—

What do you call this—smart practice? This is an honest Government, the cream of democratic Government, and yet a member of it goes in for this kind of business, and his colleagues in the Cabinet stick to him like glue.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Are you suggesting that he did it?

Mr. LESINA: His firm did it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do you say that he, the secretary for Agriculture, did it?

Mr. LESINA: I suppose he "winked the other eye."

Then I reminded the hon. gentleman of a little financial transaction he had with the Secretary for Agriculture, and the hon. gentleman met it by saying, "That shows the independence of my criticisms." Does it? I shall be very glad to hear what the Committee and the country think of it after I read them this letter. This is a letter written by the hon. member for Clermont, who made the traducing remarks I have just read out in regard to the Secretary for Agriculture on the 30th August, 1904, and I observe it was written on parliamentary paper, dated from Reid, or Keid street, South Brisbane, and it runs as follows:—

Dear Mr. Denham.—I wish you would do me an immediate service. You know that most of us Labour M.P.s have nothing but our salaries to depend upon to keep the wolf from the door. Between the dissolution and the return of the writs no salary is forthcoming. Although I have been returned unopposed, the unwritten law of the organisation is that we shall assist each other at our own expense. I have carried out that part of our programme to the letter, and I find myself somewhat in debt in consequence. I have no debts in the State. I owe no man a penny, but during the recess I have fallen back in my payments to my mother in New South Wales. I shall have to wait until 1st September before I can draw a penny of my parliamentary pay. If you can assist me to the extent of £10 I shall pay you at the rate of £2 per month until the amount is repaid.

Mr. KEOGH: Is not that honourable enough?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Oh, yes; that is all right.

You will pardon me for approaching you in this matter but to tell you the honest truth, although I

have been in active public life in connection with my own party during the past eight or nine years in Queensland, I do not know a member of that party, inside or outside of the House, that I would care to approach. If you should be good enough to assist me in this matter I shall not forget it. I shall be able to repay you by February, and I shall do so; of that there shall be no doubt. I will give you such security as I am able to, and will call upon you at your office or await your pleasure by letter addressed to me at Parliament House.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
JOE LESINA.

MR. HARDACRE: The only dishonourable thing about that is your reading it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No security was demanded. The only thing which was sent to the hon. member was a cheque for £10, payable to order. And lest there should be any disposition on the part of the hon. member to forget whether he got it or not, I am able to tell the Committee that on the back of it is written—in order that there shall be no doubt about its payment—not merely “V. B. J. Lesina,” but also “Joe Lesina.”

MR. KEOGH: What about the money you got to pay your election expenses?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: From that day to this the Secretary for Agriculture has never heard a word from the hon. member in regard to that matter. He has not been paid a penny of that money; he has not sent a word of acknowledgment of it, and the point is this: The Hon. the Secretary for Agriculture, who was attacked by the hon. member for Clermont the other night, is a man who had only one conversation in his life with the hon. member for Clermont. He only had one conversation with the hon. member, and a brief one at that, and yet the hon. member came up and wrote that letter and got the money.

HON. R. PHILP: Is he the only member of the House who has borrowed money?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: For fifteen months the hon. member—I must do him this credit—he refrained from any criticism of the Secretary for Agriculture. He bestowed abundant comments, no doubt from the shocked feelings of an outraged patriot at the spectacle of his country's affairs going to the dogs—while he bestowed these abundant comments on the doings of the other Ministers he refrained from discussing in any way the Secretary for Agriculture. He waited for a period of about fifteen months, and at the end of that time he either forgot the transaction, or, I suppose, the affatus of the £10 note had disappeared, and he started to criticise the hon. member. And he seized this occasion for doing it, and he did it in this despicable way—I use that word deliberately. It was possible for the hon. member to have made a quotation from other papers in Melbourne. There was the paper that made the charge against the company with which the Secretary for Agriculture is connected; and there was the other paper, an equally well-known paper, the Melbourne *Argus*, which contained the explanation of the secretary of that company when interviewed in Melbourne. But the hon. member for Clermont chose the one and rejected the other. I venture to think that any other member of this Committee would have gone to the Secretary for Agriculture—the man who, without any hesitation, befriended the hon. member when he came to him. In-tead of the hon. member going to the Secretary for Agriculture and saying, “I read this account, and I would like you to tell me whether there is anything in the charge or not, as it is a serious charge”—instead of doing that, he seized it as a hungry dog would seize a bone, and rushed to this Chamber and read it out with the one

absorbing idea of trying to injure the man who had befriended him. Was there ever a more contemptible act perpetrated by any man signing “M.L.A.” after his name?

MR. KEOGH: Yes, when you left your party.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I say that such a deed as that no other man who wrote “M.L.A.” after his name would have committed, but it is on a par with what you might expect from the hon. member, who in another matter also has a record that we need not envy him. He is the only hon. member that enjoys the distinction of ever having, in a British Parliament anywhere inside the British Empire, been able to say that he has been ordered off a racecourse; that he is a man who conducted himself in such a way that he was too bad even for the tolerant atmosphere of a Northern racecourse.

MR. LESINA: You are making a nice spectacle of yourself. You are making your case worse.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: This is the hon. member who accuses this Government of dishonourable deeds. This is the hon. member who, as I have pointed out, has a record that no man who has ever been in this Chamber, or in any Chamber in Australia, has ever had. This is the man who is always prating here about the purity of public affairs. This is the man who is one of the chief critics and opponents of this Administration.

MR. LESINA: He never robbed the public, anyhow.

MR. KEOGH: People ought to be clean themselves before they talk of others.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We are told that this is the only Government that do these things.

MR. LESINA: There are very few members of this Chamber that do not owe money. You have a record yourself.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member's party in politics seem to sum him up pretty well. If those members who care to do it, or have sufficient interest in it, turn up the *Worker* of the 18th of February, 1905, they would see a leading article upon the hon. member there which makes it abundantly clear that they sum him up pretty well.

MR. LESINA: Read it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I shall not read it.

MR. LESINA: Well, sing it. (Laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It says in this paper—

There was a time when the Leahy family, but particularly John Leahy, was savagely attacked in almost every issue of *Truth*. There was a time when the vitriolic denunciations of Lesina were continually being flung in the face of the member for Bulloo. These days are no more. We challenged Mr. Lesina three weeks ago to state what was the “secret history” at the back of this sudden change of front, but close reader as he is of the *Worker*, and despite the fact that the question has been repeated in several country Labour papers, he has not deemed it advisable to reply. The “fiery Lesina” is prudent enough—when it suits him.

In conclusion, we submit that we have proved the following points:—

- (1) That Mr. Lesina's record is not one entitling him to assume the rôle of censor towards his party
- (2) That his condemnation of the Government and the party is vitiated by his own statement in the Assembly last November, when he said the Government had fulfilled its promises so well that it could not be cavilled at, and he hoped the discontent in the country would be allayed. (See *Hansard*, 23rd November, 1904, page 923.)
- (3) That his motion *re* the stoppage of further sales of Crown lands was a piece of hollow hypocrisy, inasmuch as he has declared his willingness to sell lands if the proceeds are expended in the electorate in which the land is sold.

(4) That on the principle laid down by the Clermont Workers' Political Organisation's letter, he is "not fit to be a Labour member."

(5) That he has confessed his own wrongdoing by abjectly apologising to the members of his party assembled in caucus.

(6) That he is the paid tool of a paper that is doing all it can to damage the party, to malign the party's most trusted leaders, and to get its own creatures into the convention to stir up strife.

And that is a fact that every member of this Chamber is aware of.

Mr. LESINA: What do the people outside say about this Government? That was several years ago.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS:

As regards the connection between Lesina and Leahy, with all due respect to the Clermont W.P.O., we must take our own course, and choose our own time, but here is something to ponder over.

On 30th July, 1903, the member for Clermont delivered a fierce onslaught upon Minister Leahy, a terrific diatribe, lasting nearly four hours. That speech was printed, or a considerable portion of it, in the columns of *Truth*. Leahy, it is well known about Parliament House, swore to retaliate in kind, and make a personal attack on Clermont's member.

Just about the time when the threatened thunderbolt was to fall, however, Lesina suddenly disappeared.

He went away without giving notice to his party, and was absent in the south during the whole period of the crisis which resulted in the defeat of the Philp Ministry.

It was predicted by a few in the know, on the strength of certain statements which were being circulated, that Lesina would never seriously attack John Leahy again, either in Parliament or in the paper. He never has done so. The Clermont Workers' Political Organisation might ask him why when next he visits them.

Mr. LESINA: The electors did not send me here to attack Leahy or you either.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member is in the pay, and on the staff, of the proprietor of the newspaper which in regard to Queensland politics has expressed the opinion that the most fitting man for Premier is the hon. member for Bulloo.

Mr. J. LEAHY: That shows he has good judgment.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member is pulling the wires for the proprietor of the *Truth* newspaper, and the electors of Clermont, or of any other constituency in Queensland, who peruse the hon. gentleman's speeches and who imagine that they are listening to the outburst of an outraged patriot, are really perusing the utterances of a paid political time-server. To give the public who may read this debate, and this Committee, some indication of the kind of man the hon. member for

[8 p.m.] Clermont is, and of the spirit in which he makes his criticism on

public affairs and on Ministers, let me remind the Committee of an allusion which the hon. member made to me the other evening. In order to justify the animus—the miserable, low-down animus—that is apparent in his criticism, he said—

I have made three Ministers to-night lose their temper, which shows that my stings must have hurt them.

"Quite apart from that consideration, it is a fairly open secret about the Dalby district that Mr. Bell and his group (or tribe)"—

I suppose the hon. gentleman knows what a Dago is—it means a West Indian who has some coloured blood in him, and I think I could prove that the hon. gentleman has some Dago blood in him.

A greater lie than that was never uttered in a Parliament House. But what I want to ask the Committee and the country is: Supposing it were true, does it become a democrat, one of the people, to get up and charge a man with something that he is not responsible for? Supposing it had been true, what decency or fair play is

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there in a man making a statement of that kind? If I were to go into the genealogy of the hon. member—

Mr. LESINA: Mine is good on both sides.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS:

We can only judge of people by their conduct, and if we judge the hon. member's pedigree by that standard, then he has a very bad pedigree. If I were more of a genealogist, and were to go into the hon. member's genealogy, the scrutiny might prove interesting, and I might make some important discoveries. But I am not disposed to do anything of the kind. If I found that one of the hon. member's ancestors had been hung, and another had been convicted of a serious crime, I should never think of bringing that up against the hon. member, for he is not responsible for his ancestors. He has nothing to do with what they did. But the hon. member, showing the type of man that he is, charges me with something that is not true, and, even if it were true, is a matter for which I am not responsible in the slightest degree. That is the kind of criticism the hon. member indulges in, and it is a sample of the animus that prompts him to make the criticisms he does on the Administration. Assuming that the statement was true, what a miserable, contemptible kind of criticism!

Mr. LESINA: That all depends on the point of view.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS:

Before I finally pass from the hon. member, let me say that he has had the gross bad taste in a number of discussions to bring in the name of my wife. After all, he has a wife too. But there appears to be this distinction between the two ladies—one in a perfectly natural way goes for land, and the other in an equally natural way goes for the police. In the police records of this State there is a complaint from a constable, from which it is evident that the hon. member in his own home was sufficient of a blackguard to make his wife go off to the police for protection. This is the man who calls himself a "reformer." A reformer would be a better phrase. Whom does he want to reform? He wants to reform the other fellow. And this is from an hon. member who is in greater need of reform than any other man who ever sat in this Chamber. Let me tell the hon. member that that is not the only thing in the police records with regard to him. I can give him others whenever he wants them. It is greatly to the credit—I hope these words will travel far—it is greatly to the credit of a large number of hon. members, who are colleagues of his in the Labour party, men whom he has slandered in season and out of season, that although they knew these facts they never produced them. Now, I want to leave the hon. member, and turn to other matters. I want to refer to some criticisms made by hon. members, opposed to this Government, in regard to departmental administration, in a remarkably different way from the type of comments which have fallen from the hon. member for Clermont. Some remarks have been made in connection with the public estate improvement fund. The hon. member for Bulimba made a statement the other evening, which was heartily approved of by the hon. member for Wide Bay. The assertion was made that the fund, for initiating which this Government deserves the very greatest credit—though I must say in all fairness that the leader of the Opposition had the germ of the idea in the last year or two that he was in office—was spent in chosen electorates. I can say with respect to the administration of that fund, that, with the exception of one or two instances, I have been responsible for every case in which it was applied, and I can say that I have not in the remotest degree paid the

slightest attention to the electorate of the locality where the fund was proposed to be spent. Corroborative of that statement, I find that some of the largest operations which have taken place in connection with that fund were on the Boonah-Killarney road, in the electorate of Fassifern.

Mr. JENKINSON: Not altogether.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Certainly a large proportion of it. There was also considerable expenditure at Burrandowan and Degilbo, which are in the electorate of the hon. member for Burnett. However, we may classify the hon. member for Burnett, if we are not permitted to call him an opponent entirely, we may at least say that he may be called a candid friend. I find that large operations have taken place under that fund in the electorate of Moreton, and considerable operations under it in the electorate represented by the hon. member for Wide Bay. I was not really aware in which electorates the money was being expended. My sole object is to employ this fund in connection with localities where the expenditure was likely to produce a profitable result and lead to the speedier and more active selection of Crown land. I am sorry the hon. member for Bulimba is not here to hear my reply to his statement, because he would realise that he had been labouring under a delusion.

Mr. LESINA: Pay the £200 you borrowed. You talk of my paltry £10. Pay for your cigars. Didn't your tailor threaten to summon you if you didn't pay him? You're the best dunned man about the place. Didn't you get your wife to pay your cigar bills?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask the hon. member for Clermont not to interrupt the Minister in his remarks.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I am glad the hon. member spoke, because I find that in last session a question was asked with regard to the issue of free railway passes which had been granted to members, their wives, and families, from 1901 to date; and I find that in the list of members who obtained that privilege the only Labour member is the member for Clermont—a privilege which, as far as I am aware, does not extend to members of the Government. He got the bulk of those from the hon. member for Bulloo.

Mr. J. LEAHY: I do not recollect it.

Mr. LESINA: I got one from him.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Let me now deal with a criticism which fell from the senior member for Toowoomba. That hon. member said that it was an unhappy feature of this Government that there was an indifference towards agricultural homestead selection, and that there was too great a desire to get land revenue by opening up land for agricultural farm selection rather than agricultural homestead selection. I have to say this in regard to that criticism: that if we are to go on the principle recommended by some members of Parliament, as well as by others outside who are obviously anxious to become members of Parliament, that the lands of the country shall be given away free, or, at the very least, that we should only charge 2s. 6d. an acre—which is the price charged for agricultural homestead selections—we should get this result, going on the principle that agricultural homestead selection is to be universal and that agricultural farm selection is to be abolished. There have been 1,227 agricultural homesteads taken up during 1903, 1904, and 1905, during two and a-third years of which period I have been in office. If, instead of having been taken up as agricultural homesteads they had been taken up at the proclaimed price as agricultural farms, there would have been a difference to the Treasury of the State, during the term of years for

which the price is payable, of £120,000. During the same period 1,927 agricultural farms were selected. Had those agricultural farms been taken up as homesteads at 2s. 6d. an acre instead of the price at which they were selected as agricultural farms, there would have been a difference to the Treasury of £348,000. In other words, if the whole of that land had been taken up as agricultural homesteads, the difference to the Treasury would have been £484,637 11s. 4d. Those are figures which must give pause to any man who takes any interest in public affairs. Especially since the arrival of federation there has been the greatest trouble in this State to make both ends meet. If we are going to ignore such a legitimate source of revenue as our Crown lands we are simply putting ourselves into a financial position the only rescue from which would be increased taxation, and we know what has been the fate of most Administrations that have proposed increased taxation. I repeat that, having regard to the long terms and the large area—

Mr. MACKINTOSH: There was never a larger area than 160 acres sold at 2s. 6d. an acre.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Oh, yes; you can take up to 640 acres.

Mr. KROGH: 160 acres has always been the outside limit.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That was so in the "green and salad" days of the hon. member, but in the Act of 1897—the principal Act—it was increased to 640 acres. That is for land that is opened at 10s. an acre; 640 acre selections are taken up frequently. I put these figures forward because they are interesting and significant, and they show that in endeavouring to make both ends meet we cannot ignore the annual revenue-producing asset in the shape of our Crown lands. The object of any man who is going to administer the Lands Department with a view to discharging his duties, not only as a Minister, but as a member of the Cabinet who have to carry out the government of the country and show how both ends are going to meet, should be to study the problem of bringing about the greatest amount of settlement and producing the maximum amount of revenue. A man is not a success as Lands Minister when he charges such a price for land as will impede settlement. The ideal to be aimed at is to get as much money as is compatible with a maximum amount of land settlement. And recollect this: In Queensland we are offering terms to the settler that are unrivalled by any State that has land of correspondingly good quality. There are parts of the world, and parts indeed of Australia, where they may be able to say they give more liberal terms than we do here. I do not know where it is. I only suspect one part of the continent where it is done. I do not wish to particularise the locality. All I can say is that their terms are probably illusory and that it will be found that ours are in reality far more liberal. Here is a letter which has reached me, and not through an official of the Lands Department. It is from one of the English settlers who recently came to a neighbouring State, and he says—

There is no doubt your Government are offering better advantages by far than this one, but I think the land I have secured is good enough for anything, but the Government are a little too hard on the settlers.

That is an unbiased tribute from one of the English settlers who has recently come to another State. Now, a great deal of criticism has been directed against me in connection with land settlement in relation to the group system. I may say that the group system, in my opinion, has been a success. It has induced a number of people to come from outside Queensland and take up land who, but for the facilities which our

system of groups afforded, would probably not have come here. But it is a most disagreeable system for the Lands Department to have to do with. There is generally some bickering over it, and the old method, under which the land was thrown open to competition and a man balloted or tendered for his land, was, from the point of view of the Lands Department, a far easier method than the present one. But the group system is playing, and undoubtedly will continue to play, a very valuable part in putting people on the land. It was inaugurated by the Government of the hon. member at the head of the Opposition in 1901, and provided for groups of agricultural homesteads chiefly for those living outside the State, and when this Government came in we extended the principle to agricultural farms. It is also applied to a most valuable form of selection—prickly pear selection. A charge has been made against me that in forming these groups I only extend the privilege to southerners, and that Queenslanders are ignored. Let me give some figures in regard to that accusation. I find that in the Brisbane district out of three groups two are Queensland groups and one a southern group. In the Dalby district—and when I speak of it I mean the Dalby land agent's district, which is very large, and extends in a sense outside the Dalby district, geographically speaking, well into the Murilla electorate—I say that in that district, out of thirteen groups that have been formed, five are New South Wales, four Victorian, and four local. In the Gayndah district, out of four groups that have been formed, two are New South Wales and two are local. In the Gympie district, out of five groups, three are New South Wales and two Queensland. In the Maryborough district, out of four groups, three are Victorian and one local; and in the Cairns district there are two Queensland groups forming. Those figures show that I have not ignored Queenslanders in the formation of groups, and they are the more significant when hon. members know that several Queensland people have come to me to form groups, permission has been granted, and they have not succeeded in forming them. There are a number of people who may feel indignant when they find that a certain area of land has been put aside for southern groups and they complain that they have not been allowed to form a group, but the chances are that after these people had got permission to form a group, they have found the greatest difficulty in doing so. I know of two instances in which Queenslanders have come to me and asked permission to form a group under the belief, I think, that they would be refused. They, however, got permission, they went off, weeks passed, and they never succeeded. That has happened on three, or four, or five different occasions.

Mr. KEOGH: Were they sent to any particular land?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They came in regard to a particular locality and asked permission to form a group.

Mr. KEOGH: I am aware of land which was shown to some of these people, which they would not take up because it was of no value whatever.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is said that too much consideration is being shown to outsiders, but it should be remembered that while up to the end of 1905, 3,308,912 acres have been open to general competition, the area reserved for outsiders was only equal to 157,192 acres. But if I am accused of showing sympathy with the outsider, the man who comes

[8.30 p.m.] here from the south, I am not going to repudiate it. I say that it is one of the best things that is happening in Queensland to find men coming here from the south to become settlers. It is putting new lifeblood into the body politic, and I can only hope that they will

[Hon. J. T. Bell.

come in increasing numbers, by scores and hundreds, and, I hope, by thousands; and certainly if I put myself out during my period of office at the Lands Department to induce those men to come here, I feel that I am doing the very best thing that I can for Queensland. The hon. member for Port Curtis has just reminded me of the question of immigration. I had intended dealing with that later, but I cannot help saying that I am disposed to think that, if we are going to induce people to come from Europe to Queensland in any appreciable numbers, we shall have to revert to something very much like free immigration. (Hear, hear!) It was only on the 9th of last month that that land was opened in London. We have only had some cables from the Agent-General since the land was opened to selection, but from the last information I have received the outlook is not very promising.

Mr. FORSYTH: Did you expect it would be? I never thought it would be a success.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No; it is an extraordinary thing the number of people who always know after the event.

Mr. FORSYTH: I said so at the time.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Of course it may be taken up later on. But the reason is the superior advantages that other countries offer—noticeably Canada in her proximity to Europe.

Mr. COWAP: And the low fares.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is one of the advantages of proximity, and the fact also that they are spending tremendous sums of money in advertising. I am disposed to think that it would be a good thing for Queensland sooner or later to send some people off to Canada in order to talk about the advantages of Queensland. I am of opinion that we should find a very considerable number of European settlers—if all the information which reaches me is correct—who are perfectly ready to try another land. The hon. member for Balonne made some reference to the extended leases given to runs, and the hon. member did not appear to know by what process that extension was given. Well, it was given under the provisions of the Land Act of 1902. In regard to the leases of a large number of those runs, the question of the extension of lease is quite outside the province of the Secretary for Lands. The Land Court are the body that decide it. They make up their minds with regard to the class in which each run shall be placed, and the period of the lease is fixed accordingly. I have been attacked in newspapers—I was attacked by the newspaper to which the hon. member for Clermont is a leading contributor—in regard to extending the leases of several runs, whereas, as a matter of fact, I had no more control over it than any hon. member in this Chamber. It was entirely the Land Court that were responsible for it. The Land Court are a body with whose actions on several occasions I have not agreed, but I do not throw the slightest reflection—and, of course, it is not necessary to say it—upon their integrity. What I say is that they certainly have come to decisions the wisdom of which it is very hard to appreciate.

Mr. JONES: Were the Land Court solely responsible for the extension of the Tarong lease?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They were solely responsible for it.

Mr. JONES: That is not generally known. I intended to ask a question about it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Has the hon. member read the correspondence?

Mr. JONES: No.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Well, I would advise him to read it. I do not suppose there are more disgusted men in the

district than myself over that matter. In the annual report of the Department of Public Lands there are some paragraphs touching upon that. It was said by the hon. member for Bulimba, at an earlier stage of the debate, that I instigated these comments by the Under Secretary for Lands. I wish to give that statement a denial. This report was penned absolutely by the Under Secretary, and anybody who knows him, and who knows his mental calibre, knows perfectly well that, when he sits down to write a report and review the operations of the department for the year, he does it without getting instructions from any Minister at all.

Mr. FORSYTH: Hear, hear! He is quite competent to do it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The Under Secretary calls attention to the decisions of the Land Court broadly in connection with the rent of runs, and more particularly in connection with runs called Brenda, Currawillinghi, Cobbie, Noondoo, and Mugrugulla. I hope that hon. members who take any interest in land affairs will make it their duty to peruse that portion of the report of the Under Secretary on pages 6, 7, and 8, under the heading of "The Land Act, 1902." I shall probably at another time deal with this matter. It is astounding that on country where the leasehold and the resumption are admittedly of the same character, where there is no distinction, and where the pastoral lessee has a slightly longer lease than the grazing farmer, the Land Court have fixed the rent of a grazing farm at £6 13s. 4d. a square mile, while the pastoralist lessee has only paid £2 11s. 4d. a square mile. I do not in the slightest degree question the integrity of the Land Court; but I say, as Secretary for Lands, that it is absolutely impossible to appreciate the frame of mind that brought about these decisions. (Hear, hear!) As the representative of the Crown and people of Queensland who own that land, I ask what can be more galling in a community where we have the greatest difficulty in making both ends meet, when we have an asset such as this, that in connection with this particular run of Mugrugulla, where admittedly the leasehold and the resumption are of the same character, one tenant, with rather a longer lease than the other, pays only £2 11s. 4d. a square mile whilst the other has to pay £6 13s. 4d. a square mile.

Mr. MAUGHAN: It is the scandal of the department.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is a remarkable thing that the Land Court—and nobody must consider for a moment that I am making any reproach on that court as men. I respect them as men. For the senior member, Mr. Sword, I have great respect; but it is a remarkable thing when you review the history of that Land Court, and remember that it was brought in under the 1884 Land Act by what was then a liberal, an almost democratic, Government—it was clearly brought in as a democratic step, and yet that court—I won't say—

Mr. LESINA: I rise to a point of order. Is the Minister for Lands in order in discussing the constitutional character or the action of the Land Court, except on a special resolution, in this Chamber, with the Speaker in the chair?

The CHAIRMAN: It is not out of order for the Minister to refer to members of the Land Court, but personal reflections should not be made on members of that court. The Minister for Lands has already stated that he does not impugn the integrity of the members of the Land Court.

Mr. JENKINSON: It is very hard to discriminate.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister for Lands said he did not question the integrity of any member of the Land Court, but I must ask him not to proceed in that direction. He is getting very near to being out of order.

Mr. J. LEAHY: It is disgraceful.

Mr. MAUGHAN: It is very timely, anyhow.

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask hon. members not to make reflections on the Chair. I understood the hon. member for Bulloo to say it is disgraceful.

Mr. J. LEAHY: I did not mean you, Mr. Jackson.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I submit that no man could lay it down more clearly than I did. I make no reflection on any member of that court personally as individuals. I have respect for them. That court, which was really brought into existence under the 1884 Act to be a sheet-anchor, or protection as it were, to the democratic element to the small man, has now more largely come to be regarded in another light altogether.

Mr. MAUGHAN: There is no doubt about it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I say again that it would well repay everybody who is at all interested in land administration to peruse pages 6, 7, and 8 of the report of the Under Secretary for Lands.

Mr. J. LEAHY: There is a great deal in those pages that is absolutely untrue.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Let me say, when it comes to what is true and untrue, the record and reputation in the mind of any man in Queensland who knows him well of the Under Secretary for Lands is not one whit less good than the hon. member for Bulloo.

Mr. J. LEAHY: I do not mean to say that. I say he has been supplied with wrong information.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I am very glad the hon. member makes that correction. All I can say is that there is nobody in Queensland knows more about land matters than the Under Secretary for Lands.

Mr. J. LEAHY: He is a very excellent man.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I am glad to hear that said. Nobody in Queensland knows more about land matters, and I would be surprised to hear that he made any incorrect statement.

Mr. J. LEAHY: I can assure you with regard to some of the matters he is referring to there that some of the facts supplied to him are wrong. He is a very good man—I will say that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member for Balonne also alluded to the great question of rabbits, and, unless I misunderstood him, committed himself to a very startling opinion, when he wished us to imply from his observations that rabbits are not really a curse but a blessing.

Mr. LAND: That is my own opinion—by turning them into commercial value.

The HOME SECRETARY: They may be yet.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Of course, it may be so, but until the fact is much more clearly demonstrated than it has yet been, it will be a great mistake for us to endeavour to supplant sheep and cattle with rabbits. I hope later on in the session to have an opportunity of dealing with that most intricate and objectionable question—the rabbit question. It is about as disagreeable subject as any Minister could have to touch—a matter that involves the spending of money with very little visible return. We shall have to make some alteration in regard to the way we are fighting rabbits, and probably later on in the session

whatever qualifications or alterations are made will be announced. Before I sit down I have to say that with all the criticisms that are heaped upon this Administration—some of them, as I have shown, blackguard criticisms—

Mr. J. LEAHY: I rise to a point of order! Is the hon. gentleman in order in saying that some of the criticisms levelled at the Government in this House have been "blackguard criticisms"?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They have come from outside sources.

Mr. J. LEAHY: Does the hon. gentleman say it is not in the House?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I do not say anything of the sort.

The CHAIRMAN: If the Secretary for Public Lands uses the words in reference to members of the Chamber they are decidedly out of order.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Very well, I repeat again, with all respect to your ruling—and I am not in the least aware that I have contravened it—I do intend to say that some of the criticisms that are levelled against this Administration are blackguard criticisms. And I say that despite it all there has never been a Government in Queensland that has put so many democratic measures in the statute-book as this Government.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LESINA: Where are they?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is an astounding thing that some of the men who call themselves democrats, who prate about Labour and Labour doctrines, are the bitterest opponents this Government have got. We cannot shut our eyes to public matters of this kind when we listen to criticisms, that the alternative to this Government is not a more progressive or an advanced Government.

Mr. LESINA: It cannot be worse.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: If this Government, when the time comes for it to go before the people of Queensland, does not meet with approval, it will not be because we have not gone far enough, but because we have gone too far. I make that statement in order that we should remember it when we listen to the criticisms of men who call themselves advanced democrats. The alternative, and the successor of this Administration, will be a Government of a conservative type largely composed of men on the opposite side of the House. It should be remembered by those who criticise this Government because we are not more radical, that the alternative and successor is going to be a far more conservative Administration.

Mr. NORMAN: I have a few words to say.

Mr. LESINA: Why don't you give me a chance to reply?

Mr. NORMAN: The hon. member had two and a-half hours the other night, and I really think that is a fair thing. It is a regrettable thing that the speeches that have been delivered previously and that to which we had to listen to-night from the Minister should have been necessary in this Chamber.

Mr. KEOGH: It was all on your own side.

Mr. NORMAN: No; not all. I am going to give you an example in passing. The hon. member for Moreton the other night said some very unkind things, and I think if he thought again he would consider that they were not altogether justifiable. The hon. member for Cairns made an interjection that he worked six months on a sugar plantation, and did not intend to do so again, and the hon. member for Moreton said—

Yet the hon. member comes to a place like Queensland and decries sugar field work. He does not like work. I think he was born tired, and that that is the reason he could not make a living at home.

Mr. CAMPBELL: That is very mild criticism.

[Hon. J. T. Bell.]

Mr. NORMAN: Yes, but it came from the other side of the Chamber. I think the hon. member should have been chary about using language of that sort about the hon. member for Cairns, who, I believe, has been a hard working man. He could not have got into the position he occupies without working, and the fact that he is in this House shows that he has the goodwill and appreciation of the electors who put him here. There are people whose fathers before them have been able to give them a college education, or a high school education, and who are able to put them in a position to enable them to get on in life. Then there are other people who have to work and perhaps maintain their fathers, and the hon. member for Cairns might be one of them.

Mr. CAMPBELL: I have had to work since I was thirteen years of age.

Mr. NORMAN: The hon. member for Moreton is generally a calm, judicial speaker, and is not often led away by passion, and it is a pity that he should have spoilt a good speech by such a remark as that. I only followed in the train of the Minister for Lands in referring to it.

Mr. J. LEAHY: Take my advice and don't follow in his train—not to-night, anyhow.

Mr. NORMAN: I would like to say a word on the matter of base hospitals. We were given to understand—I do not say officially by the Ministry—but we were given to understand that when this question of base hospitals was being reconsidered Maryborough would be put on the same level as the rest. But we know that that is not so. I see that the only base hospitals are at Townsville, Rockhampton, and Brisbane. Of course it is satisfactory to know that the endowment to the hospitals has been increased, but I respectfully submit that that system on which money for base hospitals is given should be reconsidered and reorganised. Some system might be initiated by which hospitals might claim an extra subsidy according to the claims put upon them by the outside districts which have smaller hospitals. I notice that the hon. the junior member for Ipswich, Mr. Maughan, asked several questions about the tenders that were called for in connection with the construction of ten engines required for the Railway Department. I see from the Press recently that there is going to be "humming" times at Ipswich workshops; that they are going to manufacture several more engines besides rolling-stock and doing repairs. I consider the hon. member for Ipswich was quite right in getting all the information he could on the subject, but what I want to point out is this: that apparently the staff regulations govern the Ipswich workshops. The establishment of the Ipswich workshops has thrown a lot of mechanics and other men out of employment, more especially in my own electorate. They are men who have been in that sort of works for years and are adepts at it, but according to the staff regulations no man is to be taken on at Ipswich unless he is under thirty-five or thirty-six years of age, and then he must wait six months before he can claim to be on the staff. Why should there be staff regulations at all in connection with a manufacturing institution? Why should mechanics be kept out of employment by such absurd regulations as this because they are over thirty-six years of age? If a mechanic is fifty or sixty years of age, why should he be debarred from getting a job at the Ipswich workshops? I think it is absurd to have staff regulations in such an establishment, and they should be knocked out altogether. Let them be run the same as a foundry. Give a man a job, and even if it is for two years, let him get the job for two years, and then if the place gets slack let him go again.

Mr. KEOGH: Don't you believe in unionism

Mr. NORMAN: Yes, but this is keeping union men out of a job, and that is what I am complaining about. I hope the Minister for Railways is listening to me in this matter. We should abolish these staff regulations, as they are simply starving a lot of decent mechanics throughout the State. A great deal has been said about benevolent institutions, and an idea has occurred to me in connection with this matter. We have four State farms all in close proximity to railways. If these State farms entered into competition with the farmers, of course the farmers would have the right to grumble; but why should not these farms grow fruit and vegetables and other things to supply these benevolent institutions with every bit of fruit and vegetable that they want.

Mr. PAGE: As a matter of fact that is being done at the present time.

Mr. KEOGH: They are doing it at Gatton.

Mr. NORMAN: I know that at Goodna the inmates occupy their time in doing gardening to supply the institution with vegetables, and the same thing should be done for Dunwich. I advocate that extra hands should be employed, so that these people should not want for any of the products of Central and Northern Queensland.

Mr. KEOGH: Put them on the land, and they would be able to supply them.

Mr. NORMAN: I wish now to refer to a matter dealt with by the hon. member for Bundaberg last evening. The hon. member spoke

[9 p.m.] of the rival claims of Maryborough and Bundaberg with regard to railway construction in the Burnett district. I will say this for the hon. member: that to my knowledge he has looked well after the interests of his constituents. There is no man in the House that I know of who works harder for his electorate than the hon. member for Bundaberg, though he does not seem to get credit for that from responsible parties in Bundaberg, who ought to give credit where good work is done. If the hon. member has a bad case on this particular occasion, it is not his fault at all. When the hon. member spoke of the rival claims of Maryborough and Bundaberg, he was really referring to the railway to what is generally known as "Old Dalgangal House." The hon. member quoted from the report made by Mr. George Phillips in 1904 in favour of the extension from the Mount Perry district to Dalgangal, and showed that it was only 40 miles in length, whereas the extension from Gayndah to Dalgangal would be 70 miles. What I want to show is that Mr. Phillips, in his report, evidently took the route from Gayndah through Mundubbera, a distance of 70 miles, while we in Maryborough are really agitating for the newer route *via* Lochaber, which is only 52 miles. The hon. member was therefore "barking up the wrong tree" as far as the claims of Maryborough are concerned. This extension *via* Lochaber, which would be only 52 miles in length, would pass through lands suitable for close settlement all the way. There is the Binjour Plateau, formerly known as the Murray Plateau, and if the railway were taken by that route, the distance would be further reduced by 12 miles. The Mount Perry route is one that would not be advantageous to the State, as it would be very expensive. Mr. Phillips says—

At present there is no road, nor even a bridle-track, that could be followed by a stranger, so that the route is known only to a few bushmen. I had as guide, as far as Roslin, Mr. Thomas Dingle, a native of the district, who has a perfect knowledge of the country, and without whose assistance I would have experienced some difficulty in getting about the country.

The route was partially examined about seven years ago by Mr. Railway Surveyor F. J. North, at the instance of the Bundaberg Chamber of Commerce, but that was for an extension to the town of Eidsvold.

Mr. North reported to the Chief Engineer of Railways on the 14th January, 1897, and summed up the Eastern Creek route as follows:—

The country along this route from the start (at Wolca) to Roslin station is extremely broken and mountainous and the engineering difficulties enormous. From Roslin to crossing of Bibboolan Creek the country improves slightly, and from Bibboolan Creek to Eidsvold it is easy for railway construction.

The distance from Wolca, on the Mount Perry Railway, from which it is proposed to start this line, is 40 miles, and the estimated cost is £3,500 per mile, which would bring the total cost up to £140,000. From Gayndah to Dalgangal the distance is 52 miles, and the estimated cost of construction £2,750 per mile, or a total of £142,000. There would therefore be a cost of £3,000 more for 12 miles of railway, and this line would pass through country that is available for close settlement. I notice that the Minister for Railways, in referring to Mr. George Phillips's report, stated that the Mount Perry route would make Brisbane nearer than the Gayndah-Maryborough route by 8 miles. In making that statement the Minister must have taken the old survey, which was 70 miles long, instead of the newer route advocated, which is only 52 miles in length. That route would make the Gayndah-Maryborough route 10 miles shorter than the route formerly surveyed. The whole mistake has arisen from the hon. member for Bundaberg taking the old route from Gayndah to Dalgangal, which has been discarded altogether. In fact, the extension from Gayndah has been altered considerably from the original survey, as brought before this House years ago. The hon. member for Bundaberg also referred to the trade that was being done by Bundaberg with the district described by him. He referred to a Mr. Sellars, the chairman of the Eidsvold Divisional Board. Eidsvold is nearer to the Mount Perry route than to Maryborough, yet Mr. Sellars, who is not in any way interested in land or in property at Maryborough, nor where the line passes through between those places, has said that the Gayndah route is the best in the interests of close settlement. The opinion of Mr. Charlton, the surveyor, ought to have some weight in this House. He is one of the most conscientious men, I should say, we have in the Survey Department. There was a meeting of the Railway League in Maryborough on 11th September. Mr. Charlton happened to be in Maryborough at the time, and as an old member, went there as a visitor. While there his opinion was asked as to the best route to take. Mr. Charlton said—

He thought the route of least resistance was the best from Gayndah—that was along the valley of the Burnett River. That route presented no great engineering difficulties; there were no steep ranges to climb, and there was good land for settlement nearly all the way. [The President: Mostly Crown land?] About 90 per cent. of it. Most of the land around Dalgangal, which was the key of the position, was leased in grazing farms ranging from fifteen to twenty years. There was a very large area of agricultural land around Dalgangal, and Splinter and Three Moon Creeks, which was all locked up in grazing farms. To get those lands arrangements would have to be made to the lessees for compensation.

The President asked: Is there not less of that disability along the route from Gayndah to Dalgangal than by the route from Mount Perry to Dalgangal?

Mr. Charlton said most of this locked-up land lay beyond Dalgangal by either route. But very little land between Mount Perry and Dalgangal was fit for settlement, being mountainous and broken, and it was not till they got to Dalgangal that good land for settlement was met with along that route.

Some of the land along the Mount Perry route is tied up for twenty-five years, and that land cannot be obtained without paying the lessees compensation. That is Mr. Charlton's opinion.

Mr. Norman.]

But we are quite willing to leave it to the decision of experts. We have asked the department to put on surveyors, so that a survey may be made of the proposed route which we suggest, and we are quite willing for the thing to be decided on its merits. We must remember this: that the Maryborough Chamber of Commerce was the only body that, in the interests of close settlement, risked both money and time in disputing, in another part of the Burnett, the decisions and classifications of the Land Court, and were fined by the Land Court £200 or £300—I forget which.

Mr. P. J. LEAHY: They were not fined; that was expenses.

Mr. NORMAN: At any rate, when it came before the proper court those expenses were knocked off. It speaks well for the public feeling of the people of Maryborough that they were willing to risk this, when the public men of Bundaberg, who are now clamouring, did nothing to try and prevent land from being locked up. There is one other matter I wish to mention before I sit down. When the present extension from Wetheron to Gayndah was passed by the House last year it was understood that a traffic bridge would be built from the township of Gayndah across the Burnett River. As originally projected, the railway was meant to go into the township of Gayndah, but the route was altered, and the railway stops on the north side. I submit that the department—the Railway Department, I presume, but I am quite willing to be corrected—should build that traffic bridge in order to connect the town of Gayndah with the railway. The then Secretary for Railways, Mr. Morgan, when moving the construction of this extension last session, said—

The old proposal was southerly from Wetheron to Gayndah, which, as hon. members were aware, was situated on the south bank of the Burnett River. That route had something to recommend, but on examining the country and studying the possibilities for settlement, and the situation of lands best suited for close settlement, the opinion was formed that the route to follow was direct, or nearly direct, from the present terminus at Wetheron westerly to Mount Lawless. Hon. members who knew the district would be disposed to argue that the better route beyond Mount Lawless would be practically westerly; but in projecting a railway in that district they could not overlook the claims of Gayndah to railway communication, and, since they were able to recognise those claims without seriously diverting the line or entailing expense, he thought they had done the right thing in taking that railway, if not into Gayndah, then as near to it as they could. They would go to the north bank of the Burnett River, immediately opposite the township, about 20 chains from the river—practically at the township. [Mr. JENKINSON: The same as Nerang.] It was proposed to put a bridge across the river, so that communication would be free between the town and the railway station. Another reason for choosing that route was that in Gayndah there was some excellent scrub land, and they could serve future settlers on these Crown lands.

How can those settlers get to the railway without a bridge—the settlers on the south side that the Minister spoke of? Yet the Railway Department now, according to what the Secretary for Railways said to a deputation, do not recognise the construction of that bridge at all. That is a strange state of affairs. Here is a Premier, who is also Minister for Railways, makes his promise, and when a man in such a position makes such a promise to the House, the people have a right to consider that they have been neglected if the department does not build that traffic bridge.

Mr. KENNA: Will it benefit Maryborough?

Mr. NORMAN: I am not talking about whether it will benefit Maryborough or not; we have always been interested in the Burnett. I am speaking on a matter of public policy. Mr. Morgan promised the bridge, and that promise should be carried out. The Secretary for Rail-

ways takes up the position that if the Railway Department builds traffic bridges there will be no end to this sort of thing, but I point out that we have a public estate improvement fund, and if the Railway Department will not construct the bridge it is a fair charge on that fund. What is that fund for? This bridge would give access to land south of Gayndah, and its construction would be judicious and legitimate expenditure. I do not want to take up further time, but I hope action will be taken in this matter so as to give relief to the people who are so much concerned.

Mr. LESINA: Mr. Jackson—

The CHAIRMAN: I remind the hon. member that it is very unusual to speak twice on the Financial Statement. I cannot prevent the hon. member from speaking if he so desires, but it is a recognised rule that members shall only speak once, although we may be in Committee.

Mr. LESINA: Well, I am going to speak twice, and I am going to speak again to-morrow, and that will be a third time. I will exercise every right I possess within the four corners of the Standing Orders. It is generally recognised that members should speak only once on the Financial Statement, but circumstances have arisen which justify a complete departure from that unwritten rule. I personally have been made the subject of a most venomous, virulent, and slanderous attack.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. LESINA: I intend to reply—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member knows very well that when the Chairman rises he must take his seat. I want to point out to the hon. member that I endeavoured to stop the making of any personal attack. The hon. member attacked the Secretary for Lands in the first instance by imputing corrupt and improper motives. The hon. member has made his attack, and the Secretary for Lands has replied. It will be distinctly out of order for the hon. member to make any personally offensive reflections on the Secretary for Lands.

Mr. LESINA: Never in the course of my reading, which has extended through "May," "Bourinot," and our Standing Orders, have I heard of such a ruling being given in any Parliament.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Mr. LESINA: Under these circumstances it is suspicious, to put it as mildly as I can, that the Secretary for Lands should be permitted on behalf of the Government to make such charges against me, and then that I should be told by the Chairman that these personal attacks can be made without an opportunity being given for reply.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will make no further personal attack. If the hon. member is permitted to do so, the Secretary for Lands will expect to reply. Then the hon. member will wish to make another attack on the Secretary for Lands, and hon. members will see that there would be no end to attacks of this character. The hon. member has had his say, and the Secretary for Lands has had his, and it is only fair to ask both of them not to enter upon any further personal attack. I do not wish to do anything unfair to the hon. member or to any other hon. member.

Mr. J. LEAHY: It should be open to him to reply to new matter.

Mr. HARDACRE: He should be heard in defence, any way.

Mr. LESINA: The Secretary for Lands has been permitted to get in new matter, and it appears that I am to be excluded from making any defence. I do not suppose that the concentrated wisdom of all the Parliaments that have gone before this for the last 200 years has taken every possible precaution to provide for

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such a contingency as has now arisen. If in the course of a debate a person is traduced and slandered, and slandered apparently with impunity as far as the Standing Orders are concerned, then that person should have the right of being heard in defence. There is one statement which he made which I propose to reply to. I am not at all concerned. I have not lost my temper or felt aggrieved at what the Minister has said. You will remember that when I charged the Secretary for Agriculture with having faked butter-boxes sent to Victoria, and which a representative of the *Melbourne Age* saw with his own eyes, I asked him whether he had made any reply to the charges then alleged against him either in a Queensland paper or in the *Argus* or *Age*. Apparently he did not understand, or declined to reply. Now he puts up his colleague to tell me that if I hunt up the columns of the *Argus* I will discover the defence that the representative of the Silverwood Dairy Company made in Melbourne, which explanation, he says, was considered satisfactory. To whom was it satisfactory? To the hon. gentleman's firm or to the agent who represented them? If it had been considered satisfactory would he not have been in duty bound, both for his own personal sake as a merchant, and in the interests of the Cabinet and Parliament of which he is a member, to have republished in Queensland that explanation of his agent which was made in the columns of the *Argus*? I ask if he has done that?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Mr. LESINA: Where?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: In the Queensland Press.

Mr. LESINA: I have given all the explanation which the hon. member has given, and that explanation is distinctly and emphatically unsatisfactory. I have already put a question on the business-paper for to-morrow, asking the hon. gentleman who temporarily leads the Government and his colleague who has attacked me to-night with such incredible venom, interlarded with all the elegant diction which a university course can produce, for further opportunity of proving my case. The Secretary for Lands, who is supposed to be a paragon of parliamentary etiquette—a walking ball-room guide—refers to members as “pals” and “rabbits,” and I ask again, what right he has to do that if I have not the right to reply? I say again I have given notice of a question asking the Acting Premier if he will appoint a Select Committee to inquire into this very serious matter, and also the allegations of Mr. Cameron in reference to those two leases, Cooranga North and South. If the Minister will grant a Select Committee, I hope to be able to place before it certain evidence, and there are certain business people who will also be able to place before [9.30 p.m.] it certain evidence, to show that this business of faking brands by the Silverwood Dairy Company has been going on for some time past, and that only when the fact was revealed in the *Melbourne Age* did they stop it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is perfectly untrue. As far as the Select Committee is concerned, I will grant it with the greatest pleasure imaginable; but your statements are without the faintest foundation.

Mr. LESINA: I accept the hon. gentleman's promise with thanks.

Mr. KEOGH: Don't appoint it from that side of the House, though.

Mr. J. LEAHY: I do not think any side of the House would be unfair in a matter of that kind.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I don't care which side they come from.

Mr. LESINA: I think it can be left to the fair-mindedness of hon. members, because this is a matter altogether beyond the petty interests and passions and prejudices that may agitate hon. members at times, and which come to the surface during the height of party discussions. There is a bigger thing at stake than all these combined involved—and that is the honour of the State.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: And a fair reputation.

Mr. LESINA: Not only the reputation of the Acting Premier as a business man but the honour of the State is involved in the honour of one who administers a State Department and by his continuance in office, if it can be shown that he, as administrator of the Department of Agriculture, with a large body of well-paid experts under his control, whose business it is to see that produce exported from Queensland shall be of the very best quality. It is necessary to find out whether the hon. gentleman's firm, with or without his cognisance, has been for some considerable time past indulging in certain fraudulent practices.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Utterly wrong.

Mr. LESINA: If the hon. gentleman can clear himself of this charge, well and good. I am not concerned about it one way or the other, although the Secretary for Lands, in a low, sordid way, has imputed to me a desire to get level with his colleague because I owe him £10. I admit the liability, and, for aught that the hon. gentleman knows, I may pay the Secretary for Agriculture in the morning. That is more than he does. What about the £200 that he owes the Pastoralists' Union?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I do not owe them anything.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. gentleman denied that statement before in this House, and I rammed it down his throat. I saw the receipts in Mr. John Cameron's office, and so did the leader of the Labour party, Mr. Kerr, and the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. Bowman.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is absolutely untrue that I owe the Pastoralists' Union £200, and, what is more, that I ever got it from them.

Mr. LESINA: I saw the hon. gentleman's receipts.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I had it from the gentleman in Melbourne last session who was responsible for it.

Mr. MACARTNEY: You carry it too far.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I do not carry it too far.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I trust hon. members will not interject. I trust the hon. member for Clermont will continue his remarks without making personal attacks upon the Secretary for Lands.

Mr. LESINA: I certainly have no desire to irritate the Secretary for Lands by these references. They are merely statements of fact, and statements of fact ten times repeated should not irritate an hon. gentleman with an open mind like the hon. gentleman. He always led us to believe when we sat on that side of the Chamber, and he always posed as a fair-minded man and a candid critic of the party he sat behind—always, right up to the very last moment when he “paired” with me when I went to Sydney on that rather historic occasion to which he referred to-night.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I am extremely sorry that I ever asked Mr. Hamilton to find me a “pair.”

Mr. KEOGH: Do you admit owing that £10?

Mr. LESINA: I freely admit it. I do not suppose there are 10 per cent. of the members of this

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Committee who do not owe someone something at some time. The Secretary for Lands should be the last man in this Chamber to twit me with owing £10. I have not declined to pay it, although I might decline to pay one half-penny after the Secretary for Agriculture has handed a private and confidential letter to his colleague to make use of in this Chamber. I have a perfect right to repudiate the obligation altogether, but I do not propose to do so. Although we have gone through a long drought, and my finances are still somewhat straitened—(laughter)—I shall make an effort to raise the £10.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Don't distress yourself.

Mr. LESINA: It may be a salve to his wounded conscience when he reads in *Hansard* the extract in connection with the Silverwood Dairy Factory. This £10 seems to be worrying the hon. gentleman.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You have not got the full story yet.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. gentleman has not given the full story yet, because I have the evidence of the Secretary for Agriculture himself to prove that he told me that there was no hurry about paying. He told me that in a letter.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You need not distress yourself about it.

Mr. LESINA: A message was sent to me to that effect. At all events, it was an open, straightforward debt, signed, sealed and delivered, written on parliamentary paper, so that there could be no doubt about it; and, if the hon. gentleman likes, he can issue a writ for the recovery of the £10. Why should they adopt this paltry, spiteful method of attempting to save the reputation of the Government? If it is true that I owe the Secretary for Agriculture £10, how much does that help the case in connection with these two leases? Does it make the transaction any the sweeter?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Why had not you the courage to accept my challenge?

Mr. LESINA: I will meet it in time. My policy will be disclosed in due course. (Laughter.) In admitting the responsibility and liability in a small affair of £10—it is only a small one after all, and not one that is likely to break the Minister or distress me exceedingly—I might point out that the circumstances were strongly in favour of my keeping it dark. If I owe the Minister £10, what have I to gain from exposing his firm for faking butter and sending it away as Victorian? If I owed £100 and kept the matter dark, and it was ultimately discovered that I was aware of it and had said nothing about it, it might have been said that I kept my mouth shut because I owed the hon. gentleman £100, and that I knew on which side my bread was buttered.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You have not told all the facts yet, I can tell you.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. gentleman does not know all the facts. I might tell the Committee something that he does not know, and he might tell them some things that I do not know, and which they do not know; but, if the hon. gentleman is going to adopt those tactics in his attempts to bolster up the fast-failing reputation of this Government, he will probably by and by make an active canvass of the career of every hon. member who acts the part of candid critic of the Government. The hon. member for Burnett has acted as a rather candid friend, and I expect he will have that hon. member's career run down to the roots.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He has nothing to be ashamed of, which is more than you can say.

Mr. LESINA: If you are candid in your criticism, then the Oxford Don or the Cambridge

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Don of the Ministry will try to discover something about you and bring it before this Chamber.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Mr. LESINA: There is one other point that the hon. gentleman made, and that was with respect to a railway pass granted to Mrs. Lesina. I never denied the fact that I got a pass for Mrs. Lesina, and I told my electors that I got a pass to enable her to vi-it Clermont with me. I have always been an open advocate, both in this House and out of it, of the granting of passes once or twice a year to members for the use of their wives in visiting their constituencies. It is done in New South Wales. The federal members avail themselves of passes throughout Queensland; and the Minister himself, the present leader of the Opposition, the President of the Legislative Council, Mr. Arthur Morgan, who was leader of the Government, and half a dozen more have all had passes for their wives. Other Labour members besides myself had passes, but their names do not appear in the return. I know that, and the Commissioner knows it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Name them.

Mr. LESINA: I am not going to name them.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You cannot name them.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. gentleman might name them in order to throw mud at them. It is no disgrace for a member to get a pass for his wife and family. Richer men than I am have got these passes. The hon. member not only gets passes, but special trains, and if he gets special trains, surely I am entitled to get a free pass for my wife.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: All the names are given.

Mr. LESINA: I am not discredited by the revelation of the fact that I got a pass for my wife; I never attempted to keep the matter secret myself. I believe the question was asked with the least friendship to myself, but I do not feel aggrieved. This is another of those paltry attempts to secure a passing or temporary advantage at my expense. I say again, if I want a pass for my wife I will apply for it. I won't apply for special trains for other men's wives, anyhow. I would like to see the thing established as a matter of right. I believe the Commissioner, or Mr. Pratten, will always grant a pass to a member who goes to him unless the Minister has expressly denied it. There is no harm in it. We are not rich men. I have been engaged in politics in this State for seven or eight years, and I have not got a banking account or a penny to my credit. If I go out of politics I certainly won't own a block of land or a couple of terrace houses like the Home Secretary.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must again ask the hon. member to discontinue making these personal reflections on hon. members.

Mr. LESINA: I shall drop that matter, and refer to another thing the hon. gentleman said. You permitted him, Mr. Jackson, to go back to *Hansard*, seven, eight, or nine years ago, and read out extracts from speeches delivered in this Chamber by myself. You heard those extracts read, and probably know the circumstances under which those words were uttered. We then sat on the other side of the House as members of the Parliamentary Labour party, and if you did not altogether approve of those sentiments, you did not, as far as my memory serves me, or the records of *Hansard* show, express any dissatisfaction. The Minister for Lands was sitting on this side then, behind the hon. member for Bulloo, as a good supporter of his Government, and he did not under the circumstances then existing get up and attack me for using such language towards the hon. member for Bulloo. Why does he refer to it to-night?

Mr. J. LEAHY: He incited it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member for Bulloo can take his part extremely well. He doesn't want your assistance. He knocked you sky high on that occasion.

Mr. LESINA: That is a matter of opinion. The hon. gentleman later on helped to knock him sky high.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I did not help to knock him sky high—it is an absolutely untrue statement.

Mr. J. LEAHY: He paired with you.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. gentleman denies that, and according to parliamentary procedure I must accept his denial.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You have got to do it.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. gentleman secured a portfolio in this Cabinet, and now sits as a member of the Government which I am criticising.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Sit in front of me like a man, instead of behind me.

Mr. LESINA: With all due respect to the hon. member, I am entitled to sit where I like, and express myself where I like in this Chamber.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No you are not. It is breaking parliamentary law.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. gentleman has been breaking parliamentary law all night until you restrained him, Mr. Jackson. The hon. gentleman is using very insulting expressions under his breath. It only shows that there is more of the snob in him than there is of the gentleman.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask the hon. gentleman to withdraw that remark.

Mr. LESINA: I withdraw the term "snob" out of respect to all bootmakers. (Laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman must withdraw it unreservedly.

Mr. LESINA: I withdraw it without any further qualification. There was another point raised by the hon. gentleman in the course of his speech to which I propose to make some reference. I had intended to bring the matter up on my first speech, but did not do so because of certain circumstances which led me to change my mind—that was with respect to an interjection which appears in *Hansard*. I asked the present leader of the Government a question the other day with respect to the uses to which the "Lucinda" had been put, and for other information which I thought I was entitled to as a representative of the taxpayers. Instead of the information being vouchsafed to me the Premier sat quiet and declined to reply. I took the first opportunity I had, when a motion was moved by the leader of the Government that we go into Committee of Supply to deal with the Financial Statement, to ventilate, as a grievance, this breach of the rights of members of this Chamber. In the course of my speech the Premier interjected, and I got up and asked was I in order in asking for the papers in connection with the Native Cat mining syndicate to be published. The hon. gentlemen went seven or eight years back to quote a speech.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Are you dealing now with what occurred the other day?

Mr. LESINA: The hon. gentleman's narrative.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Everybody knows what a travesty of fact this statement is.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. gentleman quoted to-night from *Hansard* that when the Premier declined to answer my question with respect to the use to which the "Lucinda" was put, I then got up and asked, without notice, would I be in

order in asking that the papers in connection with the Native Cat mining syndicate be published?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It was in a most insulting way you did it.

Mr. LESINA: I asked that, and the hon. gentleman has gone to work to unearth the speech made by me during the absence of Mr. Kidston in England when he was sick and on leave—whither he had been sent by the Labourites in order that he might recover his health—and in his absence the hon. member for Bulloo made an attack on his connection with the Native Cat syndicate.

Mr. J. LEAHY: It was at the time he was on these benches and before he went. I never attack a man behind his back.

Mr. LESINA: I got up and defended him in a strenuous speech.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes, he was referring to you in his speech.

Mr. J. LEAHY: He was present on the only time I ever spoke about it.

Mr. LESINA: Yes, it was during his absence that I defended the Premier on that particular occasion. The Minister quoted something to-night as an evidence, from his point of view, that for the sake of mere political spleen I was prepared to go back on the defence I then made of the hon. gentleman at present at the head of the Government. I did nothing of the sort. At that time I had not the facts of the case in my possession. All I had to go on was the statement made by Mr. Kidston himself, which appears in *Hansard*, which I read when I was trying to defend him. But since then I have come into possession of facts in connection with the Native Cat syndicate, which facts are contained in documents at the Mines Office. The hon. gentleman has gone to the police office—he has invaded the confidential privacy of the police offices, apparently with the consent of his colleagues, and he is doing a dangerous thing.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I knew it years ago.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. gentleman says he knew it, and yet I have heard private members say that they had seen the private and confidential documents of the Police Department. How did the hon. gentleman get them? Now I am going to put the facts plainly before the Committee.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I know of certain documents.

Mr. LESINA: I would like the hon. member to make his statements outside where I could get at him by a criminal prosecution, and he would have to call his witnesses. No, he would sooner make them here under privilege. There is nothing to prevent anybody going to the police and making a complaint, and afterwards bringing it up here.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do you deny that such a document exists?

Mr. LESINA: I am not going to deny anything. I am not going to be cross-examined by the hon. gentleman even although he is a barrister. He wants to practise on me because he never gets any practice in the courts. (Laughter.)

Mr. J. LEAHY: He has selected a bad subject.

Mr. LESINA: Yes, as he will find out by and by. I am going to put the facts as they come to me in connection with the Native Cat. The hon. gentleman has made statements which might have an injurious effect on my prospects for the coming election.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Deal with them on the Mining Estimates.

Mr. LESINA: No, I want what I have got to say to go to the country cheek by jowl with the hon. member's statements, so that the electors

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will have the whole thing before them. Briefly put, I have here seven points which I wish to put before this Committee.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Move for those papers.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. gentleman thinks that because he is able to deal with the police records, he is going to deal with this.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. gentleman is going to read these documents he will not be in order.

Mr. LESINA: A member is judged by the public and his constituents from the standpoint he takes in this Chamber. If this statement is allowed to go unchallenged, my constituents will read in *Hansard* only one-half of the case, and it will put me in a false position. No member of the Committee would like a statement to go against his name, and allow it to go unchallenged, especially when he has got the facts at his fingers' ends, and with due propriety wishes to put them into the columns of our journal. I think I have a right, under the circumstances, to get these seven points into *Hansard*.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman will not be in order in referring to that matter. I ask him to have some regard for the Chairman's ruling.

Mr. LESINA: I have no desire to dispute your ruling in this matter. But what things are in order and what things are out of order? You are the judge. You say that certain things are in order when the Minister deals with them. The Minister was in order when he referred to the Native Cat, and I am out of order when I deal with it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I simply quoted what you said.

Mr. LESINA: And I will quote what the paper said. Am I in order in quoting from a newspaper an extract bearing upon the matter?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has no right to make a personal attack on any other member.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LESINA: The Minister for Lands does not take his grumbling so quietly as I took mine. He is wriggling about here as if he were sitting on some prickly pear—some of the prickly pear from the prickly pear selections. (Laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member made a long speech and the Minister replied to him. Now the hon. member is entering upon another long speech, and is opening up new matter. I have given the hon. member fair warning, and now ask him again to discontinue his personal attacks on Ministers.

Mr. LESINA: I am not attacking Ministers. I will put it this way: The mining industry is referred to in the Governor's Speech and also in this Statement, and that is a matter which you will remember that I did not refer to at all. As a mining representative I am entitled to be heard on mining matters, and I would like to explain the way that mining matters are put before us in Queensland. We have before us a Mining Bill which proposes certain amendments in our mining law. I regret that we are not making more progress with that measure, and in that you, Mr. Jackson, will join with me as a mining member. It is a matter that deserves the earnest attention of mining members generally. In Queensland of recent years mining has fallen into somewhat bad odour. Mr. Millican, the selected candidate to contest the next election at Charters Towers with Mr. Paull, was recently interviewed by the *Daily Mail*, a very enterprising journal. They will excuse me getting a small "ad." in for that journal, but the Premier got a good "ad." and gave them a big cheque for it. Anyone

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who read that interview would see that Mr. Millican pointed out that the names of certain mining districts in Queensland actually stank in the nostrils of the investing public. This, he tells us, was due to the flotation and booming and misrepresentation amongst unscrupulous persons. If we can stop that kind of thing it is by passing an up-to-date Mining Act. We all know what the mining industry is. It has been referred to in the Financial Statement, and it was referred to by the Treasurer before, and he said it should be encouraged. Now, the best way to encourage it is to prevent the flotation of cronk shows, to prevent the salting of mines, to prevent the alteration of documents dealing with surveys of mines, and to prevent the issuing of faked prospectuses. It is a thing that every mining member has an interest in, and I particularly, as a mining member, have an interest in it. I can tell you of the manner in which there is an interference with the maps issued by the Mines Department, and I take this opportunity of giving a description of this policy of salting and booming.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: This is out of order. Deal with it on the Mining Estimates.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. gentleman is attempting to dictate to me and to the Chairman. He has no right to do either. I am not great guns on parliamentary procedure; I cannot compare myself with the hon. gentleman in that respect. He may have considerable influence with the Committee, but I do not know if that influence extends to the Government. As an illustration of these unfortunate financial methods which are tending to ruin the mining industry in the eyes of investors, I would like to give you a simple case. Here is a case which we will call by any apocryphal name you like. We will call it the Dingo Mining Company. Here is a promoter who gets hold of this mine.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: This is dirty. You are disregarding the rules of the House, and you ought to be ashamed of yourself.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I called the hon. member to order and said he could not get in that document, and he appears to me to be trying to get it in by a subterfuge.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Hear, hear! It is a dirty piece of business.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope hon. members will not interject when the Chairman is addressing the House. I ask the hon. member for Clermont not to pursue that subject any further, or I shall have to treat him as disregarding the order of the Chair.

Mr. KEOGH: Name him!

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member will take notice of my ruling.

Mr. LESINA: My experience of being "named" in this Committee is rather extensive, and I have no desire to come into

[10 p.m.] conflict with the Chair. The

Minister for Lands maintains that I am endeavouring by a subterfuge to get in facts concerning a mining swindle. I can tell the hon. gentleman that if I do not get them in now, I shall get them in on another occasion.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The honest way to do it is by moving a direct motion.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. member can call "not formal" to that motion, and it would then go down to the bottom of the business-paper, and I would not get it till Christmas.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is the proper course for the hon. member to take, and he has no right to refer to the matter in this debate.

Mr. LESINA: Whose speech is this, the Minister for Lands' or mine? We shall see

about 400 interjections in the report of my speech to-morrow. I made a few interjections when the hon. gentleman was speaking, and I was called to order.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is one of the most persistent interjectors in this House. (Hear, hear!) At the same time, I hope the Minister for Lands will not continue to interject.

Mr. LESINA: Perhaps the Minister for Lands will now permit me to pursue the even tenor of my way—it's about the only tenner I have got. (Laughter.) As I cannot refer to this matter, which I am anxious to do, I shall leave it for some other occasion. But I should like to assure the Minister that, in the new light that has been shed upon me in connection with this matter, I was perfectly justified in asking that question of the Speaker the other day. If the hon. gentleman knew the circumstances of the case, I am sure that he would agree with me in this matter. I can give the signed documents, the dates, and the report of Mr. Maitland, as well as other things in connection with this matter; and they show that a gigantic fraud was perpetrated, and very nearly reached the acme of success. But on account of a threat of legal proceedings the matter was dropped. A signed document was put in admitting that, and the sum of £500 given in shares.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. LESINA: I am simply pointing these things out by the way. The Minister must agree with me that there has been a miscarriage of justice in regard to some gentlemen who are not very remotely interested in the butter industry, and that if it had not been for the heavy thundering of the Melbourne Press we should probably have heard nothing about it, since certain persons exercise a predominant influence in the Cabinet. I am driven to the conclusion that this Government is not the clean potato.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Do I understand the hon. member to impute corruption to the Government?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He does most distinctly.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member is doing that he is distinctly out of order. I am sorry I did not notice the hon. member sooner, or I should have stopped him, as he is distinctly out of order in imputing personal corruption to any member of this Chamber. The only way in which the hon. member can proceed in a matter of that kind is by moving a substantive motion in the House.

Mr. LESINA: I do not dispute your ruling, but if I desire to discuss the matter at any great length there is nothing in the world to prevent me moving the adjournment of the House to-morrow, if I can get five members to support me, to call attention to the different treatment to which the butter industry has been subjected by the Acting Premier in different cases. I should be only doing my duty in a patriotic sense in calling attention to such a matter, and I propose to do my duty even if in doing so I offend the tender susceptibilities of Disraeli's phantom who presides over the embarrassed Lands Office. I propose to take that course in vindication of my action in this House. With respect to the other matters the hon. member referred to, they had been hinted at for some considerable time past. The hon. gentleman does not know all the circumstances of the case. I have known for some time that one or two members have been engaged in the dirty work of disseminating these things about me, and that they have gone among my constituents to do so, but so far I have been unable to lay any one of them by the heels. But the moment

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I do so, I will take the same course with them as I would take with the Minister for Lands. If he will make outside this Chamber the statement he has made here to-night with respect to certain matters, I will rip a libel writ into him as quick as winking, and give him an opportunity of offering to the legal fraternity in this city some of the £200 he defrauded the Pastoralists' Union of.

Mr. MURPHY (*Croydon*): I feel some diffidence in speaking now, after the big guns of the House have been firing at one another. As a matter of fact, I have no grievance against the Government. Looking at matters from a purely Labour point of view, the Government have not done everything that the Labour party desire, but, as the *Worker* pointed out when this alliance was entered into between the Labour party and the other section of the Government, we could not expect to get all that we desired; and in the manifesto issued by Premier Morgan it pointed out we were given considerably more than we had any right to expect. When speaking the other night, the hon. member for Clermont twitted members of this party with sitting quietly by and permitting the Government to pay Dr. Maxwell £3,000 a year, and expenses, which in one case he stated were £100, and which he afterwards increased to £1,000.

Mr. LESINA: No; I said he got £800 or £900 for cab hire and expenses.

Mr. MURPHY: So far as I and certain other members of the Labour party are concerned, we had absolutely nothing to do with the formation of this coalition. There were occasions in the history of this Government when the hon. member for Clermont and other members of the party who are continually referring to the fact that members of the Labour party sit quietly down and permit Dr. Maxwell to draw £3,000 a year might have shown their disapproval. I remember that when I came into this House in 1904, when a vote of want of confidence was moved by the Opposition, one of the charges against the Government was that they had re-appointed Dr. Maxwell at a salary of £3,000 a year. What position did the hon. member for Leichhardt, Mr. Hardacre, or the hon. member for Clermont, Mr. Lesina, or certain other hon. members who were continually criticising the Government for keeping Dr. Maxwell in the service of the State, take up on that occasion? On the occasion of the vote of want of confidence in 1904 it only required one member of the Labour party, or one member sitting behind the Government, to cross the floor of the House and turn the Government out of office.

Mr. HARDACRE: I called attention to that particular fact.

Mr. MURPHY: If the hon. member thought the Government had acted so badly, it was his duty to have walked across the floor, and turned the Government out. It is absolutely unfair for members to be continually twitting other members of the Labour party for sitting down quietly and permitting this appointment, when they know perfectly well that under the agreement entered into on that occasion, Dr. Maxwell has still two years to run. They supported the Government; they were perfectly satisfied with the Government then. They went to the country as an alliance. The members of the Central Political Executive of the Labour party sat with certain members of the coalition. Certain members of the Parliamentary Labour party at that time absolutely objected to the hon. member for the Valley, Mr. Bowman, and Mr. Seymour, who were then members of the Central Political Executive, from sitting on that advisory board, because they were not members of Parliament. At that time—it is just as well to point this out—the *Worker*, which is now continually denouncing the coalition and the members of the

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Parliamentary Labour party who are supporting the coalition, was then very favourable to the coalition. I have looked up a leader which appeared in the *Worker* of 23rd July, 1904. It was headed, "Difficulties of the Alliance," and it said—

"To clash or not to clash?" That is the question. "Whether it is nobler in the party to suffer the stings and arrows of outrageous boodlers or to take up arms against the clash of candidates, and, by opposing, end them?"

It is evident that if the coalition is to continue and to emerge triumphant from the elections, there must be a liberal spirit of give-and-take observed in the matter of seats to be contested.

The pitting of Labour and Morgan candidates against each other for seats held by the enemy, can only result in defeat and disaster.

That a course so fraught with evil for the State must be averted at whatever cost, most Labourites will agree. The necessity for action will scarcely be denied. The matter at issue is not the why, but the how.

In a number of electorates the difficulty will not arise, the claims of one party or the other being so obviously paramount as to leave no room for difference of opinion.

But there are other electorates in which clashing must eventuate, unless some agreement is arrived at, and rival claims are adjusted in a friendly spirit "out of court."

An effort is at present being made to bring about this desirable consummation, but it can only succeed with the loyal and disinterested co-operation of the Labour organisations concerned.

The *Worker*, as the official mouthpiece of the organised movement, and the standard-bearer of what is often termed "extremism," expresses the earnest hope that the effort may be crowned with success, and that in those electorates where seats have been jointly allotted to the Morgan candidates, the organisations will recognise the situation, and loyally subordinate their laudable ambitions to the pressing needs of the country.

* * *

In face of a common danger it would be the fatalist error not to make common cause. Shall the allies fight each other while the guns of the enemy are turned upon both?

* * *

The arrangement arrived at has been made in the best interests of the party. Yet there is nothing to prevent the organisations concerned from ignoring the compromise and battling for their own hands—nothing, that is, save their sense of party loyalty and of the mutual obligations of the alliance.

The *Worker* believes, however, that a patriotic regard for the well-being of the movement as a whole will prevail, and that the local bodies will not insist upon the letter of their rights, but accept the arrangement made as the best possible under all the conditions.

Therefore, when I rise to say that I have nothing against the Government, I look at the matter purely from a coalition point of view. I recollect that on the occasion of that vote of want of confidence in 1904 that the very men who are now continually denouncing the Government were its strongest supporters.

Mr. HARDACRE: We know them a good deal better now.

Mr. MURPHY: The hon. member knew perfectly well on that occasion what the policy of the Government was.

Mr. HARDACRE: Had I known I would not have supported them.

Mr. MURPHY: I have no objection to members of this party criticising the actions of the Government. They are perfectly justified in doing that. What I do object to is that they should continually denounce members who are sitting in a coalition which they themselves created. I remember when the hon. member for Clermont recently came into my electorate he made great capital out of a speech which he delivered during the crisis of 1904. He pointed out that he had defended the coalition so well that the Government issued 25,000 copies of his address in order to show the Labour electors of Queensland that the Labour party were perfectly satisfied with the Govern-

ment. He also remarked that when Mr. Philp crossed over to the Opposition side of the House he smiled. "Why," asked the hon. member, "did he smile?" Because he thought the traditional policy of the Labour party would prevent the Labour members from coalescing with any party in the House and keeping him out of office. He also said: "We were quite satisfied to join forces with Mr. Denham, Mr. Bell, Mr. Blair, and Mr. Morgan," and added that, although the only promises made were adult suffrage and exemption under the income tax up to £100—it was, though not a liberal programme, a better programme than they were likely to obtain if they allowed the other side to remain in office. As I said, I have no objection to Labour members criticising the actions of the Government, or differing from the Government, but I must again repeat that it is absolutely unfair for Labour members to condemn other Labour members for supporting the coalition.

Mr. HARDACRE: They pass syndicate railways.

Mr. MURPHY: The hon. member for Leichhardt knew perfectly well when he went to Mr. Morgan, and obtained a letter from him, that the Etheridge railway was a part of the policy of the Government. Not only did the hon. member for Leichhardt ask for a letter from Mr. Morgan to show that he had confidence in him, he went further. He came to the members of the Labour party—the men he is continually denouncing, and begged that we would pass a vote of confidence in him at the same time.

Mr. HARDACRE: No, I did not.

Mr. MURPHY: I say the hon. member did.

Mr. J. LEAHY: Go on washing your dirty linen.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Croydon must refrain from making a personal attack on the hon. member for Leichhardt.

Mr. MURPHY: Yes, certainly. Only I just recollect that the hon. member for Leichhardt was not too particular about making personal attacks on myself and other members during the passage of the Etheridge Railway Bill, and I am always prepared to take tea with the hon. member for Leichhardt, or anyone else.

Mr. HARDACRE: A few words can settle you all right.

Mr. MURPHY: Possibly they can, but I will promise the hon. member that I will take a lot more settling than he thinks. I had no desire to refer to any of these matters at all. I have said already that I have no objection to other members acting as they think fit, provided they leave me alone.

Mr. BARBER: It is a good time for a wash, now that there has been some rain.

Mr. MURPHY: I do not know that it is a particularly good time for a wash.

The CHAIRMAN: I did not understand the hon. member for Leichhardt to make any attack on the hon. member for Croydon during this debate.

Mr. J. LEAHY: Hit something, anyhow.

Mr. MURPHY: The hon. member for Bundaberg during the course of his speech complained about the Government charging friendly societies 1s. for keeping their accounts in the Government Savings Bank; but I do not think the hon. member would like to see the Government turned out of office on that account. I think it is a very reasonable charge, as other banks charge 10s. In the Savings Bank, unless the account earns 1s. interest, no charge is made. I know that on one occasion all the money I had left in my bank was 5s., and it was taken at the end of the year to pay for keeping my account.

Mr. BARBER: I have letters from fifty-five societies complaining about it.

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Mr. MURPHY: Now, the Government have not done everything we would like to see them do, but they have certainly kept the promises they made to the party, and surely we are bound by the compact entered into. We have got a great deal more than was promised. We have got a great deal more than the Labour papers expected we would get, and I say the compact having been entered into for this Parliament, it is the duty of the party and the organisations to keep to the compact as closely as possible.

Mr. HARDACRE: And hang the electors.

Mr. MURPHY: No, I have no desire to do that. I have always made my position clear.

Mr. HARDACRE: You signed the platform?

Mr. MURPHY: Yes, I did.

Mr. HARDACRE: And you have departed from it.

Mr. MURPHY: No, I have not. At all events, if I have been a sinner in any way, I am an unrepentant sinner. I have stuck loyally to the pledges I gave my electors, and if they are dissatisfied with my actions they can turn me out at the next election, and if they do I am not going to cry about it.

Mr. KERR: You have their confidence.

Mr. MURPHY: I am not going to Mr. Kidston and ask him to give me a letter that I have his confidence. It is a matter of perfect indifference to me whether I have or not. I must confess that during the debate we have heard very little of the Financial Statement. The Treasurer frankly admits that the Government have not been able to do everything they desired to do, but they have done those things which appeared most urgent without losing sight of their first duty—that of making the revenue suffice for the disbursements of the year. I must congratulate the Government on having kept the promises which Premier Morgan and Mr. Kidston gave in reference to the income tax. They said that, as soon as circumstances permitted it, they would increase the exemption. I am pleased to see that they have increased it to £160, and I hope Queensland will so continue to prosper that ultimately we will get an exemption of £200 on all incomes. I think it would be undesirable for the Government to act on the suggestion of some members to reduce railway freights. The railways should pay interest on the capital invested, and, if you reduce railway freights, the loss will have to come out of the pockets of the people by means of taxation. I say that our railway system, as a whole, should pay interest on the capital invested. The agitation for reduced freights is in the interest of the largely-populated southern centres. These people never howled when the Gulf rates were increased 25 per cent.

Mr. CAMPBELL: What was the result in New Zealand?

Mr. MURPHY: I think it was beneficial, but I do not think it is going to benefit Queensland at the present time. In New Zealand, while they were reducing railway freights they were piling up a bigger interest burden by continually borrowing money. This is the first Government in Australia which has ceased to borrow, and which has stopped the sale of land for revenue purposes. The Labour party are continually taken to task because they permitted the Government to sell land, but when the coalition was entered into it was thoroughly understood not only by the organisations, but by the leaders of the organisations, that the sale of land could not be discontinued for some time. I am very glad to see that the Treasurer does not propose to raise any revenue from that source this year, and that last year he only raised £8,000 by the sale of land. During the debate members on the

other side have attributed the surplus to the good seasons, and have given the Treasurer very little credit for anything he has done.

Mr. CAMPBELL: Do you not think the main credit is due to Providence?

Mr. MURPHY: Yes, I do, and I recollect that when this Government first came into office certain Queenslanders gathered in a little town-ship in Western Australia and they sang—"Praise God from whom all blessings flow." Still I think some credit is due to the Treasurer, and I may point out that the Hon. A. J. Thynne, who has been connected with the political history of the State for many years, gave the Treasurer praise recently at the annual dinner of Queenslanders in London, and I have taken this interesting extract from the *Sydney Bulletin*—

Thynne's Bananland friends are preparing to give him a warm time when he returns. Thynne is their mouth-piece in the Upper House—the House of Stinking Fish. But he is now in England, trying to raise money for the Chillagoe Company to build the Etheridge Railway with, and a man who wants to raise a lot of money can't afford to say that his country is ruined, and gone to the dogs and the devil. His friends can hardly believe that it was A. J. Thynne who said at the annual Queensland dinner—

"We used to have great times and a great surplus when we spent from £2,000,000 to £3,000,000 a year of loan money. Things were lively then; public and private expenditure were on a lavish scale. But we are happily past that. Public expenditure has been cut down to the very lowest figure to which a careful Treasurer could possibly reduce it. Private expenditure has also been diminished to reasonable proportions. And what is the result? The people of Queensland—apart from a few public speakers who are generally a great nuisance—have turned their attention to actual work; and it is by actual work during the last two or three years that they have been able, without the aid of borrowed money, to show a magnificent surplus, and to make substantial progress individually and collectively. They put their shoulder to the collar, pulled their heavy load over the hill, and have now in front of them a period of greater prosperity than they have ever hitherto had in prospect."

I think it is to Mr. Thynne's credit that he spoke so well for Queensland, because most Legislative

Councillors who go to the old [10.30 p.m.] country from Australia are in the habit of abusing their country. But

Mr. Thynne knew that Queensland was a good country, and that all the talk about socialistic legislation is bunkum. As a Northerner, I am very pleased to notice the amount of interest which has lately been evinced not only in this Chamber, but in the metropolitan papers, in the far Northern portion of the State. On every possible occasion reference has been made in this House to the Cloncurry Railway. The Government have been severely criticised for not having already started that railway; but according to the Secretary for Railways, every effort is being made to push on as early as possible, and I understand that a start has now been made with laying the rails. But, although the Government have been severely criticised for delay, the people of Cloncurry have been waiting for over twenty years for railway communication. That district—which is now referred to as one of the most extensive mineral fields in Australia—a few years ago was not considered of sufficient importance by the State to justify the construction of a railway to it. I am glad to see that opinions have changed; but, as one who recollects all the agitation in Normanton for the construction of that railway, I regret that the line is not going from Normanton. I heard the Premier, during his recent visit to Normanton, when speaking to a deputation that waited on him, express his regret that some member of the Ministry had not visited North Queensland earlier, when, undoubtedly, the railway would have been constructed from Normanton. If anyone looks at the map or travels over the

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country, he must come to the conclusion that, in the interests of the mining industry in the Cloncurry field, the proper way for the railway to have gone was from Normanton. So far as the Cloncurry people are concerned, they will no doubt be perfectly satisfied if they get the railway. The question of the port does not concern them at all; but, if the district becomes as rich as we all hope and anticipate it will become, it will not be very long before there is an agitation in Cloncurry, which will also spread to this Chamber, for the construction of a railway to Normanton, because it is hardly likely that people are going to pay 500 miles of carriage to Townsville when within 250 miles there is also a good port. The line from Normanton would go right through the centre of the mineral belt, while some of the best portions of the district will not be tapped by the extension from Richmond. At the same time, I am very pleased to see that the people of Cloncurry are getting railway communication, and I trust that the Premier's statement that the railway will go right through to Cloncurry within two years will be carried out. I have nothing further to say with regard to the Financial Statement, only to congratulate the Government on having fulfilled their promise regarding the income tax.

Mr. LESINA: What about the 1 per boy who was brought from the Gulf district?

Mr. MURPHY: The whole of the facts of that case were placed before the Premier by certain gentlemen when he was in Normanton. I want to say in fairness to the Premier that he expressed himself very dissatisfied indeed with the way in which the boy was treated. I intended to refer to the matter provided the hon. member for Carpentaria did not do so. It was a matter which he had been particularly interested in, and, as it was in his electorate, I thought it was only courteous to leave him to deal with it. For £35 arrangements could have been made to take the lad away by sea. I know the boy and his people well. He was a real smart little fellow. He was the smartest lad in the Golden Gate school, and I was very sorry indeed to learn that he did not receive better treatment from the authorities. The Premier promised to inquire into the matter; but whether he has been able to do so I do not know. In addition to granting the exemption in the income tax, the Government have not only returned the £95,000 which was taken off the public servants during the period of retrenchment, but the increases put on the Estimates this year amount to something like £52,000, and I am particularly pleased to see that the greater part of that money is distributed amongst the poorer paid members of the service.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported progress, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

The House adjourned at nineteen minutes to 11 o'clock.