

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 19 OCTOBER 1915

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QUESTIONS.

RAILWAY SERVICES AND VOLUNTEERS FOR ACTIVE SERVICE.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“1. The number of men engaged in the State workshops, Ipswich, on 1st October, 1915?

“2. The total number of men in the service of the department, over eighteen years of age, within what may be termed the Ipswich area, to include all classes and grades of the service within the Ipswich area?

“3. The number of men in the railway service who have offered for active service in the forces abroad from the Ipswich area?

“4. The number of single men, if any, filling positions vacated by men who have joined the Expeditionary Forces from the Ipswich area?”

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Adamson, *Rockhampton*) replied—

“1. 1,629.

“2. 2,014.

“3. 114.

“4. 27.”

SLEEPERS FOR MUMBILLA-MOUNT EDWARDS RAILWAY.

Mr. BELL (*Fassifern*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“1. Is it a fact that both contractors' and Government teams are drawing sleepers for the Mumbilla-Mount Edwards line?

“2. If so, would he state the cost of drawing—(a) By contract; (b) by Government teams?”

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

“1. Yes.

“2. Cost of drawing varies from 10d. to 1s. 9d. per block, according to distance hauled and nature of roads traversed. The cost of hauling is approximately the same for both contractors' and Government teams when the conditions are the same.”

DISTRIBUTION OF RELIEF BY UNIONS.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

“1. Is he aware that persons applying for Government relief at the Trades Hall have been questioned by union representatives as to whether they are or are not members of unions?

“2. Does he not think that the practice of permitting the Trades Hall to distribute State relief will lead to persons in necessitous circumstances being coerced into joining unions?

“3. Will he appoint some public officer, other than a member of a union, to supervise the distribution of these public funds?”

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, 19 OCTOBER, 1915.

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

PAPER.

The following paper, laid on the table, was ordered to be printed:—

Annual report of the Chief Protector of Aborigines.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. D. Bowman, *Fortitude Valley*) replied: Although

this question was addressed to the Secretary for Public Works, it is really in my department. The answers are as follow:—

"1. No.

"2. No.

"3. Relief is distributed by an officer of the public service at the Relief Office only. Recipients who live too far away to obtain relief at the Relief Office, obtain it on orders from the local store-keeper."

GOVERNMENT RELIEF OFFICE.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*) asked the Home Secretary—

"1. Is it a fact that, on 14th October, at the Government Relief Office, the crowd was so great that the two officers distributing relief were unable to overtake their work, and that relief was being distributed even at 3.30 p.m.?"

"2. Will he provide for a distribution in two days, to obviate the long hours of waiting?"

THE HOME SECRETARY replied—

"1. Relief was distributed at 3.30 p.m. and later on the 14th October.

"2. There are two days for general distribution already—namely, Thursday and Friday."

MR. DUNSTAN AND THE LABOUR EXCHANGE.

Mr. PETRIE asked the Secretary for Public Works—

"1. Is Mr. Dunstan an officer of the Labour Exchange?"

"2. If not, to what extent does he control the work of that institution?"

"3. Is it necessary for men to secure his approval before they can have work allotted to them?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*) replied—

"1, 2, and 3. No."

DISLOYALTY OF MR. T. J. FOAT.

Mr. GUNN (*Carnarvon*) asked the Treasurer—

"Is Mr. T. J. Foat, secretary to the Federal Clerks' Union, who has been authorised by his department to interview public servants with reference to their becoming members of the Federal Clerks' Union, the same Mr. T. J. Foat who at Ipswich recently, as reported in the Ipswich and Brisbane papers, declined to honour the toast of His Most Gracious Majesty the King; and will he undertake to withdraw all public recognition from T. J. Foat, and all other persons whose public acts are tainted with disloyalty?"

The TREASURER replied—

"I have no information on the matter."

BRANDS BILL.

THIRD READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. Lennon, *Herbert*), this Bill was read a third time, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council by message in the usual form.

[*Hon. W. Lennon.*]

TRUSTEES AND EXECUTORS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. Coyne, Warrego, in the chair.*)

HON. J. A. FIELLY (*Paddington*) in moving—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to authorise trustees to invest trust funds in any Commonwealth loan,"

said: For the information of members he might state that at present trustees, through some flaw in the law, could not invest trust moneys in the Commonwealth loan. They could invest moneys in any State loan in Queensland or in any State loan in Australasia, but not in any Commonwealth loan. This Bill was to remedy that defect, and was also introduced in accordance with a promise made to the Commonwealth authorities.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*) asked what benefit would the public derive from this? The Minister was very brief in his explanation, and it was only right that hon. members should get some more information about the measure.

HON. J. A. FIELLY: The benefit would be this: Owing to a flaw in the present law, trustees could not invest moneys in a Commonwealth loan, and this Bill was to remedy that. Any investments that had been made in that loan would now be made legal, and, in future, trustees would be able to invest in Commonwealth loans, precisely as they did now in State loans. No further explanation could be given than that; that was the sum total of it.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution, and it was agreed to.

FIRST READING.

The Bill was presented and read a first time, the second reading being made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

SUPPLY.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT—DEBATE IN COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. Coyne, Warrego, in the chair.*)

Question—That there be granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1915-16, a sum not exceeding £300, to defray the salary of aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Governor—again stated.

Mr. FORSYTH (*Murrumba*), who was received with Opposition "Hear, hears," said: I think that most members will agree with me that the Financial Statement is the most important document that is ever brought before this House for discussion. This Financial Statement is somewhat different to other Financial Statements that have been delivered in this House, in the sense that a class of legislation and a class of taxation is being introduced here which has never been introduced before. I refer particularly to the land tax. Of course, we have the land tax in the other States, and it is now being introduced here. If there was ever a time in the history of Queensland when the Treasurer should have some sympathy with those who have passed through terrible straits, and who have had terrible losses, now is the time. Instead of that, we find that the

poor farmer and the poor selector, who in many cases has lost practically his all, has got to be burdened by this extra taxation which is not at all necessary.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FORSYTH: Before dealing with these things I wish to give a slight resumé of the work of the late Government during the last six years, after Mr. Kidston retired, and you will be able to see at a glance the marvellous development that has taken place during that time and the progressive legislation that was introduced, including the building of railways, while there has been a heavy increase in revenue and a heavy increase in expenditure, and it has all been done without a shilling of extra taxation. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. BERTRAM: Why not quote 1902, which was also a drought year?

Mr. FORSYTH: The hon. member refers to 1902. We have only to look at the financial tables to find that from 1900 to 1902 the revenue fell by nearly £1,000,000, and extra taxation had to be imposed. We had very big deficits then. In 1909 we received a revenue of £5,000,000 from all sources, and last year it was over £7,000,000, making a total increase in revenue in that period of over £2,000,000. No one could have dreamt that the finance of the State would have increased to such an enormous extent during that time, and it only shows we had good times and good prospects in those particular years. Each year showed a steady increase; the first year an increase of £260,000; the next year, £690,000; the next, £390,000; the next, £600,000; and last year, £229,000; making a total of about £2,000,000 increase of revenue. That is a state of affairs that any party, whether Liberal or Labour, should be proud of. How did that increase come about? We find the railway revenue, which is the biggest revenue we have got—and we should be proud of our railways, and we should be proud of the wonderful development that has taken place during the last few years—six years ago the railway revenue was £2,318,622, and last year it was £3,792,070; showing an increase of nearly one million and a-half in that short time, and the expenditure only increased during that six years by about £1,000,000, thus showing the marvellous expansion in general business that occurred and the great benefits derived in connection with our railways. Now, the hon. gentleman told us that he has got £280,000 extra money to pay in connection with interest on loan. Have we not had the same during all those years? As a matter of fact, during the last six years the Liberal Government spent on railway building alone a sum between £11,000,000 and £12,000,000. They spent altogether in connection with railways, advances to local authorities, advances to sewerage works, and things of that sort—they actually advanced and spent about £14,000,000 during that time. You will thus see that the average all round was about £2,250,000 each year, or a little more, showing that we were determined to continue spending loan money so long as that expenditure was judicious. It meant giving employment to thousands and thousands of men on our railways; it meant general prosperity all round. Not only the men who received wages on the railways received the benefit, but the general public all round received great benefit on account of the marvellous advancement during that period. A huge amount of

money was circulated, everybody was benefited, and thus we had a general run of prosperity. No doubt, we had good seasons which helped very materially. If we had not had good seasons, we could not have done it, but still, under wise and capable administration, we were able to do all that. Now, in regard to land settlement, during the same period of six years what do we find? Such a record as this State has never seen before. Our revenue from land increased during those six years by £230,000. It is now in the vicinity of £1,000,000 a year, and that is something we ought to be proud of. The revenue from pastoral leases has increased, although a large amount of the holdings has been taken away; even then they have not decreased but vitally increased, while the revenue from selections has increased most marvellously. The revenue from that source in 1909 was £292,000, and it was no less than £450,000 this year; in fact, since 1907 the total revenue derivable from rents and leases has just about doubled. That shows the wonderful improvement that has taken place in connection with our land. What has been done in connection with settling people on the land? During the last six years about 3,500,000 acres of land have been taken up in connection with agricultural farms. About 10,000 farmers have taken up that land for the purpose of helping the country and helping to develop our resources. In connection with grazing farms, about 14,000,000 acres have been taken up, and in connection with grazing homesteads about 18,000,000 acres were taken up, which, with the large amount taken up unconditionally, makes a total of some 40,000,000 acres of land taken up in various forms of selection during the last six years. That grand total shows that the Liberal party were sympathetic with the man on the land. All this development has taken place, and although we have increased our expenditure enormously—the whole of that has been done in spite of the fact of borrowing £14,000,000, and paying interest upon that amount—all that has been done without a single shilling of taxation being imposed upon the people of Queensland.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BERTRAM: Could you have done that this coming year?

Mr. FORSYTH: Yes.

Mr. BERTRAM: Tell us how.

Mr. FORSYTH: For this year we had a surplus of £240,000.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: That is not true.

Mr. FORSYTH: I have no desire to make a statement that is not true. I have always been very careful about that. I say all that was done without imposing a single penny piece of taxation upon the people. (Hear, hear!) Why has that been possible? Because the party to which we belong believe in the principle of trying to develop this great State without burdening the people by putting on extra taxation, if it is at all possible, and they have done it and left a splendid surplus at the end of each year; and even last year, in spite of going through a severe period of drought! That is the position. Now take the income tax. The income tax is a fair idea as to whether a country is prosperous or otherwise. That has increased to a very great extent; as a matter of fact, all our various revenues have

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increased, and it is satisfactory to know that they have increased, because on that account we have been able to develop and carry on as we have done. The Treasurer, in his Financial Statement, says this—

“On assuming office in June, the present Administration found it necessary to make certain adjustments in connection with financial matters. The increases in salaries to the lower-paid public servants, which accrued during the year but which had been withheld by the previous Government, were paid.”

As a matter of fact, the Liberal Government distinctly stated that that money would be paid if they had the money in hand. The reason they did not do it just prior to the general election was that, if they had done so, they would have had members on every platform stating that it was done to try and catch votes. The Liberal Government actually did give a part of it at the end of the year. What was the position? At the beginning of the year it was anticipated that there would be a deficit of £300,000, and when you are going to have a big deficit, you naturally try and keep expenditure down so as to square your accounts. But instead of having a deficit of £300,000, we actually had a surplus at the end of the year of £240,000, because the revenue became buoyant later on. Money we did not expect to come in came in, and thus helped forward the finances of the State. The hon. gentleman asked the question: “Had they a credit balance at the end of the year?” I am going to show the credit balance. The Treasurer had no less than £240,000 surplus on the 30th June. There can be no denying that fact, because the figures are in his own Statement. He states that he took away from the loan fund and debited revenue with £52,000 in connection with wooden buildings.

Mr. BERTRAM: Was not that the practice of the late Government?

Mr. FORSYTH: That is the practice of any Government if they have the money. That was done years before. Mr. Kidston, when he had a large surplus, did the same thing, and I do not blame him for doing these things, so long as the money is not wanted for anything else. Then there was £85,000 depreciation on loan. That was taken from loan and debited against revenue. Then he took £42,000 from trust funds. He credited trust funds and debited revenue for that amount. Coupled with that he gave the £56,000 in connection with the automatic increases, and the total amount of the money to which I referred is £236,000, which with a small balance brought forward of £3,000 or £4,000 gives the total of £240,000.

The TREASURER: Don't you think those items should have been paid out of revenue?

Mr. FORSYTH: I say most emphatically the hon. gentleman was wrong to do it. If the hon. gentleman had anticipated a buoyant year this coming year, and had no idea of putting on extra taxation, then he would have been perfectly justified in doing what he did. But what he should have done, if he had been a wise man, and if he wished to try and help the people get over the extra taxation—because this year we will have no less than £1,000,000 to pay in extra taxation between the Federal Government and the State Government. The Federal income tax will amount to about £4,000,000, one-eighth of

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which will have to be paid by Queensland; and the taxation suggested in the Financial Statement will mean another £500,000—making £1,000,000 that the people of Queensland will have to pay this year more than they did last year—and that in the face of the big drought! Any wise Government would have endeavoured by all the means in their power not to have increased taxation, yet we have the Government here who, according to their own Estimates have the biggest revenue that Queensland has ever had—a record—and yet at the same time they are going to show a huge deficit. It is only when we had big deficits—when the revenue was going to tumble to pieces—that extra taxation has been put on; and instead of trying to help the people who have gone through these terrible times, the Government do something they should not have done. What they should have done was: pay that £56,000, if you like, in connection with the automatic increases. That is a fair thing to do. It would have been done in any case, because you had the money to do it; but the £184,000 that the hon. gentleman had up his sleeve—what he should have done—what I would have done if I had been in his place—would have been to carry the whole of that amount forward so as to assist this year.

The TREASURER: It would have gone to the credit of the public debt reduction fund.

Mr. FORSYTH: There is not the slightest reason for that. You could have put it to a suspense account and brought in a Bill now to validate it. The Premier told us that in connection with the sugar business he bluffed the people and then brought in a validating Bill to validate his action. I would have put all that money to a suspense account, and carried it forward to next year, so as to help the lean year.

The TREASURER: The Auditor-General would not allow that.

Mr. FORSYTH: Instead of doing that, the hon. gentleman spent every shilling, and then expects the people of this State, who are suffering terrible burdens just now, to pay all this extra taxation. That is not what any sane man would have done in connection with such a thing as that. Then, the hon. gentleman says that the Government did not leave him much money, and yet, according to his own statement, there was £2,157,000 to the credit of loan fund account. He says so himself. If he had £2,000,000 left, what is he growling about? The hon. gentleman knows that he had not the money. That money has been utilised in some other way. I would like to speak about that, but it might do harm, and so I shall not do so just now. This money has been used. We know that, and we know, by the Financial Statement, the way in which it has been used. What is the result of that? The actual cash that the hon. member had is shown in the public balances. On the 30th June he had at credit in the Queensland National Bank £1,600,000; with the Agent-General, £140,000; gold in the Treasury, £350,000; in the Bank of England, £168,000; at fixed deposit in other banks, £130,000; making a total of £2,400,000. And yet we hear so much fuss about the late Government not having taken a loan from the Federal Government—and I will deal with that question in a few minutes in such a way as will perhaps surprise even the hon. member himself. I asked for the

information, but could not get it, but now I have got it from a source that even the hon. member himself will not dare to quibble about. You will have it in black and white. That is the money that hon. members opposite had. They cannot deny it, and therefore they could not have been so badly off as they tried to make out—when they had about £2,250,000 in hard cash. I notice that a sum of £150,000 which was lent to the Federal Government has been called in—and wisely so, too—for the purpose of carrying on public works. What has been done since the beginning of the year? Has the hon. member shown the slightest idea of saving, or the slightest desire to do so? He has, on the contrary, spent no less a sum than £662,000 from loan fund in three months. That is about £100,000 more than was spent in the corresponding months of the last year. He has spent from the trust funds an amount of £572,000 in the same three months, an amount of £175,000 more than was spent in the same three months of 1914. Those two items actually show that, in those three months—the first three months in the financial year—the Treasury spent from the loan and trust funds no less than £1,234,000. And yet he says that he had no money! Where did he get it?

The TREASURER: Was it not you who said that we had only enough to last till the end of September?

Mr. FORSYTH: Yes, I said that before. But the Government have got more, because they are now nearing the end of October, and they have got more money than they expected. In the Treasurer's Financial Statement he says—

“When the late Administration went out of office, the loan fund balance was quite inadequate to meet the heavy commitments, some of which were exceedingly pressing. No arrangements had been made for raising further loans.”

I am sure we all hope that the hon. gentleman will get more money. We all hope that he will be able to get all the money he wants, so that he will be able to keep the people employed, and go on with railways and other public works. Nobody will be more pleased if he gets it than I will be. But the only amount he has received during those three months of the year have been £368,000, which is the amount of the excess of revenue over expenditure. That should be taken off the amount I have just mentioned, so as to reduce it to £866,000—which has been spent. That sum has to come off the balances at the end of June, with the exception of any moneys that may be paid in to the credit of trust and loan funds from that date—the amount of which I have no means of knowing. It only shows how careful the hon. member should have been; but instead it appears that he has become a financial political spendthrift—(hear, hear!)—because he is making no provision against the time when the money may run out, when everything will have to cease straight away.

The TREASURER: Did you not ask for an advance to enable the local authorities to build a railway to Montville?

Mr. FORSYTH: Yes, and I hope the Treasurer will have the funds to do that; but if he has not got the funds, the folks cannot expect him to do the impossible, and

I do not expect him to do the impossible. That is the position; so that, in spite of all the talk, they had a considerable amount of money in hand and they are spending it just about a little too freely in my opinion, unless they have the knowledge that they are going to get more soon. Take our expenditure of loan funds in connection with railways. And the people ought to be proud of the railway system of Queensland and the way in which it has developed during the last few years. We have spent on the railways since the initiation of the system about £37,250,000, thus showing the marvellous development that the people have carried on during all these years. And the interest bill—and I want our friends to bear this in mind—the interest we have to pay in connection with railway loan money amounts to no less than £1,380,000, which is a great deal more than half the loan money interest we have to pay. And although we had such a huge amount of money to pay, we wound up the year with a small debit balance of only £1,963. Many of our railways do not pay, thousands upon thousands of pounds have to be written off every year, but in spite of that the railways have been managed so well that this year there is only a miserable little amount of £1,900 odd to debit against the whole of that advance of £37,250,000. The rest has been paid out of the revenue made on the railways. That is a record of which any Government or any party should be proud. As a matter of fact, if things had only gone on as they were, and the times had been prosperous, the amount chargeable to revenue in connection with the whole of our railways would have practically disappeared. As a matter of fact, of the whole amount of £56,000,000 which we have borrowed, the interest on 9½ per cent. is all paid from the various sources of revenue, and the only item chargeable against consolidated revenue last year was 3.72 per cent., whereas ten years ago it was 17 per cent. It is steadily decreasing all the time. Under good conditions and by good business management that item would be ultimately wiped out, and we would be able to carry on the whole of our great loan fund without a shilling burden so far as the consolidated revenue is concerned. Now, the revenue this year from railways, in spite of the drought, in spite of all the disabilities under which the people of Queensland are labouring, is, according to the estimate of the Treasurer, going to bring in the biggest revenue on record, £3,950,000, or £158,000 more than was brought in last year. The Government estimates that they will have the largest revenue from all sources than has ever been known in the history of Queensland. They hope to get £7,312,000. Last year, a record year—every year has been a record for years past, but this is going to be the greatest record of all, not only in connection with the railways but the general revenue of the country also—last year the revenue was £7,702,000.

Mr. BERTRAM: You would expect that with a Labour Government?

Mr. FORSYTH: Yes, from the very fact that a Labour Government is in power and the very fact that they are getting the largest revenue that Queensland has ever produced, we would expect that the Government would not have imposed any taxation on the people.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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Mr. FORSYTH: That is the point we want to get at, and there is not the slightest reason, under conditions like those, why an increase in the income tax and in the land tax should have to be borne by the people of Queensland.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: If it had been a poll tax, you would not object so much.

Mr. FORSYTH: I do not mind any tax when it is absolutely necessary, but I do object to taxation when there is not the slightest occasion for it, and especially when the people who have to pay it are going through one of the most trying times in the history of Queensland. The hon. member for Maree said, "Look at what happened in 1902." Well, in 1889-1900 the revenue of the whole State was £4,588,000. Two years afterwards it fell £500,000. The following year it fell another £500,000, so that in two years our revenue fell by £1,000,000, and that at a time when our revenue was not very much more than half what it is now. And yet the hon. member says: "Put on taxation." Did we not just have to put on taxation at that time? As a matter of fact, it took the State of Queensland eight years to recover her revenue to equal what it was in 1900. We lost two-thirds of the whole of our stock, revenue dwindled away all round, and we were forced to put on taxation. What extra taxation was put on? We put on an income tax, which didn't bring in a great amount of money at first—I think about £100,000. We reduced wages all round from 5 per cent. to 10 per cent., and we increased the railway rates; but in those days surely there was some reason for any Government to try to raise revenue to make both ends meet. We had big deficits; we could not help ourselves. But this Government, without any loss, with enormous surpluses at the end of the year, have imposed taxation on the people.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: Is not that better than putting men out of work?

Hon. J. TOLME: You are putting them out of work every day.

Mr. FORSYTH: And I remember that, when we were spending £1,000,000 a year from loan funds, the Labour party used to howl us down as being a Government who were going in for reckless expenditure. Compare that with the Estimates we have got before us to-day, and then you will see where the reckless expenditure is and what it is that is forcing the Government to put on extra taxation. Now, I want to return to what happened during the first three months of this year. The hon. member says that he wants another £265,000 from the railways, and for the first three months of this year he has only increased the expenditure by £8,000. Why does he not continue that policy?

The TREASURER: Do you not know that the increased wages cannot apply until the Estimates are passed?

Mr. FORSYTH: That is only one thing. It would not account for all. As a matter of fact, we only increased our expenditure by £20,000 during last year as compared with the year before, and why do not the Government try to bring these things within fair limits? Although the increase was only £20,000 during that period, he wants it

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increased by £265,000 this year, an amount that is, in my opinion, absolutely unnecessary.

The TREASURER: The late Government said they left on record a minute which would involve an expenditure of £150,000 on such works this year.

Mr. FORSYTH: That would be a right thing to do, if the Government saw their way to pay for those works, but I do not think they would have incurred that expenditure if they saw they could not do so without imposing extra taxation on the people. But the Labour party do not care what expense they incur as long as the additional expense they incur is borne by the general community. Now we will take the expenditure on education. The expenditure for this year is increased by about £90,000 over what it was last year. No wonder that we are going to have a deficit, when we have reckless expenditure of that kind. But though that is their estimated increase for the whole year, during the first three months of the present financial year they have increased their expenditure by only £4,000. I hope they will continue to go slow.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Would you cut down the vote for education?

Mr. FORSYTH: No, I would not cut down the vote for education, but I would cut down a great deal of expenditure that is unnecessary. No one has ever objected to spending money on education, but I do not see why there should be such a huge increase in that expenditure under present conditions. The department that is always in trouble—that is, the Home Secretary's Department—shows an increase of £30,000 in expenditure as compared with the expenditure for last year. The increase during the past three months has been about £27,000, and if the Government go on spending at that rate, the increase for the whole year in connection with that department will be £90,000 or £100,000. Such a policy of finance will bring about financial disaster, and land the Government in a financial cul-de-sac. There is not the slightest justification for such a large increase of expenditure in connection with that department. Some other departments show an increase in the expenditure for the last three months, and some show a decrease. With regard to the trust account, I would strongly advise the Treasurer not to drain that account too much, because, by so doing, he will disturb the public balances. I hope the hon. gentleman will take some notice of my remarks, and try not to strain the trust account, for if he does, he will find himself in trouble before long. The hon. gentleman says in his Financial Statement—

"When the late Administration went out of office, the loan fund balance was quite inadequate to meet the heavy commitments, some of which were exceedingly pressing."

I think the hon. gentleman had a fair amount of money to go on with, and, under normal conditions, he would have had no trouble in getting another loan. No one will object to his floating another loan, as I said before; no one would be more pleased than myself to see that the hon. gentleman was successful in raising an extra amount of money. The Treasurer and Premier went down to Melbourne recently to see what

means could be adopted to raise a further loan. The people in Great Britain have lent us money at an exceptionally low rate—as low as 3 per cent. and 3½ per cent.—and have assisted us to develop the resources of this State. Those people have stuck to Queensland and Australia, and yet members sitting on the Government benches talk about Cohen, the man with the three balls, and tell us that they have come to the rescue of the State. How has this country been developed? It has been developed by the expenditure of borrowed money on reproductive works, and though members opposite have in the past spoken disparagingly of those who lent us the money, they wish now that some capitalists would come along and lend them money to assist them in their difficulties. The Treasurer stated that he is proceeding cautiously as far as the expenditure of loan money is concerned. I have shown that he has been absolutely reckless in the expenditure of loan money, and that, in three months, he has spent from loan and trust funds no less than £1,250,000. Any business man in his position would look ahead, and see what we are likely to have to face, and having taken a careful view of the outlook, he would run with bare poles before the wind until the clouds rolled by. But instead of doing that, the hon. gentleman has acted the part more or less of a political spendthrift; he is spending the people's money recklessly and imposing fresh taxation on them to meet that expenditure. We have often been twitted in this House by the Premier and other hon. members of that party for not accepting a loan of £2,000,000 from the Federal Government. They have said that the Denham Government ought not to have refused that offer of the Federal Government, and that, if we had that £2,000,000 now we should be sailing along quite smoothly. I contend that the Denham Government would have been fools if they had accepted a loan of £2,000,000, which they would have to pay back in twelve months or two years. I stated on a previous occasion that the money would have to be repaid within that period, and my statement was contradicted. I have authoritative information on the point now. I had it from Mr. Fisher himself, and I am going to read it for the benefit of the House, so that hon. members may see whether I was right or wrong in making that statement. On the 19th August last, Mr. Fisher, speaking in the House of Representatives, made this statement—

“While I shall not approach that conference with great enthusiasm or optimism, we have this ground for satisfaction: that the Commonwealth is providing the States, up to the end of November next, with more money at a cheaper rate than they have ever borrowed before.”

Until the end of November, and that is the time when the whole of the £18,000,000 of loan money advanced to the various States will have to be repaid to the Federal Government.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: We are not getting any.

Mr. FORSYTH: No, and we do not want any—(laughter)—we do not want any under those conditions. The Denham Government refused the offer of the loan for the very good reason that they would have to pay

the money back within a year from the end of November next. That is the statement made by Mr. Fisher. The money is to be repaid, not in one year, but in two years, from the time it was advanced, and from November of this year the States receiving loans will have the use of the money for one year only. What a nice position the various States of Australia will be in when those moneys have to be repaid! Twelve months from next November the whole of that £18,000,000 will have to be paid back to the Federal Government. Where are the States going to find that money? Where are they going to get it?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I wish we had a few millions now.

Mr. FORSYTH: If we had been offered the money for ten years I would have been quite satisfied to accept the loan, but not to accept a loan for one year from November next. We shall want money to carry on public works next year as well as this year, and if we had to repay a loan of £2,000,000 where should we get the money to meet our requirements? The whole circumstances show that Mr. Denham acted wisely when he refused a loan which he would have to repay in so short a time. I can remember that when the Federal Government persisted in their endeavours to get the States to hand over to them the Savings Bank business, members opposite said they would like to see the Commonwealth handling that money.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: They never did say that.

Mr. FORSYTH: Hon. members said that if they had been in power they would have handed over the whole of that money to the Federal Government. Any person who understands State finance must know that the Savings Bank funds are a tower of strength to any Government. Those moneys are used for the purposes of building railways and carrying out other development works. I have shown the Treasurer how his finances stand at the present time. He has not got too much money at his disposal, but if he had not got the magnificent sum of £1,267,000 from the Savings Bank last year to carry on public works—if the whole of that money had been handed over to the Federal Government—where would he have been? The hon. gentleman's financial position to-day would have been more parlous than it is if that money had been placed under the control of the Federal Government. The Savings Bank has been an enormous source of benefit to the Government, and I trust that the Government will never dream of handing over the funds which are of such benefit to the State to the Commonwealth Government. The deposits in the Queensland Government Savings Bank have increased most wonderfully. In 1909 the total amount deposited was £5,500,000, now it is £10,663,000. That is the amount to the credit of the people in the State Savings Bank, and it speaks volumes for their industry and thrift. When people who have saved that money deposited it in the bank against a rainy day, they are glad to know that it is of incalculable benefit to the whole State, as it enables the Government to spend large sums of money in connection with public works. Therefore, I say we should stick to our Savings Bank fund. The Treasurer says that the agricultural and pastoral industries have passed through a very bad time, and he is quite correct in that statement. But I would ask what help

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have the Government given to the poor farmer on the Darling Downs who has lost all his stock and crops, to the poor selector who has not even got rations for himself and family, and to all those men on the land who have been struggling to make a living and get a home for themselves and families? They have asked the Government for bread, and the Government have offered them a stone in the shape of a land tax. The poor men on the land, the men by whom we live—for all wealth comes from the soil—have been passing through a severe struggle and have suffered severe losses, and yet the way that the Government are going to help farmers and selectors is by imposing upon them additional taxation. I say deliberately that the biggest enemy and most cruel enemy that the farmers of Queensland have to-day are the Labour Government and the Labour party. Here we have men possessing a little land who have been struggling for years to establish a home for themselves and leave [4.30 p.m.] something to the children when they "shuffle off this mortal coil," and yet the Government propose to impose a tax upon the unimproved value of all land they hold over £300. What do hon. members opposite care? They do not care a snap of the fingers. All that they care about is that they get their platform carried out, and the community as a whole will have to suffer.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: You are crying out because the rich man is being taxed.

Mr. FORSYTH: At the last general election we heard from every platform that if the Labour party were returned we would have cheap food. But have we got cheap food since this Government has been in power? The first thing the Government did was to harass the poor farmer and fix the price of butter so that he could not get any profit out of it at all. We were to get cheap bread, but as a matter of fact bread is dearer to-day than it was at election time. We know that in Adelaide the price of flour has been reduced from £18 to £16 per ton. If anybody wants to sell flour in Queensland at a price lower than that fixed by the Government, the Government will not allow him to do so. The Government are therefore keeping up the price of flour and the price of bread. Everything was to be cheaper, but, as a matter of fact, with the exception of butter—which has come down owing to normal conditions—everything is much dearer. If we had a general election now, hon. members would not be sitting opposite for one day. (Hear, hear! and Government laughter.) A great change of feeling has come about amongst the people of Queensland, even amongst their own supporters. They can see how they have been duped, and they would not return members opposite again if they had an opportunity of giving their votes on the matter. This year the people of Queensland will have to pay £1,000,000 extra in taxation caused by the Federal taxation and the taxes mentioned in this Statement. Yet we have got a Government here, who, if they had any bowels of compassion at all, would say, "No, we will not put another shilling of taxation on the people of Queensland this year." But they do not say that. No, they intend to carry out their platform, and they pile up the expenditure so that they will have the excuse to do it. The Government

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have bungled and blundered everything they have touched, and it is likely to be the same until the end of their time.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: How about the unemployment?

Mr. FORSYTH: What are you doing for the unemployed?

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: Spending money to get them work.

Mr. FORSYTH: We should not have so many unemployed at the present time. We know that 150,000 men have either left Australia or are in camp, and their places could be filled while they are away, so that there is no reason to have the same amount of unemployed now as we have in normal times. I am sorry to see people unemployed at all. I would only be too pleased to see everybody working; but how can we expect that when we have a Government in power which is crushing the life and soul out of everybody by means of taxation? This taxation will be the means of throwing numbers of men out of employment, because the people who have to pay the taxes will economise and they will have to reduce the number of their hands. Seeing that we have had such an increase in the revenue this year, there is no need to put on a penny extra taxation. The Treasurer talks about getting a loan of £3,000,000 at 5 per cent. this year. He has not told us how he is going to get it, yet he is making provision for it here.

The TREASURER: Would you not provide for contingencies?

Mr. FORSYTH: It is very doubtful whether you will get £3,000,000 at 5 per cent.

The TREASURER: Is that not the honest thing to do?

Mr. FORSYTH: The hon. gentleman saved on his interest bill this year no less than £80,000. That liability existed on the 30th June, but it did not fall due until 30th September. If the hon. gentleman had been a wise business man, he would have debited that to last year and squared it. Instead of that, he is running everything into this year and is increasing his expenditure.

The TREASURER: How could I do that under the Audit Act?

Mr. FORSYTH: The hon. member could have introduced an amendment of the Audit Act as soon as he met the House this session. He could do as the Premier did in connection with the Sugar Acquisition Act. Then there is an amount here of £88,000 in connection with the sinking fund. They had a sinking fund in Western Australia and New South Wales, and they wiped them out in both States, and we should do the same here. We should use that £88,000, and then, by and by, when you have got plenty of money, start the sinking fund again. Under the provisions of the Public Debt Reduction Act the policy adopted was to buy a debenture equal to the amount of the surplus and then to destroy the debenture, the money being paid into the loan fund. In the case of the sinking fund, the debenture is purchased in just the same way, but the debenture is put into the fund. By that means we have £88,000 in the sinking fund. Then there is the £185,000 which I referred to, which, with the sinking fund, makes £270,000 which we should have available this year.

The TREASURER: By robbing the sinking fund.

Mr. FORSYTH: I see an item here of £12,500 in connection with immigration. We know that the Labour party are not very anxious about immigration, so why not wipe that amount off altogether? We do not want immigration just now. After the war the time may come when the Government might go in for a vigorous policy of immigration, and we will help them when that time comes, but we do not want it now. Wipe out that amount altogether, and try to save the money. There is also an item here in connection with advertising the State in the old country.

The bell indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

The PREMIER: I have intimated that I am prepared to let the hon. member go on.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it the pleasure of the Committee that the hon. member for Murrumbidgee be granted an extension of time?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FORSYTH: I feel deeply grateful to the Premier, the Treasurer, and the members of the Committee for granting me an extension of time to finish my speech. I thank hon. members for their consideration in allowing me to go for a short time longer. I am trying to give some information to the Government, and showing how they can save a great deal of money on the Estimates, in the hope that hon. gentlemen will take some notice of it. I hope they will be guided by my criticism, because it is not given in any carping spirit at all. If we knocked off the item of £4,500 for advertising the State and £12,500 for immigration, that would mean a saving of over £16,000. Coming to the Home Secretary's Department, there are several items there which can be reduced. This has always been an expensive department; huge sums of money have been spent in it every year. There has been a steady increase in the expenditure in this department all the time. I see that in the amount put down for asylums there is an increase from £84,000 to £103,000. Why should we want to spend another £20,000 this year? We could save £10,000 there by cutting it down a little bit. In connection with the institutions at Goodna, Toowoomba, and Ipswich, we only wanted £28,000 last year, and this year £40,000 is asked. I can understand that the increased cost of living would account for a certain amount of this, but we will soon be getting cheap beef, cheap bread, and cheap butter and milk, and the cost of living will come down automatically without any assistance from the Control of Prices Board at all. Things will then be much better than they are at the present time. There is another item I cannot possibly understand. We have a State Children Department. Last year we allowed £64,000 for this department, and this year the Government are asking for £40,000 more. Now, £40,000 is a huge increase in one year for one department. We might expect the sums to increase, but in time of trouble, such as we are experiencing now, it is ridiculous to increase the amount by £40,000. I think that at least £20,000 should be saved there.

Mr. EERTRAM: At the expense of the widow.

Mr. FORSYTH: No, not at the expense of the widow. Does the hon. gentleman know that we are spending £104,000 on that department this year? Give them a fair

deal, by all means, but I do not see any reason for spending such a huge amount as that on one department.

The TREASURER: The amount is being increased to the natural mothers.

Mr. FORSYTH: The natural mothers would be only too glad to get their children at a lower price than the foster mothers.

The TREASURER: Then there is the increased cost of living.

Mr. FORSYTH: You are going to give the natural mothers more than the foster mothers, and that makes this £40,000 increase a ridiculous charge. It should not be there at all. Then I notice an increase of £10,000 in the Works Department. Why could we not reduce some of that? No one objects to the erection of new schools, but if you go through all the items, you will see where you could reduce by about £15,000. Then in the Treasury Department there is an increase of £11,000 provided for in the Printing Office. There are sixty persons less employed this year in that department than were employed there last year.

The TREASURER: It is a profit-earning concern.

Mr. FORSYTH: I am speaking of that expenditure.

The TREASURER: Why cut it down when it is earning?

Mr. FORSYTH: You have got sixty men less working there this year. There is also an increase in the Marine Department.

The TREASURER: No, the Marine Department vote is not as high as last year.

Mr. FORSYTH: It is just the same.

The TREASURER: No, it is considerably less than last year.

Mr. FORSYTH: Now we come to the Lands Department. This department does not go far in expenditure one year against the other. It is one of the best departments we have got. The expenditure in this department has not been very high, but as soon as the Labour party gets into power it goes up £50,000 in one act.

The TREASURER: A roads policy.

Mr. FORSYTH: A roads policy! The hon. gentleman has put £9,000 down for that. To construct roads right away up to the northern part of the territory, it would take a sum of over £200,000, and he has put this amount down as a song. It is only wasting money to put down such an item as that. In the Lands Department we find the vote for the Chief Office is increased by over £5,000. Last year the estimate was £39,325, and they spent £39,485, while the estimate this year is £44,468. Crown lands rangers is increased from £12,650 to £16,220. Travelling and incidental expenses are increased by £1,800. Survey Office is increased by £6,000. There are only three extra draftsmen and seven extra cadets employed in that department. The miscellaneous item is increased by over £10,000. Last year the Government asked for £6,300 and they spent £8,427, and this year £16,500 is wanted. It only shows that if you are going to spend £3,000 here, £20,000 there, and £40,000 somewhere else, that you will at once know you are going to have a big deficit. I say all these things could have been stopped, especially this year. Then take the Education

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Department—£90,000 more this year is asked than the estimate last year. Last year the Government only spent £13,000 more than they estimated, but this year, when the Labour Government come into power, they are going to throw the money about in every direction and make the people pay for it. It is not necessary to increase the vote at present. Everyone knows that if this country progresses we must expend more on education, but why not be reasonable in the expenditure during such times as these? Let me give one item alone. Cleansing schools—the item last year was £20,500, and this year £32,500 is asked for—an increase of £12,000.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: There are a greater number of schools.

Mr. FORSYTH: Have we had 50 per cent. more schools? No. These are the items that are objectionable.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Many of the women are being sweated now.

Mr. FORSYTH: Last year the total increase over the estimate was £13,000, and yet this year the Government are asking for £90,000 more.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That includes more than cleaning.

Mr. FORSYTH: It simply says "cleaning."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It includes sanitation.

Mr. FORSYTH: That is the item, and this year £12,500 more is asked for. Now, take the Mining Department. We are going to have a huge increase in that—nearly £30,000 more. The estimate last year was £57,000 and the expenditure was just about the same. This year the department want £86,000, instead of £57,000 as last year. Deep sinking is increased by £12,500. Now, the hon. gentleman, under normal conditions, might advance money against deep sinking to try and help the mining industry if he likes. Only a few years ago—I think during the time of the Kidston Government—when we had a big surplus, he wiped off some £50,000 or £60,000 from this particular vote, and all that Government got back was about £1,500. It was money absolutely wasted—money thrown away. It was written off as being no good; and yet the hon. gentleman is going to increase the expenditure in these times. Then we come to an expenditure of £16,000 for a boring plant. I suppose the Minister for Lands, who happens to be the member for Roma, will have that £16,000 spent in his district. I hope it won't be wasted. Now, with regard to railways. The railway is one of the great spending departments and one of the great revenue departments. I find that last year the railway expenditure increase was only about £20,000 or £30,000 over the estimate. The estimated expenditure was £2,387,500, and the amount actually spent £2,410,000, and this year the hon. gentleman wants £2,675,220, or an increase of £287,000.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And if you had spent what you should have spent, we would not have wanted so much. You left your obligations to this Government.

Mr. FORSYTH: I think we did very well. We cannot afford to do all that in one

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year. The Government should go on spending it slowly, if you like, but not £280,000 in one year. Take the Mechanical Engineering Branch; there is an increase of £100,000 this year over last for the Southern division alone. Is that a fair deal?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You used to say a time like this was the time to spend money.

Mr. FORSYTH: If the hon. gentleman said he wanted £150,000 this year to make up for what the late Government should have spent, well and good; but no, he wants £280,000. I guarantee that if the hon. gentleman is sincere he could go into the matter with the Commissioner for Railways and work it down very considerably, and instead of asking for this huge amount, he could make it £100,000 less. All I say only proves that a large amount of money could be saved apart altogether from the Railway Department, and there would have been no need to put on a land tax at all. The Commonwealth Government at the present time—what are they spending now? In connection with this terrible war they are spending about £1,000,000 a week. The Home Government are spending £3,000,000 a day, and the interest upon that money has to be borne by the people of Australia and Great Britain, and certainly they should be willing to pay. It is for the protection of the Empire—and it is for justice and humanity—and we should be willing to pay it, and I believe that the people of Australia will be willing. Seeing that the country has to find so much, would it not be far better to try and help them over their troubles? But no! The Labour Government don't care a "tinker's cuss" who finds the money, so long as they have not to find the money. It is the poor farmers on the Darling Downs and elsewhere who will have to find the money. I do not object to a land tax on big holdings. But there is no distinction. The Labour party simply impose a land tax on all land valued at £300 and over. Any hon. member in travelling round the country can realise that the people have had a bad time. This State will have to find a great deal more money on account of this great war. When we started we spoke of about 27,000 men; then it was 40,000. Now it is up to 150,000, and before very long it will be 250,000.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You may have to go.

Mr. FORSYTH: If I have to go, I shall be willing to go.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Well, I'll go with you.

Mr. FORSYTH: But I can see before me plenty who should be there. The single men who have no responsibilities should go first, and then married men. Let us all help. There are too many shirkers. The angel of death has been hovering over the Gallipoli camp for months and months—5,000 or 6,000 men are already dead and 12,000 or 14,000 wounded, and we see them coming back every day. We have to make allowances to these men and provide a pensions fund, and we have to find the interest on the money that all this fearful war is going to cost; and yet, in spite of all those terrible charges, this Government puts on extra taxation. The New South Wales and Western Australian Governments have put on taxation because they had huge deficits. The South Australian Government, under a Labour Administration,

have also put on extra taxation. I don't blame them for one moment. They have an excuse, as they are enormous sums behind; but here in Queensland we have a surplus of £240,000 at the end of the year, and yet the Government come along and put on extra taxation. I have endeavoured to show that it would be a wise thing on the part of the Government, if they have any sympathy with the people at all, to go slow with taxation, more especially at this time. It is one of the platforms of the Labour party—put on a land tax with £300 exemption, and they put on all this extra expenditure and say, "We must carry out our platform." They carry it out by glass legislation, which ultimately means that they will be hurled from office. The Government are in a majority, and they are determined to cater for their own class and not for the general community. The Government are starting extravagantly.

[5 p.m.] There is not the slightest indication of bringing expenditure within the revenue, the same as any business man would do under similar conditions. They are determined to go on. Spendthrifts they are at heart, and spendthrifts they mean to be, with other people's money.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FORSYTH: They are supposed to be the friends of the working man. He has got to get an increase in his wages, and so on; but the poor working man on the farm, who cannot earn a living very well these times—he is the man who has got to suffer to pay this increased wages. We have at the present time any quantity of articles appearing in the papers with regard to starting new industries in Queensland and Australia. Germany is knocked out of the market; we have any quantity of raw material, and we are asked why we do not start industries and employ labour, distribute wealth, and help forward the progress of the country. But if I was a young man and had a few thousand to start with, I would no more dream of coming to Queensland under a Labour Government than of going to the moon. The people have got absolutely no confidence in the country. There is no security. I was speaking to a man in a large general way of business the other day—a man who has invested funds for people in Great Britain—and he told me that large sums of money have got to be called in. The reason he gave was a most sensible and a good one. They say: "We cannot afford to lend it out at 4 per cent. or 5 per cent. We cannot afford to pay the heavy taxes in England and the income tax and the land tax of the Commonwealth, and the income tax and the land tax in Queensland—three taxes. Therefore, it is better to take the whole of the money away from here and put it into things in the old country, where we will have to pay only one tax."

The PREMIER: Where are they going to take it to?

Mr. FORSYTH: To the old country. Instead of having three big taxes to pay, they will pay only one. (Government interjections.)

Mr. BAYLEY complained that they could not hear the hon. member speaking.

Mr. FORSYTH: The Financial Statement says—

"It is not expected that the increased taxation will fall heavily upon those

who can ill afford to pay. On the contrary, it will be found that no hardship or inconvenience will be suffered by any individual."

How on earth can such a thing happen? It may be that some people can afford to pay, but there are plenty of people who will have to pay under this taxation who cannot afford to pay, and the hon. member knows it. How can the farmer, with his 100 or 200 acres of land at £5 or £10 an acre, unimproved value, afford it this year?

The TREASURER: His tax will be 16s. 8d. if he has 100 acres at £5.

Mr. FORSYTH: We do not know what the Government's proposals are yet. Then, in connection with the income tax, it is stated that the rate will be increased on companies and made progressive. Of course, we do not know how it is going to be done, but I can tell the hon. member that in connection with public companies other men of his sort of politics do not believe in taxing the companies too heavily. Mr. Hughes, speaking in the House of Representatives, said—

"We do not wish to press hardly on one particular kind of company. Companies are instruments of production; the means whereby enterprise is conducted, and we are desirous not to discourage them. If it can be shown that we are treating any particular class of company unjustly, the matter will be considered."

As a matter of fact, the Federal Government treat companies very fairly. They are only charging a tax on undivided profits of $\frac{7}{8}$ per cent., or 1s. 6d. in the £1. We have not seen what the Government propose, but in my opinion there is not the slightest reason why the Government should impose any extra taxation, either land tax or income tax. Here we have a Government who estimate that they will have the biggest revenue from railways and all other sources in the history of Queensland, and yet, in the face of that, they want to impose extra taxation on the people. All they care about is the working man—let the man who is to a large extent helping the country go to the wall. I hope the Treasurer will reconsider his Estimates and not impose these burdens at a time when the people cannot afford to pay, but rather let him try to help the people, for by so doing he will at least get their gratitude and their consideration instead of something else of a different kind altogether when the time comes for them to express an opinion.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. GUNN (*Carnarvon*): I have just risen in my place to save the situation. I was afraid that the members of the Government might not have an opportunity to reply to the very fine and excellent speech which has been delivered by the hon. member. I thought that at the very least the Premier, or some member on the front bench, would get up and reply to his very fine criticism of the Financial Statement.

Mr. POLLOCK: It was not worth replying to.

Mr. GUNN: I suppose nobody was ready; I suppose they will all go home and wait until the speech comes out so that they will have a better chance of criticising it. I do not set up as a financial critic, but at the same time I have known that it is very

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important to have my bank balance always on the right side, if possible. On this occasion there are many things I would like to criticise better than I will be able to do, but I will not have an opportunity of going fully into the matter and also the opportunity of reading the speech which has just been delivered, as other hon. members will. With reference to increase to lower-paid public servants, I am one of those who are only too glad to think that the lower-paid public servants have got these increases, and I think that if the late Government had stayed in power they would have got them too. But while it is all very well to give those increases, we have to consider those who have no employment at all, and if we give increases to lower-paid public servants, or to any other public servants, it means less money to go round, and less money to be distributed amongst the people who are perhaps in just as much need of it. There are a great many unemployed, and it would be a good thing if they could get positions even the same as the lower-paid public servants. I know that when I go down the street at the present time, I am asked for assistance more than at any time since I have been a member of Parliament. Talking of the railways, the Financial Statement says—

“To some extent the increase was accounted for by the general activity in removing stock from the drought-stricken regions to the coastal districts.”

I remember reading an account of a deputation that waited on the Premier, and the gist of the statements made there was that there were plenty of stock in Queensland, but the pastoralists would not put them forward. They were hoarding them up in some unknown place on purpose to shut down the meatworks. I am pleased to see by the Financial Statement that the Government of the day realise that there is a drought in Queensland. They talk about the railway revenue being greater this year than it was last year. Why is it so? Principally from the increased number of stock that have been shifted, we will say, from the drought-stricken districts about Longreach to Goondiwindi. From Goondiwindi they have been fed by corn spread along the road as far as Moree, until they have got to some of the more favoured districts of New South Wales. I think that I am safe in saying that 500,000 sheep have gone over the border in that direction, and, although they are lost to Queensland, they are saved to Australia, and their wool, I hope, will be available to keep the people of New South Wales going. We are short of meat now, and it will not be long before a lot of them will be fattened up fit to kill, and when they are, the people of Queensland will have to get some of them back again. If the New South Wales Government did as we have done for them, and said, “We will not allow you to take any stock to Queensland,” we would not be able to get them. But I hope they will allow them to come here, although they would be only serving us right if they returned the compliment we paid to them. The actual cost of trucking sheep from Longreach to Goondiwindi is about 2s. 3d. per head, but we will say 2s., and that means, with 500,000 sheep, a sum of £50,000 to the Railway Department. There, at once, you see where the Railway Department is getting its revenue—not through the good seasons,

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but on account of the drought. The drought is favourable to good revenue so far as the Railway Department is concerned; but when the drought is over I am quite convinced that the railway revenue will fall off very, very greatly. Many people talk as if this were the only drought that has ever been, and as if this Government were the only Government that had suffered from drought. In the district I come from we have had drought for four years. Three years ago all my lambers went, and ever since then we have been in a state of drought. But I admit that the present drought is one of the worst we have had. It is next to the 1902 drought, and if it continues much longer it will be worse than the 1902 drought. The discussion of the Loan Estimates can be deferred to a later period. I notice that the Government propose to increase the interest on the balances in the State Savings Bank from 3 to 3½ per cent. I think that is quite right, but I am very much afraid that the people will not deposit their money there all the same. What will happen will be that it will have to be invested in war loans. The whole of the spare capital we have will have to be invested in that way, and we must not look for any further deposits in our Savings Banks. It will all have to go to help us fight for our liberty. With regard to land settlement, the Government evidently expect that the demand for land will go on at the same rate as it has been doing in the past. I am sorry to say that there is not nearly the demand for land at the present time that there was previously. Agricultural farms and grazing farms find no purchasers at the present time. Any commission agent will tell you that there is no business done in land now, and that land of any sort is a drug in the market. The Government will find that land settlement will fall off and not increase during the current year. What is the good of land if you cannot make any money out of it, and how can you expect people to invest their money in land if the investment means loss? I notice that the Government are going in for a State sawmill. As they believe in nationalisation, it is only natural that this should be one of the first things they would take in hand, because we have the timber, and all that is required is the machinery and labour to prepare it for the market.

The TREASURER: You agree with that policy, then?

Mr. GUNN: I do not agree with any State enterprise as far as the management of industries is concerned, because I do not think that the Government should be an employer to any extent; their business should be to see that justice is done between the private employer and the private employee.

Mr. COOPER: And to assist the farmer occasionally.

Mr. GUNN: If I were the present Government I should certainly believe in a State sawmill—(hear, hear!)—but I would ask, why they do not enter into the pastoral industry? We are always hearing from members opposite that the men engaged in the pastoral industry are making large profits out of their stock. Well, we have millions of acres of land with respect to which leases are falling in, and why should not the Government, instead of offering those lands to pastoralists or selectors, start a socialistic enterprise and go in for cattle-raising?

Mr. COOPER: All in good time.

Mr. GUNN: They do not attempt to carry on any such industry, but leave it to the grazier or squatter, who have to stand out working in the sun in the interior of Queensland, where the temperature is 110 or 120 degrees in the shade. Those are the men who have to bear all the brunt in this industry, and the Government are going to tax them for doing it. I should like at this point to make a quotation from an article which appeared in the "Sun" a short time ago, with reference to the quantity of meat that is supposed to be stored in the meat establishments in Australia. It has been said over and over again that there is any quantity of meat in the stores of those companies, if it could only be made available for distribution amongst the public. Here is the extract to which I refer—

"Mr. Hughes has perforce to admit that on the 31st July last, the date chosen by himself, the average consumption and the stocks held worked out in the case of four chief lines of foodstuffs as follows:—

	Stocks.	Average Monthly Consumption.
Beef	... 33,000,000	... 60,400,000
Mutton	... 6,000,000	... 36,000,000
Butter	... 854,000	... 10,250,000
Cheese	... 910,000	... 1,500,000

In other words, the stocks of beef would last a fortnight, mutton five days, butter two or three days, and cheese less than a fortnight. So much for the wonderful cornering, the accusation of which has been the corner-stone in the edifice of the Labour argument."

The corner-stone of their argument all along has been that there has been a cornering of butter and wheat and everything else, and yet it appears that there has been no cornering at all. Speaking on this subject, the Treasurer says—

"The shortage in fat cattle for the year, as compared with the previous year, is probably about 40 per cent., and the shortage in the wool clip has also been considerable. The Imperial meat purchases from February to the end of July amount to £2,500,000, or £1,000,000 short of the estimate, and it is probable that the killings for the next year will be at least a further 40 per cent. short."

I should like to point out that if it rains to-morrow, it will be six months before we have any cattle fit for killing, as far as export is concerned. We may have a few cattle to meet our home consumption, but there will not be any number available for export purposes, so that it would have been honest on the part of the Government to have told the people that there is no chance of beef being made available here for another six months; and that when it is available it will not be equal to that which they had before the drought. It would have been far more honest for them to have done that, instead of passing a Bill to enable the Government to compulsorily acquire meatworks, and leading the people to believe that there was meat in stock but that it had been cornered. The Government should give the Imperial authorities notice that they cannot expect to get any great quantity of meat from Queensland before the expiration of six months. With sheep it is different. When rain falls,

it does not take sheep long to get into condition. If we get rain very shortly, we shall soon have sheep ready for the market, and the people will have to rely on mutton, and do without beef. On many former occasions, when we have been passing through times of distress, the mining industry has come along and helped us out of our trouble. I hope that the same thing will happen at the present time, and that capitalists will be offered inducements to invest their money in mining, so that the mining industry may relieve the unemployment which prevails at the present time. I represent a district in which there is a mine shut down for want of a railway—the Silverspur—and I hope that the Government will see fit to construct that railway, not simply for the sake of providing the district with a railway, but rather for the sake of opening up that mine and giving employment to a lot of men. At the present time the township is practically deserted, but if the railway were built it would be a going concern. I remember that when the last Financial Statement was under discussion, the then leader of the Opposition—the present Premier—said that a Federal Bank would be a great advantage to Queensland as far as its finances are concerned. I do not know what good the Federal Bank would be to us, as far as our finances are concerned. If we gave them a sovereign they gave us £4 in notes. The late Government accumulated hundreds of thousands of pounds in gold, and before they left office they asked for the requisite quantity of notes, but could not get them.

Hon. J. A. FIEHELLY: Mr. Cook made that promise, you know.

Mr. GUNN: The present Premier boasted very much about the benefit of a Federal Bank to the State. We have a Federal Bank; and I ask: What good is it to the State?

Hon. J. A. FIEHELLY: It was the only bank, except the Bank of England, that did not close down in England when the war broke out.

Mr. GUNN: That may be so, but that does not prove that the bank is a benefit to Queensland. The assets of the Commonwealth Bank are somewhere about £16,000,000, but there are only £2,147,000 invested in industries in the country. What are they doing with their money? It appears that they have at short call in London a sum of £2,840,000. That is all right, no doubt. They have £568,000 in Australian Commonwealth notes, £4,418,000 in coin, bullion, and cash balances; £5,479,000 in British, colonial, and Government securities; and £906,000 at fixed deposit in other banks. You do not have to put money into the Commonwealth Bank in order that it may deposit that money in private banks. Other assets are £2,147,000, bills discounted, loans and advances to customers, and other sums due to the bank. That is really legitimate banking business. What I advocated in connection with the Commonwealth Bank was that it should look after the banking business of the different States—that is, floating their loans and taking care of the moneys they have at current account. But when that institution entered into competition with the States and took away some of the Savings Bank business of the States, I could see no justification or excuse for their action. There is plenty of room for the Commonwealth Bank, but it

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oversteps its usefulness when it comes into competition with the State Savings Banks, which means that people have to pay for the maintenance of two sets of offices and officers instead of one set. About shipping and marine I do not know anything, and I shall pass by that item. Then we come to the question of fish supply. This seems to be a fishy Government. It has been all fish up to the present. The only food the people in Queensland are going to receive is fish. Fish may be all very well for Brisbane, but the people in my electorate never see any fish from the coastal district. I have always said that we should abolish the Fish Board, and abolish all restrictions on the catching and sale of fish. If we had none of these restrictions, anybody who was out of a job could go down to the bay, catch fish, and sell them there, or if they could not sell them there, bring them up to the city, so that the people of Brisbane might get fresh fish. The best inspector you can have with regard to fish is your own nose. (Laughter.) What is done by all our highly-paid fish inspectors? They see that fish is put on ice, and, after a lot of red tape is passed through, the fish is sent to some shop for distribution to the people. It would be far better if you did away with all the Fish Acts and allowed

people to catch fish where they like, and sell it where they like.

I notice that there is no reference in the Financial Statement to bears and opossums. They are very important animals, and should be worth a lot to Queensland. When I was sitting on the Government side of the House I was one of those who advocated a close season for native bears and opossums, and I did so because, at that time, we were prosperous, and I thought it would be a very good thing to have bear skins and opossum skins to fall back upon in times of stress when people are in want of employment. Since the Labour Government has been in power, you have had open season, and people have been allowed to kill the bears all over Queensland until their skins have become a drug on the market.

Hon. J. A. FIDELLY: How can skins be a drug?

Mr. GUNN: I know one man who had 150,000 opossum skins stowed away in one place, and he could not get rid of them at all for a long time, although in the last week or two I believe he got rid of them. It would be better to protect opossums until such times as there is a demand for their skins.

Mr. COOPER: Don't you believe in the indiscriminate catching of 'possums?

Mr. GUNN: No.

Mr. COOPER: You believe in indiscriminate catching of fish. Why don't you be consistent?

Mr. GUNN: I believe that the open season for 'possums and bears ought to be declared in different districts at different times. The season should first be closed, and then where there is a surplus of bears and 'possums, that district could be declared to be open. Hon. members seem to think that I talk about the bears and 'possums for the fun of the thing, but I am quite serious, I can assure you. If you are going to exterminate them you are not going to do a good thing for Queensland. They live on the eucalyptus, which

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otherwise would go to waste. I feel very sorry for our native bears. What crime did they ever commit? They never interfere with anybody. The shooter kills the mother for the skin and brings the young bear into town for sale. The girls take compassion on them, and carry them about the streets, and in a few days they pine away and die. It is a cruel thing altogether, and the native bears should be protected. Coming in from Goondiwindi we used to take turns at counting the native bears on either side of the road, and the one who counted the fewest had to "shout." I remember on one day I counted 150 native bears. Now you can hardly find a bear in the whole district. I notice that it says in the Statement with regard to railways—

"The railway revenue for this year is anticipated to exceed the actual receipts for last year by £157,930. This improved position is brought about by certain small increases in freights and adjustments in fares. The return fares have been abolished, and the single fares have been reduced by 4 per cent. This does not apply to fares and season tickets in the suburban areas, or to workmen's weekly tickets."

I see that the Treasurer says that the increases in freights are small. I think when there are increases put into force a just method should be adopted. Why should the city people and those living in the big centres be exempt? It is only taxing the unfortunate country people. The townspeople get out of it every time.

The TREASURER: Surely you would not add it on to the workmen's tickets?

Mr. GUNN: It is not right to put everything on to the unfortunate farmer. I notice that in "Hansard," volume cxiv., for 1913, page 60, Mr. Hunter has the following to say:—

"That, in the opinion of this House, the freight charges on the Queensland Government railways are excessive, and require readjustment on long-distance rates, with a view to a general reduction, for the following reasons:—

"1. They are inimical to the best interests of the man on the land;

"2. They retard closer settlement in the interior; and

"3. Are a serious handicap to that development work so essential to the progress and prosperity of the State."

Mr. STOPFORD: How did you vote on that question? (Government laughter.)

Mr. GUNN: Mr. Hunter talked about going in for a reduction in freights then.

The TREASURER: And you opposed it.

Mr. GUNN: What are you doing now? You are increasing the freights. When Mr. Hunter proposed that motion in 1913 it was seconded by Mr. Gillies, who advocated a reduction in the timber rate. What has the hon. member for Eacham got to say about the timber rate now that it is proposed to increase them by 20 per cent.?

Mr. APPEL: He is silent on that.

Mr. GUNN: Why has the hon. member for Eacham somersaulted on this question? And why has the Minister for Lands gone

back on his professed principles? The Minister for Lands used to bring forward this motion year after year on Thursday afternoons. I do not believe in a reduction of freights myself, but I am pointing out that people who did believe in it when they were sitting on this side put on an increase of 20 per cent. as soon as they get over there. Where is the consistency in that? There is no consistency about it at all. Then we have the Secretary for Public Instruction, Mr. Hardacre. In "Hansard" for 1913, page 1391, we have the hon. gentleman speaking as follows:—

"It is a lamentable thing that the Commissioner should advise the Government to raise the railway freights, as such action on their part would injuriously affect the producers of Queensland. What surprises me is that the Farmer's party in this Chamber should not make any comment on statements of that kind, and that they should actually support a Government which supports a Commissioner for Railways who makes such a proposal."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Our increases will not fall upon the producer.

Mr. GUNN: You have gone back on all you said before about it, as will be found in "Hansard." When the present Government came into power they ought to have commandeered the whole of "Hansard" and burnt it. In reading through "Hansard" I notice that hon. members now sitting opposite were annoyed with the Liberal Government when they put the land revenue to general revenue account, and they said it ought to have gone to the sinking fund. They also said that if ever they got into office that that revenue did not go to general revenue. On page 1327 of volume cxii., the present Minister for Lands said—

"What I contend is that the proceeds of sales of land, the money received as part payment for land, which is being alienated, should not go to revenue account."

What has happened to that hon. gentleman? Then, on page 1403, in "Hansard" for 1913, we find that Mr. Ryan, speaking on the question that the sales of selections should not go to revenue, made the following statement—

"It has been mentioned every year, but I particularly wish to point out here now, whether it has been the practice for years or not, it is a practice that should be stopped, and we should not have a surplus put forth to the people of Queensland from the sale of assets."

What has happened to the Premier now? All their beliefs and theories have gone by the board. I think if I had been in their place, I would have tried to cook the accounts somehow or another, and make it appear that the land revenue did not go into general revenue.

The TREASURER: Did you say you would cook the accounts?

Mr. GUNN: Yes, if I were in your place.

The TREASURER: You are worse than the hon. member for Murrumba.

Mr. GUNN: I notice that this Statement says—

"In the Home Secretary's Department the expenditure for this year is ex-

pected to exceed the actual disbursements for last year by £31,000. This is accounted for by the general expansion in the affairs of the State and the increased population necessitating increased expenditure on police, prisons, health, hospitals, asylums, and charitable institutions, etc."

We were always told that if the Labour party got into power there would be no need for any police, and we would have no need for prisons. We were frequently told that we batoned people and made them disorderly on purpose to put them in prison. Notwithstanding the fact that the Labour party are in power, I do not think we are any more likely to get into gaol than we were last year or any other year. I do not know whether they think that a lot of the young men who are going away to fight our battles in Gallipoli require more police protection. I sowed a few wild oats myself when I was young—(laughter)—and I do not think that there is any more need for police for these young men than there was at any other time. They will be under the control of the military authorities at Enoggera and also at Gallipoli, so we cannot expect the Government to want any more police for them. It might be that the Government think that because of the introduction of their new laws that they expect the people to rebel against them and they might have to put them in gaol. There is no other reason for it. I notice that the Statement says there is an increase in the Mines Department for prospecting. Prospecting is all very well, but my experience is that those people who are subsidised by the Government to go prospecting are not of much account. The Government get rid of money all right, but those who got the money never found any mine. I consider that a vote for prospecting is a vote to subsidise loafers.

Mr. STOPFORD: Have you ever heard who found Gympie? It was a working man who found it.

Mr. GUNN: He was not subsidised, anyhow. I see there is a reference to an increase to the lower-paid public servants. I am glad the lower-paid Government servants have got their increases. I am sorry that the Government did not see their way to increase the amounts paid to the women gatekeepers on the railways. Some of them get 2s. 6d. a week and some 5s. per week. I have always advocated an increased payment for these gatekeepers. This increasing of wages is a very difficult thing to get over. It is like the newchum who started to make some Johnny cake for me. I gave him the flour and he put too much water with it, then he put too much flour, and then too much water, and when he put it on the fire it ran into the ashes like a pancake and would not cook at all. (Laughter.) The increase in wages is just the same. If an industry is only producing a certain amount and the wages are increased, then you might increase them too much altogether. He increased the price of bread, and so it goes on until the thing is spoiled. I am afraid that the increased cost of commodities is going to be so great that we will not be able to compete with any other part of the world, unless it is in Australia, and then we will have to be protected with a very high tariff. There is another class of men I would like to say a word in favour of, and that is the night officers and the station-masters. I am

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informed that night officers get £130 a year to start, and they get increases at the rate of about £10 a year until they get £150 a year. They do not get any more until they become station-masters, and, when they become station-masters, they suffer a reduction of £20, because they get the use of a house with fire and lighting. So there is no great joy in being a night officer or a station-master. That illustration that I gave with regard to johnny cakes comes in here again. If you increase the rates of the men on construction works, you will have to increase the pay of the night officers and station-masters, and there will be many others who will have to be increased, and that is where I fall foul of nationalisation. Of course, nationalisation in regard to the railways is the proper thing, but it is far better to have the industries managed by private individuals, and then if you have a factory and it does not pay, you can close it up. All Governments fall foul of the public servants. Our downfall was a result of having so many public servants that we could not please them all. The present Government will not be able to please all the public servants either, and they will rise up in their wrath and turn them out, the same as they did us. You can see "the writing on the wall" already.

Hon. J. A. FIDELLY: Would you take the vote away from the public servants?

Mr. GUNN: No, but I would not have so many public servants to have a vote. Take the railway to Silverspur; the mine-owners in that district offered to build that railway out of their own pockets, and it would have been a good thing if the Government had allowed them to build their own line. The Statement goes on—

"Taking all circumstances into account, I think the State is to be congratulated on finding itself, in spite of war and dry seasons, in a position to make ends meet."

And so on. I say "in spite of the Labour party and dry seasons," and so on. It is not the war at all. The war has been a blessing to Queensland. Look at the Federal capital that has been spent in and around Brisbane. The people have got the benefit of all that expenditure, and yet the Government blame the war for our financial difficulties. The war had nothing to do with that part of our difficulties. Of course, in regard to borrowing, the war has had a lot to do with our difficulties, but the war has had nothing to do with the actual prosperity of the country; it is the result of the drought and the Labour party. I sometimes read a little Labour pamphlet issued by the Trades Hall, and I often get a little information from it. That little red book says—

"There is no more aggressive movement on earth than the Labour movement, yet at the same time there is not one more conciliatory. It storms the citadels of capitalism with the sword in one hand and in the other the olive branch."

I don't know what "holding out the olive branch" means. Many people say, "You don't want capital," but I think capital is necessary in a young country like this, as its expenditure is of benefit to all concerned. The Government party have cartoons in the "Worker" blackguarding the "fat man,"

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and then, when you get into financial difficulties, you ask the "fat man" to lend you money. You abuse the capitalist up hill and down dale all your lives, and now you come along and say, "We want to get money to fight out battles at the other end, and we want to get money to build railways—not because we want railways, but because we want to keep our men in work." What is the good of abusing the man with capital? He is only asked to place his money in the bank, and when he puts it in the bank, you think if you take it away from the bank you have got that money and you are going to do better with it than he can. You don't. You only spend it on fish markets and things of that sort. If that money is left in the bank, the selector will borrow it and put it to far better use than the Government. If you persecute the capitalists, the result will be that they will leave Australia, and you will be left here only the Australian Workers' Union and the fish markets. (Hear, hear!) I know one of three brothers who sold out his interest in a big estate in Victoria. He had £100,000, and was on the verge of investing it in Queensland, but he said, "I will wait and see the result of these Labour laws." He waited, and then he went to South Africa. Then there is another firm who had £300,000 to invest. This firm were woolbuyers in London, and they made £300,000, and they intended to invest that money here; but when they heard of all these socialistic laws, they decided to invest the money in the war loan in England. To-day I met a man who came from New Zealand a few years ago and purchased a property on the Darling Downs. I said, "Where are you going?" He said, "I am full up of Queensland; I am going back to New Zealand." He said, "When I was in New Zealand, we had socialistic laws passed there, and I came over to Queensland, but our socialistic laws over there are nothing as bad as they are here. I am glad to say they found the fallacy of the socialistic laws in New Zealand, and I am going back, and I am going to take all the money I got out of my £25,000 back to New Zealand." He lost part of it here. Then a lady got £5,000 out of an investment, and she was going to invest it in Queensland, and when she found the Government are commanding everything, she said, "I will send it home and invest it in the war loan," and she did. This is the sword that you are holding over the capitalist and over the man who has accumulated money by any means:—1, a progressive land tax; 2, force farmers to sell produce to Government at less than world's value; 3, breaking an agreement entered into with pastoral leases as to annual rents; 4, making capitalist hire his labour only through trades union officials and only to employ unionists; 5, prevent farmers sending their produce out of the State so that they may secure the world's value for their labour, while allowing workers to sell their labour in the world's market; 6, making union organisers honorary inspectors and informers; 7, allowing municipal workers to levy rates on landowners (although not paying rates themselves), such rates to be spent in finding jobs for workers; 8, a progressive income tax; 9, probate duty increased. You don't give him the privilege of leaving his money to his own offspring. Why, it does not even pay to die in Queensland. (Laughter.) Then, as regards the olive branch, these are the inducements you are holding out:—

1. to allow the capitalist free air; 2, to allow the capitalist to live; 3, to allow the capitalist to vote for a member of Parliament that floats the Union Jack over it, but not the Parliament that floats the red flag; 4, to allow the capitalist to subscribe to all Labour union funds; 5, to allow the capitalist to spend his money and his life in defending the homes and liberty of the Empire; 6, to not compel the capitalist to marry his favourite daughter to a Labour organiser. I am in earnest in this matter. I have no "down" on the Labour party in any shape or form, but I think they are making a mistake. If they think they are going to commandeer this and commandeer that, and at the same time keep capital in Queensland, they are making a mistake. There is no chance of getting capital invested here until we have a change of policy, and that change of policy will not come about by anything that we do, but by the people who put the present Government in power not very long ago. They went in on the cry of "Cheap bread, cheap butter, and cheap beef." Three B's—bread, beef, and butter; and the people are now asking where is the cheap bread, cheap beef, and cheap butter.

Mr. COLLINS: Do you want to see cheap butter?

Mr. GUNN: Yes, I do want to see cheap butter. I should like to point out that when the present Treasurer was in [7 p.m.] opposition, according to "Hansard" for 1912, page 243, he said—

"We could build our railways out of revenue if our taxes were properly adjusted."

I take it that the Treasurer is pushing ahead with the present policy of the Government so that he may adjust taxes and be able to build railways without borrowing. If he can do that he is a very clever man, but I do not know how he is going to do it. I think he will have to borrow money to build railways. I never objected to borrow money for the building of railways which will pay interest on the money expended, as that is quite a sound investment, but the Treasurer does object to that, and says we should build railways out of revenue.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Not now.

Mr. GUNN: Not now; but he ought to be consistent. When members are in opposition they make all sorts of statements and issue promissory notes, as it were, and when those promissory notes fall due they should be in a position to honour them.

Hon. J. A. FHELLY: What about ready-made farms?

Mr. GUNN: It is a very good idea to provide ready-made farms. I notice also that we are going to have increased railway rates, a land tax, and taxation of all sorts on the producers in the country, while the men in the big cities are getting off practically scot-free. If I were Treasurer I would look round for some other sources of revenue. For instance, we have private racecourses, which could be exploited to a greater extent than they are exploited by the present Government. I do not see why private people should come here and make a lot of money out of racecourses, and then take that money to the Southern States. Again, while I do not wish that everybody should go about crying, I think that people who can

afford to patronise picture shows and other sorts of theatrical amusements could very well pay a tax on each ticket they purchase so as to assist the revenue of the State. I notice, further, that the Government are going in for quite a number of new appointments—inspectors of this and inspectors of that. In fact, the inspector pest is getting worse than the rabbit pest; you cannot turn a street corner without meeting an inspector of some sort or another. I do not see much utility in experts either. The Government are bringing another expert here, in the shape of Miss Willis, to organise teaching in domestic economy. That might be all very well if food were plentiful and cheap, but everybody in the State is economising as much as possible at the present time, and we could have done without such an expert at this juncture. Indeed, there are many things that we could do without at the present time. For instance, there are the Brisbane sewerage works, which will cost a tremendous amount of money. They will certainly give work to a number of men, but all that money is being spent in Brisbane. The city has gone on from its birth until the present time without a sewerage system, and it could very well do without it for some time longer, and the money which is being spent upon those works might be expended to greater advantage in building railways which would keep mines working. When this party were on the opposite side of the House, we were told that we were a Queen-street Government. I should like to know where the Queen-street Government is now. Everything that is done by the present Government is done in the interest of Queen street and of the big cities. I know that the present is a very distressful time, but it should not be forgotten that the Federal Government are bearing the whole cost of the war, for which they are taxing the people of Australia, and that the State Government are not troubled about the war but have simply to attend to their own finances. At a time like the present, the best thing the Government could do would be to pass their Estimates and then go into recess, and allow us to devote all our energies and wealth to the production of commodities which we can send to the other end of the world to help those who are fighting for us. If we cannot produce anything ourselves, then we can go to the front and fight. I am very glad to see that the Railway Department is manufacturing munitions, and I think it would be a good thing if private capital were used in the same way, with a view to bring this lamentable war to an end as soon as possible. Anything I can do to bring it to an end I shall willingly do. As far as my wealth is concerned—the drought has pretty well taken it all, but if any is left, the last penny can go to the defence of our country. But when the Government come along and tax me for the payment of the salaries of union organisers or inspectors I get my back up.

The bell indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): I had hoped that, in view of the conditions in which we find ourselves at the present time, hon. members opposite might have made a new departure in the criticism levelled at the Financial Statement. But, instead of that, we have heard from them the same old cry against the taxation of people with

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wealth; they have no thought of anything except to save No. 1 from taxation. I think the Government are to be congratulated on the way they have faced the financial position as they have found it, and the courageous manner in which they have framed their Estimates and intend to push on as far as possible with reproductive works, so that the distress which is felt not only in this State and the Empire, but practically over three-fifths of the world, may be minimised as far as this State is concerned. It is not the slightest use of members opposite criticising the action of the Government in making the provisions they have made to meet the present emergency. We have come into the heritage or aftermath of fifty years of Liberal government, and the State has been so ground down during those fifty years that the people have been practically penalised as regards wages and other conditions to such an extent as to have reached the limit of endurance. The hon. member for Murrumbidgee referred to the drought of 1901 and 1902, and said that the then Government imposed taxation. I would point out that they also went in for a very drastic form of retrenchment which was very costly to Queensland, an example which would not be followed by any sane statesmen of the present day. At that time, on every permanent way throughout Queensland they retrenched one gang of lengthsmen in every four, and where men had to look after 10 miles of length they gave them 14 miles to look after, and claimed that, in doing that, they were acting economically. But it was foolish economy, and it cost the State thousands of pounds to bring their railways back to their former state of efficiency. Not only did they do that; they also cut down the number of mechanics and various engineers who were concerned in the repairing of and looking after the rolling-stock. At no time in the history of the State was the rolling-stock in such a dilapidated and dangerous condition as it was after the régime of that day. I notice also that, in criticising this Statement, the hon. member for Murrumbidgee referred to several of the departments in which the Government have found it necessary to pay higher wages. It has not occurred to hon. members opposite that we have had to level up the wages of nearly all the public servants of the State, particularly the railway men, who have been so miserably treated in the past, that there was something like 30 per cent. difference in many cases between their wages and the ruling wages in similar industries outside the department. Again, the hon. member for Murrumbidgee wants to know whether the £16,000 cannot be saved by cutting down the vote for the Immigration Department. It surely must have escaped his attention that the subsidy to the shipping companies has to be paid just the same now as it had previously, and that, although it is not right for us to bring male immigrants from the old country at the present time, it will be necessary for us to bring some of the female population to Queensland. What would be the good, then, of cutting down the vote for the Immigration Department? If we saved money in that way, it would cost us double as much later on. You have also the cry as to the money required for the Home Secretary's Department. The hon. member for Murrumbidgee wants to know why that vote cannot be reduced. Surely hon. members' memories are not so short that they forget the Goodna inquiry. That

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has been an example of the economy of the past Government. The people of Queensland thrilled with sickening horror at the revelations of the state of affairs of Goodna Asylum at the present time.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: The Home Secretary said that everything was all right the other day.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: The report shows that it was owing to the economy of past Governments, as they would not vote the money required to put those institutions in the state of sanitation they should be in. Then, there is the increase in connection with the payments to the natural mothers of State children. The natural mother gets the same amount as the foster-mother, and she needs it for the maintenance and upkeep of her own children. The hon. member for Murrumbidgee thinks that this is a luxury at the present time. There was no more disgraceful Act on the statute-book of Queensland than that which entitles the foster-mother to a greater amount of money for keeping children than the natural mother.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Is there no such thing as natural affection?

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: From the tactics of the past Government they did not put any value on natural affection, because the natural mother was penalised to the extent of half the amount that was paid to the foster mother. The people of Queensland will agree that the Government are doing the right thing in increasing the amount to the natural mother.

Mr. KIRWAN: This is one of the occasions when the Opposition forget the widow.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: Then the hon. member talked about reducing the amount voted for the Education Department. We know that the State teachers are paid at a lower rate of wages than are the teachers in any other State in Australia. The assistant teachers in the Education Department, under the beneficent régime spoken of by hon. members opposite, who have held the reins of office for fifty years, earn less after seven years' service than the ordinary worker on the road or the navy on the railways, and yet a greater amount is expected of them! It is absurd to think that teachers, who had to mould the characters of the children—so that in time they may become the managers of great commercial concerns, engineers on our railways, and captains of industry—are paid less than the ordinary labourer. This was the case, although members opposite always held that brains should be paid more than brawn. Hon. members opposite seemed to forget that all capital came originally from the soil and could not be produced without labour. Those hon. members wished to get it at the expense of workmen every time; and always contend that the burden should fall on the working people. The whole burden of the speech of the hon. member for Murrumbidgee was one advocating drastic retrenchment. That is the only panacea that he could think of for all evils. He does not want to suffer himself, but to let someone else suffer. Anyone with brains at all knows that when you have a falling expenditure, the best thing to do is to increase the output. The Government are wise at the present time in not allowing the great mass of unemployed to go about the country without work and without money, and in taking steps to provide reproductive work.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: They are allowing it.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: At the present time I admit there are many unemployed, but if members opposite were on the Government benches there would be a great deal more. The Government are to be congratulated on their policy of pushing on with re-productive work. We are still building railways to give work, and, in the near future, they will be bringing in revenue as well.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: They have not started a new railway since they have been in power.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: I think you are wrong. I was down at Enoggera the other day, and I saw them shifting a lot of earth there. There were a lot of men employed there, and I think they were building the railway from Enoggera to Terrors Creek. The railway to Alton Downs would also have been started had it not been for the stupid clause under the Railways Guarantee Act.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: You are going to knock that out, are you?

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: Members opposite had been in power for fifty years, and it never struck them that it was an economical idea for the State to own its own coalmine. They preferred that the capitalist and shareholder should reap a big revenue at the expense of the country.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: What about "Fish-oh"?

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: We are at present more concerned looking after the shark industry. (Government laughter.) Members opposite cry about a land tax, but it will catch the land shark. Instead of holding on to great blocks of land that are paying only a small modicum of tax, it will be taxed in proportion to the revenue they are reaping from it. The land tax is going to hit the man who owns miles and miles of country adjoining a railway and never puts it to any use, until the time comes when he can farm the farmer who wants that land. I am glad that an extra tax is going to be put on land that is not producing anything. The Financial Statement will give general satisfaction to the great mass of the people. Instead of turning round and changing their opinions, they will be glad the present Government are in power. After reading the speech of the hon. member for Murrumba, and his advocacy of drastic retrenchment of working men and public servants, they will be glad to have a Government in power that is going to make it as easy as possible for the man with the small wage.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I do not intend to let this vote go through without saying a few words on the policy of the Labour party. The two members opposite who have spoken decried the land tax proposals of the Government. We have heard a lot about the poor farmer, but we have heard nothing about the man who owns land in Queen street and other cities of this State. I have advocated a land tax for a number of years, and it is not going to hurt the farmer at all. It is going to bring land not now cultivated into cultivation. That is one of the objects of the tax as well as to bring in revenue. We know that our land values in Queensland are nearly equal to our national debt. The money we have borrowed from time to time has added value to the land and gives an increased value to it. Mr. Knibbs, in his figures for 1910, gives the unimproved value of land in Queensland at £49,797,830. In

that year the national debt of Queensland was £44,613,197. We have all helped to create these land values, and that is what we propose to take back in the shape of taxation. We do not propose to take back the whole of the unimproved value, but we propose to take back a portion of it for the use of the State. What is wrong with that proposal? What is wrong in the community taking back for their own use that which the community has created?

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Did the community get there before the farmer?

Mr. COLLINS: Every intelligent person knows that it is the community of Queensland, the people as a whole who borrowed £40,000,000, who created the land values in Brisbane. Will the leader of the Opposition deny that? Do not all our railways lead to Brisbane?

Hon. J. TOLMIE: No, some go into Bowen.

Mr. COLLINS: We hope very shortly to see the railway linked up from Mackay to Bowen, and when that connection is made the whole of your North Coast Railway will come to Brisbane. Will the [7.30 p.m.] leader of the Opposition say that when our railways all lead to Brisbane, that they do not increase the value of land in and around Brisbane? If there was no community the land values would not be so high as they are at the present time.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Who created the values at the Proserpine?

Mr. COLLINS: The people in and around the Proserpine, and owing to the fact that the State of Queensland built a sugar-mill at the Proserpine. I can give no better illustration than Babinda. I was in the vicinity of Babinda when the Government with which the leader of the Opposition was associated was hesitating, and people were a bit alarmed in and around that district. I am satisfied you could have bought land there at less than £5 an acre when the Government were hesitating, but as soon as it was known that the Government were going to build a mill at Babinda at a cost of £180,000, the land increased to £20 an acre for standing scrub. When that measure was going through this Chamber, the Government made a mistake in not, first of all as a State, resuming all the land for miles around Babinda and have taken the increased value in the interests of the State. (Hear, hear!) As a result of building that mill at Babinda the increased value went into the pockets of a few persons—the 1,280-acre farmer, the man who did not do any farming; the man who had been waiting for the public of Queensland to create the value on his land. Fancy a man with 1,280 acres of land getting £20 an acre for it in its virgin state!

Mr. GILLIES: And calls himself a farmer.

Mr. COLLINS: Who created that value? The people of Queensland on the one hand, and the people in and around the mill. That is the value that we are seeking to tax. We do not seek to tax a man for his improvements. Some of our friends opposite, when on the public platform, try to make the farmer believe that we are out to tax improvements. Nothing of the kind. Now, we come to the men who are howling against our land tax proposals. These men, as a rule, do not cultivate a single inch of soil. They are the men who are so continually

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talking about the poor farmer, like the hon. member for Murrumba, who nearly shed tears to-night.

Mr. CARTER: Crocodile tears. (Laughter.)

Mr. COLLINS: But he did not mention the fact that in Brisbane, the "Courier" $\frac{1}{4}$ acre has an unimproved value of £36,500, and the purchasing price was £85 10s. That is the figure paid to the Crown in the first instance. Is it doing an injury to the farmer to tax that $\frac{1}{4}$ acre? Hon. members opposite know full well that it is companies like the "Courier" who are continually talking about the poor farmer—the poor farmer! I wish there were farmers as well off as the people who own that $\frac{1}{4}$ acre in Queen street. Are we going to hurt anyone by taxing that land? Will the farmers on the Darling Downs have to pay more to the "Courier" for their newspaper?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: He has to pay a land tax.

Mr. COLLINS: Certainly, he will have to pay a land tax if he has over £300 of unimproved value. If the hon. member has taken the trouble to look up the figures, he will find that the improvements come to the same amount as the unimproved value right throughout Queensland. Therefore, if a farmer has a farm that is worth £600—that is improvements and unimproved value—he will pay no tax at all.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: What sort of a farm is that?

Mr. GILLIES: A good farm.

Mr. COLLINS: I claim that the average farmer is not going to be affected at all by this tax.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Then you know nothing about it.

Mr. COLLINS: I do know something about it, but the hon. member for Drayton does not know as much about it as he ought to. He ought to tell them that the Labour party proposes to tax Queen street properties. I will now quote another Queen street property—that of the Queensland National Bank. They have 2 roods 28 perches, and the unimproved value is only £66,000. Those are the poor farmers whom we are going to hurt. I have no doubt that the Queensland National Bank is opposed to the Labour party's land tax proposals, and I have no doubt that the "Brisbane Courier" is also opposed to the tax. Then we have the "Telegraph"—1 rood 32 perches—and we find the unimproved value of that is £24,400. Does the hon. member for Drayton trouble about the "Telegraph"? Then we have Finney, Isles—1 rood 26 perches—and the unimproved value £27,980.

Mr. CORSER interjected.

Mr. COLLINS: There is the hon. member for Burnett interjecting again. He is always interjecting. I venture to say that there is not a single farm in the Burnett electorate worth £27,980. Neither has the hon. member for Drayton got a farm in his electorate worth that amount. I have just mentioned four properties in Queen street, but those are not the only properties in and around Brisbane that have large values. There are valuable properties in Toowoomba, in Townsville, in Bowen, and in Cairns.

Mr. CORSER: Don't the local authorities tax them?

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Mr. COLLINS: You don't think I am so simple as not to know that. Hon. members opposite support a local authorities unimproved land tax, but denounce it for State purposes.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Why should we give you money to spend?

Mr. COLLINS: We are going to spend money in the right direction, while you people in the past spent it in the wrong direction. If I remember rightly, Queensland is the only State in the Commonwealth that has not got a land tax—Queensland, with its enormous land value.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Is that a reason why it should be taxed?

Mr. COLLINS: The main reason why land should be taxed is to bring it into use. Will the hon. gentleman tell me that I have not seen the curse of land monopoly in Queensland? All I have to do is to look out of the carriage window while travelling between Brisbane and Gympie every week. Will anyone say that there is no land monopoly there? We are continually talking about the State not making the progress it ought to make. How can the State make progress when the lands of the State are in possession of big monopolists? A man may be a big monopolist if he owns 1,000 acres within 20 miles of Brisbane, whereas he would not be a monopolist at all if he owned 10,000 acres round about Thylungra. It is for that reason that we have been advocating a land tax for years. Will hon. members say that the Federal land tax has not done good? Will they deny that it has been the means of bursting up large estates? It may be that it has not burst them up as much as we would like.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Very little.

Mr. COLLINS: If that tax has not done it, ours will, because we commence at £300. (Hear, hear!) Hon. members know as well as I do that the tax is not going to be a heavy one, as the Treasurer only estimates that it will bring in £165,000.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: That is only the thin edge of the wedge.

Mr. COLLINS: I am satisfied that the farmers in my electorate—that is, after I have explained the land tax to them at length and gone into all the details—will be thoroughly convinced that we are doing the right thing. For years I have been advocating a land tax. I believe in a land tax, and I am satisfied that it is not going to crush the farmer. It is going to strengthen the position of the farmer. The reason our friends opposite were able to score against us in the past was owing to their misrepresentation of our land tax proposals. They told the people at the last election that, if we were returned to power, we would put on a land tax; but they could not frighten them, because they told them that many stories before that they did not believe them. They have seen what the Federal land tax has done; they have seen that, owing to the fact that the Labour party have imposed a land tax, they have been able to provide for the defence of the Commonwealth. Who has a better right to pay for the defence of the country than those who own land, and whose land has had a value given to it by the community? I claim that the land tax, to be the success that I anticipate it will be,

will not be altogether revenue producing. We all look forward to the time—at least, I do—when men, instead of cultivating land on shares, which they are doing in Queensland to-day; when men, instead of paying royalty for the right to grow cane as they are doing in Queensland to-day, especially in the Mackay district, will have land of their own.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Is it paying them?

Mr. COLLINS: I should like to point out that, when farmers pay 1s. per ton, and in some cases 1s. 6d. per ton, royalty for the right to grow cane, and they have a crop of 20 tons to the acre, that means that, where the price is 1s. per ton, they are paying the landlord £1 per acre for the use of his land, and where the price is 1s. 6d. per ton, a rent of £1 10s. per acre. What our land tax will do when it comes into operation will be this: it will bring into use land which is not at present cultivated, and will enable men who are at present cultivating land on shares to become the owners of that land. That is what we are seeking to bring about. Fancy men being willing to pay £1 an acre to a landlord for the use of land in a country like Queensland! During this session we have heard a lot about freedom, British liberty, and the rights of Britishers. It seems to me that already in this young State, owing to the land system we have in operation, there are a large number of Britishers who have to pay rent to the private landlord for the right to live. I remember attending a conference at Mackay in 1912 between representatives of the Australian Workers' Union and the canegrowers, and that the president of the Farmers' Association on that occasion stated that 75 per cent. of the canegrowers were paying royalty. I take that statement as being correct, and I say that, if it is correct, that is a scandalous state of things to exist in a young State like Queensland. What surprises me is that, in the twentieth century, I should find men who are willing to uphold the private landlord as against the State. I am satisfied that, as time rolls on and this land tax gets into operation, and the farmers see how it works, there will be very few farmers' representatives sitting on that side of the House, because we are going to give land to the farmer and to the farmers' sons.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Somebody else's land.

Mr. COLLINS: I have seen the effects of landlordism, right throughout the State of Queensland. Within 3 miles of the Mourilyan Sugar-mill, on the Johnstone River, I have seen acres of rich scrub lands in their virgin state, while men are cultivating land and growing cane 10 miles away from the mill. Is that right? Is it a proper thing that land within 3 miles of the sugar-mill should be kept in its virgin state owing to the fact that it is held by some landlord, who is holding it in order that he may get the unearned increment? I contend that that is not right. That land should have been brought under cultivation and made use of. Why should any man be allowed to hold it unused, and pocket the unearned increment or the value which is created by the rest of the farmers in and around Mourilyan? I remember talking on one occasion to a farmer in the South Johnstone district. I asked him what was the value of the land there before the State invested its capital

in the building of a sugar-mill, and he told me that you could buy the land at from £2 to £3 per acre. What was paid for those lands as soon as it became known that the Government were going to erect a mill on the South Johnstone River? Why, you could not buy it for less than £5, £10, and £15 per acre—that is, land in its virgin state. The men who owned that land sold it to Italians and Spaniards and British at the increased value we had given to it by the expenditure of public money.

Mr. APPEL: Who is liable for the repayment of that money?

Mr. COLLINS: I assume that the land-owners are liable for the repayment of the money, but that does not say that the land will not go on increasing in value. All our Federal sugar legislation and State sugar legislation increase land values. Only the other day I read of a farm of 180 acres in the Innisfail district changing hands at a price of £12,000.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Including the land tax.

Mr. COLLINS: Judging from the interjection of the hon. member, I shall have to buy him an A B C primer of political economy, so that he may understand the land tax. I have given Mourilyan as an illustration and the South Johnstone as an illustration. I can also show how land in Cairns that was bought for £5 per allotment a few years ago will now cost not less than £500. These allotments have no buildings upon them. What has made the difference in values between £5 and £500? The exertion of the individual on the one hand and the expenditure of public money on the other hand. It is that unimproved value of land that we seek to tax, and that we are going to tax. But farmers know or ought to have known—because our platform has been before the country over a quarter of a century—that we intended to impose a land tax. I am pleased that I am alive to see that platform put upon the statute-book of Queensland. We have not got a Holman Government in Queensland; we have a Government who believe in the Labour party platform. Then it is proposed to increase the income tax, and because of that the member for Murrumba cries out about increased taxation. Is that tax going to hit the poor farmer? I am pleased to observe that the hon. member for Warwick is present in his place, as on one occasion he quoted some remarks made by me in this House some years ago about farmers. I hope that when the hon. member quotes my speeches in his own electorate he will quote them correctly. On the occasion referred to, I pointed out the small number of farmers who paid income tax in Queensland. I pointed out the same thing later on in my election address. There is no man knows the position of farmers of Queensland better than I do.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Which farmers?

Mr. COLLINS: The farmers of Queensland in general. The hon. member for Lockyear waves his hand. It is no use the hon. member waving his hand nowadays. (Laughter.) The days for that are past, as we have now come into possession of the Government benches. When I said I knew the position of the farmers in Queensland, I said so because I have taken my facts from the income tax returns. The hon. member

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for Lockyer need not imitate me, because they say that imitation is a form of flattery.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: You may know something about the sugar farmer, but you know nothing about the general farmer.

Mr. COLLINS: I still make the statement that I know the position of the farmers in Queensland, and know that as a class they are not wealthy. I have told you over and over again that the farmers will not be affected by the land tax proposals of the Labour party. What will really happen is that the large landowner—the man who inspires leading articles in the “Brisbane Courier”—will be made to pay up; and that the man who gets someone else to cultivate his land will have to pay up.

Mr. HODGE: He will have to pay dearly for it.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member for Nanango is always crying out about having to pay dearly. Does the hon. member mean having to pay a dear price for the land or for the labour employed on it? When I was contesting the Bowen electorate, I told the farmers in that district that I might not be able to plough a straight

[8 p.m.] furrow, but that I knew something about economics and the sugar industry. If I did not know that, I would not be in the House. I know something of what I am talking about at the present time. The hon. member for Murrumba referred to the income tax proposals of the Government. What is wrong with those proposals?

Mr. GUNN: Nothing. It comes out of the other fellow, so that it is all right.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. gentleman knows that the pastoralists take one-eleventh of the total wealth produced in Queensland. One of the members of the British Government said that they ought to be willing to pay one-half of their incomes in taxation. Who has a better right to carry on the country than the people who possess the wealth of the country? We know that the revenue received from income tax showed an increase of £40,000 last year over and above the amount received from the same source in the previous year. Queensland seems to be going through the same stage of progress as the rest of the world. The wealthy are getting wealthier in Queensland. Notwithstanding what the hon. member for Carnarvon and the Treasurer have said, the income tax returns this year will show that the Treasurer's estimates will be realised. That goes to show that a number of people in Queensland are well-to-do. Why should they not be made to pay more than they have been paying in the past towards carrying on the government of the country? They have been taking the wealth of the country which has been produced by men working under bad conditions. We know that the squatters have increased their incomes enormously during the last three or four years. Notwithstanding all the cries about the loss of cattle and the loss of sheep, I am prepared to say that at the end of this year a large number of squatters will show an increase so far as the income tax is concerned. No one deplures more than I do the crying down of this fair State of Queensland. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. BOOKER: Your district is in a bad way.

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Mr. COLLINS: I am satisfied that the Bowen electors would kick me out of Parliament if I came in and ran down their district.

Mr. APPEL: They will do it next year.

Mr. COLLINS: I hope the hon. member for Albert will do me the honour of coming up there and trying to put me out. Last year the then Minister for Railways came up there, but he only helped to increase my votes. I am well aware that the Bowen electorate is suffering from a severe drought, but they did not send me here to decry their district, or to say that it is a district where you cannot grow a blade of grass. We will overcome all of our difficulties. The development of an irrigation scheme up there which I hope to see brought about by this Government will overcome all our difficulties. (Hear, hear!) The past Government only talked about doing things, but did not do them. I believe in harnessing all the forces of Nature. In my electorate we have an immense supply of water underneath the soil, and it is only a question of raising it and irrigating the land to produce crops. That will be done with the assistance of this State.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: They have not done much yet.

Mr. COLLINS: Already the present Government have spent some money in my electorate in connection with this irrigation scheme, and I think it will be a success. (Hear, hear!) When I stand for election, I do not inquire if a man is going to vote for me. I do not canvass for votes but trust to my platform speeches to get me into Parliament. If I had to smooch to get into Parliament, I hope I will never get here. (Hear, hear!) I congratulate the Government on its proposal to establish a State sawmill. We ought to have had one in Queensland years ago. I don't know where the State sawmill is going to be established, but there is room for half a dozen State sawmills in Queensland. In that splendid tract of country known as the Atherton Scrub it would be an advantage for the State to have a sawmill there. I deplore the fact that so much fine timber has been destroyed there in the past. If we had had wise Governments in power in the past, instead of that timber being destroyed it would have been procured by the State and supplied to the people of Queensland. More power to the Treasurer for proposing to establish a State sawmill! The Government also propose to establish a State coalmine. Maybe there will be one in the Bowen electorate; at least I hope so. Why shouldn't the Bowen electorate have a State coalmine? I read something in a Sydney newspaper the other day which was news to me. It said that at the back of Bowen there was one of the biggest coalfields in the world. That is the place to start the State coalmine. We have large consumers of coal in the North, particularly the railways.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Are you going to make it pay?

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member reminds me of a man who went on the land in England in order to justify his existence on this planet, and he said he was worried by his friends always asking “was it paying?” He said that the peasants had more intelligence, because they asked him how the parsnips, carrots, and celery were growing. When we

establish a State coalmine, we will see that the miners work under better conditions than they have at the present time; and, by doing that, we will produce a finer race of men physically and mentally. That is the reason why we are not making the progress that we should do in Europe at the present time. It is owing to the fact that the friends of hon. members opposite who have been in power in England for centuries have kept the working classes working under bad conditions, with the result that the race has degenerated. I do not want to say anything in favour of Germany, but we know that while Germany only sent away 20,000 people a few years ago, Great Britain sent away 360,000. When we have a State coalmine, we must see that the conditions are good. We want to make the men physically and mentally better. We don't want the race to be puny and narrow-chested weaklings. That is why I am a strong advocate for a coalmine. The hon. member for Drayton has been a member of a shire council, and he knows how essential it is for a council to build roads. Do the roads pay a dividend? No, the roads do not pay anything in a direct sense, but they do indirectly. In the State coalmine we are not concerned whether it pays dividends or not, but we are concerned about the conditions under which they work being good. In England they have had three generations of manufacturing, and it is the factory system in vogue there instead of having men working on the soil that has degenerated them, and is responsible for the state of things in Europe at the present time. I am a believer in settling people upon the land and producing a fine race of men.

Mr. BABBINGTON: To keep you in cheap food. You stole ours. (Laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. COLLINS: The people of Queensland are keeping me. They sent me here to help make the laws, and I am doing my duty to Queensland just as much as if I was cultivating the soil on the Darling Downs or elsewhere. If the hon. member for Drayton does not believe in the people sending representatives to Parliament, he must be an out-and-out anarchist. I am doing just as useful work here assisting to pass the laws. Society required seventy-two men to make laws here, and as I am one of the seventy-two, I am doing my share to the best of my ability. With regard to the contention of our friends opposite about the farmers, I want to say that I came to Queensland thirty-two years ago, and society at that time said to me, "You would be doing a good thing and a useful thing to work in a goldmine." I went goldmining, and I have not accumulated a fortune. Will anyone say that goldmining is not a necessary and useful thing? If you believe that mining should be carried out, then a man who follows mining is just as useful as the man who cultivates the soil. I am very pleased to see the taxation proposals in the Treasurer's Statement, and I have no doubt they will not be the last proposals. It does not frighten me in the least when members opposite talk about capital leaving this State. I only smile. It used to have some effect on me when I was a boy, but not now, because I know what capital really is. If I own a sugar farm and it is worth £12,000, and if I am frightened of the legislation to be introduced in Queensland and I am going to

leave Queensland, then there must be some other man willing to pay me £12,000 for that farm who is not afraid of the laws that this party is going to pass. I am satisfied that this talk about capital clearing out of the State is all moonshine, and the leader of the Opposition knows it, too. The hon. member for Wide Bay knows, too, that as long as you leave your cattle here and as long as you leave the land here you can clear out.

Mr. BOOKER: I have a great regard for my native country and am not going to leave it.

Mr. COLLINS: I am very glad to hear the hon. member say so, and I hope he won't decry it when he gets up to speak. What State can they clear out to? In five States out of the Commonwealth, the Labour party is in power, and we are in power in the Commonwealth. I have heard men say from time to time that the Commonwealth is one of the best parts of the world, and if it is one of the best parts of the world, surely you are not going to clear out of one of the best parts of the world to one of the worst parts. I am satisfied that this cry about capital leaving the State is all nonsense.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Why are so many people out of work?

Mr. COLLINS: One of the reasons why so many people are out of work is, that in every great crisis that has occurred in the world's history private enterprise has always failed. It failed in Great Britain. One of the reasons why there are so many men out of work, is owing to the disorganisation of society that has been brought about by the private enterprise system. Then, as regards this talk about taxing the people who have large incomes restricting production; it is going to do nothing of the kind, because if it restricts it so far as private enterprise is concerned, it is going to increase it so far as the State is concerned. The State is going to do better than private enterprise.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: As it has done in New South Wales.

Mr. COLLINS: It is no use quoting New South Wales to me, because I am not going to be discouraged by one failure or half a dozen failures. (Hear, hear!) I know many things have proved to be failures; and, whilst speaking of failures, I could remind the leader of the Opposition of many failures in private enterprise. We hear about the State not making this and not making that a success. I have travelled in North Queensland, and there are more monuments of failure in North Queensland in connection with private enterprises than in any other part of Queensland. Take the mines in the North, and what do I see there? A monument of the incapacity of private enterprise. Take Mount Garnet; and when I go to the Einasleigh I see a monument costing £20,000 that did not work a week. Go right away up to Normanton, and what do I see there in connection with the meatworks? Another monument of the incapacity of private enterprise. Go to Burketown, and I see another huge monument there of private enterprise. It is no use talking to me about these things being failures.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Go to the Northern Territory and you will see a Commonwealth failure.

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Mr. COLLINS: I was in the Territory in 1886, and the greatest failure in the Territory was when the Liberal Government in South Australia built the Pine Creek Railway with Chinese labour. (Hear, hear! and Government laughter.) I wish to congratulate the Government on the Treasurer's proposals, and all this talk that we listen to from time to time about the insurance companies not lending the money to the State—that is very unpatrician indeed. It goes to show that their patriotism is not even skin deep; they are out for profit all the time. They do not even care about the prosperity of the country, and the leader of the Opposition knows quite well that under present conditions we must borrow money. There are two methods of carrying on such a State as ours—one is by borrowing and one is by taxation.

Mr. APPEL: And stealing.

Mr. COLLINS: When I went to school I was taught, "Thou shalt not steal," and so far as I know I have not stolen anything from any man, but I am not too sure about the hon. member who interjected. (Laughter.) He might have stolen other people's land for all I know. He may have done it legally, as there are so many ways of stealing. I believe in Tom Carlyle when he said, "Thou shalt not steal, and thou shalt not be stolen from." (Hear, hear!) That is what we are seeking to bring about. We are seeking to bring about a system whereby we cannot steal another man's labour.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Nor produce.

Mr. COLLINS: Because, after all, this capital that we are talking about is only stored-up labour; it is only surplus labour. It is the surplus that the capitalist has taken to himself over and above that which was necessary to sustain the labourer.

Mr. GILLES: To keep him alive.

Mr. COLLINS: That is what it means. He may have taken it legally. I am not saying he took it illegally; it is the system which is wrong that has enabled him to do that, and it is that system that we seek to destroy. It is the duty of those persons who have got that stored-up labour, if they have any patriotism at all, to assist this State.

The bell indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

At 8.25 o'clock,

Mr. BERTRAM took the chair as Temporary Chairman.

Mr. APPEL (*Albert*): I desire, in the first instance, to congratulate the hon. member for Murrumbidgee for the analytical and critical address which he delivered this afternoon in reference to the Treasurer's Financial Statement. I have no hesitation in saying that it is one of the best speeches that I believe has ever been delivered in this House by way of criticism on the Financial Statement, and the hon. gentleman who delivered that speech has given some very difficult nuts for hon. members on the Treasury benches to crack.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: They have got good teeth.

Mr. APPEL: I have no doubt they have got good teeth, and so has the tiger. I have

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no hesitation in saying that when the electors of Queensland read that speech, unless there is a very effective reply from members sitting on the Treasury bench, they will be able to come to but one conclusion.

Mr. W. HARTLEY: They will be glad they returned the Labour party to power.

Mr. APPEL: I believe they are very sorry they did not return the Liberal party, and hon. members on that side know that what I say is absolutely correct. The thing that has caused me some amusement is the action of hon. members sitting on that side of the House. When they occupied the Opposition benches, if the Liberal Government had delayed the Financial Statement to this late period of the session, what an outcry there would have been. The Financial Statement should be delivered as early in the session as possible. Of course, there may be reasons, and good reasons, for delaying this important Statement, and, as things have gone, there is no question that a certain amount of delay was necessary on account of the state of things in the Empire. Now, let us look at this famous Financial

[8.30 p.m.] Statement. What kind of a Statement is it? It is a mere tissue of platitudes. The journals which support the Labour Government spoke about it as being a wonderful effort—an absolutely different Statement from the Statement which was delivered by the Liberal Treasurer. Unfortunately, owing to illness, I was unable to be in the House last week, and, as I was anxious to see the Statement, I took the first opportunity of calling at the House upon my return from Nerang in order to obtain a copy. I secured a copy and took it home for the purpose of enjoying this magnificent production, but I found that after all it must be admitted by any honest, unbiassed person that it is only a tissue of platitudes, and a claiming of credit for the effective financial administration of the previous Government.

Mr. MAY: That is all tally rot; the whole lot of it. (Laughter.)

Mr. APPEL: The hon. member is quite correct; he says it is all "bally rot." The Statement is self-condemned when a member on that side of the House stigmatises it as being "bally rot." (Laughter.)

Mr. MAY: I meant the previous Statement.

Mr. APPEL: I take the interjection of the hon. member as he gave it originally. However, I do not propose to be carried away by interjections from members on that side of the House. So far as the Statement goes, it is a Statement of capable financial administration on the part of the late Liberal Government. All that is claimed in this Statement with regard to effective management, increased revenue, and increased expenditure for the purpose of more fully paying the workers of the State, is due to the effective financial administration of the previous Government. (Hear, hear!) I quite admit that hon. gentlemen who occupy the Treasury benches have a very difficult task before them. I do not know whether to be glad or to be sorry that they are in the position in which they are, and that they have to face what they will have to face and undergo many trials and tribulations in connection with the keeping of the financial

ship of the State afloat. According to this Statement, the ship was absolutely safe and well-trimmed, with her Plimsoll mark above water and in every way effective when the late Government left office; but I am very much afraid that the Plimsoll mark is already sinking below the water-line, and that the ship is becoming lopsided under the administration of the present Government. I quite realise that the situation is a very serious one, and that apart from the dislocation caused by the great war, we are at present suffering one of the most disastrous droughts that have ever visited Queensland. How long that drought will continue it is impossible to say. At the present time there are no indications that it is going to break up, and, even if we do get rain in the near future, it will be a very considerable time before the country recovers from the effects of the drought and before those who are settled upon the land and engaged in agricultural and pastoral industries recover from the financial embarrassments which are caused by this circumstance. And, unquestionably, the Government will suffer in the same ratio. Special reference is made in the Statement to the fact that the revenue and the expenditure for last year were over-estimated. It must be realised that at the time the late Treasurer's Financial Statement was prepared we had just entered upon the war which has been carried on ever since twelve months ago last August, and it was impossible for the Treasurer to form any estimate as to what effect the dislocation of business might have upon the various revenue-producing departments of the State. He took a conservative view of the position, and was absolutely justified in doing so. The results of the past year show the wonderful fertility of this great State. It has always been understood by Liberal administrators that in making up their Estimates they should not over-estimate the revenue, but that if the revenue exceeded their estimate they should be prepared to exceed the expenditure by using the money at their disposal to improve the conditions of those employed by the State, and they did that. Hon. members who now occupy the Treasury bench came into office just prior to the end of the financial year, so that they had practically no hand, with one exception, in connection with the improved conditions which the Liberal Administration were able to effect with regard to employees of the State. Before dealing further with this matter, I should like to ask the Government if the Government realise to-day the hypocrisy of their election cries. We know that it was owing to those cries, which appealed to the general elector of Queensland, that they attained the position which they occupy to-day—that they possess a majority in this Chamber. They told the electors that if they were returned to power their administration would be effective, especially in connection with the matter which affected the great majority of the electors of the State—that is, a reduction in the cost of living—in the price of the various articles which are daily used in the household. Do they realise to-day the hypocrisy of their election cries? Do they realise to-day how hard it is often to honour pledges and promises which were made under those conditions? We all know how chickens come home to roost. Those hon. members attacked the late Administration and the Liberal party,

and pointed out that it was in the power of the Government of the day to reduce the cost of living. They went before the electors professing that if they were placed in office they would reduce the cost of living. Now, I ask, have they ever fulfilled that pledge? We all know that to-day the cost of living is very considerably greater than it was prior to the last election, and they must realise the hypocrisy of the cries by which they gained the votes of the people.

THE HOME SECRETARY: What about your hypocrisy with your leader?

MR. APPEL: My hypocrisy! The hon. gentleman who makes that interjection knows that he makes an interjection which is absolute, contemptible hypocrisy.

THE TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to withdraw that expression.

MR. APPEL: Certainly; at your request I unhesitatingly withdraw the expression. Again, I say, have the Government fulfilled that pledge? We realise to-day that flour is selling at a higher price in Queensland than in any other State in the Commonwealth. The price of meat, owing to the trickery of the present Administration in connection with that commodity, is higher than it was before, and the prices of bacon, butter, and bread are higher than they were prior to the last general election.

MR. BEBBINGTON: After robbing the farmers.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: How did we rob the farmers?

MR. APPEL: The Government robbed the farmers by fixing the price of butter without first inquiring as to the price of its production. As I pointed out on a former occasion, the Government approached this matter from the wrong end. Instead of, first of all, ascertaining the cost of producing a particular article, they started with the finished article, with the result that, owing to the drought conditions, they inflicted a very gross injustice upon the dairy farmer. I quite admit that this was done with the object of fulfilling the pledge they gave at the general election, and for the purpose of reducing the price of butter. I have no hesitation in saying that, in view of the exceptional drought conditions, and the heavy losses of the dairy farmer and the cost to him to keep his cattle alive, that, in fixing the prices in the way they did, they inflicted a gross injustice and loss upon him. That is the reason why I say that it must come home to them that their election cries in connection with this were absolutely hypocritical. How do they propose to meet this? By indulging in a policy of wild political adventure which I have no hesitation in saying will place very severe burdens upon a section of the electors of the State for the benefit and advantage of one other section of the electors who are not concerned so far as the payment of taxation to carry out these wild political adventurous schemes is concerned. I have no doubt that the electors of Queensland will realise the value of the speeches of hon. gentlemen and hon. members sitting on that side of the House and the friendship which they always profess to have for those men who are the

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backbone of this State—the primary producers of Queensland. Speaking generally on the subject of the financing of these wild political adventurous schemes, to wit, the acquirement of meatworks costing millions of money to be bought by paper. That is the favourite method adopted by members opposite.

The PREMIER: That does not require much taxation.

Mr. APPEL: No; but the time comes for the redemption of that paper. Hon. gentlemen sitting opposite must realise that these debentures carry an obligation of interest which cannot be redeemed by paper.

The PREMIER: What are you referring to?

Mr. APPEL: The hon. gentleman knows that, under another measure, it is proposed to take over the meatworks and pay for them by means of debentures; but interest has got to be paid.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: It is a violation of the Constitution Act.

Mr. APPEL: Hon. gentlemen should realise this, seeing that they claim clemency in this Statement on the grounds of the unprecedented conditions which prevail here. They would get that clemency, but when they are prepared to go into these adventurous schemes which would involve the State of Queensland in very heavy obligations indeed, it is the duty of every representative of the people in this House who has the interests of the people at heart to oppose them by every means and every constitutional method which it is possible to carry into operation. We find on one side one portion of the members of the community who practically escape all taxation are to still further be favoured by the Government at the expense of one other class of the community, consisting primarily of the producer—the man who cannot get away because he is chained to his land. He is the man who will have to pay all kinds of taxation—local government, Commonwealth, and State. He is the man who suffers from weather conditions; is unable to get away, and yet he has burdens placed upon his back. He is to be further handicapped by having still heavier burdens placed upon him for the purpose of carrying out these wild political adventurous schemes which there was no necessity to introduce at the present time. If these schemes had not been introduced, it would have obviated the necessity of increased taxation at the present time. We gladly meet the Commonwealth impost, because it is for an object and purpose we agree with. Probably the Commonwealth land tax will be increased, and we will gladly bear the burden because of the object for increasing it. At this particular time it should have been the duty of hon. members sitting on the Treasury benches to take into consideration that there is a limit to the burden of taxation on the primary producers and the men settled upon the land. I am sure this taxation will prove grievous and sore to them at the present juncture. I do not intend to attempt to reply to the arguments of the hon. members opposite. The hon. member for Bowen referred to them as the A B C of economics.

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The Minister for Lands would not reply to them because he knows they are absolutely hollow. I was at a meeting when the land tax was discussed, and one of the representatives said that, in a certain State, the farmers could never grow a crop until the land tax was placed upon their land. A Queenslander arose, and said they could not grow a crop unless they got rain. I am sure that this tax will impose grievous and sore burdens upon those settled upon the land.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Those who hold large areas of land and do not use them will have to pay.

Mr. APPEL: Those who are suffering from the unprecedented drought will have to pay. What is the purpose of the land tax? Hon. members opposite say it is to see that the land is properly utilised. One hon. member said that the land in the city of Brisbane would be taxed. Surely, land upon which buildings have been erected is utilised, so what is the use of placing taxation on land so highly improved as that? I quite agree with the proposal that a freeholder who has large areas of land and does not use them should be taxed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What are you grumbling at, then?

Mr. APPEL: Because this tax will be a severe burden on the man who is trying to utilise his land.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: You want to let the city landholder off.

Mr. APPEL: I am inclined to think that one section of the community will be victimised by the imposition of the land and income taxes and by the wages of their employees being increased. They will also suffer by the introduction of preference to unionists and the increases in railway fares and freights. If it is a sound economical principle to have a land tax, then there should be no exemption at all in that tax. (Hear, hear!) We find the Government and their supporters exempting the man who owns land to the value of £300. Furthermore, the railway fares of the working men are not to be increased, because, up to a certain limit—I believe it is 20 miles from the city—the suburban fares are not to be increased.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Shameful! It is a shame!

Mr. APPEL: But the fares to the places further afield are to be increased. It is only the farmer and agriculturist who is to be made to suffer in connection with the increase and additional imposts which are to be placed upon them. I notice, furthermore, that hon. members sitting on the Treasury benches do propose some little method of economy—they propose to abolish the South Brisbane Police Court, [9 p.m.] which has been established for the last twenty years, and serves a large section of the community. The greater part of that section of the community are primary producers living on the Logan and Albert and in portion of Oxley, which are occupied for agricultural and dairying purposes. I do not know what is to be saved—perhaps £1,000 or £1,500—but this police court is to be abolished, and

persons in the South Coast district, who, with two exceptions, are represented by members sitting on this side of the House, are to be compelled to come to North Brisbane, at further expense. I see the hon. member for South Brisbane smiling. Perhaps he is at the bottom of this. Probably he does not want a police court in South Brisbane. I do not know what his electors think on the matter; perhaps they want to come over to North Brisbane. This will inflict a very serious injustice on a large section of the community settled on the land in the South Coast districts of Queensland. We have other wild socialistic schemes forecasted, and the hon. member for Bowen said it is only the thin end of the wedge. He put it in this way—apparently regarding Mr. Holman, the Premier of New South Wales, as being a tactful man who was able to balance his affairs while carrying out a democratic policy—the hon. member said: “We have got no Mr. Holman here; we are going to carry out every plank of our platform, it does not matter whether it pays or not.” Of course, the hon. member may be a financier when he says it does not matter whether it pays or not; but, unfortunately, the men who will be materially affected by these socialistic enterprises—

Mr. FREE: You claimed to be a State socialist the other day.

Mr. APPEL: That is quite a different thing. Those who are to be beneficially affected by this scheme—it does not matter a farthing to them whether they fail or not; it is the unfortunate primary producer who will have to foot the bill every time. And this is the time to enter a protest to hon. members sitting on that side of the House. It is possible to kill the goose that lays the golden egg.

The PREMIER: Do you call the primary producer a goose? (Laughter.)

Mr. APPEL: Those primary producers who are represented by members on that side of the House, I say unhesitatingly, are geese. I want to sound a note of warning to hon. members opposite. It must be recollected that it was only the other day that a deputation, representing the banking community of the Commonwealth, and including the manager of the Commonwealth Bank, waited on the Secretary for Public Lands and pointed out to him that a scheme such as he proposed was affecting the finances of Australia, and would have the effect of driving capital out of the State. Hon. members on that side of the House declare that the only capital is labour. If they are sincere in their declaration, why did the Premier and the Treasurer go South for the purpose of endeavouring to obtain sovereigns to bring into Queensland? It simply shows the hollowness of the statement that labour is capital. Of course, labour is capital just as money is capital, and the one is no good without the other. Before there was any coinage, we know that the only system was barter and exchange; labour was exchange for produce and produce for labour. One was no good without the other; and if there are no means of selling gold, then gold is valueless as gold. But to say that we can do without capital here—that there is no need to consider capital—is a hypocritical cry. That may not be crying

stinking fish, but I think the result would be stinking fish.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You are always crying stinking fish on that side.

Mr. APPEL: I do not think I have ever decried my native State of Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: During the whole of this session you have been doing nothing else.

Mr. APPEL: I can unhesitatingly say that there is no fairer State than the State of Queensland; that there is no State more bountifully endowed by Nature than the State of Queensland, and it is only an injudicious policy that may delay that progress which should mark her course.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Now you are cray-fishing.

Mr. APPEL: The hon. gentleman has had a good deal of experience in that sort of thing. In connection with the proposal to tax unimproved values, and compel cultivation under a penalty, we have to realise that there is no comparison between land in the State of Queensland and the land outside the North Coast district of New South Wales, in New South Wales generally, and in a great part of Victoria and South Australia. In those States we know that there is no natural fodder, and it is necessary to grow wheat. Of course, it is exceptional wheat country, but it is absolutely necessary for fodder purposes to crop that country. We know that in the wheat districts no man can make a living on less than 1,200 acres, and in that class of country—open plain country with light sandy soil—it is only customary to disc-harrow, and it is possible to prepare 1,200 acres in the time that it would take to plough 150 acres of our heavy Downs land. Then, hon. members opposite talk about making a condition that a certain amount of increased cultivation should take place. Take our North Coast scrub lands—all our coast country, in fact—possibly our best land; owing to it being permanently watered there is a very small percentage indeed suitable for cultivation, due to its configuration, and until it was possible by the export of butter to make dairying a profitable concern, that land was not occupied. Wherever it is possible to grow fruit, fruit has been grown; but it is only in favoured localities that that is possible. When hon. members talk about penalising the men who have taken up these rough scrub land and insist upon them putting a certain amount under cultivation, it only shows their lack of knowledge on the subject. Has not our butter industry returned a very large profit, indeed, to the State? The annual value of our butter export hitherto has exceeded £1,000,000 sterling, which has been returned to the State and put into circulation. There is no more profitable method of using land, under ordinary conditions, than by dairying, and why compel the settlers to engage in an occupation which is less profitable than the great dairying industry, which returns to the State such a large amount of gold from its export? It simply shows the lack of knowledge of hon. members sitting on that side of the House, who profess to know more about these conditions than the men who are engaged in the industry. I notice in the Statement that it is proposed to

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transfer a sum of £42,000 from trust funds to revenue, that £42,000 apparently being the profit made from the sale of certain repurchased estates. When one recollects that hon. members sitting on that side of the House protested against that course—I think it is quite a right and proper course to pursue—but when we realise that hon. members sitting on the Treasury benches used to stand up in this Chamber and protest against this being done, and used to inform the electors that the Governments of the day were taking a course which was not justified, all I can say is, that when these electors see that hon. members are doing exactly as the Liberal Government did, they will wonder—as I wonder. I realise the difficulties that will beset hon. gentlemen sitting on the Treasury benches in connection with the obtaining of funds for the purpose of carrying out public works, and in that respect they have my sympathy, and should have the sympathy of every member sitting on this side of the House, because without loan funds it is impossible to carry out public works. Loan funds are an absolute necessity in carrying out public works, particularly railways, which it is necessary to construct, so that Crown lands that are at present unsettled may be settled. Without railway construction it would be absolutely unjust to ask settlers to take up such land, as, after having cleared and cultivated it, they would have no means for transporting their product to market. So far as I am individually concerned, the Government will have, not alone my sympathy, but any assistance I can give them in this matter.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You will lend them half a million or so.

Mr. APPEL: If I had a million I would lend it to the State.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That shows you have faith in the Government.

Mr. APPEL: The Government is the Government, whether it is a Labour Government or a Liberal Government, and there is only one course for a Government to pursue—that is, to preserve as far as possible the confidence of those who are interested in the State.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We are doing that.

Mr. APPEL: I wish now to refer to the wonderful position of our Savings Bank. A person reading this Statement would naturally conclude that the satisfactory position of the Savings Bank during the last financial year was due to the fact that members of the Labour party are sitting on the Treasury bench. But we have to realise that its position is due to the confidence that the small investors of the State had in the late Liberal Administration. When we find that recently investors in the Government Savings Bank were making abnormal withdrawals of deposits—so much so that the present Treasurer found it necessary to have a paragraph published in the daily Press advising investors not to make withdrawals, as their money was safe and would not be taxed—we can see what confidence they have in the present Government. The Liberal Administration never had to take action of that kind. I give the late Treasurer, the Hon. W. H. Barnes, credit for the fact that it was owing to his administration

in establishing Savings Banks throughout the length and breadth of Queensland, when the Commonwealth Government entered into competition with the State in that business, that our Savings Bank has achieved its present position. I only hope that the present Treasurer will restore the confidence of investors in the bank, so that they will bring their savings to our own institution, because with that money many beneficial acts of administration are possible, such as advances under the Workers' Dwellings Act passed by the late Liberal Administration, and advances under the Agricultural Bank Act to settlers who go upon our lands.

The TREASURER: We shall be more generous.

Mr. APPEL: I hope the hon. gentleman will have the money to carry out his generous purposes. We cannot be too generous towards the men who settle upon the land. This statement was questioned by some hon. member a few minutes ago when a member on this side of the House was speaking, but I repeat that the State cannot be too good or too generous to the men who have gone upon our land and who are making the State what it is, more particularly those men who have the heart to take up prickly-pear country. I see no mention in the Statement as to what it is proposed to do to further assist the men who have gone upon prickly-pear country. From what I have seen of the prickly-pear land, I have no hesitation in saying that men who are prepared to settle on prickly-pear country have hearts like lions, and that the State cannot do too much for them. The prickly-pear is a national danger in Queensland; it is absolutely necessary to cope with it, and I would advise the Government to take all the means which existing legislation affords them to see that prickly-pear destruction is carried out. I have noticed that the pear is increasing in different districts. Recently I was in the Goondiwindi district, and I noticed places there where there has been a large increase in the area infected with pear. It does not matter who the proprietor of such land may be, it is the duty of the State to deal with him, and at the same time to give him every financial assistance to enable him to tackle the pest. With regard to the increases of expenditure in the Home Department and the Department of Public Instruction referred to by the hon. member for Murrumba, I differ from that hon. member as to the necessity for such increases, because I know that they are absolutely necessary. The increase in the allowance to natural mothers is one that I have always advocated personally, but, as hon. members know, we cannot do everything that we wish. Still, it is an act of justice, especially in view of the increase in the cost of living, to make the allowance to natural mothers at the same rate as is paid to foster-mothers; and I would urge upon the Home Secretary that in making that increase he should see that the money granted is used for the benefit of the child, as in the case of grants to foster-mothers. The subsidy is given for the purpose of enabling the mother to bring up the child in good health, to clothe, feed, and house it properly; and I would advise the hon. gentleman to see that those provisions are carried out by natural mothers as well as foster-mothers. We all know that recently there has been an inquiry into the condition of one of our mental hospitals. I

[Mr. Appel.

was a witness at that inquiry. We know that it is impossible to take an Aladdin's lamp and build new wards in a night.

The bell indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

Mr. BELL (*Fassifern*): Before the vote goes through, I should like to say a few words on the Financial Statement. I congratulate the Labour party on attaining their position on the Treasury benches, and trust that they will endeavour to introduce legislation and carry out such administration so that we can extend those congratulations to the State of Queensland. I had thought that some of the older members upon the Treasury benches would have brought their riper experience and saner judgment to bear upon the deliberations of the party, but, unfortunately, I have been condemned to disappointment. We have the spectacle of the Premier and other Ministers running round with salt in their hands vainly endeavouring to lay it on the tail of a popular idea. We have the Secretary for Public Instruction proposing to do away with home lessons, but I notice that he has very unsuccessfully glossed over that proposal without carrying out his intention. And we have the Minister for Agriculture issuing regulations providing for the way in which food should be served to pigs, and I understand that he is extending their operation to the fattening of stock on prickly-pear. It must be admitted that the Government are face to face with a very grave situation, which demands from them sound judgment in the carrying out of their various duties, but I am afraid that we shall look in vain to this Government for a proper realisation of the situation. Up to the present the proposals which they have introduced to the House have been of an extremely socialistic character. I am very surprised that some members sitting on the Government side of the House do not rise in their places and object to some of the legislation that is being introduced, but I am afraid that supporters of the Government have very elastic consciences. They claim that they represent the people of Queensland, and when the Hon. the Premier was sitting on the Opposition side of the House, he was always claiming that he and his party represented the people of Queensland, but we find that ever since their accession to office they have been endeavouring to attend to the wants of one section of the community only, and that the legislation which they have brought in has been of a purely class nature. Our industrial legislation has proved insufficient and inadequate to carry out its intended purpose, but the legislation now introduced will strangle individual ambition and level men down to one standard of opportunity. It will tend to breed a class of idlers. I should like to ask, are the workers in any better position under socialistic legislation than they were previously? There is a great deal of unemployment in Queensland at the present time, and the Government are not [9.30 p.m.] taking any steps to relieve that distress. I ask the Premier did he, when he was in the South, make any preparations to establish munition factories in Queensland to enable the unemployed to get employment? The only start that he did make was to utilise the Government workshops at Ipswich. We find sufficient statistics to prove that since 1901 the purchasing power of money has depreciated in the same ratio as wages have advanced. The effect of all this

legislation is tending to a great dislocation in trade and discontent in the minds of the workers. We find the present Government cannot satisfy the demands made upon it, and it will be a repetition of the old fable of the man who owned the donkey and could please nobody. One remedy to relieve this would be the dissolution of the unions as at present existing. We shall never have a satisfactory conclusion to industrial matters until a new unionism is established enabling labour and capital to work hand in hand, and until we have a mutual regard for mutual interests. I notice references are made in the Financial Statement to many State enterprises. It is proposed to establish a State sawmill and a State coalmine close to Ipswich. I had a letter this morning from some of the unfortunate people who bought land on the old racecourse, where the Government propose to establish a State coalmine. These men purchased the land on the understanding that they had the coal rights. Now, it is discovered that the Government have the mineral and coal rights, and these unfortunate people are going to be penalised.

The TREASURER: Do you mean the residents?

Mr. BELL: The owners of the land.

The TREASURER: You do not think that the holder of a 16-perch allotment is going to sink a coalmine?

Mr. BELL: They could form a syndicate.

The TREASURER: How could they be penalised when they have no rights?

Mr. BELL: They understood that they had the coal rights when they purchased, and it is only recently that they discovered that they have not got them. One man paid £30 per acre for some of this land, with the intention of establishing a coalmine there. These people bought under the impression that they had the coal rights.

The TREASURER: Who is responsible for that impression?

Mr. BELL: The sellers of the land and their agents, whoever sold it. Or, perhaps, the purchasers never inquired into their title. The Mines Department knew nothing of it until recently.

The TREASURER: You don't want the Government to forfeit their rights.

Mr. BELL: You might give them the right to sink a mine, if they so desire. This Government came into power under false pretences. (Government laughter.) They said that the late Government were responsible for the high prices ruling for bread and the necessaries of life. What has the Government done since they have come into power?

Mr. CORSER: They stole our butter.

Mr. BELL: Living has gone up since the present Government had been in power.

The TREASURER: Look at what it would have been if your Government had been in power!

Mr. BELL: The Government commandeered the butter at 158s. and sold it in the South at a profit. That was taking away the farmers' profits. I am certain that if the people of Queensland could give a vote tomorrow, they would be in favour of a change of Government—that the result would be very different from last May. We view with alarm the increase of unemployment. In the

Mr. Bell.]

Fassifern electorate we have many opportunities of giving work to the unemployed. We would like to see the via recta completed, and the extension of the Fassifern line is badly required. I would like to see the Government do something in this direction. Early in the session the Government introduced a Bill for the relief of the Jimbour settlers, but they withdrew the Bill, because they said members on this side objected to it whereas we only wanted to see permanent relief granted. Members on this side opposed the Elections Bill, but the Government did not withdraw that Bill. The Government would rather penalise the settlers on the Jimbour Estate. This is the first time, for nearly fifteen years, that the Government of Queensland is showing a deficit. And now the Government are proposing to levy a land tax and an income tax, and also to increase railway fares and freights—not to the people in the city who have every convenience, but to the unfortunate man who has to make his living in the country, the man who has to fight his battles with Nature—to fight against adverse seasons and poor markets. These are the people who have to bear the burden of taxation. I am glad the Government accepted the advice given by the Opposition and made the Meatworks Bill a war measure. I view with alarm the proposal of the Government to extend the franchise in local government, because it will place an unfair power in the hands of the people who do not pay rates or taxes. We, on this side, desire Queensland to prosper, and our wish is that every individual in Queensland should share in that prosperity; but, so long as the Labour Government occupy the front Treasury benches, they will not do so.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): I am not a financial critic at all, but I am one of those unfortunates who have to "foot the bill," and I am going to speak from that experience this evening. The speeches of hon. gentlemen opposite have simply been an excuse for the land tax. We see that the Railway Department not only paid their way but handed something over to the Treasurer; so it is hard to understand why the fares and freights are to be increased. We can only come to the conclusion that the Government are favouring the cities at the expense of the country. The taxation is one-sided in that it is only put on the people in the country. It is a class tax, and one that is unnecessary. It is not the biggest tax that we have placed upon us. The biggest tax that we have had is the seizure of the results of our labour. What would be said if the Government took 30 per cent. of the wages of the Government workmen? That would be exactly the same as seizing our produce and keeping 30 per cent. of its value. That produce represents our labour, just as weekly wages represent the wages of the workmen; and still the Government think nothing of taking 30 per cent. of our earnings. That is not the worst of it. They took these wages from the struggling people on the land and handed them to the rich people of Brisbane. You have only to look round to see the evidences of riches in Brisbane. Look at the motor-cars and hotels, where they pay seven guineas a week!

Hon. J. HUXHAM: The workers do not own motor-cars and hotels.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I know two gentlemen who went in to lunch who had to pay 11s.

[*Mr. Bell.*]

for lunch and a drink. If people can afford to pay that, they can afford to pay the producer a fair price for his produce. I have a letter here from a dairyman's wife sent to a Toowoomba tradesman which shows the state of affairs so far as the dairymen are concerned—

"I thank you so much for sending the goods and waiting for your money. We kept the cows at home until they had eaten all the feed. We then drew all our savings out of the bank to buy feed for them. We have nothing left. My husband then took the cows away 34 miles to some scrub and prickly-pear. He is doing everything possible to keep them alive. He pays 1s. per head per week. They are milking a little, but the first charge on the milk is the agistment fee. The balance will be sent on to you."

These are the conditions under which this food is produced. And here the Government deliberately seize 30 per cent. of that and land it over to the rich people of Brisbane. Is that a fair thing to do? You know it is correct, and you cannot get away from it. That is not the only thing. They not only seize our produce, but they put on a land tax as well—in seasons like this, when the farmer cannot get an income. They know perfectly well that the farmers have no income tax to pay, and they say, "There will not be any income, but we will make them pay through a land tax." That is a fact, and you cannot get away from it. I saw one farm of about 1,100 acres—a beautiful farm—and the three years' drought have absolutely ruined the farmer. Notwithstanding the fact that that man has not had a single item of income for two years, he will be compelled to pay a land tax.

Mr. COOPER: What is the value of the land?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The value of the farm would be £5,000 or £6,000.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Ruined. (Laughter.)

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Yes, ruined. That £5,000 or £6,000 represents that man's savings for a lifetime, and he probably had a mortgage of half that amount. But because he has no income, the Government say, "We will make him pay a land tax." That is the kind of sympathy they have.

The TREASURER: Poor starving fellow, with a farm worth £5,000 or £6,000. (Government laughter.)

Mr. BEBBINGTON: That man has not received a single penny income from his crops for over two years, but the Government say he must pay up. The Treasurer says, "Pay up and look cheerful." But here in Brisbane men of their own clique—just because they happen to earn a weekly wage and get an income of £200 a year—do not pay any tax at all. But these men in the country—just because they happen to own a little bit of land and have to struggle to make a living—they not only have to pay a land tax, but the Government take 30 per cent. of their produce. Here is another case where a man had forty cows. They are all dead. The man took his savings of years out of the post office bank and

bought food for them as long as he could, and mortgaged his farm. However, he has got to pay a tax on that farm.

The TREASURER: What is the value of the farm?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Probably £1,400 or £1,500.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Poor farmer! (Government laughter.)

Mr. BEBBINGTON: They know nothing about the farmer. They cannot grasp anything at all outside of Brisbane. Their minds go just as far as the suburban trains, and they say, "We will relieve you of taxation and we will tax the man on the land." That is all their sympathy with the people in the country, who have to fight, as we have, in order to make a living; and it is very aggravating, under conditions such as that, to have to talk to such men.

Mr. FREE interjected.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: There is another one. His mind only goes as far as the big bridge. Then we have the Food Prices Commissioner, who is practically a buffer between the Premier and the public. He does not count for anything else. He admits that when he fixed prices he did not take any evidence of the cost of production, and he says the people were doing fairly well on the coast. What does a man on the coast say? He says—

"No doubt there are a few dairymen on the coast who have not felt the effects of the drought a good deal. But they are very few and far between. The great majority are like myself—just able to exist. I have just received my cheque for September's cream (£5 6s. 4d.). This represents wages for myself and four of my family, and comes to about 3s. 6½d. per day between five of us, without allowing anything for carting cream 6 miles to the station."

And then the Government take 30 per cent. of that 3s. 6½d. per day. Going further he says—

"How is that for doing well? How would Mr. Sumner and some of his Trades Hall friends like working twelve hours a day for those wages? I have been milking and feeding nineteen cows to get that, and yet I have been doing better than some of my neighbours. I know one man in this district who had to turn his cows out altogether three months ago. Yet we are doing well! Of course, we must be, because Mr. Sumner says we are, and he ought to know! I wonder is Mr. Sumner doing well now? I see by to-day's 'Courier' that his present income is £8 per week and £1 ls. per day expenses—more than a good many dairymen will make in the next two months."

Then he talks about the crowds that go to the races. We have to keep the crowds there; the crowds that they see on the race-course every week; the crowds that you see lining the streets and the theatres. It is a shame, and nothing else, to take 30 per cent. of our produce and hand it over to those people. You have made us the slaves of the whole community, practically speaking. That is your sympathy with the farmer.

Mr. GILDAY interjected.

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Mr. BEBBINGTON: The hon. member says, "Amen," which means "So be it." (Laughter.) He has had something cheap, and I hope he has enjoyed it. Now we come to the land tax, and we find that, with a £300 exemption, they have calculated very nicely the building allotments of the whole of the population round Brisbane. You let them all off. If you take the residential areas outside Brisbane, you will find that the value of the allotments comes under £300, so they are all exempt.

Mr. KIRWAN: Just fancy this being a rich man's Government! (Laughter.)

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It is a rich man's Government and nothing else. You tax nobody but the man on the land. There is no additional tax on the man in the town, practically speaking. There is another thing which they seem to lose sight of. They think that they are going to penalise the men who hold large areas of land in the West, that were purchased at 10s. an acre. In those cases the State has had the benefit of something like 50 per cent. more than what they get for their leasehold land.

The PREMIER: You think we ought to get more for the leaseholds?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The people bought that land at 10s. an acre, and the interest on that is 6d. an acre, and the same land alongside is very often leased at 1d. or 1½d. an acre; therefore the people who bought that land at 10s. an acre have lost about 75 per cent.

Mr. GILLIES: Is that an argument in favour of freehold?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It is a fact; it is no argument at all.

At 9.50 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Now we come to the railways. We must certainly congratulate the Commissioner for Railways on his business methods. I think the Minister for Railways has done the best he could to grapple with the situation, and I do not think he has had anything to do with grabbing our food below cost. I believe he would be above taking the food from the poor to give to the rich. Anyhow, as a member of the Government, he has had to come in with the rest, and it has been done. We find that there is a balance in connection with the railways of £48,000 to the good, so we want to know why the necessity for raising the railway fares and freights generally, and not the suburban rates? This is all done merely to tax one class of people—that is, the people in the country—and the people in the towns and cities are let off. Then there is the question of the guaranteed lines. If we have a surplus of £48,000, what necessity is there to enforce the guarantee? Then there is a very large amount of money that the railways should get credit for, and for which they get no credit whatever. I refer to the increased values and rents which are created by the railways running through the land, and which go into the Lands Department, and the increased values of freehold land created by the railway. The railway gets no credit for that, and those who have to guarantee the line have to pay. I do not see any reason why the Railway Department should not get credit for that.

The PREMIER: You say the increased value of freehold land?

Mr. Bebbington.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: What is freehold today? Before the railways were surveyed, in some of our districts—take the Nanango district; in that district the State offered the land at £1 10s. an acre, and no one would take it. But after the railway was surveyed, a lot of that land was sold at £6 an acre. I say a great deal of that should be credited to the railway.

The PREMIER: What about the private lands? That is what we want to get at.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If you can make it a property tax, I would be pleased indeed. Charge all property, without any exemption.

The TREASURER: You want a tax on the buildings as well as on the land.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I want to see no exemption, and it would suit the farmers very much better if you had a tax on buildings, if you only have a certain amount to make up. If you want £150,000 [10 p.m.] or £500,000 and you let nobody off—no exemption—then the tax comes to very little. But when you are going to take only a few, it seems that those few will have to pay a great deal. Why should we let the professional men have their building sites exempt? Hon. members will find that very few of these allotments will go over £300.

The PREMIER: You want us to tax the farmer's house as well as his land.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If you cannot get it one way, you will get it another. If he has no income, you will get his land. I am very glad to see that an increase is provided for hospitals. People, I think, realise very little what they are doing. We were led to believe that once the Labour party got on to the Treasury benches, they would alter things altogether, but here we find that they were merely providing an extra £18,000. I think that the country hospitals are called upon to do a great deal more than they should be called upon to do, according to the assistance they get. They are undoubtedly called upon to do unreasonable things. Here in Brisbane the hospital gets £4,000 extra, and Townsville and Rockhampton and other places also get something extra, but the country hospitals have to live on practically what they can get—we will say £2 for £1. We were told by hon. members opposite that they would get more, but there does not appear to be any sign of it. I have said, and I say again, that our country hospitals are kept up by sweating the medical and nursing staff.

Mr. MCPHAIL: Nationalise them.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Nationalise them, or do anything you like, but the Government will not find the money. The Government are giving an eight-hours' day to the asylum employees and so on, and they are the principal employers in connection with our hospitals, because they find most of the money, and why should they not give them the same conditions? They look after everybody except those who are looking after the sick. I have spoken to the Home Secretary and the Assistant Home Secretary, and they certainly appear to have a good deal of sympathy with them.

The PREMIER: Did the Liberal party not do less in better times?

[Mr. Bebbington.]

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I do not see how they could have done less.

The PREMIER: You have admitted that they did.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: £18,000 is only a natural increase. There is an increase in connection with all other institutions. This is the fourth year I have spoken on this question, and I hope the Home Secretary and the Assistant Home Secretary will soon do something to alter the condition of things. Another question which comes under the Home Secretary's Department is the question of roads. The late Government intended to set aside 10 per cent. of the royalties on timber for the maintenance of country roads where timber carting had to be done, because it cuts up the roads, and I sincerely hope that the present Government will carry out their intentions. Then there is the question of the freehold of land which has not been entirely cleared. At the present time, I believe that no person can get the freehold until he has cleared the whole of it. I think that once a man clears an acre he is entitled to the freehold, and I would give it to him, no matter how much was left. He should have every encouragement. Coming to the question of unemployment, I hope that the Government will not think that all the unemployed are in Brisbane. We know it is a Brisbane Government. (Government dissent.)

Mr. KIRWAN: How can you say that? Look at the front bench!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: We can only go by their actions. I admit that they have treated Rockhampton and Townsville the same—there must be no extra taxation there or increased railway rates. There are two things sacred to hon. members opposite—one is the grog trade, and the other is the cities. They would not put their hands on either of them.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: How do you make that out?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: A gentleman the other day said that he was supporting them because they promised not to interfere.

The PREMIER: No such promise was ever made.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I hope that relief for the unemployed will be distributed right throughout the State. I know of several places where improvements are needed.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Railways?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Railways and improvements to railways. The hon. member knows that I only want one railway station, and I sincerely hope he will carry that out.

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

TOOWONG PARK BILL.

MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Council returning this Bill with amendments, in which they requested the concurrence of the Assembly.

The consideration of the message was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at eleven minutes past 10 o'clock.