

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 13 DECEMBER 1910**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, 13 DECEMBER, 1910.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (W. D. Armstrong, Esq., *Lockyer*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

## ASSENT TO BILLS.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER announced the receipt of messages from the Governor, intimating that His Excellency had assented to the following Bills:—

Margarine Bill;

Harrisville School of Arts Land Mortgage Bill;

Mackay School of Arts Land Sale Bill.

## PAPERS.

The following paper was laid on the table of the House:—Papers in connection with the pooling and sampling of cream at depôts in the West Moreton district.

The following paper, laid on the table of the House, was ordered to be printed:—Regulations under the Navigation Act of 1876.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS.

REPORT IN "BRISBANE COURIER."

Mr. MULCAHY (*Gympie*): Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I desire to make a personal explanation. In the *Courier* of to-day I am quoted, or rather misquoted, as follows, in connection with the railway proposals which were before the House last evening:—

Mr. Mulcahy said he had ascertained that the money for the four lines was to come from the big loan, and said he should oppose all four. He objected to big loans. Queensland could not afford the money.

As a matter of fact, I did not make any reference to loans at all, and a reference to the shorthand report by the *Hansard* staff will bear that out. That speech, I believe, was made by the hon. member for Croyden, Mr. Murphy.

Mr. MURPHY: Hear, hear! I made it all right. (Laughter.)

## GAYNDAH TO MUNDUBBERA RAILWAY.

Mr. WHITE (*Musgrave*): I wish to make a personal explanation. I regret very much that I was not in my place in the House last night when the Gayndah to Mundubbera line was being considered. The reason of my absence was due to an interview which the chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and the Hon. C. F. Nielson had with the Minister for Railways on Thursday last; and I was informed that these Railway Bills, including the line from Gayndah to Mundubbera, would come before the House on Tuesday—that is to-day. That is the reason why I was not in my place last night.

Mr. COYNE (*Warrego*): Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in making a speech.

about a Bill which has already been passed in the House, because that is what he is doing?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member may make a personal explanation if it is purely a personal explanation.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. W. T. Paget, *Mackay*): May I be allowed to say a word in explanation, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Mr. COYNE: No.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No reply can be allowed to a personal explanation.

#### PROPOSED NEW RAILWAYS.

##### PLANS, ETC., TABLED.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS laid on the table the plans, sections, and books of reference of the following proposed railway extensions:—

Blackbutt to Yarraman, 14 miles 62 chains;

Miles to Juandah, 44 miles 6 chains; and

Bullamon to Dirranbandi, 39 miles 51 chains;

together with the Railway Commissioner's reports thereon, which were ordered to be printed.

#### QUESTIONS.

##### MINING UNDER BUNDANBA RACECOURSE.

Mr. KEOGH (*Rosewood*) asked the Secretary for Mines—

Has a lease been granted to a company giving them the right to mine under the racecourse at Bundanba; if so, will the royalty derivable therefrom be handed over to the trustees for the purpose of keeping said course and fences in proper order?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. J. G. Appel, *Albert*) replied—

A lease has been granted to Herbert George to mine under the racecourse reserve at Bundanba, but royalty, as provided by the Mining Act of 1898, is payable to the Crown.

##### LADIES' COMPARTMENTS ON ROCKHAMPTON MAIL TRAIN.

Mr. BRESLIN (*Port Curtis*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. Is it correct that on the Rockhampton mail train, timed to leave Brisbane Central at 10.25 p.m. on 8th December, 1910, there was only one regular first-class ladies' compartment?

2. Is it correct that this compartment was marked "Reserved"?

3. Why was it so ticketed, how many persons travelled in it, what extra fees were paid?

4. Is it correct that ladies willing to pay sleeping-car fees were unable to find adequate or any accommodation in this "ladies only" compartment?

5. Is it correct that an ordinary lavatory compartment, hastily transformed into a "ladies only," was very much overcrowded?

6. Does the department know how many persons the Health Department would consider sufficient for a compartment transformed as in previous question?

7. Has the department any idea as to how many persons travelled in this compartment when it left Brisbane?

8. Does the Minister not consider that the time has arrived when an up-to-date nightly service should be instituted between Brisbane and Rockhampton?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

1. One saloon compartment (to seat sixteen) was reserved for ladies.

2. No.

3. See No. 2.

4. I cannot say.

5. I have no advice of this.

6. No.

7. No.

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8. The present traffic does not warrant a train between Brisbane and Rockhampton every night.

One saloon compartment with lavatory accommodation was set apart for ladies, and ladies could also travel in the other half of the saloon, which was available for ladies and gentlemen. Both sleeping-cars were full. Two ladies did make application for sleeping berths ten minutes before the train was due out, and it was then impossible to arrange for them. The station-master reports that the train was not overcrowded, and that no application was made to him, nor was any complaint made regarding insufficient accommodation.

##### PUBLIC SERVICE REGULATIONS AND SICK LEAVE.

Mr. MULLAN (*Charters Towers*), for Mr. Allen, asked the Chief Secretary—

1. To what date have the new Public Service Regulations in respect of sick leave been made retrospective?

2. Has there been kept a full and complete record since that date of the whole of the time lost through sickness by members of the public service?

3. If not, in what departments have there been kept such records?

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Kidston, *Rockhampton*) replied—

1. To the date of the first appointment of each officer.

2 and 3. A full record concerning the majority of officers now in the public service has been kept; but, in all cases, the officer's record, complete or otherwise, will be taken as indicating the sick leave which may be granted to him.

##### CHAIRMEN OF WAGES BOARDS.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

Will he kindly place on the table of the House, for the use of members, a return giving—

(a) The names of gentlemen who have acted, or are at present acting, as chairmen of wages boards;

(b) The number of boards of which one man is chairman;

(c) The fees, travelling and other expenses, received by each from the date the Wages Board Act came into force up to the 30th November, 1910?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Bulimba*) replied—

Yes.

##### LEASE OF RAILWAY BOOKSTALLS.

Mr. LESINA asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. When did Messrs. Gordon and Gotch's three years' lease of the railway bookstalls expire?

2. Have fresh tenders been called, as is usual, for the stalls?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. W. T. Paget, *Mackay*) replied—

1. On 30th June, 1910.

2. No. In consideration of Messrs. Gordon and Gotch erecting at their own expense a new stall at the Central Station in a more convenient place for the public (owing to the necessary alterations to the platforms) it was agreed to extend their leases for another three years at the same rental.

##### STATE ASSISTANCE TO BRISBANE TRAMWAYS. COMPANY EMPLOYEES.

Mr. BLAIR (*Ipswich*): I would like to ask the Chief Secretary, without notice—

Is he correctly reported in to-day's *Courier* as having pledged the Government to render legal assistance to the non-union members of the Brisbane Tramways Company?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BLAIR: And secondly—

If he is correctly reported, on what principle does the State render assistance to ordinary members of the public?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I have not seen to-day's *Courier*.

Mr. BRESLIN: You know what you said.

The PREMIER: The hon. member had better give notice of the question.

Mr. BLAIR: I give notice.

#### EXTRA REMUNERATION FOR EMPLOYEES, PARLIAMENT HOUSE.

Mr. MAY (*Flinders*): I wish to ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, without notice, whether, in consideration of late sittings and all-night sittings, any extra remuneration will be paid to the employees—male and female—who have been kept up to attend on members of Parliament. (Hear, hear!)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I may point out that no verbal or written question can be addressed to the Speaker in the chair.

Mr. MAY: May I ask a member of the Refreshment-rooms Committee? I ask Mr. Ryland to give the information. (Loud laughter.)

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*): As a member of the Refreshment-rooms Committee, I may say that the question has not come before the committee; but I am of opinion that the officers referred to should be paid overtime in connection with the late sittings of the House (Hear, hear! and laughter.)

#### MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

##### STATE ASSISTANCE TO BRISBANE TRAMWAYS COMPANY'S EMPLOYEES.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER announced that he had received from the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Maughan, a letter stating that he intended to move the adjournment of the House to-day to call attention to a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely:—

The action of the Chief Secretary of Queensland in using the public funds for the purpose of defeating the aims and objects of the Australian Tramway Employees' Association of Australia.

Mr. MAUGHAN (*Ipswich*): I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded?

Not less than five members having risen in their places,

Mr. MAUGHAN said: I make no apology for having addressed what I conceive to be a very important letter to you this afternoon; and, in view of the action already taken this afternoon by more than one hon. member on this side by way of question, it will be conceded that it is regarded not only as of urgent importance, but of great importance, especially in the industrial world. Knowing, as I do, that there is a large amount of work to be transacted in the next few days, and knowing that there is a desire on this side to get through as much business as possible, I have no desire to take up the time of the House at any undue length.

Mr. FERRICKS: It is well worth the trouble.

Mr. MAUGHAN: A few minutes ago, when the hon. member for Warrego gave notice of a question on this matter, and the hon. member for Ipswich, my colleague, called the at-

tention of the Chief Secretary to the fact that a certain report of a conference held yesterday had appeared in this morning's *Courier*, the hon. gentleman said he had not read the report of that particular conference.

The PREMIER: It is quite true.

Mr. MAUGHAN: It may be of use to the hon. gentleman, and convenient to other hon. gentlemen, if I take the opportunity of reading exactly what is printed in the *Courier* of to-day. It is as follows:—

#### MAKING TROUBLE.

How Union Organisers do their Work.

The Tyranny of Unionism.

Brisbane Tramway Employees.

State Government Assistance Asked For.

The Premier Takes Action.

A deputation from the Brisbane tramway employees, consisting of Messrs. H. Morris (secretary) and F. E. Matthews (member) of the Protest Committee, waited on the Minister for Public Works (Hon. W. H. Barnes) last night, the Premier and the Attorney-General also being present, to bring certain matters under the Minister's notice. They explained that the Brisbane tramway employees, who numbered about 500, had been brought under the Wages Boards Act, and employers and employed were perfectly satisfied with the determination. The employees, in fact, were better off than any other body of tramway men in Australasia. A few weeks ago a representative of the Australian Industrial Federation of Tramway Workers had come up from the South, and going among the men secretly, and without calling any mass meeting of the men, had obtained fifty signatures to a petition to the Registrar of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration requesting the registration of the Australian Tramway Employees' Association. It was not until the Southern delegate had left that the general body of employees became aware of his visit and its mission. Thereupon a mass meeting of employees was called, when it was decided to prepare a counter petition protesting against the employees being brought under the Commonwealth Arbitration Court. To this petition no fewer than 231 signatures were obtained, and the petition had been duly forwarded to the Registrar. That day Mr. Morris, as secretary of the Protest Committee, had received from the Registrar a communication stating that in the matter of the application for the registration of the Australian Tramway Employees' Association the Registrar had fixed Tuesday, 13th December, at 2 p.m., in Melbourne, as the time for the hearing of the application, adding "If you have anything to urge against the registration you will be given an opportunity of addressing me on the date fixed." Now, of course, the men had no opportunity, at such short notice, of being heard, and they wanted to know what to do.

Mr. Kidston: The tramway employees have a wages board. Has there been any difficulty among the employees in working under the award of that board?

Mr. Matthews: No trouble of any sort whatever, and no grievances.

Mr. Barnes: As a proof that it has worked most satisfactorily, I have not been approached since its formation.

Mr. Morris explained that the men were organised as the Tramway Employees' Association. That association was not registered. The men also had their recreation clubs.

Mr. Kidston said the remarkable thing about the communication from the Registrar was that it arrived on 12th December, and the men were required to attend in Melbourne on 13th December. He presumed that the men who were applying for registration had worked the same oracle in Sydney, Melbourne, and perhaps Adelaide, and obtained the necessary small percentage of signatures to enable them to apply for registration. While the employers and employees were satisfied with the

determination of the Wages Board, why, in heaven's name, the men should be called from Brisbane to Melbourne to get someone else to mess up their affairs he could not understand.

Mr. Matthews: We are quite satisfied; we don't want any third party interfering.

Mr. Kidston: I think it is unfair that the men's hands should be fixed this way.

Mr. Barnes: We have already the necessary machinery which is working satisfactorily, and an outside body comes and tries to cause trouble. Surely we have a right to protect the men. It shows what is going to happen if this Referenda Bill is carried—

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Ah, ah!

Mr. FOLEY: That's where the shoe pinches.

Mr. MAUGHAN:

It shows what is going to happen if this Referenda Bill is carried, and things are carried to Melbourne. Pity the community!

Mr. Kidston: Before these men know where they are they might be called out.

Mr. Morris: The Sydney tramway men have tried hard for eighteen months to bring us into this association, but we have ignored their appeals.

Mr. Kidston: It makes good billets for a good many men if they can centralise all that sort of thing in Melbourne. These men in Brisbane cannot look after their own affairs in Melbourne, and would have to pay others to do so. Men and masters may not always be able to agree, but while they are able to do so I think it is an outrage for a third party to seek to interfere.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN:

Mr. Matthews: The object of the federation is to get uniform conditions throughout Australia, and get similar conditions to those in Wellington; but we in Brisbane have already better conditions than in New Zealand.

Mr. Kidston: If they could give you a perfect assurance that you would get 6d. a day extra, I think it would be a misfortune to give away your own business for a mess of pottage.

Mr. Matthews: Exactly; that is what we think.

After further discussion Mr. Kidston said he would arrange with the Attorney-General to telegraph to Melbourne on the following morning, and instruct counsel to represent the men, and put their case before the Registrar, pointing out that they strongly protested against being registered. He thought an attempt was being made to do an injustice to the Brisbane tramway employees, and he had no hesitation in helping them to protect themselves. The Government would bear the cost of representing the men, since the latter had not the means to do so.

The deputation warmly thanked the Premier, and withdrew.

I think hon. members will see that, after all, no time has been wasted in submitting this report to the House, because we will be able, as time goes on, to work up a good deal of information in connection with this report. I might say here that the primary object of this party in taking action as we are doing this afternoon is entirely in the interests of industrial peace. This party, not only in Queensland, but in the Commonwealth Parliament of Australia, has a policy, and from its inception has always laid down as a cardinal principle industrial peace; and every action, so far as I can discover, that it has taken, whether industrial or political, has been in that direction. I said a few moments ago that no apology is needed for moving such a resolution. As a matter of fact, there seems to be—whether we like it or not—an all-round conspiracy throughout Australia to smash up the union movement.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN: Go into what State you like, whether in Victoria, New South Wales

or Queensland, there seems to be a conspiracy—that is the best word—on foot to smash up the union movement in the States and in Australia generally.

Mr. HAMILTON: And to use public funds for the purpose.

Mr. MAUGHAN: I will not attempt to go into the matter of the tramway workers. As a matter of fact, it is well known in trade union circles that, while a very large proportion of the men engaged with the Brisbane Tramways Company are at heart unionists, yet they have never dared, owing to various circumstances, to take advantage of the trade union movement. And why? The simple reason is that they would have been discharged. As a matter of fact, some years ago six or eight men were discharged from the Brisbane Tramways Company for daring not only to advocate unionism but to become unionists; and they were only taken back into the employ of the company on condition that they would have nothing to do in future with unionism.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Is that freedom?

Mr. MAUGHAN: My special purpose this afternoon is to take exception—and very strong exception—to the action of the Premier of the State in using public funds for the purpose which I have indicated in the *Courier* report.

Mr. HARDACRE: He has no authority.

Mr. MAUGHAN: As the hon. member for Leichhardt points out, he has no authority to use State funds, and his [4 p.m.] action, I submit, in this connection is apt to do a great deal of harm, to say the least of it, to the industrial peace of Australia. In fact, I think it is quite unprecedented for any Premier, whether it be in the States or the Commonwealth, to have gone as far as the hon. gentleman did yesterday in supplying non-union labour with funds to practically fight the union movement.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: What would he do if he had charge of the military if he does this?

Mr. MAUGHAN: The Australian Tramways Association are endeavouring to their utmost to seek long-desired remedies at the Arbitration Court.

Mr. D. HUNTER: Not the association. The association was never consulted.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Yes. Having regard to the fact that all over Australia there is a desire, not only on the part of the workers but on the part of the employers themselves, to combine for mutual protection, I cannot understand the object of the hon. gentleman, who himself poses as a trade unionist, in taking the action he has done.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The Tramway Employees' Association was never consulted.

Mr. MAUGHAN: I have very little further to add. As I said previously, I have no desire to unduly take up the time of the House, because there are many other members who wish to speak, and I will simply content myself by again expressing my astonishment and disgust at the action of the Premier in utilising the public funds for the purpose which he utilised them yesterday, and I simply move the adjournment of the House.

The PREMIER: I am obliged to the senior member for Ipswich in having saved me the trouble of turning up the *Courier* to see the report of that interview last night. I listened

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to him with a great deal of interest while he was reading it, and I am very pleased to notice that I put the matter so clearly—

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: You are proud of your handiwork?

The PREMIER: That I so clearly expressed myself, and if the hon. member thinks he is blaming the Government for something that the Government are ashamed of, then he is entirely mistaken.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Oh, oh! Shame to you!

The PREMIER: The Government, in my person, last night took this action, believing it was the proper action to take under the circumstances, and we are quite prepared to abide by the result. We thought it was the right thing to do, as I will show.

Mr. FOLEY: You will see the result by and by. (Other interjections by Opposition members.)

The PREMIER: I will be glad to deal with the result by and by. Hon. members opposite are continually consoling themselves with prophesying what is going to happen in the future. For five solid years they have been consoling themselves with what will happen in the future.

Interruption by Opposition members.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I must ask hon. members to cease interjecting. The hon. member for Kennedy has made seven interjections, almost as fast as he can utter them, within the last half-minute. That is too absurd altogether. I shall call him by name if he continues to interrupt.

The PREMIER: However, I will try to deal with the merits of the case. The Hon. the Secretary for Public Works told me last night that a number of tramway men wanted to interview him, and said he would like it if I would be present. I asked him what the purpose was, and he told me, and I said it would be better to get the Attorney-General to come also, and he rung up and got the Attorney-General to come to the House so that we could discuss the matter together. The story which these men told us—which has not been questioned—the hon. member for Ipswich has been good enough to read to the House, so that I do not need to refer to it in detail. The point of the matter which struck me was this: That yesterday morning these tramway employees got a letter from Melbourne, dated the 8th instant, which arrived here on the morning of the 12th, summoning them to appear in Melbourne before the court at 2 o'clock on the 13th instant. If it was nothing but the ignorance of geography which that registrar has shown I should say he is not competent to deal with industrial matters of this kind. But that was not all. The date chosen—although it made it utterly impracticable for those men to take part in the matter—was not the whole difficulty. To my mind, a much more important aspect of the matter was this: Those men, who are going on with their work there, are perfectly satisfied. They were satisfied, and the employers were satisfied by the mutual arrangement that had been come to under the wages board, and why in heaven's name should any one seek to disturb them? Why should anyone in Melbourne or anywhere else seek to disturb them?

Mr. HARDACRE: Why did those fifty men sign the requisition?

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The PREMIER: If the employers and employees had formed a wages board and had settled the conditions under which one was to get wages and the other one was to pay wages, and both parties were quite satisfied, why in heaven's name should anyone be permitted to come in and interfere?

Mr. HARDACRE: That is not your business.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Two wrongs don't make a right.

The PREMIER: As the House knows quite well, we passed a Wages Boards Act in Queensland, believing that the best way to settle industrial difficulties between masters and men was to get the masters and men to meet together by their representatives—

Mr. FERRICKS: We don't want any masters here.

The PREMIER: The men who actually knew the details of the business that was being discussed, the men who knew what wages they wanted, the men who knew what wages they wanted to pay—to get them to meet together and settle the matter in dispute. I have nothing at all to show there could be any better method of settling industrial disputes.

Mr. COYNE: There could be a much better method.

The PREMIER: There could be no better way.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: That is your opinion.

Other interjections by Opposition members.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Hon. members themselves have proposed this motion as being a matter of "definite urgent public importance." Will they treat it as such, and allow the Chief Secretary, who is responsible for the Government, to make a statement without interruption?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The professional agitator, who makes a living out of his "pals" in regard to industrial disputes, or the revolutionary socialist—(Opposition laughter)—who hopes to so centralise the settlement of all industrial disputes in one centre, to so organise all the workers under one head, so that when any serious industrial dispute takes place it will not be an industrial dispute properly speaking, but will become a social revolution—those men may desire other methods of settling industrial disputes; but I believe now, and have always believed, that the best way to settle industrial disputes is to get employers and employees to meet one with the other, per medium of a wages board, or some similar arrangement, discuss the matter *pro* and *con*, give and take with one another—and I say if you cannot settle industrial matters that way you cannot settle them in any way.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COYNE: Did you believe that when you signed the Labour platform?

The PREMIER: You cannot settle them in any other way, and there is no way you can settle them cheaper or better than by that arrangement. (Hear, hear!) In consequence of the Wages Boards Act, which this House passed, those tramway men were enabled to come to an agreement with their employers, and arranged conditions which were mutually satisfactory. Someone was sent up from the South, who, without consulting the tramway men themselves—

Mr. COLLINS: They did not consult the company.

The PREMIER: Who did not consult the company or the company's employees.

Mr. MANN: They got fifty signatures.

The PREMIER: Who went round and got this one to sign and that one to sign a requisition to get formed into a federated association of some kind, and the whole body of the men after those fifty men had signed—it was only after the men left that the bulk of the men knew anything had been done. It was then they called a meeting and discussed the matter and decided that they were better off to remain as they were. I am sure hon. members will admit that those men should settle such matters themselves.

Mr. FERRICKS: That is what they are going to do.

The PREMIER: I hope hon. members opposite will admit that the tramway men should be allowed to say what they consider best for themselves.

Mr. COYNE: That is what we are asking.

The PREMIER: It does not look as if they will be gracious enough to permit them to conduct their own business. In any case, those men appealed against the action taken in the South, and the result was they were summoned to appear before the court in Melbourne about twenty-eight hours after they got the letter; and naturally under the circumstances they appealed to the Secretary for Works, who has the administration of the Wages Boards Act. What were those men to do? They had not the money to fee counsel in Melbourne. They probably would have had some difficulty to find out where to turn to do it. They might have appealed to my lawyer friend, who smiles at me, and doubtless he would have told them.

Mr. COLLINS: Have they no organisation?

The PREMIER: I have not the slightest doubt if they had gone to a lawyer in the city he would have put them into communication with some lawyer in Melbourne, but neither have I the slightest doubt but that he would have charged the ordinary fee for doing so. I might just mention the fact that some two years ago, or something less, the timber merchants here were summoned to Melbourne in the same way, and, in the same way, they came to the Government asking for some form of assistance.

Mr. COYNE: Financial assistance?

The PREMIER: For financial assistance. They wanted the Government to fight the matter for them in Melbourne, and I told them at the time that I considered they were quite competent to take their own part; that I did not think they needed financial assistance from the Government at all; and they went and they did fight their own case in Melbourne, and they won. But that had nothing at all to do with the Government.

Mr. COYNE: There is no analogy between the two cases.

The PREMIER: But when the tramway employees came to me, under the circumstances, I thought the matter was altogether different, and I thought it was proper for the Government to assist those men.

Mr. HARDACRE: Have you offered the fifty men who signed the requisition money to fight their case?

The PREMIER: I told those men that the Attorney-General would engage a lawyer in Melbourne this morning to attend to their case in the court at 2 o'clock to-day. I sup-

pose that has been done. I think that was the right thing to do, under the circumstances.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I did not think that we were justified in fighting the case of the timber merchants, who had money of their own, or who had no difficulty in finding the money to do the thing, but I think that in this case we were amply justified in assisting these men who had no money to do it.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: They could have appealed to the Tramways Company.

The PREMIER: I do not know whether they could have appealed to the Tramways Company, and I do not know whether the company would have found the money.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Of course they would.

The PREMIER: I am surprised at the gentlemen who passed the Poor Prisoners' Defence Bill objecting

Mr. COYNE: I would be surprised to see you assist any *bona fide* labour union.

The PREMIER: They would give a vote in favour of that measure, but object to assist these men exactly in the same way. I am also surprised that hon. members opposite have so soon forgotten the celebrated "Harvester case"—how the Federal Government spent £2,000 to help the unionists in that case.

Mr. COYNE: To help to back up their own law.

The PREMIER: I find they spent £536. I think I have said sufficient to show that the Government, and I myself personally, are not only not in any way ashamed—

Mr. MULCAHY: There is no shame in you.

Mr. MURPHY: You know the particulars of the "Harvester case." State the truth about that case.

Mr. NEVITT: He couldn't if he tried.

Mr. HAMILTON: The manufacturers were defeating the law. That is the reason.

The PREMIER: The Government was helping the unionists, and it was a very good thing to do. It was the Federal Labour Government that was doing it, and therefore it was a good thing to do. But this Government is also helping the unionists, but, because it is the Kidston Government, it is a bad thing to do.

Mr. HARDACRE: You are making a very weak defence.

The PREMIER: As I said, not only is the Government not ashamed of doing this but the Government think they have done a very creditable thing.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MANN: Will you extend the principle?

The PREMIER: Let me say that anything I can do to prevent Queensland industrial disputes being taken down to Melbourne for settlement I will try to do.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: It will be a bad thing for the workmen of Queensland and for the masters of Queensland when it is admitted that they are incapable of settling their own industrial differences—that they have to go to Melbourne to get them settled.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: And come under the wing of the Government.

*Hon. W. Kidston.*]

The PREMIER: They can settle them here, not only quite as well, but very much better. The wisest way and the cheapest and healthiest way for workmen is that they should take a direct hand themselves in dealing with their employers as to the conditions of employment.

Mr. COYNE: And you are trying to prevent that.

The PREMIER: That some court should settle it for them would not be half so good for the workmen—no matter what wages they got—as that the workmen should feel the responsibility—the manly responsibility—of settling these matters for themselves.

Mr. COYNE: And lose their jobs.

The PREMIER: If unionism has done one good thing for English workmen it is that—

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: That it has indoctrinated it into the nation that their affairs with their employers are their own affairs, and that they are the men who have the right to settle them.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. HAMILTON: Why do these men come to the Government, then?

The PREMIER: The new socialistic doctrine that you are not to do it yourself at all—that you are to get somebody elsewhere to make nice conditions for you—is only the doctrine of the cow in the field of clover. It is not a doctrine for men at all, and it will not make strong men and good men.

Mr. LESINA: That doctrine is not preached by socialists.

The PREMIER: It is a bad thing for the employers and a bad thing for the men. I think the Government were in every way justified, and if a similar case occurs again the Government will repeat their action in this matter, and will help workmen in every way possible to keep the management of their own affairs in their own hands.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BLAIR: I am sorry to hear such a statement as that which has just come from the Premier of this State. I do not think there is anyone in this Chamber or outside who looks at this matter from a dispassionate point of view, who can come to any other conclusion than that a scandalous misuse of public funds has been perpetrated by the man who, for the time being, is head of this State politically.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BLAIR: One or two things which he has mentioned, to which I shall briefly allude, are nothing more than “red herrings” simply brought in with a view of clouding the issue and taking the attention of hon. members from what is the real crux of this question.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BLAIR: First he made a sneering allusion—one of those cheap sneers which are so easily cast, and which reflect nothing but discredit on the people who use them—to the Poor Prisoners’ Defence Act. I would remind him that he was the Premier of a Cabinet which approved of that Bill, which assisted to pass it, and expressed pleasure, on more than one occasion, that it became law.

The PREMIER interjected.

Mr. BLAIR: The hon. gentleman jokes, surely! Taking that one instance that he quoted, the money of the taxpayer is paid

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out for that purpose under the sanction of the statute. To-day or last night the Premier used money belonging to the taxpayer without the sanction of any statute, and absolutely against the law.

Hon. R. PHILP: Have you never done it?

Mr. BLAIR: Never in my life. If I had done it a million times, would it justify this? What sort of an interjection is that? The next point is this: The Premier alluded to the “Harvester case,” where the Federal Government was supposed to assist certain people by paying certain fees. That is an absolutely false statement of the case.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BLAIR: There is no other language to characterise a statement of that kind. It is not only misleading, it is absolutely false. What was done in that particular instance was to pay fees to test the legality or otherwise of a measure passed by the Commonwealth Parliament—and I would remind hon. members on that side—passed by the Hon. Alfred Deakin, whom they are now supporting. I think I have sufficiently dealt with those two points. I saw this morning in the paper an account of what my colleague has read to the House. I, with others in the railway carriage, was surprised that such a thing had happened; and, further than that, that it could happen in a State like Queensland. I can assure hon. members on that side that it is causing surprise in many quarters among their own supporters that such a peculiar transaction should take place at all. I came down to the House, and I had not time to frame a question; and, without knowledge that the adjournment of the House was to be moved, I gave notice of those questions. However, since then the adjournment of the House has been moved, and I have had the opportunity of expressing myself upon it. I do not regard this matter from the point necessarily of unionism or non-unionism at all—that is a matter which can be dealt with by unionists and non-unionists themselves; but what I take strong exception to is that there should be exceptional treatment of any unit of the public or any aggregate unit of the public. If assistance is to be given by the State to any individual or body of individuals to fight their case before any court, where is it going to end? If the State were going to provide legal assistance both in civil and criminal matters indiscriminately, I would have no *locus standi*; but if exceptional treatment is going to be meted out with the funds of the taxpayer—to be handed out to help—

Mr. D. HUNTER: This is an exceptional case.

Mr. BLAIR: There is no exceptional case whatever. It is tantamount to nothing more than class assistance, and the Premier is giving the whole case away when he states that he would use the funds of the State to resist any attack by the Commonwealth Government on our own system of wages boards.

The PREMIER: I did not use the words “Commonwealth Government” at all.

Mr. BLAIR: No; but you used words which are tantamount to it, and I say that the hon. gentleman is anticipating the question of the referendum.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BLAIR: He is trying to get in one first. I do not think that anyone who looks at it from a conscientious point of view will



say that it is a right thing to pay public money to assist any one individual of the public, or body public; it is class treatment—exceptional treatment. What is the basis of the argument on which the Premier relies? He says they got notice last night to appear on the 13th, and he immediately consults the Attorney-General and the Minister for Works, and they wired through to get counsel. What was there to prevent those fifty men from wiring through to get counsel? It does not mean, when the case is coming on on the 13th, that it is going to be held on that day.

The PREMIER: If there is no defence.

Mr. BLAIR: The assumption is that an adjournment will be asked for and granted, to work up the case.

The PREMIER: But who will ask for the adjournment if no one is there?

Mr. BLAIR: What is to prevent them from getting counsel? What on earth is the use of splitting hairs on a question like that? There are fifty men there.

Mr. HAMILTON: Two hundred and thirty.

Mr. BLAIR: Well, 230. They are getting admirable wages, they are living in comfort, and what is to prevent them seeing a solicitor and wiring through? I am not saying anything against those men, but it is a pernicious principle to allow any body of men to make use of the taxpayers' money like that. They could wire through: the solicitor here would get the counsel that he usually employs, and an adjournment would be granted to prepare their case. There must be an adjournment asked for now, though the Crown is paying this money.

The PREMIER: I think it is very likely.

Mr. BLAIR: Then what is the use of doing anything of that kind? Why not tell the men that you sympathise with them, but you could not use the taxpayers' money. It is the most pernicious thing that I have ever heard of in Queensland. I am speaking strongly because I feel strongly. If this House were conscious of what is being done they would rise in a body and protest against such a thing.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LESINA: He has pledged all his supporters to oppose industrial unionism.

Mr. BLAIR: Apart altogether from that question of unionism, there is a Commonwealth Arbitration Court established by the Hon. Alfred Deakin or his Government. It is the existing law now—the Commonwealth law. Any individual in a union has a right to appeal to that court, because it is the law of the land—not of Queensland but of the Commonwealth.

The PREMIER: They have no right to drive them in.

Mr. BLAIR: There is no driving in. That is the fallacy of the whole thing. The law says a certain number can make application and give the court jurisdiction. There has been no compulsion about that certain number; they have applied and invited the jurisdiction of the court, and the Premier now seeks to get behind the whole thing. He says that it is in conflict with the wages board. With regard to the wages board, what is the difference in principle? None whatever. A wages board is only established if a majority of employers or employees ask for it. If a majority of the employees or employers in the State ask for the formation of a wages board, then they may be charged with tyranny, and all

the other things hinted at, just the same as the tramway employees are charged with in connection with the Commonwealth Arbitration Court. There is just as much in the one case as in the other.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Very special pleading.

Mr. BLAIR: I am surprised to hear the Minister for Works say that this is special pleading. I ask him, as a man, to rise afterwards in his place and show wherein there may be any special pleading.

Mr. LESINA: Ask him as a Christian. (Laughter.)

Mr. BLAIR: The wages boards were established so that the majority of the employees or the majority of the employers may go to them just the same as the majority of the employers or employees may go to the Commonwealth Arbitration Court in order to gain jurisdiction. Where is the difference in the two cases? I can assure the hon. gentleman who has charged me with special pleading that I can see no difference between them, and I am ready to be convinced if he can alter that opinion. That is an opinion which I entertain, having considered this matter carefully. It is only right that a member should rise in his seat this afternoon and protest against this misuse of public money. (Hear, hear!) Hon. members on the other side are entitled to their opinion just the same as hon. members on this side. But if any hon. member on the other side can show me that it is right to use the money of the taxpayers to help any individual of the public, in a private suit—a private action—or any body of individuals, unionists or non-unionists, to fight their case in any court, then I am satisfied. I repeat what I said at the commencement, that if you allow it in one case, where is it going to stop? I say, in conclusion, that I think the Chief Secretary has done the wrong thing. He has done it, perhaps, hastily and ill-advisedly—

Mr. MANN: He had to do it.

Mr. BLAIR: But, in justice to the men supporting him, he should withdraw from a position which is as illogical as it is untenable.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. D. HUNTER (Woolloongabba): I am very glad that this question has been raised—very glad indeed. (Hear, hear!) The hon. member for Ipswich said that there was a conspiracy throughout Australia to endeavour to smash up unions.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. D. HUNTER: I do not believe it. There is no conspiracy at all. I do not hold with the Tramways Company at all in saying that the men in their employ should not have a union. Every man ought to have the right to join a union if he wants to, and no employer should dictate to him whether he will join a union or not; but we take up this attitude when a man comes up from New South Wales on the quiet.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: On the sly.

Mr. D. HUNTER: He comes up here on the quiet and gets hold of a number of men and gets them to try to defeat a law which has been passed by this House.

Mr. LESINA: Do you expect him to come up here headed by a brass band?

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Mr. D. HUNTER: He should have spoken to the men like a man. (Hear, hear!) He spoke to the men like cowards, and he got them to sign a petition, and a good many of them regret to-day that they did sign that petition.

Mr. LENNON: Nonsense!

Mr. D. HUNTER: Why did that man come up here? Did he come here to benefit the men in Brisbane?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Yes.

Mr. D. HUNTER: No. He came here to benefit the men in Sydney at the expense of the Brisbane men. He came up here because he knew that the conditions in Brisbane were better than the conditions in any other part of Australia or New Zealand.

Mr. LESINA: That is not true.

Mr. D. HUNTER: He came here in order to drag the other States up to the level of Brisbane, and he sought to drag the Brisbane men into the union. That is the position. As Queenslanders we have a right to protest against these men being dragged into the Federal union. While I have contributed in strikes in the past—

Mr. LESINA: You will again.

Mr. D. HUNTER: Yes; if the fight is for a principle I believe in. I say that the people themselves should be allowed the right to decide the question.

Mr. HARDACRE: Which people?

Mr. D. HUNTER: The people engaged in the dispute. In the past we fought the great seamen's strike, and what was the fight about? It was because you would not have a conference between the men and the employers.

Mr. FOLEY: Nonsense!

Mr. D. HUNTER: Yes; the fight was on that basis alone. The late coal strike in New South Wales was of the same nature. They said, "Give us a conference between the miners and the employers and we will settle it." That is the principle of our Wages Boards Act. The representatives of the employers and of the men come together in conference, and they settle all disputes.

Mr. HARDACRE: Are they opposed to inter-State unions?

Mr. D. HUNTER: It is the principle of unionism for the representatives to come together. In my own trade the men in Brisbane would not allow the men in Sydney or the executive in Sydney to tell them to go out on strike. The men in Sydney have absolutely no power to do that.

Mr. FOLEY: Are you not amalgamated?

Mr. D. HUNTER: The local men settle all their differences and all questions whether they shall go out on strike or not, and the only power the executive in Sydney has is to say, "Will you do this or that?" If the local men say, "You must do this," then the executive must do it.

Mr. HARDACRE: Are you opposed to inter-State unions?

Mr. D. HUNTER: I am opposed to bodies which are being formed to defeat the benefits received by laws passed in the State.

Mr. MANN: Then why not extend them to the sugar industry?

Mr. D. HUNTER: I believe that all men at heart believe in the principle that when

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you get a body of men collectively and a body of employers collectively, they can meet together and settle their differences far better than if you have them piecemeal. That is unionism. That is the very principle which we established in our Wages Boards Act, and it shows that we believe in unionism. The whole question before us comes to this: Why did the Premier say he would advance them this money? That is the question we have to trouble about. (Hear, hear!) The hon. member said, "What was to prevent them from engaging a lawyer themselves?" The hon. gentleman knows perfectly well. He knows that a great deal prevented it. Time prevented them. (Opposition laughter.) They got that letter yesterday morning—I suppose it was delivered at 10 o'clock.

Mr. FOLEY: It would not have taken five minutes to call a meeting.

Mr. D. HUNTER: How could you call a meeting of 230 members in five minutes? We will say that the letter was delivered at 10 o'clock, although probably it was not so early as that. They could not call a meeting in order to take action.

Mr. BLAIR: They did call a meeting, and had the deputation to the Premier.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I hope that the hon. member for Woolloomabba will address the Chair, and I hope that other hon. members on my left will cease from interjecting. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. D. HUNTER: If they wanted to call a meeting, they could not have done it before night. Even if they had been able to call a meeting yesterday, it would have been the fastest called meeting that I ever heard of.

Mr. LESINA: They could have held it at midnight. They held their first meeting at midnight.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: If hon. members will persist in interjecting I shall rise repeatedly and call them by name to order. These interjections are getting intolerable.

Mr. D. HUNTER: The members had no time to call a meeting and arrange to be represented in Melbourne. The whole thing to me savours of a dodge to defeat the wishes of the majority of the men up here.

Mr. COYNE: Do you accuse the registrar of that?

Mr. D. HUNTER: No. But if it is done by any official, I would say that it was done for a purpose. The very fact that the men were asked to appear in Melbourne in twenty-six hours is enough. Fancy being called upon in Brisbane to appear in Melbourne in twenty-six hours! Why, such a thing is only playing into the hands of the lawyers.

Mr. MULLAN: The lawyers will appear there now.

Mr. D. HUNTER: The Government were perfectly right in a case of this kind, when they saw that an injustice was going to be done—when they saw that there was no chance of the men appearing in Melbourne—to take action that would prevent an injustice being done to them by paying the expenses of their representation in Melbourne.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Could they not have gone to a lawyer themselves?

Mr. D. HUNTER: Who could they have gone to? Do they know any lawyer in Melbourne at all? Can the hon. members on the other side tell me who they could have gone to? It was necessary that something should be done, and done quickly. The Premier was consulted, and I glory in the fact that

he did what he did, and I also glory in the fact that we have seen the trend of legislation that is taking place in endeavouring to drag all the unions down to another State. We are going to be ruled from another State altogether if we do not look out what we are doing. The fact remains that the men were going to have an injustice done to them and their conditions made worse than they are at the present time, but the Premier, by his action, saved the situation.

Mr. COYNE (*Warrego*): The hon. gentleman who has just resumed his seat made out a very poor case, just as poor as the Premier himself made out. He told us that 231 tramway employees in Brisbane did not know what to do, and in order to prevent a catastrophe happening to-day in connection with the Federal Arbitration Court the Premier paid for the representation of the men in Melbourne.

Mr. HARDACRE: It would only have cost them 6d. each.

Mr. COYNE: It would only have cost the men 3d. each, and they could have gone to a lawyer and wired to Melbourne, when a solicitor would have appeared before the registrar, and he could have asked for an adjournment. The fact of the matter is that it has been well known to the general public in Brisbane for weeks past that there are a number of men engaged by the Brisbane Tramways Company who, from an industrial point of view, are anything but unionists. There was a strike among the tramway employees before. Here is an article which appeared in *Truth* on Sunday last. These are the same gentlemen who came to the Premier last night. This article is headed "Pusillanimous Pimps and Plausible Parasites."

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What are you reading from?

Mr. COYNE: I am reading from last Sunday's *Truth*.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Who wrote that article?

Mr. COYNE: That is another matter altogether. I do not know who wrote the article. This article reads—

THE TRAM TOILERS' TROUBLE.  
BEGIN THEIR BATTLE WITH BOSS BADGER.  
PUSILLANIMOUS PIMPS AND PUTRID  
PARASITES.

I want to show that this matter did not crop up yesterday or last night. It says in this article—

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order: Will the hon. member vouch for the accuracy of the article?

Mr. COYNE: It is just as accurate as the article the adjournment of the House is moved for. I certainly can vouch for the accuracy of it, because there is sufficient evidence here to satisfy me that it is accurate. It says—

Men in the tram service have been dissatisfied for some time past.

We have been told by the Minister for Works that they are perfectly satisfied.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Perfectly true.

Mr. COYNE: This article goes on—

And different attempts have been made to get them to form a union secretly, but somehow or other the "Boss" always got to know who were trying to organise, and anyone in the company's employ with ginger enough in his composition to talk of combining to get better conditions got the sack.

It says here—

A couple of months ago a motorman happened to suggest forming a union, and he was given his walking-ticket a couple of days afterwards.

They told the Premier last night they had a union, but it was not registered. There are thousands of "scab" unionists of that kind. They are not registered, because they are afraid to be known as unionists. These pimps and parasites are the men whose representatives went to the Premier and wanted his assistance. I admit that they may have got 231 signatures from the men; but how were they got? By intimidation. They sent round their big cars after midnight—these Christian people sent their long cars out specially to bring the men back on the Sabbath—and out of 500 employers only twenty-six turned up to attend a special meeting.

Mr. BARBER: The *Courier* states the same thing.

Mr. COYNE: The Chief Secretary said that before they knew where they were they might be called out if the Commonwealth Arbitration Court dealt with their claims. It is a well-known fact which cannot be disputed, that any award from the Commonwealth Arbitration Court has never been disputed by the employees, and there has never been a call out in connection with any such award. In the greatest industry in Australia—the pastoral industry—where they gave an award, there has been absolute peace since the award was given, and they are seeking a renewal of the award; but prior to that there was not a year when there was not a great deal of trouble in that industry. The Premier talked about professional agitators, but he forgot about the time when he used to make revolutionary poetry. Does he forget the great poem he made in Rockhampton in 1891 entitled "When George the Fourth was King"? In it he said there were downtrodden serfs when George IV was King, and appealed to Queenslanders not to become such. He was a professional agitator at that time.

Mr. BARBER: He used to sing it too.

Mr. COYNE: He used to sing it in kilts; and, as a result of his agitation at that time, he occupies his present position. He misled people into thinking that he believed what he said and wrote at that time. The Premier also said that after the organiser left, a large majority of the employees did not know anything about it. Who are the majority? Those pimps and parasites who went to the Premier and Minister for Works yesterday; those men who are ready to spy on their mates.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: They are prepared to get all the advantages and benefits at the same time.

Mr. COYNE: Yes. The Australian Tramways Union comprises 10,000 members scattered all over Australia, and even allowing that the men who approached the Premier were correct in saying they had 231 names on their list, though there are 500 tramway employees in Brisbane and the greatest pressure was brought to bear on them at the time, yet they could not get the majority; so the majority are in favour of being enrolled under the Commonwealth Arbitration Act. As to this organiser of whom so much has been said, he simply came about his business. He was in communication with some true unionists in the Tramways Company's employ, and they told him not to go near Kerr or Matthews, as they were pimps of the company; and, because he did not go near them,

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they told the Premier that the majority of the employees knew nothing about his presence. Do you think it possible that a man could come to Brisbane to get the majority of the employees into his union and anybody bar a pimp not know anything about him being present?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He did not get the majority.

Mr. COYNE: We know that Matthews and Kerr did not get a majority. They are not going to diminish the number they got; and they said they got 231 out of 500.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He got fifty.

Mr. COYNE: That is more unionists than there are in the barracks of the Tramways Company.

Mr. FOLEY: That was all he wanted.

Mr. COYNE: Yes. He did his business by organising a committee; and he left the committee to do the remainder. When did they lodge their objection to being enrolled? About three days ago; and the registrar sent a reply yesterday morning. Any schoolboy in the street could tell you how they could have blocked this; yet the Premier comes along in a fine way and tells us he rescued them from an intolerable calamity. I would like to see a *bond fide* union go to the Premier and see what he would do with them. Whatever he might have done in the year 1891, when he used to write this doggerel, "When George the Fourth was King," we know what he would do now. The Minister for Works will stand up in a short time and tell us the wages boards are working excellently in Queensland; but I want the Minister to let us know how the ironmoulders' award is acting. We know the ironmoulders are out on strike; but under the Commonwealth Arbitration Act if anybody goes out on strike after an award is given his union is liable to a heavy penalty for misconduct. We cannot do without wages boards—they cannot prevent strikes. An award may be given to-day and there may be a strike to-morrow, and there may be awards and strikes alternately for months. There is no finality at all. The Premier may think he is getting in the first hit with regard to the referenda to be taken in a short time.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. COYNE: The Premier referred to a referenda to be taken in a short time in connection with this same thing, and I was going to causally refer to what he stated. I believe that he has done one of the best things that have been done up to the present time in Queensland towards getting an affirmative vote on that matter. They got an abortion of a wages board and arbitration court in Sydney, and the result, so far, has been never-ending industrial trouble. And in Queensland we have had strikes year after year, but under the Commonwealth Act when the court has given its award all strife is ended. I may say that the evidence we have as to the way in which the Commonwealth Arbitration Court has dealt with industrial disputes will cause hundreds and thousands of people in Queensland to cast their votes in favour of something that would bring about industrial peace in this State. Now about the granting of this money to these men. I think it is unprecedented in Queensland—and probably in Australia, and probably in the whole of the British Empire—to give away public money to fight the case of non-unionist against unionists, and I trust it will

[*Mr. Coyne.*]

never be done again. When men can organise to the number of 10,000 they are worthy of some recognition; but when a handful of backsliders come along and ask for some assistance against unionism the Premier gives that assistance. I hope this misconduct on the part of the Premier will appeal to the good sense of the people of Queensland, and that in the very near future they will show their opinion of the Cabinet and of the Premier who has done this wrong. I do not think anybody in the position occupied by the Premier has ever prostituted his position by giving away public money in an unjust cause more than the present Premier has on this occasion by giving public money to lawyers to represent these men in Melbourne.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*): I do not propose to occupy more than a few minutes in discussing this matter. I would like to say, in approaching the subject, that I intend to deal with it from its constitutional aspect. The Premier, on behalf of the Cabinet and his followers, has pledged the Government to take money from the public Treasury and hand it over for the use of a certain class. Has he a right to do that? There is only one case of that kind recognised, and it is recognised by statute, that by the Poor Prisoners' Defence Act. If a poor prisoner is unable to secure defence and he is under trial for his life, we are able to secure assistance for him under this Act, but we have

made special arrangements for [5 p.m.] this by passing an Act of Parliament. But here is a thing which is beyond legislation, beyond constitutional practice which establishes a precedent. Now precedent may be good or bad, and I believe in making our own precedents—

Mr. HARDACRE: He is going to follow it up.

Mr. LESINA: If he is going to follow it up all round, then I will support him, because it means establishing in Queensland the principle of meeting the cost of all litigations, civil or criminal, out of the Treasury. It simply means pulling down the legal monopoly that exists to-day. It simply means using the funds of the taxpayer to carry out all civil and criminal trials. If the Government are prepared to go that far, I am prepared to go with them to that extent. But that is not so. This is an exceptional case, and under the circumstances we are brought face to face with to-day the Government practically pledged themselves to take from the Treasury and pay to certain barristers or other legal gentlemen certain fees to represent this particular body down in Melbourne. Now, that money does not belong to the Government. It belongs to the taxpayer—it is collected from the whole of the people of Queensland and put into the Treasury, and the Government propose to take it out and pay the cost of this action. What right have they to do that? We want some legal member to get up on the Government benches and tell us what right the Government have to dip into the public Treasury and take out that money to defend this particular case. They must have some right, otherwise they would not do it. No Government, especially the present Government, ever does wrong. (Laughter.) The hon. member for Woollongabba is the only member on that side of the House who has defended their action. He says the Government did the right thing, and gave half a dozen reasons why it should have been done. None of those reasons, to my mind, should

carry any weight at all. Briefly, so far as I am able to understand the case, for many years past the Brisbane tramway employees have been a very badly badgered and ill-treated body of men. They have been prevented from forming a union by the influence of Mr. Badger and certain subordinate officers. Every time they have tried to form a union, the employee who took any part in the talking or acting has been sacked. Some means have been found to get rid of him. On one occasion, when a score of men held a meeting to form a union, some pimp was present, and carried the particulars to Mr. Badger, and certain of those men were sacked. It does not matter how they are sacked—they have found reasons sooner or later to sack them. A complaint has been made, it may be by a shareholder of the company, of impertinence on the part of a conductor. That conductor may have taken some active part in the formation of a union, and, months after, he is sacked. Every capitalist gets rid of workmen that he objects to. The Minister for Butter—excuse me, the Minister for Public Lands—knows, as a practical business man, how easy it is to get rid of an employee who develops a depraved taste for unionism. That is practically everyday experience, and he knows it. They all know—and no person in the world knows better than the present Premier how easy it is to get rid of scores of men. I know of the cases of at least half a dozen men who have been sacked, and I can prove them right up to the hilt. Men have been sacked mostly because they have taken an active part in attempting to promote unionism among the downtrodden and badgered body of men in the employ of this crushing monopoly we have in Brisbane—a monopoly which would have been taken over years ago had we had an up-to-date body of men at the head of the municipal affairs in Brisbane. Those men have been badly treated. They work longer hours, receive worse pay, and are under worse conditions than any body of tramway employees in Australia; and I know it, because I have made a special study of this question, although I have not taken any active part in the matter, and have not interviewed the men, and have never got on the platform in connection with the matter. But I know from personal inquiries, and from information received from persons I interviewed recently when in New Zealand, that the tramway men of Queensland up to recently have been the very worst treated body of men engaged in that particular enterprise in the whole of Australia. They get nothing like the hours of labour, the rate of wages, or conditions of labour, or other terms under which the men in New South Wales work. They are debarred from forming a union—it is called a recreation club—it is a hypocritical club. If a man talks in a recreation club about unionism, he is a marked man, and sooner or later he is shifted. Now, these men, in order to form a union to enable them to gather together in that principle of co-operation which is the underlying principle of unionism to-day, they have to seek the assistance of the federated organisation and the better treated men down South, and one of their men came up here. The hon. member for Woolloongabba objected to him coming up in secret. Where is the secrecy in a man talking to the men quietly and taking their names? He should have approached the subject with a brass

band, I suppose, or he should have wired to Badger that he was coming, and asking that individual to be present. With Badger's cold-steel eye on them, who would be game enough to risk their bread and butter by putting their names down as members of the tramways union? Why should they not be allowed to form a union under ordinary conditions, the same as bakers, butchers, and other people of Queensland? Badger, by his monopoly, is crushing the manhood out of them, and is exercising the tyranny which certain of Badger's pimps belonging to the Tramways Company have been grumbling about. It is Mr. Badger and his minions, who have been responsible for exercising tyranny—this monopoly which is paying huge dividends and robbing the public of Queensland. That man came up here and got fifty names; and, having got fifty names, the union was registered, and, naturally enough, the registrar informed those men that they must appear before a certain time—that they should take such legal steps as may be necessary under the circumstances to make an appearance, and I suppose they have done so by this time. But a number of malcontents, anxious to curry favour with the boss, anxious to secure themselves in their position, determined to take action. They called a meeting at midnight at one of the sheds, and the daily Press announced that there were fifty men present out of 500. Even if there were fifty present out of 500 it would be a very small majority, but there were only twenty-seven men present, and one of those was a *Truth* reporter. The matter was left over to enable a still larger representative meeting to be held, and they put on a long car from the Light-street depot to Countess street, where the meeting was held. Instead of that car being packed with men—there were hundreds down there—there were only thirteen men who travelled by that car, and they were hooted off the premises by the men who stayed behind. Those men turned up at the meeting, making twenty-seven altogether. Those twenty-seven men signed a protest. In the meantime they got together a list and obtained 231 signatures. Some men refused to sign the list and were sacked. They obtained those signatures by the exercise of tyranny, and denied that liberty which the Minister of Works will get up presently and talk so movingly about—he will talk about the tyranny of unionism. What about the tyranny of this tramway monopoly which sends round a list, and if the men do not sign it sacks them? Is there not tyranny exercised there?

Mr. COTTELL: You cannot prove that statement.

Mr. LESINA: The thing is done, but they make it as difficult as possible to prove those cases. But we know, as practical men of the world, that a rich company will get rid of a man if that man manifests, in some instances, any sympathy for unionism.

Mr. COTTELL: You do not know one instance.

Mr. LESINA: I can mention a number of cases to prove it. I maintain they got those 231 signatures by intimidation, and many of those men are unionists at heart, but they were too timid to take the risk. Many of them are married men with children, and they did not care to take the risk for the sake of their wives and children. Let the Minister for Works keep that point.

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in his mind. Let him just reflect on the fact that a big majority of those signatures are the signatures of men who have been dragged into signing the list. That is the worst kind of intimidation. You can have intimidation sometimes through physical demonstration. You can intimidate other men through the medium of their relations, and many of these tramway men have been intimidated by pressure brought to bear on them in this way. They are not frightened of themselves for their jobs, but they are afraid for the sake of their wives and children. Well, that company, which will bring force like that to bear on the men, is the company we want to fight, and the Cabinet have actually stepped into the breach and taken money out of the Treasury to assist those men in fighting for the tramway monopoly. The men Matthews and Morris, who attended the meeting last night, are simply tools of Badger's. They are simply tools of the company. They have made their billets secure for life, and they come along to the Government and ask the Government to pay the cost of the action in this matter.

Mr. BARBER: They will get promotion for their action.

Mr. LESINA: Very likely before long you will find them walking down Queen street with gold braid on their uniforms as inspectors as a reward for treachery to their fellow-employees. This appears to me where the Premier has done wrong. The Government should have had nothing at all to do with this thing. They should have said, "There is certain Federal legislation provided to allow employees to come together and apply to be registered by the registrar, and a certain award will be made in due course in connection with that industry. It appears certain men have signed this requisition. I do not know why they have signed. It is not my business; I have nothing at all to do with it." But, instead of that, the Premier pledged himself right away, and instructed the Attorney-General to wire to Melbourne instructing a barrister and other legal gentlemen to represent these malcontents. He has pledged every man sitting behind him to fight these industrial unions. Every man who is sitting on the Government benches and approves of the Government action in this matter is pledged to fight these industrial unions, and their electorates should recognise it—has pledged himself to support the Premier in taking public money to fight the industrial unions. Most members on the other side have been elected, not as enemies of unionism. The hon. member for Toowong is sympathetic with unionism, and has thousands of unionists in his electorate, who must sympathise with the tramway men to establish a union, and who do they find the strongest opponents to this being done? The Premier of Queensland, who takes the taxpayers' money to fight the establishment of this union. If the Government are justified in taking this money, will some hon. member on the other side kindly tell me where it is going to stop? The next thing will be that the Government will take public money to assist the co-operative farmers to fight the butter companies' men. If they can do it in the case of industrial unionism they can do it in the case of co-operative butter factories, or in the case of the sugar industry. It is a most dangerous position to take up. If the Government are going to apply this principle all round, and money is to be paid in criminal and civil cases, I am

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going to be with them. But there is no such principle involved in this case. It is a deliberate attempt on the part of the Government to step in between two bodies of men, one of which wants to form a union and the other to prevent it, and it is to assist these men who are against the union that money out of the public Treasury is taken. As one who contends that money from the public purse shall go for public purposes, I object to money being taken from the public funds to employ lawyers in Melbourne to fight against the formation of the union. The troubles are to a large extent the outcome of sectional unionism. Sectional unionism is doomed.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LESINA: In the future there will be only one huge industrial unionism, which will include all workers, and as soon as it is recognised that sectional unionism is wrong, so soon will they pull down the sectional barriers and stand together in one body.

Mr. NEVITT: This Government want to stop it.

Mr. LESINA: The Premier in taking up this attitude may possibly be animated by a desire to forestall certain action taken by the Federal Government. The tramway men have unions in all parts of Australia except Brisbane, and the Premier is going to use State funds to keep the Brisbane men. What position will he be in in a few months' time if the referendum is carried? If the people say that industrial matters like these shall be taken over by the Federal Government, it will be a very peculiar position for the hon. gentleman to be in. If the House justifies the Government in taking this action—if their own supporters, without one word, are agreed to support them, they are opening the door to what may be an excellent thing if applied all round without any partisan spirit, but which if applied in a partisan spirit may be a source of danger to the public purse.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I quite agree with some hon. gentlemen who have spoken as to the importance of the matter that has been brought before this House, and it is my duty very briefly to lay before the House some of the particulars which led up to the action which has, very properly, been taken by the State Government in protection of State rights.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. FERRICKS: Who is playing to the gallery now?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I think I will be able to show pretty clearly that the Government have proved themselves the friends of those who need strength and assistance in the hour of need. The position very briefly is as follows: There have been repeated efforts made to get certain tramway men to join a Southern union, and those repeated efforts have signally failed, and they failed in this last instance.

Mr. MULCAHY: They have the Government behind them.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It seems an extraordinary thing that an emissary from the South, who perchance is backed up by some hon. gentlemen on the Labour side—he came up and what did he do? Did he do what any other gentleman would have done, at any rate, and call those who represented the tramway men together to discuss matters pertaining to the Tramways Company? Oh, no!

Mr. MAUGHAN: He was advised by the men themselves.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Of course he was advised of it, because he knew the bulk of the men were dead against any such proposal, and were entirely satisfied with their position. He knew the men were entirely satisfied, and he was not man enough to come along and ask the executive of the tramway employees to get together to discuss this matter. He went round in a way which could be properly described by the hon. member for Clermont—he came at night-time, buttoning one here and one there, asking in whispers these men—begging them—to come out and make one of the fifty in order to sign his particular document; and the result was that the men who had the control of the employees' interests in connection with the Tramways Company knew nothing whatever about it until he had slipped away. The whole way of dealing with it was such as to condemn it right from the very jump. If it had been something worth conducting it would have been conducted properly; but no, it was done by stealth; it was done as if the man who was conducting this matter was afraid of the action he was taking. I want to impress upon the House that the Government have nothing to do with the question as to whether men are union or non-union men; their desire is to protect the worker every time. (Opposition laughter.) I maintain that that has been the action of the Government all through.

Mr. BARBER: You are intensely amusing.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It was not their place to ask whether a man is a union or non-union man, but it was their duty to step in and, when this matter was brought before them, act as the Premier has acted in this case. Let me remind the House that as soon as it was discovered what had been going on, the bulk of the tramway men immediately sent a petition to Melbourne, and I have a copy of the petition in my hand, which I will read. The hon. member for Warrego suggested that they might not have been able in Melbourne to reply in time, but I want to draw attention to the fact that the petition is dated 28th November. It reads as follows:—

28th November, 1910.

The Industrial Registrar, Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, Melbourne, Victoria.

We, the undersigned, employees of the Brisbane Tramways Company, Limited, desire to protest against any proposal to include the Brisbane tramway employees in the Australian Tramway Employees' Association or the Australian Federated Industrial Organisation of Tramway Workers.

It is within our knowledge that a minority of the Brisbane tramway employees have submitted their names as members of the organisation above referred to (registration of which we understand is being applied for), but seeing that such names were obtained by a personal canvass, that many of the employees were not approached in the matter, and that there were not any meetings at which those of us who are opposed to membership could express our views, we, the majority, confidently appeal by petition for the Brisbane tramway employees to be excluded from any such organisation or association.

Hon. members will notice that on the 28th of November this course was taken. What happened? On the 8th December, a circular was sent from the registrar in Melbourne. Evidently he must have thought it was possible for us here in Queensland, through the use of an aeroplane, to get to Melbourne, or by some method to deal with these matters.

Whilst I assume in the ordinary course of events it would reach Brisbane on the Saturday evening, it must be borne in mind that it would not be in the ordinary course delivered till Monday morning, and on Monday morning this document is presented to these men, and they are told to be in Melbourne on Tuesday at 2 o'clock.

Mr. FERRICKS: You are dodging the issue.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It is an extraordinary thing that hon. members on the other side take up the stand that it is exceedingly improper for this money to be devoted to the interests of these men. They naturally came to the Department of Labour. Let me point out that in connection with the wages board, which is controlled by the State, and which an outside influence is seeking to upset, there had been nothing to show that the men were not satisfied with their condition, and yet an outside influence is brought to bear to try and create a feeling of mistrust in the minds of the men, and the men said, "No; we are better off with our wages board; we prefer having representation instead of handing over ourselves practically body and soul to parties in the South." And so they said they were not prepared to accept that. Exception has been taken to the expenditure of this money; but is it not a fact that every day there is expenditure of money which comes from contingencies? I would like to ask the hon. junior member for Ipswich—who, I regret, is not in his place—if, during his time, and during the time of any other Minister, money is not spent which comes from contingencies, and must of necessity be spent? Is it not entirely a proper thing for the Ministry of the day to protect the State rights of their workers? (Opposition laughter.) Apparently, judging by the commotion created on the other side, we are protecting them in a way that hon. members do not like. I may be out of order if I get very far on this subject, but I must say that I think it is a fortunate thing for the workers of Queensland that the hand of the Commonwealth Government has been shown so early. I would like to say that in their anticipation of something which is going to come later—

Mr. BARBER: You are very amusing.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: In answer to those gentlemen who have been complaining about our spending [5.30 p.m.] money, I would like to ask them if they have ever raised their voice in connection with the expenditure of money in the South in connection with fighting similar matters?

Mr. BARBER: There is no analogy.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: They are not similar matters.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I think I shall be able to show hon. members opposite, not only that their friends have been parties to the spending of public money, but I shall also be able to show that their friends have also been taking the money. Let me quote from *Federal Hansard*, page 6442—

HARVESTER CASE.

Senator GIVENS: Is it the intention of the Government this year to make provision for the payment of a portion or the whole of the law costs incurred by the agricultural implement makers in what is known as the Harvester case?

Senator MCGREGOR: There is some provision on the Estimates for that purpose.

Who is Senator McGregor? Is he a member

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of the Deakin Government? If I am not very much mistaken, he is a member of the present Labour Government of the Commonwealth. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: The cases are not analogous.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The hon. gentleman will see that the cases are similar.

Mr. MANN: It came before Parliament there; but we have no say in this matter at all.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I will also quote from the speech of Mr. W. Elliott Johnson in the House of Representatives. This is from Federal *Hansard*, page 6716—

I am afraid, however, that that broad view would assume very circumscribed proportions if they were asked to extend it to the other side. It may be interesting just to quote the bill of expenses sent in by Mr. Sutch—

Mr. MAUGHAN: Who is Mr. Sutch?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I will show the hon. gentleman who is Mr. Sutch. He is one of the gentlemen whose cause he is always championing in this House. Mr. Johnson continued—

To A/C.

Expenses of the following societies represented before the New Protection Court by Mr. J. Sutch:—Sawmill Employees, Carpenters, Engine-drivers, Painters, Pattern Makers, Wheelwrights, and others:—

	£	s.	d.
To witnesses, loss of time, etc. ...	16	0	0
Typewriting and other expenses ...	5	0	0
J. Sutch, attendance at court, 27 days at £5 5s. ...	141	15	0
	£162	15	0

Fancy £5 5s. a day for Mr. Sutch's attendance at the court—only £5 5s. a day! When the Labour movement is in question that is a very small item; but when it is "the other fellow," then it becomes a very big item, and it is magnified very much indeed.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: What about the Land Court expenses?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Then Mr. Johnson goes on—

Statement of expenses incurred in the presentment of the Agricultural Implement Makers' Union case against the manufacturers in the Excise Tariff Court:—

	£	s.	d.
By legal expenses, account of J. Woolf ...	1,112	17	7
Comrade Woolf claims a pretty good slice of the expenses—it is a case of the "wolf at the door" of Parliament, with a vengeance!—			
By payment of witnesses for lost time ...	5	15	1½
By payment of Mr. T. M. Smith for lost time ...	15	15	9
Telegrams, fares, postage, etc. ...	1	0	0
	£1,135	8	5½

They are very accurate in the Federal Parliament when they even include their halfpennies. It shows how very accurate they are in making out their accounts. Then Mr. Johnson goes on—

What I marvel at is that, if this claim be a proper one, provision has not been made on the Estimates for the payment of the whole amount. On what ground has the reduction of £500 been made?

Apparently they were afraid to make provision on the Estimates for the whole amount, and they only made provision for a portion of it. I would draw the attention of the

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House to the attitude that is adopted by some of the men whom hon. gentlemen opposite claim to represent. A man may be a non-union man, and yet it is possible for him to suffer all the insults that it is possible for any individual to suffer. I will show what tyranny and coercion can be exercised against a man who is a non-union man by some of the workers. I may not be in order in reading this paragraph, because you have ruled, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that a member cannot read a paragraph from a newspaper unless he can vouch for its accuracy. I hold in my hand a Brisbane *Observer* of to-day's date. On looking through it I find a reference to a strike in Adelaide, and I find that because certain men were foolish enough to attempt to earn their bread in a legitimate way what happened to them?

Mr. FERRICKS: They got what they deserved.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What has been tried to be brought before this House by hon. gentlemen on the other side this afternoon, only they are too polished and too wise to go to the extreme which these people in Adelaide go to. Because men attempted to earn their living in a legitimate way, they were assaulted in a most brutal manner.

Mr. FERRICKS: Good enough for them, too.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I am glad that the hon. member for Bowen made that interjection. It is in keeping with the hon. gentleman's attitude ever since he has been in this House.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FERRICKS: I wish all blacklegs were treated in the same way.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: These men in Brisbane, employed by the Tramways Company, recognised that they have a tribunal which has been entirely satisfactory, and no hon. gentleman on the other side has been able to prove to the contrary. I challenge them to prove where in connection with the wages board, where a wages board has to deal with a particular industry, that there has been a single case brought to the Department of Labour.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: A man has been discharged because he was a member of a board.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I happen to know it that it is a fact that the men do not like to leave the Tramways Company. I have no brief for the Tramways Company, but last week a man came to me who had been for ten years in the service of the Tramways Company, and because he had been intemperate he was discharged. He asked me to go to Mr. Stephens, the manager, to get him reinstated. That is in keeping with the attitude of that particular company. The company are doing a fair deal by the men, and the conditions of the men are entirely satisfactory. The hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Blair, made a remark that the attitude of the Premier was a conspiracy to smash up the spirit of unionism. As a matter of fact, the attitude of the Premier was to protect and conserve the union movement, as shown in the Tramways Company. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. NEVITT: There is no union there.



The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It is the hon. gentlemen on the other side who want to smash up that union. It is just as well to be plain in these matters. There are some men on the opposite side of the House who are never satisfied unless they are stirring up influences amongst the men.

Mr. BARBER: The glorious gospel of discontent, that is what we believe in.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The hon. member for Bundaberg practically says "Amen" to what I have said.

Mr. BARBER: Amen, brother!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The attitude of hon. members opposite this afternoon is a conspiracy on their side to fetter the men employed by the Tramways Company in Brisbane, and to practically force them into the hands of the Southern unions. I say again, "Pity Queensland and pity the day when that kind of thing happens so far as Queensland is concerned." Hon. gentlemen opposite are working for that, and they will not be satisfied till they get it.

Mr. HARDACRE (*Leichhardt*): A great deal of dust has been thrown up by members on the Government side—by the Premier and the Minister for Works—to hide what appears to me to be one of the most serious cases of maladministration in our public affairs that has occurred for many years past. Such action will only lead to all kinds of controversies and difficulties, and all members of Parliament, no matter on what side of the House they sit, should set their backs against it. Briefly, the position is this: There exists in the other States of the Commonwealth a series of tramway unions. These unions sent a representative to Brisbane to induce the men working for the Brisbane Tramways Company to join the unions existing in the other States of the Commonwealth.

Mr. D. HUNTER: Why did he not do it properly?

Mr. HARDACRE: There exists a Commonwealth law under which there can be a combination of employees in all the States of the Commonwealth under one union. The tramway employees in the other States of the Commonwealth sent their representative up to Brisbane to endeavour to induce the Brisbane employees to join the other tramway unions as they exist to-day. They were acting entirely within their rights in doing that. I understand that a number of tramway employees in Brisbane signed a paper asking to be registered under the Commonwealth law. And that was followed up by a number of other men working for the Brisbane Tramways Company sending down a protest.

The TREASURER: Yes, as soon as they learned what the others had done.

Mr. HARDACRE: Yes, against the registration. Then the official registrar sends up a notice, which is received here on the 12th of this month, informing the men that they can appear in Melbourne on the 13th—the day following—to enter their protest. My own opinion is that there must be some mistake as to the date of that notice. It seems to me to be absurd to think that a Government official in Melbourne would send such a notice asking them to appear in Melbourne on an impossible date. There must be some

explanation of that. But that does not justify the Queensland Government in using public funds in order to employ some legal assistance to represent the men in Melbourne. From the arguments used by the Premier it seems that this action is being taken by the Queensland Government in opposition to the Commonwealth law. The excuse of the Premier was that the wages boards in Queensland worked satisfactorily, and it would be a wrong thing to have the Commonwealth law carried out here. His whole argument was to the effect that it would be intolerable for the Commonwealth law to exist here, and that it should not be operative; and, therefore, the Government should assist men to fight against the law under which registration was going to take place. Practically, it is such an act as might lead to civil war, and it is a serious position.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: The Commonwealth Act is better than our law.

Mr. HARDACRE: There are two opinions as to that. My opinion is that it is better; but whether it is good or bad, that is no justification for the Queensland Government using public funds to fight the Commonwealth law. That is the most serious aspect of the question. If anything wrong is done by a Commonwealth official, it is for the Commonwealth Government to take action, and if the Commonwealth law is bad, it is for the people of Australia to alter it. For the State Government to fight the Commonwealth law is an act of war; and we might just as well expect the Commonwealth Government to use its funds to fight some State law which it considered was wrong. The other aspect of the matter is not so bad, but it is bad enough. Apparently, the Queensland Premier has used the public funds to assist non-unionists against unionists. The Minister for Works has declared that the wages board works satisfactorily as far as the tramway employees are concerned, but I deny that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Have you any proof?

Mr. HARDACRE: I am going to prove it. There was great difficulty, in the first instance, in getting a wages board established in connection with the tramway employees.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is not correct.

Mr. HARDACRE: The Tramways Company objected to their employees coming under a wages board for a long time.

The HOME SECRETARY: I refused to ratify the agreement, and granted them a board. That is the whole thing.

Mr. HARDACRE: Ultimately the employees managed to secure a wages board, and got an award fixing a certain rate of wages; but immediately the decision was given the Tramways Company flched away to a large extent the benefit of the wages board's decision by increasing the number of hours the men worked per day, and diminishing the number of hours they worked per week. The men did not work the full week; in some cases they only got five days' wages in the week, and practically they got no more wages after the decision was given than before. The Premier did not promise to assist the fifty men who asked to be registered under the Commonwealth law, although he offered to assist the men who were protesting against registration. Why

*Mr. Hardacre.]*

should they not be offered assistance as well as the other men? Why should the Premier offer assistance out of the public funds to one side and not to the other?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The fifty men were working in the dark; the others acted openly.

Mr. HARDACRE: In the case of the men who protested against registration, an open sheet was sent round for them to sign, and it was signed under intimidation, because if they had not signed it they would have been marked men.

Mr. COTTELL: You have no guarantee for that.

Mr. HARDACRE: I know as a fact that it was sent round as an open sheet, and they had to sign it openly. They were not permitted to take a ballot as to whether they should protest against registration or not. Whatever may be the merits or demerits of the fifty men who asked for registration, or the man who came from another State to ask men here to come under the Commonwealth Act, that is not the question at issue. The real issue is that

[7 p.m.] the Government used public funds to assist non-union men to fight against union men. It is a most reprehensible thing, and I hope every man in this Chamber will set his face against it and vote for the motion.

Mr. McLACHLAN (*Fortitude Valley*): I desire to say a few words on this question. I listened very attentively to the Minister for Works, but I do not propose to follow him in his long speech, most of which was foreign to the subject; but there is one point which I tried to get in by interjection. The hon. gentleman was speaking about the protest sent to Melbourne, a copy of which he held in his hand, and he stated that the date of the petition was the 28th November. That would lead the House to believe that the petition practically left Brisbane for Melbourne on the 28th November; but it could not have been sent to Melbourne on that date, because on the night of the 27th November, according to the report in the *Courier* of the 28th, a meeting of protest was held, at which meeting it was decided by twenty-five out of twenty-seven who were present to enter a protest against the registration of the Brisbane tramway employees as a part of the great federation of tramway employees throughout Australia. On the 28th November the signing of this petition began, and it is ridiculous for the Minister to argue that the whole of the signatures to that petition were got in one day. There were 231 signatures secured, and I know of my own knowledge that quite a number who signed the petition were in favour of registration, but they signed it feeling that it was not worth the paper on which it was written, and knowing that if they refused to sign the petition—which ostensibly was supposed to be got up by the men, but was in effect drafted by the Tramways Company themselves—they would be liable to dismissal. That is a fairly strong statement to make, but I know that at the meeting at which the protest was carried there was one man present who voted against the motion for protesting, and the next day that man was dismissed, not because he voted against the protest resolution, or because he had attended the meeting, but because some three weeks previously it had been alleged that he was insolent to a passenger on a tramcar. I do not think any hon. member will be of the opinion that this

[*Mr. Hardacre.*]

man was dismissed because of something that happened three weeks previously. It was simply because he had the courage to disagree with the protest. With reference to the formation of the union, many efforts were put forward to form a union amongst the tramway employees in Brisbane, and on each occasion intimidation was used by the company, with the result that all effort failed. One of the speakers at the meeting of protest was Mr. Kerr, and I will quote what he said. This is from the *Brisbane Courier*, and I am prepared to vouch for its accuracy because it appears in that paper.

The PREMIER: That is quite a new phase for you.

Mr. McLACHLAN: My experience of reporters is that at all times they give a fair report of the proceedings that take place at meetings; and I am satisfied that this is an absolutely fair and correct report of what transpired. In the report of what Mr. Kerr said, we find this—

Worse than all, if the employees committed themselves to the proposed move or allowed themselves to be committed, they would be guilty of as serious a breach of faith and confidence as would be possible under any circumstances, in view of the fact that prior to Mr. Badger's departure for England they had promised him that during his absence they would not enter into any compact, by intrigue or otherwise, to upset the present conditions.

The extract merely proves that prior to the departure of Mr. Badger to the old country some pressure was brought to bear upon the men by giving them to understand that some dire consequences would result if they formed any association during his absence.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Are you correctly quoting the position?

Mr. McLACHLAN: I have quoted the words of one of the speakers at the meeting of protest.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That does not prove what you say.

Mr. McLACHLAN: It is reasonable to suppose that when a statement of that kind is made at a public meeting something must have happened, prior to the departure of Mr. Badger for the old country, to warrant such a statement being made. The only inference to be drawn is that if action of this kind were taken some consequence would follow which would not be beneficial to the men. This proves that every attempt which has been made on behalf of the men to organise in this particular employment has met with direct opposition from the Tramways Company.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is not correct.

Mr. McLACHLAN: It is absolutely correct. I, with others, at one time joined in endeavouring to form a tramway union.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Don't let the cat out of the bag.

Mr. McLACHLAN: I am proud of the fact that I assisted to form a tramway union; and I will be glad to do the same to-morrow for any body of workers.

The PREMIER: You are trying to block the Mines Regulation Bill.

Mr. McLACHLAN: No; the only person that is responsible for the circumstances which have arisen this afternoon is the hon. gentleman in taking up the attitude which he took up last night in connection with the proposal to spend the money of the taxpayers of Queensland, and in the direction in which he indicated he intended to spend it. The Premier, in reply to the deputation last night, stated that he was

going to assist these men by finding the money to pay for counsel in Melbourne because they were not in a position to find the money themselves. There are 500 men in the employment of the Tramways Company, and 231 of this number are supposed to have signed a petition protesting against the action of a certain number of the tramway employees who signed another petition asking for registration under the Commonwealth Arbitration Act. Only 230 of them protested, and still the majority—who, I take it, were given an opportunity of signing the petition if they so desired—if they did not sign it, were agreeable to allow the registration to go on. Only fifty were necessary to sign the application for registration, and, if it had been 250, they would have been got just as easily as the fifty had been secured.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLACHLAN: The fact remains that there was a majority of the men in the employ of the Tramways Company who did not enter any protest against the action taken, and still we find the Premier prepared to spend public money in providing counsel for men, the majority of whom did not ask for the action. The point he makes is that they have not money to do it for themselves. Here is a body of men, who have not got a registered union, but an association—a sort of recreation club—in which there must be some funds. If they could not use their funds to assist in fighting their case, which 230 of them thought should be fought, what should they use their funds for? It is quite patent that these 230 men were satisfied that they had not the power to use the funds in this direction, and still the Premier is prepared to spend the taxpayers' money in fighting a battle of non-union men as against registered unions. The Premier, in taking this action, has taken up what cannot be regarded as anything but an unconstitutional course—an illegal act. I think he has taken up a wrong attitude altogether. For him to argue that the men could not get legal advice in Melbourne, if they so desired, is so much idle talk. It is well known that if a number of men went to a reputable firm of solicitors in this town, as representatives of a large body of men, and asked them to take up the case, they would do it. It is idle to argue that the men had no opportunity of getting legal assistance in Melbourne. The attitude taken up by the Premier is not only unconstitutional, but illegal as well; and I am prepared, if a division is called, to vote for the motion of the senior member for Ipswich.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*): I desire to make a few remarks on this motion. This seems to be one of the positions of which someone has said "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

The PREMIER: And that is why you rush in. (Laughter.)

Mr. BARBER: The Premier, carried away with a sense of his own importance, and with his vindictiveness to the Commonwealth Government, has seized upon this opportunity of doing what he considers a very courageous act in endeavouring to get one home on the Commonwealth Government. Everyone knows what has been the feeling of the Premier towards the Commonwealth Government for a long time. I might say that he has been as vicious as a native cat against the Commonwealth Government. For some months past there has been a movement to bring the whole of the tramway employees in the Commonwealth under one federation. The Minister for Public Works seems to be astonished that an organiser should come from New South Wales to Queensland to organise these men into a union, to enable them to amalgamate with the federa-

tion down South. The same thing has been done in all the other centres. Three weeks ago another organiser proceeded to Adelaide and organised the tramway employees there, and hardly a month ago an organiser proceeded to Melbourne, and endeavoured to organise the tramway employees into a union there, an operation which was eminently successful. When I was living down there some twenty years ago it was considered—and I may say from what one can read that company has always been a company of a most tyrannical character as far as its treatment of its employees is concerned. The organiser called on the secretary of that company and placed the position before him. He stated that the men were being organised and brought under one union. The secretary issued some hundreds of circulars, one to each employee, asking the men to notify the company if they had joined the union, and that in that case they could no longer remain members of the union connected with that company. In reply to that edict, 800 or 900 men enrolled themselves under the banner of the new union. By the time the organiser sent in his last report, which appeared in the *Sydney Worker* some two or three weeks ago, it was estimated that at the end of November there would be enrolled in that union no less than 1,000 Melbourne men.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BARBER: The conditions obtaining there were almost on a par with the tyrannical conditions which obtain here in connection with this company. Why, two of the employees were discharged from the Melbourne company the other week! One of them was charged with the notorious and outrageous crime that when the conductor rang the bell he looked behind. (Opposition laughter.) And I want to say here, whether the Minister for Public Works knows it or not, that there are a lot of little petty acts of tyranny practised in the Brisbane Tramways Company. He talks about the smooth working of the Wages Boards Act. The hon. gentleman knows absolutely nothing about it. These few men who come to him are the servants of the directorate and spy on their mates! They are the men who are the malcontents in this case, because the majority of the employees working at the present time are in favour of coming into this union.

The PREMIER: How do you know that?

Mr. BARBER: I mix up with the crowd. If the Secretary for Public Works or the Premier would go out and mix with the men and gain their confidence—which I am quite sure they never will, because the men would not trust them—they would soon find out the opinions of these men. The hon. member says that since the decision of the wages board was arrived at everything in connection with the Tramways Company has worked smoothly.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BARBER: Has it? The hon. gentleman is simply exhibiting his ignorance when he is making that statement. Is he aware of the fact that since the decision of that wages board has been applied to this company, in a dozen different ways these men have been screwed; little privileges have been taken away from them, and the whole system has become more than ever subjected to espionage worse than it was before the decision was applied.

The PREMIER: Those are merely unsupported statements.

Mr. BARBER: They are not; and I emphasise here that what I am saying is absolutely correct. I know what I am talking about. I mix with the crowd, and I know what their opinions are.

*Mr. Barber.]*

The PREMIER: You are making statements which you cannot prove.

Mr. BARBER: Will the hon. gentleman keep cool? I made a statement the other week when the Works Estimates were going through which the Minister for Works considered was a most outrageous statement. I

remarked that as soon as these [7.30 p.m.] decisions of the wages boards were applied to the big industries, the large employers of labour at once engaged the best legal talent they could to ascertain whereby they could get through the provisions of the Act. No sooner was the decision of the wages board applied to the Tramways Company than the bosses came down to the hard-and-fast and tyrannical conditions that exist in the Tramways Company to-day.

The PREMIER: They are still your unsupported statements.

Mr. BARBER: What was the object of getting the men to leave the Federal union? I will read the rules of this union which the men were asked to join. They are as follow:—

To obtain legislative enactments, and to take steps to obtain compensation for accidents where the employees are liable. To prevent illegal stoppages of wages to members at the pay offices. To provide an allowance for the support of members who may be looked out or victimised, and to resist any unjust regulation connected with their employment. To assist kindred associations that have similar objects. To promote industrial peace and efficiency by all amicable means, such as conciliation, or the establishment of permanent boards to adjust disputes and regulate wages.

The rules also provide that industrial agreements must not be entered into unless approved by a general meeting or a special meeting of the association. Those are the rules of the union which the Minister says this emissary was sent up from the South to promulgate among the people here and cause discontent. The Minister for Works wishes to make a tinpot deity of this Wages Boards Act. Does the hon. gentleman think that because the Wages Boards Act applies to different industries in Queensland, the workers of the State have arrived at the gates of Paradise? Does he think that there is no possibility of their conditions being further improved now that the provisions of this Wages Boards Act apply to them? I only look on the Wages Boards Act as a palliative. I always preferred the conciliation and arbitration court because it deals more effectively with large bodies of men than the wages board never can deal with. The Wages Boards Act is only a palliative. The hon. gentleman dilated considerably upon this petition. The junior member for Fortitude Valley pointed out that it was only necessary for these men to secure fifty names to enable the Brisbane Tramways Company men to be federated with their brothers connected with the Southern union. There has been no trouble in Adelaide. The organiser went there and did his work, and did it effectively, but Premier Verran did not rush in and promise to spend the public funds to fight the Federal Government on behalf of these men. It is a very easy matter to secure petitions of this sort. If hon. members opposite knew what it was to "hump bluey" or to do hard slogging work they would know that in thousands of cases where the men have wives and children depending on them to earn a crust for them and keep a home for them, that these men out of sheer necessity and force of circumstances are compelled to sign these petitions. (Hear, hear!) To show that these petitions are very easily obtained I have only to refer to the fact that when the Wages Boards Act was first introduced we had a petition from the warehouse employees asking

that they should not be brought under the provisions of the Wages Boards Act, and the statements used then can be applied to this case.

Mr. MANN: We also had a petition from the barmaids and barmen asking leave to work longer hours.

Mr. BARBER: When some of the heads of the departments and subdepartments walked round with a petition, it is a case of stand and deliver with a pistol at the men's heads, and they are told to "Sign, or get." As to the date on which the men were asked to appear in Melbourne, and of which a great deal has been made, I would remind the hon. gentleman that a month is given in which unions can apply to come under the operations of the Act. Their meeting was held some time in November, and by the time this petition was sent down the time had practically expired. Although it was intimated to the men in Brisbane that their presence would be required in Melbourne to-day, it does not at all indicate that the business will be proceeded with straight away. As the hon. member for Ipswich pointed out, in principle there is no difference between the establishment of wages boards and courts of conciliation and arbitration. The Minister knows perfectly well that in practically all cases when members of the wages boards are summoned to Brisbane the only thing they do on the first day they meet is to elect a chairman and then adjourn. The Minister was reading out in a very careful way the details of the amounts that were paid to Mr. Sutch and others in Victoria. I remember on one occasion going into the hon. gentleman's office, and I heard him reading out a list of sales, etc., saying, "Eggs, 6½d. a dozen," and he read it with the same pathos, or bathos, as he read out those amounts this afternoon. (Laughter.) The Minister for Works said we were endeavouring to burst up what was a good union in Brisbane. (Hear, hear.) That simply shows that the hon. member does not know anything about this business, because there is no union among the men. Some years ago the men were called together. They met at midnight and formed a union. Someone spied on them, and the very next morning the name of every man who was present at that meeting and who joined the union was known to the boss, and they were given the option of dropping out of the union or leaving the employ of the company altogether. We know very well that when these men are given the sack there is no reason given for it. I met a late employee of the Tramways Company the other night in the lobby, and he was told that his services were no longer required, and he had to go. He was asked if he had anything to do with the forming of the union, and he admitted he had a little to do with it. That was quite sufficient evidence as to why he got the sack.

Mr. D. HUNTER: Do you believe Mr. Stephens did that?

Mr. BARBER: I believe he would do anything.

Mr. D. HUNTER: I do not believe he ever did it.

Mr. BARBER: The hon. member for Woolloongabba has really no sympathy at all for these men, and they have less for him. It is a well-known fact that in the election before last one of the officials of the Tramways Company actually went round and canvassed the houses of the tram employees for votes for the hon. member for Woolloongabba. No wonder that the men take up the attitude towards him that they do! The Minister for Public Works talks about hon. members on this side trying to burst up the union. I read myself the objects of that union, and I challenge the hon. member to show that there is anything bloodthirsty about them. All

[Mr. Barber.]

that these men seek for is to get a fair deal, which the Secretary for Public Works and the Premier are trying to prevent them from accomplishing. The Premier and the Secretary for Public Works, with their Mrs. Partington mop kind of business, will never stop these men from accomplishing their wishes to join the federated union. The Premier thinks that he can exert great power and influence in the State, but he has not the power to stop these men from organising and becoming a partner in that union. He may be a man of considerable tonnage in his own estimate, but he has not got sufficient tonnage to prevent that union from being formed. What is at the back of the whole thing?

Mr. HAMILTON: Badger.

Mr. BARBER: The Premier knows as well as any man sitting on this side the value of strong organisation. He knew what strong organisation meant years ago, when he was connected with this party. He knows its strength and its power to-day, but the hon. gentleman is simply a poor, weak, humble instrument backed up by the great Employers' Union, whose object it is to burst up industrial unionism in the Commonwealth.

Mr. NEVITT (*Carpentaria*): There are three issues at stake in this question. The first is the spending of Government money unconstitutionally; the second is the attempt to destroy unionism; and the third is the use of public money for the purpose of defending men who are too mean to subscribe money to defend themselves. When these men were called upon to say whether they would become affiliated with this union—when 231 men could not muster up £10 to enable them to be represented by counsel—it says very little for the conditions they are labouring under, or it shows that they are too mean to find the money. The Secretary for Public Works evidently thought the question was too big for him to deal with, so he called in the Premier to assist him, and the Premier called in the Attorney-General. If ever there was a case in the history of Queensland or in the history of unionism, this is a case in which unionism should deal with those gentlemen at the next opportunity. The Premier said these men had no grievances. I have not been intimately acquainted with many of the tramway employees, but I have never heard one of them say that the company treated men in a fair and legitimate manner. Only the other day, when the electric light employees of this company came under the decision of the wages board, the manager of the company took away their privilege tickets. And this is the company the Premier and his satellites are upholding! I heard him interjecting two or three times, "It is a bald statement," and I asked him to make inquiry whether this is not true. If men would not be deprived of their positions, I could bring them to the bar of the House, and get them to state that what I say is a fact.

The PREMIER: It is not for me to disprove your statements; it is for you to prove them.

Mr. NEVITT: How many times does the hon. gentleman make statements in this House which he does not bring evidence to prove? I do not come here for the purpose of distributing a lot of lies broadcast; I have no interest in this matter beyond the interest of fair play between man and man. That is all I am after, and that is all the members of this party are after. It is a fair and legitimate thing that we should insist, as far as lies in our power, in preventing the Government from spending money in an unconstitutional manner. Some time ago I was pleased to give my vote in favour of the Poor Prisoners' Defence Bill. If the Premier had relieved these

men under that Bill, I would have nothing to say, but these men are not eligible to come under it, although the Premier makes them eligible. I cannot find words strong enough to express what I feel on this matter—it makes one's blood boil when such outrages on public morality take place. The Premier said the gentleman who came from Melbourne was an agitator. I say that man was working in the interests of humanity. When the hon. gentleman promised public money to assist those men, was he working in the interests of humanity? He may say so, but I defy him to prove it. I say it is working against the best interests of humanity. It is not long ago since we had a Bill for the protection of life and limb, but we could not get time at our disposal for a Bill that would prevent serious accidents to life and limb, yet the Premier can find public money to defend a lot of "scab" unionists.

The PREMIER: The talk of members opposite prevented the Bill from being considered.

Mr. NEVITT: The gag was applied and a lot of boodle legislation has gone through since then.

The PREMIER: We have been waiting for an opportunity to bring it forward.

Mr. NEVITT: We have been waiting for it five months, but you have kept it in the background—you had "other fish to fry," to use your own phrase. What harm was that man doing when he came from Melbourne to try and get these men to band themselves together and become affiliated with one united body? I fail to see it, and no one has attempted to show that there is anything wrong, yet public money is being used to prevent it from being done. Then the Premier and the Minister for Works said the Harvester case was on all-fours with this. The law that made the Harvester case possible was passed by Mr. Deakin and his colleagues, and it is because that law was *ultra vires* that those men were forced to spend money from union funds. There is no comparison between that case and this. Then the Minister talks about the defence of State rights. I would like to know when the Minister for Works became a defender of State rights. I have here a speech which he made when he was anything but a State rights defender. He was then sitting on the Opposition side, and he complained that the Commissioner for Railways was not administering this department in a proper manner. He said—

His own firm, on the other hand, had received on 14th September 225 bags of chaff from Allora; the railway weight was 169 cwt. 0 qr. 7 lb.; the actual weight received being 184 cwt. 0 qr. 14 lb.

What did they do with the difference? They kept it themselves. Was that defending State rights? Why did the hon. gentleman, if he was an honest storekeeper, not return it to the Commissioner?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Why did you not read the whole of this?

Mr. NEVITT: That is the absolute fact, but I will read the whole of it if you like.

His own firm, on the other hand, had received on 14th September 225 bags of chaff from Allora; the railway weight was 169 cwt. 0 qr. 7 lb.; the actual weight received being 184 cwt. 0 qr. 14 lb. Perhaps someone might ask if they had reported the fact to the Commissioner for Railways. Well, they had not, for the simple reason that they had repeatedly to pay on shortages, and they thought this was only a fair set-off.

That does not alter the fact. I have not misquoted the hon. gentleman, or twisted what he said in any shape. I gave the actual facts.

The PREMIER: What has it to do with State rights?

Mr. Nevitt.]

Mr. NEVITT: It has a good deal to do with State rights. The difference between 169 cwt. and 184 cwt. belongs to the State, or to the Commissioner for Railways.

The PREMIER: It has nothing to do with State rights.

Mr. NEVITT: When you entrust goods to the Commissioner for Railways, he is to all intents and purposes the owner of those goods: and if the Minister for Works was such a stickler for State rights, he would have returned the excess of that material to the Railway Commissioner, to whom it belonged. Then the hon. gentleman asked, in connection with the visit of the organiser, why he did not go openly and organise the men. It is a well-known fact that if any individual goes to organise the tramway employees and any of those employees take an active part in the movement, they get the sack. In times gone past the men tried to form a union, but those who took an active part in the work got the sack. The hon. gentleman went on to say that the organiser was a coward, and that his not calling a meeting condemned his action from the jump. I say that man had the welfare of the tramway employees and their wives and families at heart, and that is why he did not come into the open and try to get those men to form a union. Nobody knows better than the Secretary for Public Works that if he or any other man tried to form a union, they would get sacked to-morrow, because that has been the case in the past, and it is reasonable to assume that they would do it in the future. I do not wish to take up the time of the House any further, but I want to emphasise the fact that this money has been spent in an unconstitutional manner, and every man who has the welfare of Queensland at heart, and who is in favour of a fair deal between man and man, will oppose this action of the Government.

Mr. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): It seems there is "a conspiracy of silence" amongst the Government supporters. A couple of Ministers have got up and spoken and the hon. member for Woolloongabba. Whether the members sitting behind the Government endorse the action of the Government it is impossible to tell, but if silence implies consent they certainly do. It seems to me that the Hon. the Premier brought down a lot of irrelevant matters to obscure the real gravamen of the charge. It is not the question of the visit of an organiser trying to organise the tramway employees of Brisbane, but of the Government spending public money—not to prevent a breach of the law, but to assist private individuals in trying to fight industrial unionism. The Premier said he would step in to interfere because the men were too poor to do it themselves, and yet the Minister for Works stands up and says these men were quite satisfied with their position and emoluments. If so, it is not the place of the Government to step in. All the men had to do was to go to any firm of solicitors for advice. Even the men who waited on the Premier did not wait on him as members of the Tramways Association, but as members of the Protest Committee. One can hardly think that the Premier is the same individual who in 1891 was an agitator himself. The friends the hon. gentleman now has behind him were calling the hon. gentleman an agitator in 1891. I have yet to learn that there is anything discreditable in a man being an agitator. No reform is ever obtained without agitation. The foremost men in reform movements, both political and economic, have been agitators, and some of them have sacrificed their lives in their work. The very cream of manhood is amongst the men whom the hon. gentleman has termed agitators. An organiser paid by a federated

[*Mr. Nevitt.*]

union of tramway employees came up here to organise the tramway employees in Brisbane. The shearers unite themselves together, and why should we not also have a federation of labour as far as tramway men and railway men are concerned? The time is not far distant when we shall have a wider federation of labour than the federation of the Commonwealth. It will be the federation of the world, and our industrial and economic movements to-day tend towards bringing that about. The hon. gentleman, when he termed this man an agitator, did him the highest possible compliment he could pay. There is more manhood in one whom he calls an agitator than in a thousand of the creatures who came to him the other night. The Premier and the Secretary for Public Works interfered before they had any right to interfere. The Government only had the right to step in when there is a breach of the law, but there was no breach of the law here.

The PREMIER: Are you quite sure of that?

Mr. HAMILTON: I am quite certain that there was no breach of the law, and the hon. gentleman has not shown that there was any breach. Talk about the Tozer régime in 1891 and 1894! It was not a bit worse than this; they used Government funds to try and down the shearers. The Minister is using the public funds in this instance to try and prevent a federation of the tramway employees throughout the Commonwealth, and he has done an unconstitutional thing. It is a good thing if we have uniform conditions brought about in rates of wages and conditions of work.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They do not want their wages lowered.

Mr. HAMILTON: There was no talk about their wages being lowered. Fifty of these men were quite willing and desirous of being under the Commonwealth Arbitration Court. We have no proof that there was any truth in the statement made here that a majority of the tramway employees are against coming under the Commonwealth Arbitration Court.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There is any amount of proof.

Mr. HAMILTON: I know very well that there was a lot of dissatisfaction with their conditions till quite recently. I know that there are spies in the camp there, just as in any other camp, and some of the men have not got souls of their own. They have wives and children to think of, and if they come out openly they know they will be victimised. When they struck against their conditions a couple of years ago, before they came under the wages board, a lot of them were victimised, and every time they have attempted to go in for better conditions some of them have been victimised, and it has meant the coercion of the many. If this action is allowed to pass without protest by the Opposition, where is it going to stop? If the Government can use public funds in a case like this, there is no telling how far a Government that will do this is prepared to go. I coincide with the motion for the adjournment of the House to bring this under the public notice. When the next election comes round I hope the thousands of unionists who helped to place the hon. gentleman where he is will remember his action and that of those who are applauding him.

Mr. FERRICKS (*Bowen*): While I do not object to the style in which the Premier received the introduction of this motion, I must protest against the attitude of some of his colleagues on the Treasury bench, particularly the Minister for Public Works and the Home Secretary, who throughout the course of this debate have put on a forced laugh, evidently with the intention of

creating an impression that the matter is of little consequence. I consider that this matter is a very serious one, and I am surprised at the action of the Secretary for Public Works in turning it off into a light vein. The Premier and his colleagues have evidently been out to aim a blow at industrial unionism, with the object of doing it some damage. The Premier asked for proof of the assertion that the majority of the members in the Tramways Company were in favour of affiliation with the Southern branch of the Tramways Union, and that proof is contained in the facts which have been put before us this afternoon. In the *Courier*—the official organ of the Government—we are told there are 500 employees of the Brisbane Tramways Company, and 231 signed the petition protesting against inclusion in the Federal Tramways Union. But how many did not sign it? The majority of 269 did not sign it. 231 signed it under intimidation, and 269 braved that intimidation and did not sign it. Therefore, the majority of the employees are in favour of affiliation with their brethren in the South. The question of State rights has been advanced by the Secretary for Public Works, and after he expressed himself in that connection he gave the whole show entirely away. The forced solicitude which the hon. gentleman showed for the concerns of the workers, and his statement that it was an attempt to justify State rights, shows that his solicitations

[8 p.m.] only amounted to canting hypocrisy.

The hon. gentleman would have been better advised had he been much more considerate in his contention. If he had said that the action was taken in the interests of the workers, then there would have been some justification for the attitude they took up, in their own minds at least; but when they say they are fighting the battle of State rights, and then shed crocodile tears for the workers, it is all sheer bosh. It may go down in this Chamber, but it will not go down outside. The Minister for Works, both in his speech and in his interjections, referred to the affiliation of the Brisbane men with what he termed a Southern union. As a matter of fact, it is not a Southern union at all, but an Australian union. And that Australian union will mature in spite of any scheme of opposition that might be advanced by the Premier and his colleagues. The Government and their followers in endorsing the action of the Premier are, each and every one of them, accepting a brief from Mr. Badger, the manager of the Brisbane Tramways Company. They are fighting Badger's battle against the workers of Brisbane. I do not think that the people of the metropolitan area are too much in love with the company or its manager, because the people of Brisbane are bled to the extent of £90,000 a year by this octopus. The people of Brisbane have no wish to go down on their knees to this Tramways Company, and it is surprising to me that members sitting on the other side agree to support this monopolistic institution, which is bleeding the people, not only of Brisbane but of Queensland. We have been told that the Government do not believe in class legislation. I believe in class legislation, but the class I believe in legislating for represents nine-tenths of the people, but the class the hon. gentlemen wish to legislate for is embodied in the other one-tenth. At the commencement of this session I was a member of a large and representative deputation which approached the Minister for Works and the Premier and asked them if it was their intention to introduce during the session a Bill to provide a statutory eight hours a day throughout Queensland, and the Premier replied to the deputation—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have allowed the hon. member a very considerable

latitude. He is dealing now with the whole subject of legislation in regard to workers. I must ask him to try to confine his remarks to the question before the House. I understand that considerable latitude must be allowed in a question of this nature, and I have allowed it, but I cannot allow it to be continued to the extent the hon. member apparently wishes to go.

Mr. FERRICKS: I was endeavouring to point out that if the Government is out in the interests of workers and not for State rights, as stated by the Minister for Works—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: A reply to a remark made by the Minister for Works with regard to State rights will be quite in order, but to debate the whole ramifications of State rights is entirely out of order.

Mr. FERRICKS: It has been mentioned during the debate, on an argument led by that allegedly unionistic Aunt Sally of members opposite—the hon. member for Wollongabba—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will have to couch his language in parliamentary terms. I cannot allow any member on either side to call any other member an Aunt Sally, and I ask the hon. member to withdraw it unreservedly.

Mr. FERRICKS: I withdraw it. I was not aware that I was transgressing at the time. The hon. member stated that the conditions of the tramway men were superior to the conditions of the tramway men in other places, and amongst others he named Wellington, in New Zealand. The aim of the tramway employees' federation is to federate the tramway employees of the Commonwealth. They do not go over to New Zealand at all. I might mention, for the benefit of the hon. member for Wollongabba, that New Zealand is not in the Commonwealth at all, and if he wants to make a comparison of the conditions of the Brisbane men he should confine that comparison to the conditions of the men in some State of the Commonwealth. But he went to New Zealand for a comparison. He might just as well have gone to China, because the Federal Arbitration Act only applies to the Commonwealth, and New Zealand is not in the Commonwealth, and the hon. member should know that. When they go to this extent in an attempt to justify their ground, they are put to sorry straits indeed, and they are proclaiming loudly the weakness of their own cause. One other matter I would like to mention is in regard to this industrial agitator who came up to Brisbane from the South in the endeavour to organise the men in the Tramways Company in Brisbane. It has been pointed out in this House that political agitators are very useful at times. Sometimes, for instance, they are responsible for sending a man away on a health trip, even although that man may afterwards turn traitor. We have another kind of political agitator as organisers of the People's Progressive League, who are out in the country getting £4 a week and expenses paid.

Mr. MANN: £400 a year.

Mr. FERRICKS: The head man gets £400 a year and expenses paid. Because this industrial organiser came to Brisbane to see these men it is thought to be a very wrong thing to do. If he had gone to Badger or any of his understrappers, then he would have nullified his efforts. But the action he took cut the ground from under the feet of the sycophants in the employ of the Tramways Company who act as pimps on their companions. Another phase of this question has been advanced during the debate, particularly by the Minister for Works, and he has instanced the referenda which will

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come off early next year. While I do not intend to go into the merits of these referenda, I would like to point out that unless these powers are enlarged to the Federal Government it would be possible for the tramway employees in Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland all to be out on strike at one time. The State Governments could refuse to interfere, and the Commonwealth would be unable to interfere. The strikes in each of the States might be on different grounds, and there might be no connection with the different disputes, and the Federal Government would be powerless to interfere. The Federal Government are coming before us early next year asking us to give them power, not only to embrace tramway employees in the different States, but also employees situated in like circumstances. But when this federation is established, the employees who come under it will be able to settle all their differences without resorting to strikes and lockouts. Someone on the other side made reference to revolutionary socialists. In fact, it was the Premier himself who made that remark, quite overlooking the fact that in the early nineties he was one of that brand himself. I would point out that if people are badgered and dominated by people in mushroom positions they will not stand it, and if they cannot get their way by peaceful methods they will do it by drastic methods. It is only necessary to refer to what took place in New South Wales some time ago. No one in Queensland knew how closely we were to a revolution at that time when the Premier of New South Wales, acting under the advice of the capitalistic coal vend, took measures to stop the strike. Our State Premier so far has followed this up by attempting to bolster up these non-unionists. That is a dangerous course to pursue. It is only right that his action should be brought before the people of Queensland, because it is such actions as these that lead to drastic methods being adopted, and the step from drastic methods to civil war is very slight. We have already had experience of that in connection with the shearers' strike in Queensland, when the military were sent out West to shoot the shearers. What could we expect from the Premier of Queensland if a similar set of circumstances arose tomorrow? We have had it from the Premier's own lips that he would leg-iron the strike prisoners. He told us that himself. There is only one way for peace to be proclaimed, and that is by the workers organising. If they are prevented from organising—if they are threatened and intimidated and encouraged to take drastic methods—it will lead to civil war. I point out, in conclusion, that this principle, if not pulled up now, then, as pointed out by the junior member for Ipswich, there are unbounded possibilities of what might be expected in Queensland. There is nothing to prevent the Premier, backed by his servile followers, taking the money belonging to the taxpayers, and using it for political purposes. The Premier is using public money, without the sanction of Parliament, for unconstitutional purposes. I am very pleased that the motion has been moved. I hope that those members representing metropolitan constituencies, who are supporting the Government in this action, will get their reward as soon as the opportunity is given to do so.

Mr. PAYNE (*Mitchell*): I think the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Blair, put the matter very wisely when he said, "I wonder where this thing is going to end." He was referring then to the wrongful expenditure of public money in assisting the tramway men to be represented in Melbourne. I think it is a somewhat unwise procedure of this Government to use the public

money to assist anybody. I listened very carefully to the arguments used by the Premier and the Minister for Works in defence of their action in using this public money, and I never listened to a more flimsy or weak argument in defence of any action. The Premier said that it was his duty to assist any body of men. I wonder where the Premier's trade union principles have gone to. Where are those trade union principles that he used to boast about so much years ago? Here we have a body of 500 tramway employees, and they could not raise £20 or £30 to have themselves represented in Melbourne. I remember the time when the Premier would turn to them and say, "If you have any manhood, put your hands into your own pockets for a little money, and show that you can be represented from your own body." If it was a body of men in a weak state, it would be a matter of humanity to assist them, but for the Premier to try to make believe that he was justified in spending public money in having the case of these men represented in Melbourne is nonsense. There is no honesty about it. And the argument of the Secretary for Public Works was much weaker. It is as plain as a pikestaff that the Premier is trying to stop these men from being converted into one consolidated union. No man in the Commonwealth knows better than the Chief Secretary the strength of industrial unionism. Reference has been made to the stand he took in the early nineties. The unions of Queensland were proud of him, but I regret that the Hon. William Kidston should get up to-night and refer to an honest organiser as an agitator. There was no greater agitator in the Commonwealth than the hon. gentleman himself, and he was a very good agitator at that time; and it will become the hon. gentleman to refer to any other man as an agitator. We know very well that all progressive movements in the civilised world have been brought about by agitation; and, as far as the horny-handed son of toil is concerned, we know very well what position he would be in to-day but for the agitation that has taken place in the past. It has been pointed out that there was no breach of the law by those fifty men in asking to be registered. If there had been a breach of the State law, I think the Premier would have been justified in stepping in; but there has been no breach of the law at all, and I want to know where this thing is going to end. If 230 members of the Australian Workers' Union came to the Chief Secretary and wanted an advance of some hundreds of pounds to see them through a case, would he give them the money? The whole thing shows that the action of the Government has been taken for no other purpose than to stop industrial organisation. If those men wanted someone to represent them in Melbourne, they had only to go to the hon. member for Barcoo or the hon. member for Ipswich or any legal gentleman either in this Chamber or outside. They would not have to put up any money, because we know very well that their word would be worth £20. We are told that the tramway men in Brisbane receive good wages and are contented, which is not correct. It has been pointed out that even the 230 signatures to the petition that has been spoken of do not represent a majority of the tramway employees, and it would be interesting to know if that petition was presented to every one of the employees. I have heard a good deal about agitation to-night, but I am not ashamed to rise in my place and say that for a good number of years I have been an agitator. The hon. member for Gregory referred to the troublous times in 1891, and to the stand which the Chief Secretary took then. I do not believe in burning and destroying property, but I have been a consistent agitator ever since I

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came to manhood: and, because a man believes in the spirit of unionism, it does not follow that he is not a respectable citizen.

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS:** Who is trying to prove that?

**MR. PAYNE:** The Chief Secretary referred to anarchists, and it ill became the hon. gentleman to do so. No man in the House should say less about industrial agitators than the hon. gentleman. I could say a good deal about his action in connection with industrial organisations in the early nineties, but I will not do so. The Chief Secretary and the Minister for Works, in spending the taxpayers' money to assist those 500 men, are simply degrading them, and I never listened to such hypocrisy as fell from these two Ministers. If they were in earnest, they would have said to these men, "You are quite strong enough to look after your own affairs and settle the matter between yourselves. It is our business to step in if you violate the law of the land." During the last two sessions the Government have done such peculiar things that it would be interesting to know where it will end. Speaking from a humane point of view, I say that the action of the Premier will do more to bring these men down to the gutter than anything I know of.

**MR. RYAN (Barcoo):** I have much pleasure in supporting the motion moved by the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Maughan, and I think that hon. gentleman is to be commended for the action he has taken. I cannot think of anything more discreditable on the part of the Government than the act of spending public money for party purposes. I consider the Government have spent public funds to fight the Labour party and to fight unionism; and the evidence of that is to be found in their speeches and in the answers which members gave to the deputation last night. I will refer to what the Minister for Works said in answer to the deputation. He said—

We have already the necessary machinery, which is working satisfactorily; and an outside body comes and tries to cause trouble.

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. RYAN:** Surely we have a right to protect the men. It shows what is going to happen if this Referenda Bill is carried, and things are carried to Melbourne. Pity the community!

**MR. FOLEY:** That is the trouble.

**MR. RYAN:** That is the trouble. They must defeat that referenda; and they must use the public funds to do it. The hon. gentleman said to-night it was a case of fighting for State rights. When before this did the Government spend money to protect State rights? Is it not only since the Federal Labour party came into power that they have been so anxious about State rights?

**HON. R. PHILP:** I fought for State rights against the Barton Government?

**MR. LENNON:** You did not use the public funds.

**MR. RYAN:** I consider this is one of the most important motions brought before the House this session.

**HON. R. PHILP:** It's all bunkum!

**MR. RYAN:** It is one that greatly concerns the people of Queensland, and it will closely concern the Government when they next meet the people—that is, if the result of this motion is not to warn them to desist from the course of conduct they are entering upon. We had the degrading spectacle of the leader of the Govern-

ment scorning the base degrees by which he rose. We saw him acting traitor to the principles which placed him in his position, and going back on the platform he signed, his defection from which placed him amongst his present colleagues. What is the position? We have established, not by Mr. Fisher, but by the Barton-Deakin party, a court of compulsory conciliation and arbitration—a court established with all due regard to State rights. And we have a certain number of the employees of the Brisbane Tramways Company—fifty of them—who [8.30 p.m.] applied as members of an association in a constitutional manner to be registered under the provisions of the Act providing for that court of conciliation and arbitration. That is all perfectly constitutional.

**HON. R. PHILP:** What about the other 450 who do not want it?

**MR. RYAN:** I will come to the other 450 directly. If they did not want to sign to be members that is their affair, but they have no right to prevent one single man from becoming a member of that association.

**HON. R. PHILP:** You say that one man should dominate ten.

**MR. RYAN:** No; I do not say one man should dominate ten; but I say that 500 men have not the right to say what I shall do or whether these fifty men shall join a union or not.

**THE TREASURER:** The fifty should not dominate the 500 either.

**MR. RYAN:** The fifty will not dominate the 500. The fifty persons who signed that are bound by that organisation, and the others are not. I now come to where the shoe pinches, and it is the Act which was passed by the Federal Parliament giving preference to unionists. That is the whole trouble. The people the Government are assisting are not these people who come up and say they want to be represented in Melbourne; it is the Brisbane Tramways Company who are interested. These fifty men, six weeks ago, at the instigation of an organiser who came from the South, sent in their names to this association as desiring to become members and to become registered under the provisions of the Commonwealth Arbitration and Conciliation Act. We are told that that man came up and did not call an open meeting of all the employees. If he had taken that proceeding, he would have been a great fool, because no one knows better than the hon. gentleman who leads the Government—and who I am sorry to say is not in his place at present—the necessity for organisers in cases like this not to let the employer know what they are doing, because the unfortunate men who had the courage of their convictions to sign on as members would lose their positions. Is not that the experience of unionism all over Queensland?

**MR. LAND:** They blacklist them all over the country.

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS:** That is ancient history—not modern history.

**MR. RYAN:** He gets fifty men to send in their names, and they are all who are concerned. An application is made six weeks before the 13th December, and they send down that application. These people who now come, and that we have the public funds spent upon, start upon the 28th November a petition which no doubt took some days to get the names to it, and got to Melbourne very late, with the result that they got the reply back on the 12th. That was as soon as the registrar could do it, and if there is anyone to blame that they have not had much time it is themselves.

**MR. FOLEY:** Does the Minister know this?

*Mr. Ryan* ]

Mr. RYAN: Of course, the Minister knew all about it; and if the truth is told, this deputation was not arranged by the men themselves—I suppose it was engineered by the Brisbane Tramways Company. I am only giving my opinion, one which I think is shared by a great number of members in this House, and a great number of people outside this House who happen to be in the know.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: If anyone reads it, they will see that the petition is a tyrannical act to prevent these fifty men becoming members of this association. It sets out—

We, the undersigned employees of the Brisbane Tramways Company, Limited, desire to protest against any proposal to include the Brisbane tramway employees in the Australian Tramway Employees' Association, or the Australian Federated Industrial Organisation of Tramway Workers.

It is within our knowledge that a minority of the Brisbane tramway employees have submitted their names as members of the organisation above referred to—

Those are the important words—

(registration of which, we understand, is being applied for), but seeing that such names were obtained by a personal canvass, that many of the employees were not approached in the matter, and that there were not any meetings at which those of us who are opposed to membership could express our views, we, the majority, confidently appeal by petition for the Brisbane tramway employees to be excluded from any such organisation or association.

Who can be excluded? Only the fifty men who have signed on, because the others are not members of the association at all. These men come to get public funds spent to prevent those fifty men from becoming members of that association.

The TREASURER: The award will be binding upon all parties who are summoned.

Mr. RYAN: This is not a question of award at present, but a question of registration. I draw the attention of the hon. gentleman to a provision in this Act—section 60 of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act, subsection (1)—

If it appears to the registrar—

(a) That for any reasons the registration of an organisation ought to be cancelled.

there is provision for it to be cancelled. This registration is not a final thing at all. If they can show any valid reason why registration should not take place they would be heard even subsequent to registration.

The TREASURER: It would take a long time.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: If fifty only were concerned, why send a notice to the others?

Mr. RYAN: I will tell the hon. gentleman why notice is sent to them—because they have sent in a petition objecting to the registration. Any association with fifty *bona fide* members has the right to come in, even if there should be 10,000 against them; and the only question for decision is whether they are *bona fide* members. There is a suggestion contained in this that they are not *bona fide* members; and that is the only point the registrar can hear argument on if these come before him in Melbourne. I suppose it is decided by this time. It is the only reason why these people can come forward. We know there are seventy now, because twenty names have gone down since. There are a far greater number who wish to sign, but they are afraid to sign on account of the Brisbane Tramways Company. I know any amount of men who were advised to sign this petition objecting to registration by Labour men, but simply because they knew the thing would be of no use, and to protect themselves and their wives and children, they did so. I think

[Mr. Ryan.

the position was put very well by the hon. member for Leichhardt, when he said that this was a case of civil war against the Federal Government. Here is a perfectly constitutional action taken by certain employees of the Brisbane Tramways Company, and we have the public money brought in to frustrate them. There is no possible chance of frustrating them; but it gives us an opportunity of knowing to what length this Government will go for party purposes. I do not think any Government can become more daring than to dip their hands in the public treasury for their own party purposes. That is what the Government have done. It is part and parcel of the policy which, to my mind, they have been pursuing lately at the public expense, of endeavouring to gain favour at the hands of some of the working classes. There was a statement in the Brisbane *Courier* the other day that they were going to build houses for the people who would be engaged on those railways that have been passed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you object to them?

Mr. RYAN: I do not object to them; but they are going to build those houses in order to try and bribe those people to vote for the Government.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. RYAN: It is a very good thing to state plainly what we think and what we mean. The attitude of the Government reminds me of the Trojan horse. The Greeks could not take Troy, but they made the Trojans a present of a wooden horse and got it inside the wall. Then when the army withdrew to the island close by, we all know what happened. The soldiers came from inside the horse and captured the city. That is what this Government is trying to do with the labouring men. They are stopping inside this wooden horse and endeavouring to get their support, and then, when they go into power, they will rend the working man.

The TREASURER: Do you object to their being made comfortable?

Mr. RYAN: I do not object to them being made comfortable; but I do object to these proposals being made to gain support. This is all part of a policy which is an attempt to keep this party in power. They will stop at nothing; and they have come to the very lowest point when they dip their hand down into the public treasury for party purposes as they have done on this occasion. The Minister for Works says it is fortunate that the hand of the Commonwealth Government was shown so soon. This was done to draw my attention to the outside interference. I challenge the hon. gentleman to say where the Commonwealth Government have acted in this matter at all. It is a case of fifty tramway employees in Brisbane using the machinery of a court which was established by the hon. gentleman's own party. The Commonwealth Government have nothing to do with this whatever. I would like the hon. gentleman, by way of interjection, to enlighten me as to where the Commonwealth Government are concerned in this matter. He is silent; he cannot answer. It is quite obvious that they have not interfered at all. It is merely a use of words for party purposes, the same as they are prepared to use the public money.

Mr. HAMILTON: There has been no breach of the law.

Mr. RYAN: Certainly there has been no breach of the law by these fifty men; there has been a strict observance of the law. Everything has been done constitutionally, and then we are going to get counsel briefed in Melbourne who will find perhaps that they have no *locus standi*. Why

did not the Attorney-General tell these men to get their own solicitor? Why should he spend public money to have their case put forward—a section of the community who have no right to be heard at all?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I am afraid you are bit very hard.

Mr. RYAN: I do not feel hit very hard; I think the hon. gentleman is hit very hard. I gave him a fair challenge to state whether the Commonwealth Government was interfering, and he was unable to give an answer. I have much pleasure in again supporting the motion. There is one other point which I had forgotten—that is, the comparison of the Harvester case. When the Premier was speaking, the Minister for Lands was tugging at his coat-tails to tell him to ring in the Harvester case, and he quoted from the Federal *Hansard* in reference to that case. In that case the fight was to determine whether a certain Act of the Commonwealth Parliament was constitutional or not. That is an entirely different thing from this. It is admitted that the Arbitration Act was constitutional.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Is it admitted that money was paid by the Government?

Mr. RYAN: Yes, money was placed on the Estimates and passed by Parliament in the ordinary way.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Only a portion of it.

Mr. RYAN: Of course it was only a portion of it, because they only paid a portion of it. If they had paid the lot, the lot would have been mentioned.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It was on the Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. RYAN: It may have been on the Supplementary Estimates, but they took the constitutional course of asking the sanction of Parliament to pay that money. (Hear, hear!) And Parliament had a perfect right to have that matter put before it, because it was money paid to ascertain the powers of the Commonwealth. If something similar to that had been done in this case I would have supported it, but the two cases are quite different. I may say that when I read that paragraph in the paper this morning I was astonished. I was really astonished when I saw that the Premier said he was going to give these men any assistance at all. The Government have no right to pay the legal expenses of these men to be represented in Melbourne, especially when we have been told that they have been living under such conditions that they do not require any conciliation or arbitration court at all. The argument advanced by the Premier is ridiculous, and I shall support the motion.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. R. PHILP (*Townsville*): What is the occasion of all this noise?

Mr. LENNON: The Brisbane Tramways Company.

HON. R. PHILP: It seems that the Labour party throughout the session have been making a very poor fight. They feel that their case is a pretty bad one. The House will adjourn next week, and their friends will say to them outside, "What have you done this session? You have done nothing."

Mr. HAMILTON: You will not be able to say that.

Mr. MULLAN: You have done pretty well.

Mr. RYLAND: You got your little railway.

HON. R. PHILP: You got a railway. (Laughter.) I never got one railway at all. (Govern-

ment laughter.) The Labour party are fighting because their friends outside are saying, "You are no good at fighting; you cannot make a fight at all; why don't you do something?" That is why it suddenly struck the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Maughan, to say, "Here is a splendid opportunity for me to distinguish myself." (Laughter.) If the Labour party are good at anything, they are good at calling somebody else a bad name. That is their stock in trade; abuse the other fellow. Go for him, he will not reply. He will not deign to reply, so have a good go at him. We had the hon. member for Bundaberg this afternoon graphically describing about a man bumping his "bluey." Why, he never bumped "bluey" in his life! I do not believe he ever saw a "bluey" in his life. (Laughter.) Why, the ship he arrived in had not done rocking when the hon. member for Bundaberg came into this House. (Laughter.)

Mr. BARBER: I have been in Australia eleven years, at any rate. I worked my passage out. It was not paid for me.

HON. R. PHILP: Well, you have done pretty well in eleven years. (Laughter.) The hon. member for Carpentaria is in a terrible state, and he described these tramway men as "scab" unionists. I think those men, man for man, are just as good as he is.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: What sort of argument is that?

Mr. LAND (to Mr. Philp): You do not care whether they are "scabs" or not.

HON. R. PHILP: There are 500 employees of the Tramways Company. Fifty of those tramway employees want to be affiliated with the other unions and 450 do not want it at all. Why should fifty men be allowed to sway the destiny of 500 men?

Mr. NEVITT: That is a bald statement. Where do you get your figures from?

HON. R. PHILP: It is not a bald statement. There are 500 employees in the Tramways Company. I travel in the trams, and I often have a talk with the conductors.

Mr. LAND: They will not tell you anything; they know too much for that. (Laughter.)

HON. R. PHILP: I generally talk with them, and after the wages board decision one of them volunteered the statement to me, "Mr. Philp, we are the best paid tramway men in Australia!"

Mr. FOLEY: Was it Morris?

HON. R. PHILP: That was what was told to me by one of the men.

Mr. COLLINS: What about the profits of the Tramways Company?

HON. R. PHILP: I do not know anything about the profits, as I am not a shareholder.

Mr. HARDACRE: In New South Wales they pay the tramway men better wages.

HON. R. PHILP: The tramway men in Brisbane assure me that they are the best paid tramway men in Australia.

Mr. NEVITT: Then they ought to be able to pay for their own legal advice. (Hear, hear!)

HON. R. PHILP: If the Brisbane men are the best paid men in Australia, they do not want to join the Federal union. They come under our own Wages Boards Act, and they are quite satisfied with that. If these fifty men could join the Federal union without bringing in the other 450, it would be all right.

Mr. RYAN: They can do that.

HON. R. PHILP: No. The trouble is that these fifty can drag in the other 450.

Mr. RYAN: No.

*Hon. R. Philp.]*

HON. R. PHILP: Then if that it so, why do these 450 men protest against the action of the fifty men in wanting to join the Federal union?

MR. FOLEY: Because the company asked them to do so.

HON. R. PHILP: I am not in the secrets of the Tramways Company, like my friend the other hon. member for Townsville.

MR. RYAN: The company would be subject to the award and would be subject to the penalty.

HON. R. PHILP: Then the other 450 men will be dragged into it. Queensland can settle all her own quarrels. I hope that all our own industrial matters will be settled [9 p.m.] by Queensland. It is not right to drag the whole of Australia into the industrial matters of the State.

MR. HAMILTON: The seamen and wharf labourers are all federated.

MR. LENNON: What about the Pastoralists' Union?

HON. R. PHILP: I say here that I believe in State rights. (Hear, hear!) I think it would be better for Queensland if she were by herself.

MR. LAND: You voted for federation.

HON. R. PHILP: I did, and I would vote again for federation, but I never voted for a federation to interfere with State matters.

MR. HARDACRE: The question is whether State money should be used to fight for these men.

HON. R. PHILP: It is a fight for trade unionists. This is an opportunity to abuse every man in the Chamber who does not fall in with their views. This is regarded as a splendid opportunity for members opposite to stand up and abuse these men belonging to the Tramways Company.

MR. HAMILTON: They are non-unionists.

HON. R. PHILP: Whether they are non-unionists or not I do not care. I employ as many unionists as the hon. member for Gregory, and more. When hon. members opposite say that this is done for political purposes it shows how fallen those gentlemen are.

MR. HAMILTON: You could not get men to work for you unless they were unionists. They would have to be unionists out there. (Hear, hear!)

HON. R. PHILP: That is not the question. I have never objected to a man being a trade unionist. A man has a perfect right to do anything he can to better his position. I do not object to these fifty men signing the petition to bring them into the Federal union so long as they do not drag in the other 450 with them.

MR. HARDACRE: It is not the business of the Government to spend public money in helping them.

HON. R. PHILP: I saw a letter from an officer of the Commonwealth Government—the registrar. I understand that this letter was received yesterday, and it asked these men to appear in Melbourne to-day.

MR. LENNON: They addressed their petition to that Commonwealth officer.

HON. R. PHILP: Any common-sense man must know that these men could not appear in Melbourne to-morrow. I am satisfied that nobody in this House knows how the tramway employees vote—whether they vote for Government or Labour. I think that this case is on all-fours with the Harvester case in Melbourne. Mr. Mackay was not paid by the other side, and he had to pay his own expenses. The men had their expenses paid by the Fisher Government.

[*Hon. R. Philp.*

I think it is a bad thing to stand by the Fisher Government in that matter. Of course, Fisher can do no wrong and Kidston can do no right. That is the argument of hon. members opposite. It is nothing but abuse of the Government.

MR. NEVITT: You do not know the Premier as we do.

HON. R. PHILP: I knew very little of the hon. member for Carpentaria till he came to this House. I warn him that he will burst some day if he does not look out. (Laughter.) He goes about in a terrible way with his blood boiling, so he had better be careful of himself. I wonder that the leader of the Opposition did not start this matter. I thought we would have finished it by 4 o'clock. Instead of that the minds of members have been inflated by the hon. gentlemen's supporters, and we have been kept going until 9 o'clock. I hope that we will keep going now until half-past 10 o'clock. We have wasted a whole day. We had a very important matter in front of us—the amendments in the Mines Regulation Bill, that hon. members were calling out for. Hon. members were allowed two days to discuss that Bill, but as they have wasted the whole of to-day over this other question we ought to go on with this question until it is time to adjourn.

MR. COLLINS: It was the action of the Government that wasted the time.

HON. R. PHILP: It would have been quite sufficient for the mover of the motion to have spoken and the leader of the party, and then we could have taken a vote on it. But no. Here was an opportunity not to be lost by members on the other side. They had neglected their duty before, but here was an opportunity to go for the Government and call them a lot of harsh names.

MR. HAMILTON: You lost no opportunity of going for them when you were over on this side.

HON. R. PHILP: Abuse is the stock in trade of the Labour party. They believe in throwing mud in the hope that some of it will stick. That is only part of their game. I can honestly say that it was never part of my game. I have never abused anybody. (Opposition laughter.) I have never descended to the low personal statements that were made in this House this afternoon.

MR. HARDACRE: This is a matter that might lead to a civil war.

HON. R. PHILP: The hon. member for Leichhardt may talk to his grandmother about civil war. There is no civil war here. This is a question of State rights. If we are going to have war we will have war, but this is not going to bring it. I have always defended State rights and I will defend them again.

MR. HARDACRE: If the State Government fight against the Commonwealth, would not that be civil war?

HON. R. PHILP: There was no occasion for all this abuse this afternoon, but the Labour party saw their opportunity of having a go at the Government, and that is all they care for.

THE TREASURER: Political fireworks.

HON. R. PHILP: I am sorry that men should so far forget themselves as to call other men "scab" unionists. I consider that these 450 men, man for man, are as good as they are every time.

MR. NEVITT: Where do you get your 450 from? There are only 231.

HON. R. PHILP: These men are working here every day; they are getting good wages, and they are entitled to get them.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: We all say that.

HON. R. PHILP: Nobody has a right to refer to these men in that way, and it would serve them right to get a smack in the face from some of those "scab" unionists.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEVITT: You never abuse anybody.

HON. R. PHILP: What right have you to call them that? It is evident that we are going to have a night of it, and I think I have given members, opposite something to reply to. I notice the hon. member for Herbert getting up to go for me, and I am satisfied that we are going to waste the whole evening over nothing at all. We have not many days left before the close of the session.

MR. MULLAN: We are in no hurry to adjourn next week.

HON. R. PHILP: I think most members want to adjourn next week. It is hard work to come five days a week, but there is still a lot of work to be done; and I am sorry, at the dying hours of the session, we should waste a whole day as we have done this afternoon.

MR. COLLINS (*Burke*): The hon. member for Townsville talked about inflaming minds; and then he went on to say it would be a good thing if some of the members who referred to men as "scabs" were to get a slap across the face after they left the House. I do not think any member on this side has done as much towards inflaming men's minds as the hon. gentleman has done. I expected the Government was going to do something in connection with this tramway trouble, because for weeks we have had leaders in the *Courier* about the tyranny of unionism. For weeks the *Courier* has been inspired by the Premier to write these articles. We have heard a lot about the tyranny of unionism, and it would be as well if we heard something about the tyranny of capitalism as represented by the Brisbane Tramways Company. It has been said that this company pays its employees better than any other tramway company in the Commonwealth. Even if it does, it is not saying much for the company, which makes greater profits than any other company. The Premier referred to revolutionary socialists. I am not aware that there are any revolutionary socialists in this House, and I may tell the hon. gentleman that revolutionary socialists do not believe in conciliation and arbitration. They say there should be nothing to conciliate or arbitrate about, and the worker is entitled to the whole product of his labour. The Premier does not seem to understand the position.

THE PREMIER: Much better than the hon. gentleman.

MR. COLLINS: Then he did not prove that this afternoon. He ought to understand it, because at one particular period he was classed as a revolutionary subject; and I remember the time when the Queensland Government were desirous of arresting the hon. gentleman and placing him in prison.

MR. MURPHY: So they ought. They ought to have hanged him. (Laughter.)

THE PREMIER: That is what you have been trying to do ever since. (Laughter.)

MR. COLLINS: But the hon. gentleman kept within the pale of the law. At one time the hon. gentleman wrote poetry; and I will read something of what he wrote in connection with the railway men. The conditions are somewhat similar—

And if you are a railway man, I'd have you for to know,

You've got to ask your gaffer where your sympathies should go.

Your heart, your purse, your conscience to their keeping you must bring;

Why, it's getting even hotter than when George the Fourth was King.

\* \* \* \* \*

W. KIDSTON.

Written during the great shearers' strike, to be sung to the stirring air of "The Wearin' of the Green."

(Loud laughter.) I do not know that any member on this side is a writer of revolutionary poetry such as I have read. (Laughter.) The hon. member for Townsville said, by the way of interjection, that one man should not dominate ten. The idea of fifty unionists dominating 450 is something terrible! It is terrible also to think that for ages past one man has been allowed to dominate tens of thousands. And that is what is done to-day whenever capitalists get the opportunity. That is why we are trying to bring about the federation of the tramway employees. The Minister for Public Works said this emissary from the South went about whispering to the men. What sort of conditions must exist when any organiser has to whisper to the men? If we wanted any argument to prove our case, the Minister for Public Works proved it up to the hilt by showing that the men are afraid to join the union openly for fear they would get the sack. If these conditions exist, as I believe they do, the Government should have come to the rescue of the men and told the Tramways Company they would not be allowed to stop their men from forming a union. The day of sectional unionism is over; and we should seek the federation of labour not only all over the Commonwealth, but throughout the world.

THE PREMIER: The Japs included.

MR. COLLINS: Japs included. I am sorry that in this country such conditions exist; and I am sorry that the Premier, who at one time inspired the electors with that poetry of his, should so fall away from the path of virtue, as it were—the path of progress—and be ranked amongst the most reactionary Premiers in the world. Owing to the existing tyrannical conditions, we are told that the tramway employees promised Mr. Badger that they would be good boys while he was away in London. What are we coming to in Queensland? Where is the manhood of these men? I say they should join the union. They should stand erect and be men. When they join this federated union will it mean the lowering of their standard? Not a bit of it. More than likely it will be the means of raising their standard. I hope that when they go into the federation the Federal Arbitration Court will give such an award as will lessen the profits of the company and improve the position of the men. It has been said that we have wasted time this afternoon, but the Premier is responsible for that, because it is owing to his action that this party thought it desirable to take action. I am glad the question has been brought forward, because it shows that we have in Queensland the most tory Government in the Commonwealth.

MR. LENNON (*Herbert*): When the hon. member for Townsville sat down I thought I might speak, because the hon. gentleman twitted me with not yet having spoken on this subject. I won't take up much time to reply to that statement, except to say that my idea is that a good general does not do all the fighting himself, and there is very little need for me to take the brunt of the fray. The remarks of the hon. member for Townsville are in a large measure like those which have fallen from the Chief Secretary. They both spoke about everything except what we are really discussing. If the pastoralist industry can be federated all over Australia, is there any reason why the tramway men should

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not be federated over Australia? When they try to show these fifty tramway men, simply because they want to join a union for their own protection, dominate the 450, it is perfectly absurd. If fifty men came forward to join the People's Progressive League, the mere fact that they joined the People's Progressive League would not say they would have any influence on 450 other men to join them. Fifty is the statutory minimum number, and that is all that is required. That was the work which the organiser was sent up to do, and which he did, and there was no reason to waste his time with trying to augment that number to 500. The Minister for Lands, in reply to the hon. member for Barcoo, said that these men were not in any way intimidated by the Tramways Company when they were endeavouring to form a union. The Minister for Lands tried to make out that the hon. member for Barcoo was trying to fabricate a case, that intimidation was ancient history and not modern history, and yet 50 yards away, at the Queensland Club, a first-class steward, who had served the club faithfully for three years, was summarily dismissed because he dared to take action in the formation of a stewards' union in Brisbane.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: How do you regard the treatment of the men at Adelaide referred to in the earlier part of the day?

MR. LENNON: I take the words of the Minister for Works, and say it has nothing to do with the case.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The intimidation was on the other hand.

MR. LENNON: The gravamen of the charge is that this Government have used public money for the purpose of bolstering up a powerful company, and preventing that company from being in any way injured by having to pay the men better wages and give them better conditions. It is a matter of public notoriety in Brisbane that these men are bounced and bullied and badgered by the company. These men who are regarded as pimps—who said that they would not do anything during the absence of Mr. Badger—came along and found favour with the Chief Secretary, the Attorney-General, and the Minister for Public Works, who listened to the tale of woe which they told, and provided public money to enable them to brief a barrister to defend their side of the case. If these gentlemen would turn their attention to some awards which have been made in Brisbane lately—particularly in regard to the candle-makers, who were awarded a miserable pittance of £1 10s. a week—if they would try to prevent these poor men from being trodden down, it would do them some credit. But when they try to protect the Tramways Company, when called upon to give better wages and conditions, it is a pitiable exhibition on the part of the Government.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The conditions of these men are better than those of others in the State.

MR. LENNON: I doubt it very much. I have travelled a good deal for the past three years on the trams in Brisbane, and frequently heard the tram men speak of the conditions under which they were working. No doubt the conditions are better now than they were two years ago, but I have heard the men complain of the long hours, the poor pay, and the domination of one man. The hon. member for Townsville complains of the domination of these fifty men, but what has the domination of Mr. Badger been for the last fifteen years? I consider that this motion has not been brought forward by the senior member for Ipswich, as the Hon. the Chief Secretary alleges, for the purpose of blocking the Mines Regulation Bill. It has been moved for the purpose of

[Mr. Lennon.]

blocking the underground engineering Bill who sits on that side, to show him up to the country. This is a justifiable motion, and it is most opportune. It was only this morning that we heard that this little scheme had been arranged between the Premier and the tramway men, and this party did not allow one moment to elapse before bringing on the motion, so that all the talk that this is for the purpose of obstruction is mere idle words. The Chief Secretary and the Secretary for Public Works have tried in every possible way, by introducing foreign matter, to answer the charge made. The charge is that this Government has dipped its hands into the public Treasury to boost up the Brisbane Tramways Company.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CRAWFORD (*Fitzroy*): I think we would have been extremely wanting in our knowledge of the duties of an Opposition if we had allowed this matter to go by without bringing it before the House. It involves an infringement of the Constitution in regard to the matter of dealing with public funds. It is a matter which conflicts with the principles of democracy which give cause for the existence of the party on this side. I am satisfied that the silence which has been so conspicuous on the other side indicates that they are anxious to strike a blow at unionism, and they have seized on this opportunity, which, I am convinced, is engineered not by persons who presented themselves to the Premier, but by others far higher in intelligence and with greater funds behind them. It is quite obvious that this action of the Government will not have any retarding effect on the growth of unionism; on the contrary, it will give a great impetus to unionism, and show to those who have been apathetic that it is all the more necessary to organise, in order to combat the powers arrayed against us, especially when those powers are strengthened by a Ministry whose members are willing to dip their hands into the public Treasury in order to assist them. We have heard a great deal about the compelling of men in this matter, and so on, but that argument is "flat, stale, and unprofitable." It has been brought up against us on every occasion we began to form a union. I had an

[9.30 p.m.] identical experience some years ago when I, with others, attempted to form a union in Mount Morgan. The very men who are loudest in condemnation of the unions are the very first to gather the benefits that accrue from those who have had the courage and manliness to brave the intimidation which is the inevitable concomitant of the attitude they take up in forming these unions. One effect will be—

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: To delay the passage of the Mines Regulation Bill. This is all fireworks.

MR. CRAWFORD: I am astonished to hear the remarks of Ministers and others who support the Ministry, who know that they are dominated by one man. Here we have forty men dominated by one man. All silence! They sit silent, and allow him to dominate them. They allow him to dip his hand into the Treasury, and they allow him to say that he will make them sit down and will not allow them to speak. Fancy the inconsistency on their part to talk about tyranny when they submit to the domination of one man as they do!

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The tyranny is over there.

MR. CRAWFORD: I am glad to see that the Minister for Lands is somewhat excited, because I know that he of all members objects very strongly to the domination of this one man.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MANN : He objects strongly to it, and he is the only man who does.

Mr. CRAWFORD : He has not yet given public utterance to his objection to the dictation of one man.

Mr. MAUGHAN : That will come in the recess.

Mr. CRAWFORD : We can see here that one man is dominating nearly fifty members of this House, so let us hear no more about one-man domination, because it comes with very bad grace and very inconsistently from Ministerialists and members over there, who are every day dominated by one man. If members over there are going to support the Government in their action, they are at the same time committing themselves to a deliberate attack on unionism. There is no getting out of it. This action of the Premier's is an attack on unionism, and those who are supporting the Premier are also attacking unionism. That fact will not be lost sight of by us when the time comes for us to place these matters before the people.

Mr. HARDACRE : The worst thing is that it is an attack on the public Treasury.

Mr. CRAWFORD : I listened attentively to the speakers on the other side, and I did not hear one argument which would satisfy one reasonable mind that there was a justification of the action taken by the Premier in interfering with the ordinary process of the formation of a union. What justification had the Premier in arraying himself not on behalf of a union but against a union, and not on behalf of a body of employees but only on behalf of a section of employees?

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER : Parasites.

Mr. CRAWFORD : I will not say they are parasites, because I know something of the feelings of men when unions are being formed. But there was no justification for the Premier to interfere at all in this way. The Premier could have told these men to be men. The Premier is not ignorant of unionism. No one will say that the Premier is ignorant of the methods that must be pursued in strengthening unionism, and he knew perfectly well that the real manly course for these men to pursue was to take their own means and communicate with Melbourne and ask for the case to be delayed. I think that that delay in the hearing of the case could have been obtained. The Commonwealth Arbitration Court is not in such a hurry that it would inflict an injustice on men. They do not wish to do that. What they wish to do is to hear the whole of the circumstances of the case, and, so far as we know from the records, the Commonwealth Arbitration Court deals out justice. If justice comes in any court in the Commonwealth it comes there, because they insist on knowing all the circumstances of the case before they arrive at a decision. We well know that when unions start they must be started in secret. The Premier himself knows that. He knows very well that a union cannot jump into existence fully armed, but that they must gradually persuade members to join the union. There are many ways of persuading men and pointing out to them the acknowledged benefits of unions, and the men who are most against them are the men who afterwards become the best unionists. These men had to be convinced that unions are for their benefit, and that is why in many localities they are slow in forming unions. I must say that the manner in which this union of tramway men was formed was not any different to the manner in which the unions have been formed in other industries. The agitator comes along and has a talk with first one man and then

another, and gradually a spirit of unionism spreads amongst all the men. There is a desire among them to become united, and they recognise the value of combination for their own benefit and protection. It is always a few who are willing to combine together and agree to put down their names. They take the initial sacrifice and the initial risk on themselves of bringing unions into existence, as they know that in time it must grow. I recollect when I was in New Zealand we started a union there, and eventually brought it to the arbitration court. Our first meeting was at night. We met by stealth in an old abandoned brick-kiln, and we had for a light a candle stuck by its own grease on the top of a brick. There were five of us at that first meeting, and we had the satisfaction of seeing that union grow until there were hundreds of members in it. We should not blame the agitator. He must come along in a quiet manner, and he must do his work quietly in view of the intimidation which is practised by employers the world over.

Mr. MAUGHAN : The Coalminers' Union was started under similar conditions.

Mr. CRAWFORD : We have got to recognise that the union is not local but Federal. The local control is not taken away. There always remains sufficient local control to look after the welfare of the union, but the unions all throughout the Commonwealth are becoming Federal. It is worth the while of this Ministry to take some lessons from these unions, which are showing a truer Federal spirit than any member of this Ministry has ever done. (Hear, hear!) So far as wages boards are concerned, I do not intend to deal with them, but it is not always that cases of grievances come before wages boards. Multitudes of cases arise which do not come before wages boards at all. There are cases involving a reduction of wages, and involving the sack, which do not come before them at all. I know personally that the tramway men have grievances, because I ride on the trams every day, and I converse with the tramway men. I frequently, like the hon. member for Townsville, talked with these men, and I learned a good deal from them. I was told that men are called up to the tram office and they are dismissed arbitrarily, and they are not given the slightest reason for their dismissal. Nothing is more unjust or more arbitrary or more inequitable to a man than being dismissed without being given some sort of reference as to the manner in which he carried out his services in order that he might get employment elsewhere. There are cases of that sort in abundance where men have been dismissed by this company arbitrarily. When we consider that this company has become wealthy at the expense of the people, then to dismiss from their employ men who have a good record and who have given steady attention to their work—to dismiss them without giving reasons for so doing is arbitrary and unjust conduct. With regard to the men who waited on the Premier, I am firmly convinced that they did not visit the Premier of their own accord, but that they went there at the dictation of an intelligence greater than their own, and a will power and influence greater than their own. They were tools in the hands of some greater power than themselves. They have by their action earned the contempt of their fellow-workers, and the contempt of those who have been engaged in bringing unionism to what it is to-day, by allowing themselves to be used as tools by an unseen hand, but whose name can easily be guessed at. These men, far from having succeeded in the attempt which they made to break down the cause of unionism, have succeeded in strengthening it,

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because they have drawn public attention to the evils which exist in our midst and which have not been given public attention to for a considerable time, but they are now brought before the public in a most public manner in the place where such grievances should be discussed. I consider that the action of the Premier in interfering, not at the wish of the weak-willed fellows who allowed themselves to be made use of, but at the instigation of the Tramways Company, to speak plainly, is interference that is altogether unwarrantable. It is unfederal, unconstitutional, and undemocratic. In drawing attention to it we are only doing our duty, and we will earn the gratitude, not only of the men in the movement, but of the men who before long will be bound in one great union in different parts of the Commonwealth; and we will earn the gratitude of all those who love fair play, and all those who are upholders of constitutional principles. Therefore, I rejoice that this motion has been brought forward, for reasons which are perfectly satisfactory to every reasonable mind.

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*): I wish to say a few words before this goes to a vote. I am entirely in favour of the motion, because the Premier has shown a hostile attitude towards organised labour. What are the real facts of the matter? The workers in connection with our trainways in Brisbane want to become members of the Australian Commonwealth Workers' Union. They are organised now on trade union lines, and now the opportunity has come in the shape of our Commonwealth legislation, by which we can make better conditions, if only taken advantage of, for those who come in and be organised with their fellow-workers in the other States. A certain number of men made application to be registered, and the matter was to come on at a certain date; but some persons working for the Tramways Company objected, and approached the Premier with the view of getting his assistance. It has been said that the men seeking registration do not represent the majority of employees. Neither do the 231 represent the majority; yet the Premier takes up their case and says he will see that an objection is made in Melbourne to the registration of these men, and that he will find the money. The fifty men who want registration are finding their own money; they did not go to the Hon. the Premier for assistance. Those who are objecting do not represent the honest, straightforward employees, but the "master's men," who are always prepared to point on their fellow-workers. The Premier is championing their cause, and getting counsel to represent them in Melbourne. The Commonwealth Arbitration Act gives opportunities to employees throughout the Commonwealth; and that Act, in common with our Wages Boards Act, was passed on the assumption that it would be backed up by unionism, so that when it was necessary to bring cases forward people would not have to go to the Government for assistance. The unions in the various States have done a great deal, but they cannot do anything like the amount of good to the workers generally that can be done by moving together with one step right throughout the Commonwealth. The Australian unionism is their larger hope, from which they may expect greater salvation; and in the Federal Arbitration Court they will get better protection than they can hope to get from the State Wages Boards. It is from that larger spirit of unionism that the workers will get lasting good; and for the Premier to come along and put his arm into the Treasury up to the elbow and find money to prevent them from joining the Australian union is against anything

ever done before in this House. It is using State funds to defeat a Commonwealth law. The Premier and the Minister for Works said, "If we allow this to go by unchallenged what will be the effect?" And they pointed to the two laws to be submitted to the people on the 26th April, so as to give the Federal authority more power. Under the Commonwealth law at present the Federal Arbitration Court can decide as to wages and conditions in Brisbane; and the Ministers flashed the red light, and told the electors to beware of giving enlarged power to the Federal Parliament. As far as I know, the workers of Queensland would prefer to get awards from the Federal Arbitration Court, because there is a better chance of getting justice than under a wages board. All the Premiers in Australia will not be able to defeat Commonwealth law. They may raise objections, and they may employ counsel to fight the cause of the States, but the great intelligence of the industrial world is against them, as they will learn on the 26th of April. It has been stated that this question is on all-fours with the Harvester case, but it is quite different. In the Harvester case union funds were used in fighting a case and getting a decision under Federal law; and it was afterwards considered by the Federal Parliament that the unions had been doing national work in getting that decision; and the Federal Government brought in a recommendation that they should be recompensed their costs. Is that what the Premier did in connection with this matter? Did the tramway employees incur expenditure in what the Premier considered to be a national work, and did he tell them he would recommend that Parliament should pay the cost and that the money would be refunded to the men? That would have been on the same lines as was done in connection with the Harvester case, but he has not done

[10 p.m.] so. He says, "I will instruct counsel to appear for you in Melbourne to-day, and see that, in connection with this application for the organisation of the tramway workers in Brisbane, these men are not allowed to join the tramway workers of Australia." Mr. Badger would not allow them to join a union in Brisbane. He said he would not have any union. Some of them said, "We will not join the Brisbane union, but we will join an Australian union," and the Premier comes along and says, "Mr. Badger will not allow you to join a Queensland union, and I will not allow you to join an Australian union." And not only that, but he used State funds to do it. He called in all the wisdom of the Cabinet to help him in what he considers a national question; simply to prevent the tramway workers from becoming members of the Australian Tramway Workers' Union. In fighting this Commonwealth law—and the State Premier is fighting it—there is not a Premier who has tried to fight it yet who has not gone down. Mr. Wade tried to fight it with regard to wire netting. He took the matter into his own hands and said, "No matter what the Commonwealth law is, I am going to have things as I think they ought to be." He broke open the doors of the Custom-house, which he said once belonged to the Government of New South Wales, and should belong to it again. He took the goods away, but he had to take them back again, as he found that the Commonwealth law overrode the State law, and we will find the Commonwealth law will override the State law as regards this question.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Where is he to-day?

[*Mr. Crawford.*]



Mr. RYLAND: He went down. The Premier is going to try to override the Commonwealth law now by not allowing the tramway employees to join the Australian union; but the more he tries to do it the more determined he will make the electors of Queensland and Australia to vote "Yes" at the coming referendum on the 26th April next. The workers in the shearing industry found it was better to take advantage of the Commonwealth law. The State Premier of New South Wales raised all the objection he could, and sent telegrams up here to try and prevent them going into the Federal Arbitration Court, but that did not prevent the shearers of Australia from taking advantage of the Act, neither did it prevent the Commonwealth Arbitration Court giving an increased wage of 4s. per 100 sheep. Then the Waterside Union have taken advantage of it. The unions, knowing the advantages which their brother toiler has received from the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, are determined that they will not be deterred from taking advantage of this board. They will not remain satisfied with the State wages board, but will join the Australian union, and get the advantages of the arbitration law as passed by the Federal Parliament.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have to draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that he has exhausted the time allowed by the Sessional Order.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (*Kennedy*): I regret that it was necessary for the Opposition to move the adjournment of the House to call the attention of the country to this unconstitutional action on the part of the Government. It is astonishing to think that in a country like Queensland, where we have a pure and free democracy, there is a Government which is going to use the people's money for a purpose for which it should not be used. Here we have a Government which is going to dip its hands into the Treasury of the State to forward sectional unionism or non-unionism. It was unconstitutional for trades unions to use their funds for certain purposes, as decided in the Osborne case; and if this case was taken to the highest court of the Empire, I believe it would be found that the Government had no right to divert any funds of the State to the particular purpose they have in view. I would advise members to watch very closely the next Auditor-General's report, to see if he will give his assent to the funds of the State being used for this purpose. If it was wrong in the case of a union to divert funds towards a particular purpose, then it was doubly wrong on the part of the Government representing every section of the community to devote the funds of the State in the manner indicated. The hon. member for Townsville asked what was the occasion for all this talk?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Hear, hear!

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: The Minister says "Hear, hear!" It is always the way. The wolves and the foxes always want to get at the flocks, and when they find out that the watchdogs—the members on this side—are calling public attention to these things, they do not like it. We should be lacking in our duty as an Opposition if we did not draw attention to this. Those who have had experience in trade unions know very well that the power of monopoly is so great, and some

employers are so unscrupulous, that men have to combine, and use judicious means to get men to assist in forming trade unions. The Minister for Works said that it was a very unmanly thing for an organiser from the Southern States to come as an emissary, and go round to those men. That is the only course possible in many cases, if men who have the interests of their fellow-workers at heart are to organise them into any union whatever. I have been in places where to speak of unionism meant the sack immediately. When these men come along with the petition and say they are well treated by the Tramways Company, I am reminded of the gentleman who runs the tramway, of his overbearing manner towards the men from time to time when they have tried to organise a union. There has been some talk about men being agitators. When there is a great wrong done, it is the duty of every man who can see clearly the need of combination to right that wrong by every means in his power within the law. It is no use shutting our eyes to the fact that there is industrial war in the world. There is industrial war undoubtedly. Labour, as labour, is combining against capital, as capital—the one fighting for a greater measure of the results of their industry, and the other—the capitalist—to retain as much as possible of the results of labour. And although industrial war is a terrible thing, still that war is to be preferred to slavishness on the part of the worker and unscrupulous dictation on the part of those who have the power of the sack held over the worker. Now, these men who have determined to come under the Arbitration Act are seeking for justice in a peaceable manner. As pointed out by the junior member for Gympie, they want to come into a wider sphere of brotherhood so far as industrial matters are concerned. I think it is the duty of men who have the interests of industrial peace at heart to see that these men will join together with their brother unionists in the South, or whatever part of Australia it may be, so as to ensure under the Commonwealth Arbitration Act industrial peace throughout the Commonwealth. It has been shown by the hon. member for Warrego earlier in this debate that the great organisation with which he is identified has secured industrial peace throughout Australia.

At 10.17 p.m.,

Mr. MULLAN: I beg to draw attention to the state of the House.

Quorum formed.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: The hon. member for Warrego proved conclusively that those who are working in the organisation he is connected with have found that under the Commonwealth Arbitration Act it has been very beneficial to them, and that is why we want the tram employees to come under it. In the whole of the industry with which the hon. member for Warrego is identified, industrial peace has been secured, which undoubtedly could not have been secured under the States' Wages Boards Acts. I do not wish to delay the House. There have been splendid arguments shown why we should resent the encroachment on the part of the Government to use the funds of the State to back up anything pertaining to non-unionism. The followers of the Government are giving them permission to do it, so that when the country is next appealed to I hope that we will have

*Mr. O'Sullivan.]*

a reversion from a Government like this, and that true democracy will reign in its stead.

Mr. LAND (*Balonne*): I am pleased that this motion was moved to give members an opportunity of expressing their opinion on this subject. My opinion is that the Government have made a great blunder. Whether they have done it intentionally or not is a matter best known to themselves. My opinion is that the men who came here to get the Premier to assist in endeavouring to frustrate the action of those fifty unionists did not come of their own free will at all. It would be too thin altogether to ask anyone to believe that. There are fifty men who at the instigation of the organisers outside have expressed themselves as being desirous of joining the federated union. The names of these fifty men were got on the quiet, and for a very good reason indeed. If it had been known by the company that these men were endeavouring to join a federated union, then they would have been discharged, because it is a well-known fact that the company will not allow its employees to form a union. That is a well-known fact, and no member of this House can deny it. If the Premier wants to test the feelings of the 500 men in the employ of the company, let him take a secret ballot as to whether they are in favour of forming a union or not; and I guarantee to the House that the majority of those 500 men are in favour of joining a union. There were 231 names attached to an open sheet protesting against the action of the fifty men. Any man who has got any sense at all would know that those men were not game to refuse to put their names down. Over fifty men want a union. Their names were got secretly, and the other men's names were got because they were afraid to refuse. If the Premier wants to do anything, why does he not save the bleeding public from being robbed by Badger and his Tramways Company? They are charging the people double fares, and look at the inconvenience they put people to in the suburbs!

Mr. MURPHY: They charge 6d. to go to the races.

Mr. LAND: The worst feature of the whole thing is that the Premier is using the public money to assist the non-unionists to defeat the unionists. Look at the effect such an action as that may have! Suppose that some trouble arose in connection with the unions in the West. Suppose that there was a strike, and men were brought from the other States and from other parts of the world to take their places. There was never anything like this done in the past. We have heard a lot about the tyranny of the worker. I have had a lot of experience amongst workers, and I would like to ask what tyranny can the worker exercise? What do the unionists want? They only want to try to better their conditions.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Take up to-day's *Observer* and you will see what the unionists are doing down South.

Mr. LAND: The *Observer* and the daily Press of Brisbane are like the Minister for Works and the Premier—they will publish anything they like, and the Ministers will say anything they like. So far as tyranny goes, the only tyranny that is practised is practised by the employer, and it is the worst form of tyranny, too. They are the

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men the senior member for Townsville always champions, and he championed them to-night. The hon. member wanted to show that the 450 men were being tyrannised by the fifty. It is the employer that practises the tyranny. I have known the secretaries of the Pastoral Union to have black lists circulated, and under cover of an envelope they would deprive a man of the opportunity of earning his daily bread in the country. Does anyone know where the unionists can do that? Can the Premier quote one case where the workers have done that? The workers are always powerless and helpless. In late years they have become federated, and they are getting more power now as they go on. It is an absolutely wrong thing to spend public money in the way the Premier is going to do.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: It is a low-down thing.

Mr. LAND: It is a bad thing and a blunder. Where is it going to end, as the hon. member for Ipswich said to-day? If a certain section of the community can get the Premier to use public money to represent them in Melbourne—

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: And his position.

Mr. LAND: Is he going to extend it to the rouseabouts and shearers and workers of all descriptions when they make a similar application? If he is not going to do it for them, why does he single out this particular case now? The Premier is using the public money of this State for the non-unionists against the unionists. It will not do much good, because the people of Australia will see through it. I know that the people of this State will not forget it when they are called upon in a month or two.

Mr. FOLEY (*Townsville*): I would like to say a word or two on this matter. I would not have risen at all had it not have been for the speech delivered by the senior member for Townsville. He accused this side of going in for abuse, but he went in for more abuse than any other speaker to-day. (Hear, hear!) His whole speech was a tirade of abuse against members on this side. I want to say, in as few words as possible, that I agree with the motion before the House in order to call attention to the action of the Government in dealing with this matter brought before the Premier last night by two representatives of the tramway employees. In dealing with that matter I will point to the statement of the Premier himself. In speaking to the deputation, he is reported to have said—

All these men may be called out at any moment.

I think that the Premier wilfully misstated the case when he made use of those words. The Premier himself, being an old trades unionist, must know that the application to the Registrar of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court immediately does away with the possibility of strikes.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in order in saying that the Premier wilfully misstated the case.

Mr. FOLEY: What I wish to convey is that the Premier must have known that when a union applies for registration, immediately the application is granted that union must

cease from striking, because one of the fundamental principles of arbitration is to do away with strikes and lockouts. The Minister for Works says it is the duty of the Government to protect the workers, and [10.30 p.m.] he gives that as a reason why the Government should provide money for legal assistance in this matter. If fifty of the men had made it known that they wished to register, and the tramway company objected, and the men had gone to the Minister, would public money have been used to enable them to get registration? I think I can answer the question in the negative; and I can only come to the conclusion that the object was to protect the tramway company against the possibility of having their men registered in the Tramway Employees' Association of Australia. A good deal has been said about only fifty men having signed the petition for registration; but it was only necessary for the organiser to get fifty names. I take it that he got the first fifty he asked, and there was no need for him to go further; so the argument that fifty want to dominate 450 falls to the ground. As a matter of fact, I may mention that my attention was called to this matter when I was going home to dinner. Like the Premier, I did not read the *Courier* this morning, and I was not aware that anything had taken place. My attention was called to the matter by one of the tramway employees, who told me that they protested against the Government interfering with their business.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FOLEY: And he told me that their secretary, immediately they found out what the Premier had done, wired to Melbourne instructing a barrister to insist on the registration. So the Premier has not got the thanks even of the tramway employees. If they become enrolled in the Federal Tramway Employees' Association, they will have a better chance of getting their grievances righted than by Mr. Badger at a conference with the men. The Premier, who has been a working man, should know that when a conference takes place between employers and employees, it is a bold employee who will stand up and insist on grievances being righted and justice done. The very fact of his doing so would be the signal for him to be a marked man—an undesirable person to have in the employ of the company. These are things that are done; and no reasons are given for dispensing with a man's services in such a case. I have gone through the mill myself, and I know what I am talking about. The Premier knows it also; but, unfortunately, since he wrote the verses from which the hon. member for Burke quoted, his opinions have changed considerably. At that time the people with whom he is now associated would have jumped on him as an agitator. I do not wish to speak at length on this question, which has already been ably dealt with by others; I only wish to add my protest against the Government using public money as they have done in this case. The Government have no right to use public money for any purpose unless authorised by Parliament; and the sanction of Parliament was never asked for the expenditure of this money. Nothing has been said on the other side to justify this expenditure, and I hope the people outside will resent the action of the Government when the opportunity arises.

1910—8 H

Question—That this House do now adjourn (*Mr. Maughan's motion*)—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 26.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Mann
" Blair	" Maughan
" Breslin	" May
" Collins	" Mulcahy
" Coyne	" Mullan
" Crawford	" Murphy
" Ferricks	" McLachlan
" Foley	" Nevitt
" Hamilton	" O'Sullivan
" Hardacre	" Payne
" Hunter, J. M.	" Ryan
" Land	" Ryland
" Lennon	" Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Crawford and Mr. Nevitt.

NOES, 35.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Hodge
" Appel	" Hunter, D.
" Barnes, G. P.	" Keogh
" Barnes, W. H.	" Kidston
" Booker	" Macartney
" Bouchard	" Morgan
" Brennan	" Paget
" Bridges	" Petrie
" Corser	" Philp
" Cottell	" Rankin
" Cribb	" Somerset
" Denham	" Swayne
" Forrest	" Thorn
" Forsyth	" Tohmle
" Grant	" Walker
" Grayson	" White
" Gunn	" Wienholt
" Hawthorn	

Tellers: Mr. Cottell and Mr. Walker.

PAIRS.

Aye—Mr. Lesina. No—Mr. Fox.

Resolved in the negative.

## RABBIT BOARDS ACTS CONTINUATION BILL.

### INITIATION AND FIRST READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS, this Bill, which had been initiated in Committee, was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

## ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I beg to move that the House do now adjourn. As there seems to be an objection on the other side of the House to discuss the Mines Regulation Bill, we will put it down to the foot of the paper. The first business to-morrow will be the Native Animals Protection Act Amendment Bill.

Mr. LENNON: I did not hear what the hon. gentleman said about the business for to-morrow.

The PREMIER: The business will be as on the business-paper to-day, starting with No. 3—the Native Animals Protection Bill.

Mr. MURPHY: Before the House adjourns, I hope the Premier will reconsider that. As far as I am concerned about the proposal to put the Mines Regulation Bill at the bottom of the paper, if other members of the House feel as I do, he won't get any of his other Bills through before Christmas.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Question put and passed.

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

*Mr. Murphy.]*