

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 23 AUGUST 1916

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WEDNESDAY, 23 AUGUST, 1916.

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

PAPERS.

The following papers, laid on the table, were ordered to be printed:—

Report on the cost and circulation of "Hansard."

Annual report of Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board, Brisbane.

QUESTIONS.

PRICE OF RAW SUGAR.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*) asked the Chief Secretary—

"If, as buyer of all the raw sugar made in Queensland, he will raise the price sufficiently to enable the producers to comply with the conditions of the award now being made by the Industrial Court; or, if not, will he use the powers the Crown possesses under section 46 of the Industrial Peace Act in order to save the sugar industry from a serious injury before it is too late to intervene?"

The PREMIER (Hon. T. J. Ryan, *Barcoo*) replied—

"The raw sugar was purchased by virtue of an agreement with the Commonwealth Government, and the price cannot be increased without the consent of that Government. With regard to the latter portion of the question, I would suggest that the hon. member address a question to the Minister for Works."

SPREAD OF LANTANA.

Mr. SWAYNE asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"What has been done since 20th December of last year, when, in reply to my question referring to the rapid spread of lantana on our coastal grazing lands, he stated that the Entomologist was then endeavouring to obtain a further supply of the fly 'Lantana agronomyza'?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK (Hon. W. Lennon, *Herbert*) replied—

"The co-operation of a visiting entomologist has been sought, but without result so far. The Commissioners of Agriculture in Hawaii decline responsibility for sending the insects beyond that island."

PREMIER AS A VOLUNTEER FOR ACTIVE SERVICE.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*), on behalf of Mr. Morgan, asked the Chief Secretary—

"Is it a fact, as reported in the English Press, that he volunteered for active service, but was refused permission by the Recruiting Committee on the ground that his services would be of greater value to the Empire as Premier of Queensland?"

The PREMIER replied—

“This question should be addressed to the Recruiting Committee. If, however, the hon. member thinks the matter of sufficient public importance, and obtains the consent of the Recruiting Committee, I shall have much pleasure in showing him the correspondence on the matter.”

PRICE OF MUTTON.

Mr. CORSER, on behalf of Mr. Morgan, asked the Chief Secretary—

“1. Is the price fixed for mutton by the Imperial Government to be uniform throughout the States—viz., 5½d.?”

“2. If not, what price has been fixed for mutton for supply to the Imperial Government by States other than Queensland?”

“3. The quantity of mutton, if any, supplied to the Imperial Government from Queensland from the 1st January, 1916, to 31st July, 1916?”

The PREMIER replied—

“1 and 2. The price now fixed for first quality wether mutton by the Imperial Government—viz., 5½d. per lb. f.o.b. (lower grades proportionately less)—applies to Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria. We have no advice as to what price is being paid for mutton supplied by South Australia.

“3. 29,554 carcasses.”

IPSWICH WORKSHOPS DINING-ROOM.

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

“1. Has he noticed a letter appearing in the ‘Courier’ entitled ‘Unionism for Ever,’ wherein it is stated that the dining-room committee of the Ipswich workshops, although showing a healthy profit on the year’s transaction, worked their employees from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. without payment of overtime, reduced the cook’s wages from £2 2s. 6d. to £1 15s. per week, and imposed arbitrary penalties, amounting to 17s. in one week, on a waitress receiving 17s. 6d. per week, in respect of breakages of crockery?”

“2. Will he make inquiry into the merits of this charge?”

“3. Are the workmen mentioned in the article working under an award?”

“4. Is the deduction for breakages legitimate?”

“5. If not, will he take proceedings under the provisions of the Industrial Peace Act of 1912 to recover the wages due to the servant in question?”

“6. Will he institute proceedings against the committee in question for the recovery of overtime due to these workmen?”

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

“1 to 6. This matter will be inquired into.”

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the PREMIER, it was formally resolved—

“1. That, in compliance with Standing Order No. 298, a Select Committee

be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the printing to be executed by order of the House; and for the purpose of selecting, and arranging for printing, returns and papers presented in pursuance of motions made by members.

“2. That such committee consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Barber, Mr. Bertram, Mr. Winstanley, Mr. Roberts, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Grayson, and the mover.”

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the PREMIER, it was formally resolved—

“That the Standing Orders Committee for the present session consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Tolmie, Mr. Macartney, Mr. Swayne, Mr. Gilday, Mr. A. J. Jones, Mr. Larcombe, and the mover, with leave to sit during any adjournment of the House, and authority to confer upon subjects of mutual concernment with any committee appointed for similar purposes by the Legislative Council.”

JOINT COMMITTEES.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of the following message from the Legislative Council:—

“MR. SPEAKER,—

“The Legislative Council having come to the following resolutions, viz.:—

1. That the President, Mr. Dunn, and Mr. Fowles be appointed members of the Joint Committee for the management of the Parliamentary Library;

2. That the President, Mr. McDonnell, and Mr. Fahey be appointed members of the Joint Committee for the management of the Parliamentary Refreshment-rooms;

3. That the President, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Hall be appointed members of the Joint Committee for the management and superintendence of the Parliamentary Buildings;

beg now to intimate the same to the Legislative Assembly, and to request that they will be pleased to nominate a like number of members from their body, with a view to give effect to the 8th Joint Standing Order.

“ARTHUR MORGAN,

“President.

“Legislative Council Chamber,

“Brisbane, 23rd August, 1916.”

On the motion of the PREMIER, it was formally resolved—

“That a message be returned to the Legislative Council, intimating that the Legislative Assembly had appointed Mr. Speaker, Mr. Gunn, and Mr. T. L. Jones as members of the Joint Library Committee; Mr. Speaker, Mr. Booker, and Mr. May as members of the joint committee for the management of the Refreshment-rooms; and Mr. Speaker, Mr. Petrie, and Mr. Payne as members of the joint committee for the management and superintendence of the Parliamentary Buildings.”

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.

The PREMIER, in moving—

“That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended for this day as would otherwise prevent the immediate constitution of Committees of Supply and Ways and Means, the receiving of resolutions on the same day on which they shall have passed in those committees, and the passing of an Appropriation Bill through all its stages in one day,”

said: This is a practice with which members of the Opposition should be thoroughly conversant, and I think it is unnecessary for me to give any reasons for having to adopt it on this occasion.

HON. J. TOLMIE (*Toowoomba*): I am afraid I am not quite in harmony with the statement made by the Premier when he said there were sufficient reasons known to the Opposition why this motion should be allowed to go as formal. As a matter of fact, I think there are many reasons known to the Premier why this motion should not have been introduced at all at this stage, and when introducing it a very considerable amount of information should have been given to the House. It has been the custom—if not since time immemorial, for a very considerable time, at all events, in Houses of Parliament under the British Crown—for members of Parliament to discuss grievances and seek information before Supply is granted, and we are now asked to grant Supply under conditions that, I think, we should not be asked to consent to. We are now taking this opportunity of asking for certain information to which we are entitled, and to which the country is entitled, and which, I think, the Government are justified in giving. I regret very much that the Premier himself did not see the necessity of giving the information.

The PREMIER: You should have given me a list of the information you wanted.

HON. J. TOLMIE: For instance, a number of questions have already been asked in this House for information which would be of advantage not only to members of this Chamber but to the outside public as well. First of all, there is a considerable amount of curiosity manifested in the Chamber in regard to the visit of the Premier to Great Britain. Personally—and I believe all members of the Chamber, too—I am very glad to see him back again—(hear, hear!)—but when the House closed down last session, although it was not stated publicly that the Premier was about to visit Great Britain, we on this side of the House knew that such was the intention. It is hardly necessary for me to give the reasons how we came to have that knowledge.

Mr. COLLINS: You must have had some German spies.

HON. J. TOLMIE: That information came from a source entirely outside any department of the State. So far as the public servants in this State are concerned they have, from my experience, been true to the present Government, as public servants ought to be, and they have received no encouragement, at any rate from this side, to be otherwise; and, further than that, I might say that my opinion of them is that they would resent any action of that kind had any overtures been made to them. I think it is highly improper for members on

the other side to say that public servants have given information in regard to the movements of the Premier, because the Premier himself is quite well aware that probably very few, if any, public servants knew of what his proposed movements were.

The PREMIER: I did not know myself till well into the middle of March.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I quite agree that the Premier may not have been definitely aware of the fact until the middle of March, but I say we knew from the fact that certain cases were pending in England which were asked to be postponed because it was anticipated that some time in March, or thereafter, the Attorney-General of Queensland would be in London for the purpose of dealing with those matters. We knew of that information at the latter end of last year, and we knew that probably the Premier was about to visit England. There is a certain amount of obscurity attaching to the visit of the Premier. All that we know is that certain cases were pending; that he went there for that purpose, and we had, before he went away, the knowledge that there were industrial troubles brought about by the party on the other side; brought about absolutely by the legislation they passed—troubles of an important character that might necessitate his attendance in England; at any rate, necessitate the attendance of the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia. Hon. members on the other side may not know, but at any rate we do know that such was the case, and it is just as well that all information of that character should be available to the people of Queensland. We should know exactly the position in which we stand in relation to all great public questions. If that were part of the mission of the Premier to England, then we ought to have some knowledge of it. As a matter of fact that was a part of his mission, because in an article that was contributed by himself in “Reynolds’s Newspaper” of the 14th May of this year, he indicated that it was questions in relation to the sugar industry that brought him to England.

The SPEAKER: Order! The question before the House is the suspension of the Standing Orders, and I would suggest to the leader of the Opposition that he and other members of the Chamber will have ample opportunity, on the motion that I do now leave the chair, of discussing grievances. It is usual, before granting Supply, for all grievances to be ventilated, and I would suggest to hon. members, in order to save repetition, that advantage be taken of the motion I have mentioned for that purpose. I hope the hon. member will keep to the question as to whether the Standing Orders should be suspended or otherwise.

HON. J. TOLMIE: Well, I think I am keeping to the spirit of the motion that is before the House.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member led off by stating that it is usual to discuss grievances before Supply is granted.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I have not come to a grievance yet. (Laughter.) I only asked for information in regard to that matter. I do not want to discuss the question twice over.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member will have an opportunity of discussing it on the motion that I do now leave the chair.

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HON. J. TOLMIE: In view of the attitude that you have taken up, Mr. Speaker, in relation to grievances—I am not going to question that it is a sound one—I will not discuss the matter to any further great extent now, but will take the opportunity—as you say and as I know—will be available when the question arises that you do now leave the chair. At the same time it is just as well for me to intimate that there is information which is sought by members on this side of the House, not only in relation to the visit of the Premier to England, but also in relation to other matters. For instance, we want to know what our financial position is. We are quite justified in wanting to know that. We shall also want to know why it is that Parliament has been called together at so late a date in the year, and something in relation to the attitude the Government has assumed in connection with the public service. Now, in mentioning these matters now, I do not deprive myself of the opportunity of discussing them later on. Is that so, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER: The hon. member will not be in order in discussing them now.

HON. J. TOLMIE: But I do not deprive myself of the opportunity of discussing them later on?

The SPEAKER: The hon. member will not be in order in discussing them now.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I take it for granted that, as I shall not be in order in discussing them now, I shall be able to do so later on.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member will understand that the question before the House is the suspension of the Standing Orders. If he objects to that suspension, he must shape his arguments accordingly.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I will not continue any further now, with the object of discussing them later on.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. J. G. APPEL: Mr. Speaker,—I had intended to say a few words on this subject, but, in view of what you have said, I shall only suggest to the Premier that if he is prepared to answer the question and give us the information which has been sought by the leader of the Opposition, possibly we will be able to get through with the business more speedily.

The PREMIER: There is some information that you know I cannot give.

HON. J. G. APPEL: But there is certain information that not alone the leader of the Opposition wants, but that the people of Queensland want.

Mr. COOPER: And that Germany wants, too!

HON. J. G. APPEL: We are only asking for information as to the reason why this motion has been made. However, as I have already stated, if the hon. member is prepared to give us such information as has been mentioned, I think it will certainly facilitate business, and I am prepared to sit down now and await the moment which, as you have said, will come when we will have a further opportunity of discussing grievances.

Question put and passed.

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SUPPLY.

APPROPRIATION BILL NO. 1.

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that you do now leave the chair, and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the Supply to be granted to His Majesty.

HON. J. TOLMIE: Before you leave the chair, Mr. Speaker, I desire to get some information from the Government with regard to the matters that have cropped up since the House last met. As you are aware, I have already spoken in relation to the absence of the Premier—an absence which he no doubt can thoroughly justify. I have not the slightest doubt that he will be able to justify his visit to the mother country, but so far as the public is concerned, and so far as this Chamber is concerned, we know little or nothing of the business that has taken the leader of the Government out of this State. It is a very desirable thing that the public should know all that is desirable for it to know in connection with the movements of its public men, more particularly when those public men are acting in their public capacities. And that is the information that we are endeavouring to seek now, and the information that up to the present time has not been granted. We know what statements have appeared in the public Press, not so much perhaps the Press here as in the Press of the mother country and of America regarding the movements of the Premier. When he left Queensland we were not aware of the reasons that were taking him to the mother country. He told us then that matters of great moment had arisen that necessitated his presence at home. When he got to the mother country he is reported as saying, in an article contributed by himself to "Reynolds's Newspaper," that he had come in connection with industrial matters, and more particularly in connection with the sugar industry.

The PREMIER: Where is that? Read it.

HON. J. TOLMIE: It is in "Reynolds's Newspaper" of the 14th May, and if some hon. member will go to the library and get "Reynolds's Newspaper" of 14th May I will be able to read out what the hon. member said before I sit down. The "British Australasian" of 4th May had practically the same statement, although that was not an article contributed by himself—that he had come home in connection with industrial matters, and more particularly in relation to matters affecting the sugar industry. Well, there are many people here who are interested in the sugar industry. I think it is at the present time in a very perilous condition—(hear, hear!)—and probably, notwithstanding the visit of the Premier to the mother country, there will be no sugar industry whose interests he may safeguard. Again, we understand that the Premier was visiting the old country in connection with financial matters—that his presence was necessary there. That was a statement that went forth here.

The PREMIER: That is what the late Premiers used to say.

HON. J. TOLMIE: Now, we are very anxious to know what the financial position of Queensland is to-day. There never was

a time when there was more necessity for money to be utilised in the State than now, and from the statements that have been made by Ministers I am not of the opinion that the financial position, so far as money available for public works is concerned, is a good one, because we have the statements of Ministers in recent months that they are in the unfortunate position of not having money at hand for the purpose of carrying on public works. We have those statements appearing in the public Press, but on the return of the Premier we were told that in England money was handed to him out of a shovel, that he was asked if he wanted any money, and that he could have all the money he required. I think it must have come under the notice of hon. members here that in one of the papers circulating in this city an excellent cartoon appeared of the Premier himself being handed all the millions that are waiting for him. Perhaps he will be able to give us some information in regard to that matter—as to whether he has been successful in securing that amount of loan money which is necessary for this State if it is to carry on its public works.

Then we come to another question that we are entitled to ask the Premier this afternoon. That is, "Why has Parliament not been called together earlier?" Hon. members will remember that last year, when the Estimates were being passed through the House, an additional month's Supply was granted by this Chamber to the Government for the ostensible purpose of obviating the necessity of a motion such as is before this Chamber now. It had been customary in past years for the House to meet in the first week of July, and the first business almost always was the suspension of the Standing Orders, so that a motion might be passed through the Chamber granting Supply for the purposes of the public service. And the question was frequently raised and objection taken—"What! Are you going to deprive the public servants of their earnings, of their salaries and wages?" And that is the unenviable position in which we stand this afternoon. We may be charged by hon. members opposite that we are standing in the light of the public servants of Queensland, that we are depriving them of the wages to which they are justly entitled. Well, we are prepared to take that odium, relying on the fact that public servants of Queensland are men of discernment, that they can easily lay the blame on the right shoulders. If there is anybody to blame, then it must be the Administration of the State of Queensland. They had thirteen months' Supply granted to them, giving them the opportunity to meet if they felt so disposed at any time during last month, and then a Bill might have been passed through all its stages in the usual way. Why is there any delay? We are in exactly the same position now, in spite of that grant, and if that is a policy we approve of, and if the hon. members of this Chamber so far forget their principles, then a Government might carry on from year to year without meeting the House at all. It would only be necessary for them to pass a measure such as was passed last session, giving them additional Supply not only for one month but probably for the whole twelve months.

The TREASURER: You did not object to it last year.

HON. J. TOLMIE: No, because it was put in in such an insidious way. (Government laughter.) And the interjector had every right, when he knew that he was departing from a fixed principle, to come before this Chamber and tell us that he was asking for thirteen months' Supply.

The TREASURER: The year was mentioned in the resolution.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I do not doubt that, but I say that the hon. member should have mentioned the fact that he was asking for Supply for thirteen months. We had been sitting here for weeks discussing the finances of the State of Queensland, and had been voting supplies for a period of twelve months—that is, to the 30th June of this year. That is a practice which has obtained in this House from its inception—that Supply has been granted for twelve months—and naturally, being accustomed to see Supply granted for twelve months, and having discussed the matter and granted Supply for twelve months, when the Bill came in at the end of the evening, it was rushed through the Chamber, because everybody agreed to the motion, and no one could notice the fact that it was for 1916-1917 until after the measure had passed through this Chamber.

The TREASURER: The resolution was placed before the Committee.

HON. J. TOLMIE: That is the position with regard to that matter. I say there was every reason why the Government should have met the House during the month of July or early in August, in order that there would be no necessity for this motion this afternoon. I do not know whether the fact that the Premier was absent from the State was the real reason why the House could not meet—it may have been so—but it has happened before that when a Premier has been absent from the State the business of the country has gone on. The business of the country should not necessarily suffer because of the absence of the chief Minister. We had an instance in the sister State only a few weeks ago, where Parliament was opened, and the Premier had gone away a few days before on probably what was a well-earned holiday.

Mr. BOOKER: He went away on a holiday.

HON. J. TOLMIE: As the hon. member for Wide Bay says, he went away on a holiday, but the business of the country went on in the usual way. The country was not inconvenienced because of the absence of the Premier, and I do not see that there was any reason why this State should have been inconvenienced in that respect. Another motion which is to come on will show some of the inconvenience which members of this Chamber will suffer from the fact of Parliament meeting so late in the year.

Then, this is the time to ask for an explanation as to why the Government has seen fit to dispense with the services of a great number of its public servants—men who have been in the public service for a very considerable period, and who are thoroughly capable to-day of discharging all the functions they are called upon to perform, and who are now, with their ripe experience, better servants than they were twenty or thirty years ago. It is laid down in the Public Service Act that when a public servant attains the age of sixty-five years his services may be dispensed with, but there is also a proviso that the Ministry may, if

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they see fit, continue those services from year to year until the servant has arrived at the age of seventy years. That has been the practice in this State, and the present Government last year, and even this year, granted an extension of time to some of these public servants. Then all at once their services are dispensed with because, it is stated, that they have arrived at the age of sixty-five. Some of these public servants have been encouraged to embark in the public service superannuation fund, and to a great extent they have inconvenienced themselves for some time past in paying in large sums of money every month, so that by the time they reach the age of seventy years they may be in a position to obtain a pension. Of course, I understand that the money is going to be returned to them, but in the meantime they have been deprived of the use of it. They thought they were making provision for their retirement at seventy; but that provision has been taken away from them. No doubt the Government will be able to give us some reason why it has been necessary to follow this course. It has been particularly hard on some of these public servants. I know that some of the men who have been deprived of the position they occupied have sons serving their country at the front, and surely there ought to be some consideration for the old man when the young man is doing his duty.

Mr. KIRWAN: There are some men working in the Railway Department for 7s. a day.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I do not draw comparison between the navy who is getting 8s. a day and a man who is getting a very much larger salary. If a man has a son who is serving his country at the front, there ought to be some consideration for the father, and he should not be turned out perhaps in very impecunious circumstances.

Then I would like to know if the increases given to one class of employees are going to be extended to all classes of employees. We have in the Railway Department at the present time a great deal of unrest. There has been a great deal of dissatisfaction expressed with the Government because of the fact that certain increases have been promised to the employees in the department and they have not obtained them. The railway station-masters are suffering particularly in that respect. They know that a station-master often does not receive the amount of money that is paid to a night officer, who is very much his junior, and who may be assisting him on the station, and they have asked for a redress in that direction. I think that this is the proper time to ask whether that is being done. We have also seen that a deputation waited upon the Minister for Railways the other day in regard to what is called "dirt money," and that in certain cases that was granted. I ask if the Government are going to grant that all along the line? If one class of employees is entitled to it, I contend that all classes of employees are entitled to it as well.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: Do they all do dirty work?

HON. J. TOLMIE: I have raised the discussion for the purpose of eliciting information that is of public interest, and which may be of value to hon. members also. More particularly are we desirous of knowing what the position of the State is financially at the present time; whether the Treasurer has

been able to make reasonable arrangements for the supply of sufficient funds to carry us on for the coming year, or perhaps for a longer period. We know that last session he stated that he had sufficient money left by the late Government to carry him on to the end of March this year. It was very good of the late Government to leave him that money, and no doubt the amount was very gratifying to him, and he appreciated it to the fullest possible extent. We desire at the present time to know whether the country is as financially sound—that is, that as much money is available for the Government as there was last year. We ask that question in view of the Governor's Speech which has been placed before us. We will have to discuss that at another time, when we shall find it necessary to also view the question of public works and what the Government are prepared to do. If we know what money is available, we will have some evidence that work is going to be found for the people of the State during the coming year.

I trust that we shall be able to obtain information on all these points from members on the front Treasury bench before you leave the chair, Sir. It is information to which we are justly entitled, and which ought not to be withheld; the Government should certainly not, in their own interest, endeavour to withhold it from us.

HON. J. G. APPEL (*Albert*): I likewise think it would only be a fair thing for the Chief Secretary, or other hon. gentlemen sitting on the front Treasury bench, to give us this information, which not alone we are asking for but also the public of Queensland. The public are asking what necessity there was for the Premier to visit Great Britain within twelve months of his appointment, and it is our duty to endeavour to elicit that reason. It has been stated by the hon. gentleman himself that his visit was in connection with certain appeals. The public want to know whether his visit was made in a professional capacity or as Premier of the State. If it was in his professional capacity, I take it that he received certain fees for the work he did in connection with those appeals.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Which you would want if you went.

HON. J. G. APPEL: If I went in my professional capacity I should act accordingly. If the hon. gentleman made that visit in his professional capacity, then we take it that he received an adequate fee for those particular services. The public want to know whether he received not only that fee but also his expenses, as Premiers usually do when they go as Premiers of the State.

Mr. McPHAIL: He went to do a good work for the State, and did it.

HON. J. G. APPEL: That is what we want to know, and we are entitled to know it. Apparently, hon. members opposite are in the secret, but we are not in the secret. I furthermore urge that it would be well for the Premier to say why it was necessary within the first twelve months of his tenure of office to pay a visit to Great Britain. The leader of the Opposition has stated—I confess I was not aware of the fact myself—that thirteen months' Supply had been granted—and, if I had, possibly I would not have objected to it—to obviate the necessity

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of such a motion as this being brought forward during the first few days of the new session. But here we have done something which was never done before, and which would have been objected to by hon. members who are now sitting on the Treasury benches. They now, after having obtained that extra month's Supply, come along on the second day of the session and endeavour to obtain from the House further Supply, without giving us the information which we say is absolutely necessary for us to have before we can agree to assist in granting the Supply they ask for.

The TREASURER: If we had objected to Supply being granted, we would have said so.

HON. J. G. APPEL: We want information in connection with the financial position. On what terms did the Chief Secretary succeed in obtaining money? I remember that on previous occasions, when Liberal Premiers visited Great Britain in connection with money matters, a lot of questions were asked and statements made as to how much additional interest they had had to pay for the money obtained. We want to know what the hon. gentleman succeeded in doing, and what increase of interest he has to pay. I remember the hon. gentleman saying that there was no need for Queensland to pay any additional interest, as there was no better security than this State, and that it was an absolute farce to contend that British financiers would not lend us money at a certain rate.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You know there is. War is on. That makes all the difference on earth.

HON. J. G. APPEL: There were other conditions which were equally vital to our case as the war is on this occasion. Hon. members opposite laugh, but we know how they said that they could get the money at a cheaper rate of interest. We want to know what arrangements were made by the Premier when he went to England—what money will be made available for the State and the amount of interest we shall have to pay for that particular accommodation.

There are other matters I would like to get some information about. I would like to know what authority the Government have got for the erection of State groggeries. I want to know that, the Opposition wants to know, and the public outside want to know. We all know that the Liberal party endeavoured to arrange that no licensed houses should be established in sugar centres, so that the workmen would not be tempted to drink. I, the public of the State, and the Opposition want to know now the reason the State has adopted the policy of establishing State groggeries in those centres. We

[4.30 p.m.] also want to know what apologies they have to offer for appropriating large sums of money for that purpose while at the same time they refused to grant loans to local authorities and refused also to grant assistance to the lower paid public servants. We want to know why the Government are appropriating large sums of public money for the encouragement of drink.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and Government laughter and dissent.

HON. J. G. APPEL. These are things which the public want to know, and we as an

Opposition are trying to find out. The Government will see that it is only a reasonable request that we are making when we are asking for this information.

Mr. POLLOCK: Then, a hotel becomes a groggery when it is run by the State?

HON. J. G. APPEL: It is called a groggery. The policy of the previous Administration was to banish grog shops from sugar areas.

Mr. POLLOCK: This is a sugar-mill.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I would like to know what is the position of the Government in connection with the referendum which the people are asking should be taken this year. This is one of the few occasions that we have for airing our grievances and obtaining information from the Government, and we propose to take full advantage of it. We want to know what is the position of hon. gentlemen opposite for taking a referendum on that particular subject this year. Has the hon. gentleman made provision for the necessary appropriation in the Bill which he intends to introduce for the taking of the referendum? The public want to know that and we, as an Opposition, want to know it, too.

There is another thing that I would like to know, and that is the amount of money which will be available for local authorities. Repeated requests have been made by local authorities for loans for the purpose of improving their roads, for constructing bridges, and for carrying out public works for the benefit of the ratepayers in their particular locality. On every occasion they are met by a reply from the Government that there are no funds available, and that none will be made available this financial year. The public want to know, and we want to know, too, if the finances of the State are healthy. Of course, hon. members opposite are in the secret, but we want the secret disclosed to us, and I think it is perfectly reasonable to ask for that to be done. I also want to know, and the public want to know, how it is that the lower paid school teachers are not receiving that justice which they ought to receive. We want to know the position of the present Administration towards the teachers, because it is a public scandal to see the small amount of pay they are receiving at the present time. We want to know if the necessary provision is being made in the appropriation to remove that injustice from that large section of the community.

We want to know also why certain stipendiary magistrates have been retired. The policy pursued by previous Administrations was that if a man was not physically capable of carrying on his duties when he reached the age of sixty-five years he was retired, but if he was fitted to do his work he was allowed to continue until he was seventy years of age, when, of course, he had to retire.

The TREASURER: You put him into the Legislative Council, then.

HON. J. G. APPEL: We want to know why these magistrates were retired, because they are capable, healthy men. I refer particularly to the stipendiary magistrates who occupy the benches in the city of Brisbane and also the stipendiary magistrate of the city of Maryborough. We want to know, and the public

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want to know, why these men were retired. Is it because their opinions were probably Liberal? (Government laughter.) We also want to know why those whose opinions are Labour in politics are continued in the service and advanced. These are little matters that we want some information on, and I think we are justified in getting that information. I also want to know why the Commissioner of Police is being treated as he is at the present time. He is a most capable officer, and I have always stated on the floor of this House that he was a most capable officer. I always defended that officer against the aspersions and charges that were made against him. As the man who for many years was the administrative head of the Home Department, I want to know why the Commissioner of Police has been treated in the way he has. I always considered it necessary that that officer should be supplied with a motor-car. It was necessary and essential that he should have a motor-car, and he was supplied with a motor-car. The public would like to know why that motor car was summarily taken from him.

The TREASURER: Would you like to know, too? (Laughter.)

HON. J. G. APPEL: Yes, I would. Is it a matter of revenge for the action he took as a public officer in carrying out his duty under the instruction of the administrative head of his department? Is it a matter of revenge for his having done his duty that he is being treated to-day in the way he is? That is information we want, and if the hon. gentleman is prepared to give us that information it will probably facilitate the passage of the measure he desired to pass to-day.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Did you give him instructions?

HON. J. G. APPEL: Yes. And I said on the floor of this House that I gave him his instructions on that occasion.

Mr. FREE: Then you gave him instructions to flog women with batons. That was a German action.

HON. J. G. APPEL: That is absolutely false.

Mr. FREE: It is true. Brutality to women and children.

HON. J. G. APPEL: There is another most important matter—and, perhaps, as important as anything that has been referred to—that we wish some information upon. We would like to know the reason for calling Parliament together at this late stage of the year. For years I have listened to hon. members on that side of the House when the House has been called together in June or the first week of July orating and speaking of the injustice to the public and electors of the State and themselves, as an Opposition, owing to Parliament being called together so late in the year. Now, what do those gentlemen who believed in Parliament being called together early say about the time Parliament is called together this year? Not only have hon. members opposite delayed the calling of Parliament together until the 22nd August, but they propose to make this Chamber sit on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of each week. It is quite true, as the leader of the Opposition said, that if hon. members opposite had been able to do it they would have avoided

calling Parliament together at all. (Government laughter.) We find on reference to the Governor's Speech that it is proposed to make certain arrangements for carrying on of insurance. Hon. gentlemen opposite were prepared to do that without legislative authority. They wanted to establish State fire insurance. That is another matter we require some information upon. What was the cost to the State, owing to the illegal action of the Government in that particular matter? Hon. members opposite must admit that if we fail to raise our voice at this juncture in connection with these matters we will deserve and will receive public condemnation for our non-action in the matter.

Mr. McLACHLAN: You will get it just the same.

HON. J. G. APPEL: Yes, we quite realise that we are impotent. We realise that the party on that side of the House are prepared to force everything through this House by means of their large majority, whether it is for the benefit of the State or not. We want to enable the public to judge between us, and I am sure they will judge accordingly. (Hear, hear!) If the public can only hear the rights and facts of the case, then they will be able to come to a just conclusion. (Hear, hear!)

There is another matter we would like some information on. You know, Mr. Speaker, that the trade of the port of Mackay has been held up. Hon. gentlemen who represent the Labour movement always contended that if we had arbitration it would be a panacea for all trouble and would settle all disputes, but since the present party have been in power there have been more strikes and disputes than took place during the two previous Parliaments when the Liberals had possession of the Treasury benches.

Mr. POLLOCK: Because you would not pass the Arbitration Bill.

HON. J. G. APPEL: There was an arbitration award given at Mackay, and yet the whole trade of that port is being held up. They are failing to carry out the award which they asked for and received, and are now holding up the trade of the port. You must recollect that few of these people, or only a very small section of them, pay any taxation at all. They practically pay no taxation. When a tax of 10s. was put upon them they regarded it as a poll tax, and said it was a gross injustice to ask them to pay it. Yet this section of the people, despite the benefits they receive from the Arbitration Court, continue to hold up the trade of a port like Mackay and dislocate business arrangements, and practically place the people on the verge of starvation owing to the fact that they are unable to obtain supplies. It is only right and fair that we should have some information on this subject, and see what the Government have done and what they have not done.

Then there is another matter that I should like to have a little information upon: that is, in connection with what has been done in regard to the State coalmines. We heard a great deal of what the Government were going to do in connection with State coalmines; how they were going to revolutionise the whole coal industry. Then we would like some information in connection with the cost of the State sawmills, and under what legislative

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authority those appropriations were made for the acquirement of State sawmills; also as to the salaries that are being paid to the heads of those new departments which have been established; as to the number of inspectors and the salaries paid to them, and what profit the State is making in connection with these great undertakings which are involving the State in very large sums of money while depriving many deserving servants of the State of those increases which they ought and which they deserve to receive. This is information which we are entitled to ask for and which we are entitled to receive, and I can only ask the Premier, in all sincerity, to furnish us with the information. I, for one, do not desire to delay the business of the Government, but I think it only fair that we should have this information, and if the Premier is prepared to give it I believe it will facilitate business very considerably.

Mr. BOOKER (*Wide Bay*): I do not intend to speak for any length of time, and only wish to say that the Premier has failed to advise the House—members on this side anyhow—and the country generally, as to the business he went to the old country to deal with. Further, he takes, even in the Address to the House—he claims in the first seven paragraphs special credit for having done certain things for Queensland. On an occasion like an address from the Governor no Premier should take unto himself any personal credit. That special paragraph that deals with what the Premier did in connection with the "Eastern" case is pure piffle. (Government laughter.) All the business in connection with that case had already been dealt with by the Crown Solicitor, and the previous Administration had the matter so far advanced, and the whole case so worked up at that time, that no matter who the Premier was, or whether he went to London or not, the case would have been dealt with just as it was dealt with. So the Premier has no right to claim any personal credit for that particular business.

Queensland stands by itself to-day as the one State that has refused distinctly and absolutely to fall into line with the other States in connection with the liquor traffic—the closing of hotels at 6 o'clock.

Mr. WILSON: The Referendum Bill will do that.

Mr. BOOKER: I am quite aware that the newest recruit, the hon. member for the Valley, is keenly alive to the liquor traffic and their interests, and I say this, and I take the responsibility of it: that the majority of members sitting on the other side of the House to-day owe their seats to the support given to them by the liquor traffic of Queensland.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Interruption and cries of "That's a lie."

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BOOKER: It is also a notorious fact that certain members on the other side have been deeply associated with the funds subscribed by the liquor traffic.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: "That is not correct," and cries of "Name them. Prove it."

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BOOKER: When I look across the Chamber and see the present hon. member

for Maryborough and the Secretary for Railways associated with a body of men who hold their political power largely by the influence and the money of the liquor traffic of Queensland—

Mr. FREE: Why don't you close the hotel you are interested in? and interruption.

Mr. BOOKER: That is plain language, and I am quite prepared to listen to any remarks that my friends opposite may have to make when I am finished. What I want to see done is this: For this House or the Government at the earliest possible moment to realise the gravity of the position, and do for Queensland what the Governments and people of the other States have done for those States. It is a diabolical fact—it is a disastrous fact—that we should see the hotels of Queensland trading up till 11 o'clock at night when we are, perhaps, the only British people in any part of the nation who are doing so. Let the House realise what the people outside the House realise—the gravity and importance of the position. The Government say that they are going to submit a proposal to this House in connection with the initiative and referendum.

Mr. FREE: That will close your hotel up.

Mr. BOOKER: Every member who interjects has his tongue in his jaw—that is the position. (Interruption.) Their tongues are in their cheeks, for this reason—that they know that the people of this country are not going to give a body of irresponsible men powers—for what? Not in the interests of this State of ours, but for circumstances that are patent to everyone outside of the circle. Anyhow, the public know why the Initiative and Referendum Bill is to be submitted at this particular time; it is to get away from their responsibilities; it is to get away from the responsibility of submitting a referendum as to whether hotels shall be closed at 6 o'clock, 9 o'clock, or 11 o'clock. (Interruption.) You are not game to go to the people. If you did, there would be a surprise packet for every member of the liquor party sitting on that side of the House.

Then, again, there is another circumstance, and the Premier should take it in hand. If he does not do so, he is not standing by the people of Queensland. It is this: Rampant in our midst is a free and easy kind of way of making large sums of money—that is, proprietary racecourse meetings. At a time like this it is the duty of the responsible men of the country, more particularly of the Premier, to endeavour in the most effective way possible to curtail that kind of thing. When we realise that the established racing clubs of Australia are subscribing almost their entire profits to patriotic funds—take, for instance, the leading race club in Australia, the Australian Jockey Club. Their profits last year were £19,000. They gave to patriotic funds in New South Wales £14,500, and this year there is a proposal, which was accepted, to at once subscribe another £10,000 and any further profits that may accrue on the year's operations. We find in Queensland the Queensland Turf Club are doing likewise. What are the proprietary racecourse owners or syndicators doing in that respect? Are they giving a proportionate amount? I have not heard that they have.

I am sorry that the hon. member for Maryborough is not here to-night. To some

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extent I represent a large proportion of Maryborough—the populous portion and also, perhaps, the best portion, and that is, where the industrial workers live. I regret the hon. member for Maryborough is not here, because I would like to hear his views on the matter. We find in one of the oldest towns of the State—one of the most important towns of the State, representing probably one of the largest districts of the State—in a petty, puny kind of way the Government have abolished the police magistrate. Whether it is a question of economy or not, I do not know; but I am prepared to say that if it is a question of economy, and the Minister for Justice says it is, he could have economised in many other respects and not in that particular respect. The police magistrate of Maryborough has been in the habit of sitting, not only in Maryborough but in the back parts from Maryborough, as far on occasions as Eidsvold. I think the Government could not have given an important town a bigger slap in the face than to have done what the Justice Department has done in this respect—that is, to abolish the police magistracy in Maryborough. I cannot conceive of a more offensive thing. I do not question the rights and privileges of other towns, but I do say in this particular case it should not have been done. Whether Maryborough has been picked out particularly, we will hear from the Minister later on.

There is another matter that has already been referred to by the late Home Secretary, and I was pleased to hear the remarks that have fallen from him. To think that the Commissioner for Police, above all high public servants, should be denied the right of having a horse and trap! There is no department in the State of Queensland—there is no public office in the city of Brisbane that requires a motor-car as much as the office of Commissioner of Police. There are times when he is called out urgently; there are urgent and important matters to attend to, and he has probably to telephone to a garage. If there is one department more than another that should have a motor-car, it is that department; and I cannot help saying—and I say it quite distinctly—I cannot conceive of any reason but that of absolute spleen and spite—spleen and spite for the action of the Government. To the everlasting memory of the revered late Minister for Home Affairs, Mr. Bowman—we paid a tribute last night to the memory of the late Mr. Bowman, but there is another tribute due to the late hon. member—he stood on his own, and refused absolutely to treat the Commissioner for Police as he has been treated since the hon. member's death. There is no question about that. He knew, just as the late Minister for Home Affairs knew, that the Commissioner for Police did his duty, and did it fearlessly; and for that reason he is being penalised. I would not lead that man's life for £10,000 a year.

These are matters that should be ventilated, and there are many other matters that could be reasonably dealt with, but there will be opportunities later on when I will be able to deal with them. The position in Queensland to-day is a grave one, and before I take my seat I just want to say this: The Prime Minister of Australia has struck the right key, and it rests with the Premier of Queensland whether he is going to accept the call and stand by national efficiency, whether we are going to leave the men who are at the front without reinforcements,

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whether we are going to allow them to stand the entire brunt of it, or whether hon. members on that side—hon. members on this side have played their part and are doing their duty all the time; but I say from my place here, and with all the responsibilities of my position in this House, that there are men on that side of the House—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BOOKER: The position is a grave one; it is acute, and I say distinctly and emphatically—without in any sense saying that you, Sir, are pulling me up unnecessarily—that it is the obligation of every man in this Chamber to do his duty at this particular time, and endeavour if he cannot go himself to do the next best thing. Some men can go, there is nothing to stop them from going, but every one of us in this Chamber should feel one obligation—that if we are not able to go we should do the next best thing. That just brings me to the point that there are members in this House that do a very great deal of good in this direction, and, instead of submitting a lot of proposals imposing financial obligations in many directions, the money so spent could have been better and more effectively spent in other ways. What does it all mean? If we do not succeed in our enterprise at the other end, it means that all those proposals go for nought, and all our legislation stands for nought.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): I want to say just a few words here on this question because people in the Drayton electorate are very anxious to know why the Premier went home.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: What about butter?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It is their bread and butter; it is their living. It is a very trifling thing to hon. members on the other side; but when your children have to go without clothes and without proper food through such actions as those of the present Government, it is not a trifling matter. Notwithstanding the fact that many of our people have been taxed so unnecessarily during the past year—

Mr. H. J. RYAN: Rot!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: You have not been taxed. You could not pay it if you had. (Laughter.) I am speaking from experience, for I know that 90 per cent. of the farmers in my district, which is one of the richest farming districts in Queensland, had to go and borrow money to pay their land tax imposed by members of the present Government. It was not imposed by us. We are clear of that charge. Notwithstanding the whole of that taxation, through which men who did not have a sixpence coming in for twelve months were called upon to pay £5 land tax, members opposite claim to be a friend of the man on the land. I admit that I had half of mine returned. I did not make a cent out of the farm, and yet I had to pay £12 10s. for the land tax. That is the way the Labour party finance and serve the man on the land. Notwithstanding the fact that we contributed so much extra in taxation, notwithstanding the fact that these thousands and thousands of pounds were extracted from the people's pockets—more than ever any other Government extracted—we cannot get sufficient money to put up a fence around the school. The people in the

country districts have had to put up their own fences, and, though I applied for money to pay for it, I have not got it yet. I want information on such things as this.

Another thing I want to know about is not in my own electorate, but farther north. Every members of this House and every person in Queensland is interested in it. It is the great mine called the Great Fitzroy. Up to last year that mine was paying something like £2,000 expenses, etc., but it had exemption. That mine was offered to the Government, I believe, for £25,000 cash.

Mr. CARTER: Worn-out machinery.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: There was no "worn out" about it, and perfectly well the hon. member knows it. There was £85,000 worth of machinery.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: What did it fetch at auction?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: There was a proposition by which £12,000 would start the mine, because the company were quite ready to find the other. It would have employed 500 men and produced 250 tons of copper a month, which was so badly needed at the time.

Mr. FREE: It was a German show—German debenture holders.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: But the Government would not do it. They insisted on the company doing things which they were not prepared to do themselves, and the end of this was that all that is left to-day of a promising mine and £80,000 worth of machinery—which they could have had for £25,000—is a hole in the ground. Hon. members opposite know that perfectly well, and that the district which they might have saved is a wreck to-day. If there were any chance of getting the money, would it not have been a fairer thing to have given £12,000, even though they had lost every cent of it, if it would have employed 500 men and used a large amount of our coal and employed our timber-getters? Would it not have been a much better investment? They offered the mine to the Government, and offered to help them work it, but the Government refused, and so the mortgagees came in and closed down, and the result was that there is a hole in the ground to-day instead of a mine with £85,000 worth of machinery employing 500 men. Why did the Government not do as the past Government did? If not, why did they not allow the company a reasonable time to get proper machinery and get to work on the ground? I shall want to know more about that on the Address in Reply. I know that what I have stated in the House is correct.

The TREASURER: No; you are badly informed.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I had it from the bookkeeper, or rather from a person who was conversant with the books—not exactly the bookkeeper—and who went through the correspondence. Notwithstanding the importance of this subject, the Mines Department did not even answer a letter bearing on it.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: They sent up inspectors.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The hon. member went to inspect that machinery. He said he was an engineer. There was £85,000 worth of machinery still on the books, and the hon. member said, "Where are the gauge

glasses?" These were worth about 1s. 6d. (Laughter.) Fancy a man asking for a gauge glass in £85,000 worth of machinery.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: You should give us your authority.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: My authority is the highest and best you can get in Rockhampton, and hon. members will hear more of it, and they will hear more from the people of that electorate.

I think, as I have already said, that it is a mean and contemptible thing to take the motor-car away from the police. (Government laughter and Opposition "Hear, hears!") If there is one department more than another which ought to have the use of motor-cars and the very best means of getting about, it is the Police Department.

Mr. KIRWAN: The department, but not the Commissioner.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Is not the Commissioner part of the department? Does not the Commissioner belong to the Police Department? What other department does he belong to? But it was through orders that it was taken away, not because he did not need it.

I hope the Premier will give us some information as to the money that is at hand.

Mr. CARTER: What about butter?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Yes, I may ask that. What have the Government done with the money for which they sold the butter over twelve months ago? They should have sold it at a big profit—what have they done with the money? Not one single penny has yet reached the pockets of the producers. So long ago as last July the member for Rosewood asked what had become of the money and what was to become of it, but still these men are waiting for it, and not one shilling in their pockets! Is that a right thing to do—to hold the poor producers' money for twelve months? Is it any credit to the Government? We would like to know what they are going to do, what they got, and what they are going to pay us for it.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: And what about 6 o'clock closing?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If you had faith in the people you would allow that question to go to the people, and if you were not bound to the grog party you would let it go. It is their interest that is keeping you back, but it is not to the soldiers' interests or to the interests of the country. I hope the Premier will give us all the information he possibly can.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): There are still some subjects which I wish for some information upon before you, Mr. Speaker, leave the chair. I should like to know, not only on behalf of those I represent, but on behalf of many thousands of people up and down the Queensland coast, what the Government are doing at the present juncture with regard to the sugar industry. No one can be indifferent to the serious position in which the growers have been placed by the award just made by the Industrial Court. This afternoon, when the House met, I pointed out to the Premier two ways by which relief could be afforded. I am sorry to say that his reply was evasive. First of all, in order to enable us to pay the increased cost of production that has now been placed upon us, one

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method is to give us more for our sugar. Queensland and the Commonwealth Government are handling the whole of it. I asked the Premier if he would pay more for it, and so enable us to tide over the difficulty of paying the increased wages that are now being imposed. I think that would be a very satisfactory solution for all parties concerned. The Premier told me that he was selling that sugar under agreement to the Commonwealth, and apparently he had no recourse. If he has tied himself up so hard and fast in such an arrangement that it leaves him no loophole when confronted with a contingency of this kind to raise the price, does he mean to tell me that, if he were to go to the Commonwealth Government and point out the serious position of the industry, they would not extend some help in view of the big profit they are deriving from the industry? I would like to point out that the price at which he commandeered the sugar was £18, and how does it compare with the corresponding world's price at the present moment? I may say that only a week ago raw sugar was reported to be £41 a ton in London.

Mr. COOPER: Will you advocate that after the war?

Mr. SWAYNE: While we are only getting £18, they are getting £41 a ton in London at the present time; and does the Premier mean to say that with such a burden as that there is not a lot of room for relief in the way I have indicated? I think that his answer is most disappointing, and that he failed entirely to realise the gravity of the position. As showing the importance of the subject I am touching on, I would like to draw attention to the fact that something like 20,000 hands are employed in the industry at the present time, and I should say that, as directly and indirectly connected with the industry, there are fully 80,000 to 100,000 people in Queensland dependent on the successful prosecution of the industry. I think hon. members opposite want to be told these things, as I do not think that they thoroughly realise the importance of our primary industries. The capital invested in the sugar industry at present represents from £15,000,000 to £20,000,000. I would like to point out what the industry did for Australia recently. The value of the sugar produced last season was £3,348,000, and if we had had to buy that sugar outside from a neutral country, say Cuba or Java, we should have had to pay £4,836,000, plus freight and shipping charges, and that amount would have had to be paid in gold—it would have meant gold to that amount being sent out of Queensland. In all probability, in a few years' time, with the return of good seasons, there will be a much larger return to Queensland. I think that I am justified, knowing the industry as I do, at the present time in asking the Government what they are going to do.

There is another method. If the Premier, acting in collaboration with the Commonwealth Government, will not give us such a price as will enable us to carry on, I say he has power under the Act to intervene and get such modifications of the award as will enable us to carry on and do our part in building up a white Australia. When the Act was passed there was clearly seen the risk of leaving the control of our industry in the hands of one man without any appeal. There has been no appeal, in the usual way, in this case, but a court of appeal was provided

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by the Act. The court of appeal is the Government of Queensland itself, and I say that it is up to them to intervene. They have already intervened in this case—I am not asking anything new—they have already done it on the other side. I am justified in asking them to exercise their powers under section 46 of the Industrial Peace Act and do something to save the industry from the danger which threatens it.

There is another matter I wish to refer to, which I think is a very grave one; that is in connection with the administration of justice. In leading up to this subject, I should like to quote a lecture delivered by Viscount Morley at the Manchester University lately, as regards the importance of impartial administration of justice in a community. He says—

“If we remember, for instance, that administration of law is the keystone of all civilised government.”

Again, he points out—

“Weakened confidence in our Parliament would be formidable, but confidence destroyed in courts of justice would be taking out the linch-pin.”

Again, I notice in a speech made by Burke that he said “There cannot be liberty without justice.” I say that, under the present Administration, there has been tampering with the fountain of justice.

The PREMIER: Where?

Mr. SWAYNE: If the Premier will only contain himself I will point out what has happened. I say it with a full realisation of the gravity of what I am saying. In connection with the appointment of judges I think it has always been regarded as a fundamental principle that the judge appointed shall be in a position to do his duty without fear or favour, and have nothing to fear or hope from any political party. I say they have made the whole of that system a travesty in their actions with regard to the Industrial Court. They have degraded the transactions of that court in the manner of appointing judges. They were asked some time ago, when it was shown that the work of the court was getting too much for one man, to make another appointment. Instead of doing so, they appointed acting judges—they have two at the present time. They make it a sort of trial stakes with the judges for a prize, and the only thing we can assume is that the one who gives the greatest satisfaction is going to get the prize. I say it is the most disgraceful state of things that one can conceive. I would like to point out that in regard to Industrial Courts it is even more necessary to have permanent appointments made than in ordinary courts, because not only is the fate of thousands of people involved in the decisions of these courts, but political feelings also enter into these courts in a way that they do not enter into the ordinary courts of justice. When we see an acting judge sitting in the Industrial Court we must assume that he desires a permanent appointment, or otherwise he would not take the acting appointment. The position is this: That he can only get what he wants through the good graces of one of the parties or litigants in the suit. We know that the Australian Workers' Union has had a case before the courts for some months. We know that the Australian Workers' Union is the Government. We know that the Government

will not hold office for a moment longer than that body pleases, and there is a judge in that position adjudicating on their case. That is the position, and most certainly a case such as that should have been dealt with by a permanent judge. I, myself, in conjunction with the hon. member for Burrum, called on the Acting Premier—the Treasurer—and we asked him to see that a permanent judge dealt with that case.

The TREASURER: Did I not tell you that the matter was arranged by the judges themselves?

Mr. SWAYNE: Surely there was time then to make a permanent appointment? Does not the matter of making permanent appointments to these courts rest with the Government? But before that, the same question had been raised.

I should like to draw attention to the attitude of the Government during the proceedings of this court. At the same time that we asked that a permanently appointed judge should deal with the case, we also asked that the necessary steps which the Act provides, and Parliament clearly intended, should be taken for the protection of the interests of the producers, but we were told that such a request was most improper, and that it was out of all reason; in fact, the hon. gentleman told us that he did not think he had the power under the Act. I remember asking him why, if he did not think he had power, that section was put there. At any rate, we did not get it. What has happened? After all, the Government intervened under the very section that we asked them to do; they intervened on the other side, and broke the spirit, if not the letter, of the Act. In the Industrial Peace Act it is provided that the professional element shall not appear at the proceedings—both parties to the suit are debarred from being represented by lawyers—but we find that the Government turned loose a gentleman with a wig, one of our leading barristers, amongst the amateurs that we had there. From the very first he not only deals with the matter that is placed in his hands—a trivial matter comparatively, although it is represented as one of importance—but he takes sides in his remarks; I myself heard him allude to the other side as “those in the enemy’s camp.” Those words were used with reference to the representatives of the growers and millers. I do not know what word to use in connection with such a serious matter as this; but I ask, is it ordinary decency, leaving out all question of fair play, justice, or anything else, that such things should happen in Queensland? I know quite well that I am handling a very serious and delicate question, [5.30 p.m.] but I am not going to see one of the greatest industries in Queensland ruined without sticking up for it and saying what I think it is my duty to say. I am pointing out that there are still some ways in which intervention can take place. I say to the Government if they cannot get us a sufficient rise in the price of sugar to enable us to comply with those impossible rates, then I ask them to step in and save the industry from the blow that is being struck at it. I say that the conditions of the award are directly contrary to those made by the permanent judge, Judge Macnaughton. They are directly contrary to the award given by that judge. For instance, in the matter of grading, he pointed out how unwise it would

be to apply grading conditions to the agricultural industry. It is impossible. As regards the question of hours, Judge Macnaughton went thoroughly into it and gave his decision, but the acting judge differed altogether from him. Either one or the other is wrong. It is a serious matter for the industry. If I am not mistaken, in the next few days information will come to Brisbane showing that what I say is correct. Before this question is passed I think we are entitled to some information on this subject. I say here that the whole attitude of the acting president of the court—and I was in the court listening to the proceedings—the whole action of the acting president of the Industrial Court looked very much as if he were influenced in his decision in securing the goodwill of the Government.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have allowed the hon. member to deal with the action of the Government, but he is not in order in criticising the judge, or imputing improper motives to him. The hon. member was quite in order in criticising the Government in appointing acting judges, but I warn him that I shall not permit him to impute motives against any of the judges.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COLLINS: He ought to withdraw it.

Mr. SWAYNE: This is a serious matter, and serious consequences are likely to result from the decision given by the acting president, and I consider I am only doing my duty in bringing this matter before the House.

The SPEAKER: The hon. gentleman is imputing improper motives to the judge when he states that the judge is influenced in his decisions in order to secure the goodwill of the Government. He is clearly out of order in making such a statement as that, or in casting any reflection on the judge.

Mr. SWAYNE: In deference to your ruling, Mr. Speaker, I will not pursue that topic any further, but I hope that what I have said will bear fruit. Those who know me know that I would not make a statement of that kind unless I had good reasons for doing so. I have a practical knowledge of the industry, and I would not make the statements I have done about the industry unless I had good grounds for doing so. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): When the leader of the Opposition challenged the passage of this resolution at this stage, the Treasurer interjected that last year we had a similar matter before the House, and no exception was taken to it. The conditions that existed last year are probably different to what exist to-day.

Mr. FOLEY: The war is not over yet.

Mr. VOWLES: No, the war is not over yet, but that is no reason why we should miss the opportunity we have at this juncture of ventilating grievances which still exist in connection with the administration of the Government.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: You missed your opportunity on the 22nd of May last year.

Mr. VOWLES: There is one matter I would like to refer to first of all. I contend that the Government have committed a grossly illegal act in appropriating certain moneys without the warrant of the Auditor-General. No reference has been made to

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this to-day, but it was referred to in our superior court by Mr. Justice Lukin in his judgment in connection with the insurance case. He pointed out clearly that the appropriation of £20,000 by proclamation at the instance of the Ministry was illegal and in contravention of the Audit Act and the privileges of this House. I say to the Ministry of the day that if they are prepared to go and commit breaches of the law themselves, is it any wonder that the public think they have a license to break the law, especially when they have a Ministry that is sympathetic towards them?

The TREASURER: Do you say that the action of the Government was in contravention of the Audit Act?

Mr. VOWLES: I say that no warrant has been granted for the payment of that money. The money was appropriated by proclamation and not by the authority of this House. The same thing applies to the money which has been utilised for the establishment of State hotels. What authority is there for the utilisation of those moneys?

The TREASURER: Executive authority.

Mr. VOWLES: There are certain matters in which the Executive must take second place to this House, and, as regards the appropriation of that £20,000, I say that the whole of the Government's action was wrong and illegal, and they will have to bring in some form of a validating Bill to validate their action. I think we will find such a Bill coming forward, and that not before long.

The PREMIER: You have had no chance of testing that judgment yet.

Mr. VOWLES: We are not dealing with the question of the judgment at all. We are dealing with the illegal action of the present Administration in appropriating money by proclamation. The House has only been called together at the eleventh hour. The reason for that was that the Premier was away globe-trotting. We are told that he went away to conduct important matters connected with the State. I have a statement here which the Premier cannot challenge. In the "British Australasian" of the 4th May last appears a speech delivered by the Premier when in London. The same article appears in "Reynold's Newspaper," and the photograph of the Hon. the Premier appears to prove the *bonâ fides* of it. (Laughter.) It says in the "British Australasian"—

"Not only are our railways State owned, but we have our State sugar-mills, and the sugar industry is developing very rapidly. Questions affecting that industry are among those that I have come over to discuss with the Imperial Government."

Now, that statement appears in both articles. When the leader of the Opposition was speaking, the Premier challenged that statement which I have just read.

The PREMIER: I still challenge it. He said "industrial" matters.

Mr. VOWLES: He meant "sugar" matters.

The PREMIER: But he said "industrial" matters.

Mr. VOWLES: We want some information as to what the hon. gentleman did when he went home. We know that the hon. gentleman advertised himself when he went

home. We know that the hon. gentleman went home as a barrister to prosecute a certain suit. He prosecuted that suit and succeeded in winning it.

Mr. MORGAN: One case was a failure.

Mr. VOWLES: The Premier tells us that he went home on matters of very great moment as far as the State of Queensland is concerned, yet when we ask him for a little information about it he will not give it. We can only come to the conclusion that it was simply the usual advertising.

Mr. MORGAN: Window-dressing.

Mr. VOWLES: Yes, window-dressing; especially when you find his portrait there, too. If such a thing had taken place when we had charge of the Treasury benches, and Mr. Denham had refused to give particulars to the Opposition about his mission to the old country and the result, what sort of a howl would there have been from this side of the House!

Mr. KIRWAN: He has not had a chance to get up yet.

Mr. VOWLES: We gave him the opportunity and he refused to accept it.

The PREMIER: When was that?

Mr. KIRWAN: Two of you jumped up at once.

Mr. VOWLES: There were certain charges made by the previous speaker, the hon. member for Mirani, which I very much regretted to hear. I regret to hear any insinuations mentioned here about the administration of justice, but the hon. member evidently had some reason for what he said or he would not have said it. Hon. gentlemen opposite realise that a mistake has been made in that award, and I have heard them say myself that they got more than they expected. The position is that if we are going to have industrial judges dealing with such important matters as the fixing of wages which will have the effect of making or unmaking huge industries, then the suggestion made by the hon. member for Mirani and others interested is that the decision should be made by permanent judges.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: Like Pope Cooper.

Mr. VOWLES: I do not care who he is, so long as he is in a permanent position, so that he cannot be charged with being influenced by any Government. The administration of justice should be beyond suspicion in every case. If that matter is of so great importance, it should be tried by a man who is occupying a permanent position, and whose future career may not happen to depend upon the decision he gives. I regret that such a suggestion has ever been made in this House, but, seeing that it has been made, I think matters of such importance should be dealt with only by permanent judges. There is another reason why we should complain at this juncture about the actions of the Government. We have had the clearest breaches of the Industrial Peace Act committed in Mackay.

The TREASURER: No. The Industrial Peace Act has no jurisdiction there. (Government laughter.)

Mr. VOWLES: If it has none in that particular case, then it is only because of a technicality. It may come under one of the Commonwealth Acts, and I presume that is the technicality. But there have been numerous instances of strikes that have

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taken place where no action has been taken by the parties who are supposed to protect the public in these cases. The gentleman who should take that action happens to be the Treasurer, and he happens to be identical with the head of the labour organisation in Queensland. It is absolutely impossible for a man to hold dual positions of that kind.

Mr. MORGAN: He does not hold the other position now. He was knocked out of that last year.

The TREASURER: The Treasurer does not administer the Industrial Peace Act.

Mr. VOWLES: No; it is administered by the Secretary for Public Works, and he authorises the prosecutions. No prosecutions have been authorised by that gentleman to date, and he is not carrying out his duty.

The TREASURER: I don't know of any instances where there have been breaches of the Act.

Mr. VOWLES: If the Mackay strike comes under the jurisdiction of a Commonwealth Act, then you are blameless.

The TREASURER: What others are there?

Mr. VOWLES: What about the sewerage strike?

The TREASURER: What sewerage strike? You are all at sea. If you mean the strike of the sanitary carters, then all I can say is that I was practically responsible myself for getting the trouble fixed up.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES: Got it fixed up, but the breach had been made—a strike had taken place without due notice, and you allowed it to slide. You are the only person who could authorise a prosecution, and you did not do it in any instance. When we have laws on the statute-book, until such time as they are removed, the officers in charge of the department should carry them out, notwithstanding what their political opinions may be. That is the law for the time being, and political feelings should never enter into the administration of any department.

Reference was made this afternoon, in connection with the 6 o'clock closing, to the fact that the liquor people of Queensland are behind the Government. I do not know whether that is correct or not.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: You were a member of the "Bung" party when the Act went through.

Mr. VOWLES: I was one of the men who stood out all the time and had the courage of my convictions. I voted as I thought right, and would do the same to-morrow. There are members on the other side of the House who got financial assistance from the "Bung" party at the last elections.

Mr. GILLIES: You know that is not true, and Government dissent.

Mr. VOWLES: I know there are members opposite who are opposed to the liquor traffic. For instance, take the Minister for Railways. I saw how temperate he was a little while ago. I do not know whether the hon. gentleman knows it, but he is thought so highly of in the hotels in Queensland and in Brisbane that they have got his portrait. (Loud laughter.)

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: It is over the bar.

Mr. VOWLES: It is in what is known as "The rogues' gallery." (Renewed laughter.)

Hon. J. HUXHAM: You mistook a picture of "Johnnie Walker" for the hon. gentleman.

Mr. VOWLES: I do not think I could mistake his portrait. I have been down and had a look at it. It is a good draw to see the hon. gentleman who has always spoken against the liquor traffic. It is a means of advertising.

There is another matter which I referred to this afternoon by way of a question, and that is the interference with decisions in criminal cases. I understand—I am prepared to be corrected—that another instance has happened in which a criminal sentence has been interfered with by some authority other than the judge.

Mr. MORGAN: The Assistant Minister for Justice.

Mr. VOWLES: I do not know who, but whoever was responsible, such a position of affairs is ridiculous. In this particular case the woman was found guilty of murder, and she was sentenced to five years' imprisonment, but on account of the unfortunate circumstances in which she lived all her life and her residence among prostitutes and thieves, the judge said that if after two years' incarceration application were made for her sentence to be reconsidered he would willingly do so, and he hoped the sentence would have the effect it was intended to have.

Hon. J. HUXHAM: Don't you think you had better wait till you get an answer to-morrow?

Mr. VOWLES: I have the particulars here from the Sydney "Bulletin," and as it has not been contradicted I take it to be correct.

Hon. J. HUXHAM: You will be worried to-morrow when you get your answer.

Mr. VOWLES: I suppose it will be the old story—it was done on humanitarian lines, or something of that sort. The fact remains, if this woman was released after being only eight or nine weeks in goal, and if the judge was not consulted—

Hon. J. HUXHAM: You are making an error; the judge was consulted.

Mr. VOWLES: I said "if" the judge was not consulted it is nothing less than a scandal.

Hon. J. HUXHAM: The judge was consulted and it was done with the judge's full concurrence.

Mr. VOWLES: I asked a similar question in respect to another criminal who was released, not on probation either—that was the Macarthy case—released without the judge's consent and without any reference to him, and that is the reason I am following it up. On the Address in Reply last night we had the seceder showing his sympathy for criminals. He did not believe in punishment. Crime could go on and no one should be punished. He did not believe in capital punishment, he did not believe in solitary confinement, he did not believe in whipping, and he did not believe in incarceration of any kind. People could commit all kinds of crime. Why does the hon. member for Gregory advocate things of that kind? Is it to gain popularity? Is it not vote-hunting and nothing else? Look at the Acts of Parliament that were brought before us!

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Look at the Elections Act last year! Wife-beaters, habitual drunkards, and confirmed criminals who, since 1885 up till last year, were liable to be deprived of their votes, were specially exempted.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Don't forget the I.W.W.

Mr. VOWLES: All these men are given special exemptions, and now the Government of the day seems to be fathering the criminal instead of trying to keep him in his proper place. This is the time to bring these matters up. We want information on these matters. We want the public to know and the public want us to find out. Did our Government ever father criminals like the present Government is doing? Did our Government ever misappropriate moneys without the warrant that is vested in the Auditor-General? Or did it take money without coming before this House to sanction it?

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Yes.

Mr. VOWLES: It happened on one occasion, and what sort of a rumpus was there? The most strenuous protest that could possibly be made was made by members opposite.

The TREASURER: It happened in hundreds of cases when your Government was in power.

Mr. VOWLES: It did not happen in hundreds of cases. If it had, the hon. gentleman would have ventilated it as he is not so slow as to miss his opportunity. It is not his nature. When a particular matter was stated by a member of the Supreme Court to be distinctly illegal on the part of the Government, then he resents criticism of it in the proper place. These are matters that the people want to know about. They want to know what sort of Government is in power; they want to know what sort of Opposition you have got that will allow these things to happen and not ventilate them. It is our business to expose them and allow the public to see. If we allowed these things to slide; if we allowed the Government to have their way in small matters, what on earth could we expect in the future? If you give them an inch they will take an ell. We know if they get the opportunity they will do it. We know they explain away every Act of Parliament; that they are doing actions now which are being decided in our courts, and which are sub judice at present. In some of them they have to compromise and pay heavy damages. They bought stock at a ridiculous price and made arrangements for their sale and committed a breach of the border tax. The Government, in order to get a worthless deal off their hands, want to do what it objected to the general public of Queensland doing. These are things we want to know all about. One thing, too, is whether this border tax—this seizure of stock and everything connected with it, was done with the sanction of the Attorney-General's Department. We are given to understand it was not. We are given to understand it was done expressly against the opinions of the department. They took the chance and they fell in. It is up to the Premier to reply to that matter. I do not mean to say that all these charges can be upheld against the Government, but where there is smoke there is fire, and it is the Government's duty to protect its good name, if it has any, and if it has not it is our business to find out where the weaknesses are and expose them.

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Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I think it is the duty of the Premier, after returning from a trip to the old country, to let the taxpayers of Queensland know what business he did on that trip. The Premier has had an opportunity of telling those who are bearing the burden why he went to the old country, and why this House has been kept two months from doing work that the people are looking to be done. We have had one or two statements from the Premier in respect to the great work he has performed, and we heard a great deal about the amount of money he saved to the woolgrowers of Queensland owing to the fact that he was able to rectify a little error that might have occurred in regard to the instructions of the Imperial Government. We all know perfectly well that we have an Agent-General in London who is there to do that work, and no doubt he could have performed it had a cablegram been sent home, and no doubt he did do the work if the truth is known, and now the Premier is claiming credit for it. Then we are told that in connection with the "Eastern" case he saved the Government of Queensland some £60,000, besides establishing a great precedent in regard to the responsibility of pilots on the Brisbane River. We know perfectly well that everything in connection with that case was arranged by the Liberal Government before ever the Premier went home at all. We also know that by the expenditure of a few hundred pounds we could have got a barrister of equal capability to perform the work, so there was no necessity for the Premier to leave Queensland and go to Great Britain for the purpose of defending that case. We also know that he went home in connection with a private case and we know that in connection with that private case the Premier lost. He was not on a good wicket. The decision was given against him. The Premier was on a good wicket, no doubt, but as far as his clients were concerned they certainly suffered. Just about the time the Premier was going away the Government entered into a contract and bought 600 or 800 bullocks at £12 a head from the gentleman who briefed Mr. Ryan to go to England to defend his case.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in order in imputing improper motives to hon. members of this House.

Mr. MORGAN: I am not imputing improper motives; I am stating this as a fact. What I state is an absolute fact—that the Government purchased from this gentleman a certain number of bullocks at £12 a head just about the time the Premier was going home to conduct a case on behalf of that particular gentleman.

The PREMIER: He could have got £13 a head anywhere else.

Mr. MORGAN: Whether these bullocks were worth £12 a head or not I do not know. Was it an accident that the Government bought them from that particular gentleman or was it in order to find money to defend that particular case? We are suspicious, and we are here to ask these questions. The Premier knows perfectly well, and we know as we travel right throughout Queensland, that these matters are being talked about by the people of Queensland in every train and in every public-house. These matters are being discussed and questions are being asked, and it is the duty of the Premier to

give us an explanation in connection with that matter, and also let us know the cost of his trip to the old country. At the particular moment when we were begging and praying—we went to the Minister for Agriculture about seven months ago, and begged and prayed him to put a certain amount of money aside to assist the people who were struggling on the land to enable them to put in large areas of wheat and cultivate their soils, and the Minister for Agriculture would not assist them. As they had no security, no one else would assist them, and we asked the Minister to put aside £20,000 or £30,000 in order that these men might be able to clear their land and put it under cultivation, but we were told that the Government could not do it because it had no money, but the Government had money to send the Premier and his troupe away to the old country.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: It was a good investment.

Mr. MORGAN: I admit it was a good investment to one particular individual. Looking over "Hansard" after the visit of Mr. Denham to the old country, I notice that the present Premier was very anxious that that gentleman should give reasons to the House why he went and also what work he accomplished. Mr. Denham did so, to the evident satisfaction of the Premier and his party. He told them everything that occurred, and without further comment the Opposition of the day appeared to be thoroughly satisfied with the explanation. I hope and trust that the Premier will follow the good example set by Mr. Denham.

The PREMIER: What did he do?

Mr. MORGAN: He evidently satisfied the Opposition at that time.

Mr. BERTRAM: He did not satisfy his party; they signed a round robin.

Mr. KIRWAN: You signed the round robin, didn't you?

Mr. MORGAN: That had nothing to do with any discontent that may have occurred in connection with his party. At any rate, we hope that the Premier will be able to give a satisfactory explanation not only to this House but also to the country, and let us know the true reason why he left Queensland at a time when it was, perhaps, most important that he should remain in this State, and delayed this House nearly two months from going on with the business. Evidently the party opposite is a party of one man, and they do not seem to be able to carry on without the guiding hand of their leader, or, at any rate, they did not feel confident that they could face the strong Opposition. (Government laughter.)

Mr. COOPER: It is the weakest in the history of Queensland.

Mr. MORGAN: So strong did they fear it would be that they were afraid to meet the House without the help of their leader. That may be—no doubt is—a compliment to Mr. Ryan. At any rate, that is the true fact.

I should also like to know whether the Premier will inform us of his intentions regarding the curtailment of drink and gambling and horseracing and matters of that sort in the State of Queensland.

Mr. CARTER: Horse-dealing, too. (Laughter.)

Mr. MORGAN: It might be necessary in connection with horse-dealing also. I believe my friend has had one or two poor deals, and he may want some also. At the present time we know that Queensland is practically a hunting ground for all sorts of spieblers from the other States; gambling is rampant, two-up schools flourish practically in the main streets of Brisbane.

Mr. WELLINGTON: In your opinion.

Mr. MORGAN: No. One of our most up-to-date two-up schools is owned by one of our most prominent men in Brisbane, and nothing is done to prevent it being carried on. I understand it is fitted out probably better than any other two-up school in any part of Queensland or Australia, and probably because it is carried on in the property of a gentleman who is a very prominent supporter of the Labour party nothing is done to interfere with the gambling there.

Mr. COLLINS: You ought to get paid "dirt" money. (Laughter.)

Mr. MORGAN: There is no necessity to get "dirt" money for my friend opposite. He has already received that. We also know that at the present time, unfortunately, the State of Queensland is practically in the control of two parties, or one individual and one party—John Wren and the "Bung" party.

Mr. KIRWAN: He came from the same place as you did—Victoria.

Mr. MORGAN: And I ought to be sorry to own him as a Victorian. He and the "Bung" party are responsible for the hands of the present Government being tied as they are to-day. (Government dissent.) At the last election, in consideration of certain support, certain promises made by certain Cabinet Ministers—who were not then in the Cabinet—who promised the "Bung" party that if they became the Government of the day they would not in any shape or form interfere with the Liquor Act for three years—

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No, no.

Mr. KIRWAN: Give us their names.

Mr. MORGAN: The Assistant Minister for Justice and the present Treasurer had something to do with a certain fund that was given by the "Bung" party to help conduct the election. (Government dissent and interruption.)

Mr. KIRWAN: You are not game to say that outside.

Mr. MORGAN: And already those gentlemen have been brought to book by certain members of the party for not presenting a balance-sheet. (Uproar.) That is one of the reasons—that is, in fact, the only reason—why we find ourselves the only part of the British Empire, in fact the only part of any of our allies, where nothing has been done to curtail the liquor trade—where nothing has been done to prevent the soldiers who come from the country into the town from obtaining drink after 6 o'clock—where nothing has been done in any shape or form to try to reduce the liquor bill that is so high in Queensland to-day. We have one member now on the Treasury benches—the Minister for Railways—whom I remember admiring when he got up in his place here and fought in favour of temperance reform.

Mr. COOPER: You scoffed at him.

Mr. MORGAN: I did not scoff at him. I supported him in his endeavour to bring about temperance reform, and I heard him

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say he did not care what happened, whether he lost his seat, he stood to bring about a different state of affairs.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do yet.

Mr. MORGAN: He said that, notwithstanding the great liquor vote in his electorate, he was going to fight for temperance reform. He was out to try to bring about a reduction in the drink evil; but to-day, when we find him in a position where he should have some strength—then he was in a minority and we could not expect him to do anything in the way of reform—to-day, we expect a great deal from him; but, unfortunately, he has failed his temperance party. We had other men on the Opposition benches who practically pledged themselves to the temperance party, that if they were returned they would do certain things, and we find that they have sacrificed their pledges to that party. They are not even game to submit it to a referendum of the people. We, the people, are not asking the Government to introduce anything without submitting it to the people, and I defy any man on that side of the House to get up and give any reason why the question should not be submitted to a referendum of the people. The Government are attempting to hoodwink the temperance people, to hoodwink those who think that something ought to be done during the war, by offering them the initiative and referendum. We know that that is only done to delay matters, hoping and trusting and praying that the war may cease, so that they can keep their pledge to the "Bung" party and go to the country next year with their support, not only individually but as a party. They are "between the devil and the deep blue sea." If they grant 6 o'clock closing, which has been asked for by thousands and thousands of people, they immediately break their pledge and lose the support, monetary and otherwise, of the "Bung" party, and they go to the country weaker than they were at the last election. If they do not grant it, they lose thousands of their solid supporters who are against the sale of intoxicating liquor that is taking place in Brisbane—against the amount of drink that is being sold. It does not matter when the producer from the country comes and asks for some loan, the Government say, "We have got no money. Go back home and tax your own property, and do the best you can." The Government can find £30,000 to break the law—the Constitution of Queensland—and build State grogeries. They know that they are breaking the law—they know that the very moment they start to sell drink they commit a criminal offence, because they are breaking the laws of the land by spending money in that particular connection. We find that not only are the Government out to break the law in that respect, but also in many other respects. We find the Assistant Minister for Justice overriding the laws of the land upon every occasion, overriding his departmental officers by granting permits for illegal games to be played, and also in respect to insurance. We find that everything he has touched, no matter what it may have been, has proved misleading, and his work has not been relied upon in any respect. What he told the House in respect to State insurance is proved to be absolutely false.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to withdraw the words "absolutely false."

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Mr. MORGAN: I withdraw "absolutely false" and I substitute "absolutely incorrect." That is what has occurred. We find that a certain advertisement, which was looked upon by the Assistant Secretary for Justice as revenge against the fire insurance societies, in which it was said that the State was guaranteeing losses insured with the State department, came before a judge, and the judge told him that he had done something absolutely illegal and wrong—that the State did not guarantee any losses unless it had been first of all agreed to by this House. It is the same in connection with many other matters that that hon. gentleman has had anything to do with. No matter what he has touched in regard to the departments he has under his control, there has been discontent and dissatisfaction, and in very many instances more or less corruption.

Hon. J. A. FIDELLY: What are you chaps growling about the acting judges for?

Mr. MORGAN: I also want to refer to a matter which, in my opinion, is one which should be ventilated in this House. We know that last session the Government decided to appoint a Public Works Committee. When the Bill was turned down by the Legislative Council, the Government decided to appoint a Royal Commission, consisting of five members from their own side of the House. I admit that the members of the Liberal party decided not to have any representatives on the commission.

Mr. GILLIES: They went on strike.

Mr. MORGAN: That commission has had a certain work to perform. I can only criticise it in regard to work in my own electorate, and I can only criticise the Government in placing before the commission the Juandah-Taroom Railway to inquire into.

Mr. BERTRAM: Had it not been for political corruption the line to Juandah would not have been built, and you are responsible for it.

Mr. MORGAN: That is absolutely incorrect. That line came before the House. The first section was constructed from Miles to Juandah. The second section came before the House, and was passed without one word of dissent in record time. The only man who got up and spoke in connection with it was the present Minister for Lands, Mr. Hunter, and he condemned the Liberal Government for stopping the railway and not going on with its construction. He said it was a shame that the railway should have been stopped at all; that instead of stopping it at Juandah they should have carried it on to Taroom. That line has been passed, the survey has been made, and the whole of the work has been carried out, with the exception that the present Government has not put money on the Estimates to build it. They sent the commission up to inquire from a land settlement point of view as to what land there was in and around Taroom, but that information could have been obtained from the Lands Department in half an hour. It had already been obtained by the present Minister for Railways, the Commissioner for Railways, and every bit of the work which the commission went up to do was a waste of public funds, at a time when money should not be wasted. The line had already passed the House and met with approval from both sides. When the commission was going up they had not even given due notice of

their intention to visit the locality. I, as the representative, was not informed that they were going. I think I should have been informed in order that I might have communicated with the different public bodies, so that they could have had men on the spot who were capable of giving evidence for or against the construction of the line. The commission arrived at Juandah without anyone knowing that they were going. The Taroom people did their level best, under the circumstances, to show them around the country. I say that if it is worth while spending money to send five commissioners there besides the secretary and others, it is worth while doing it properly and in a business-like manner; otherwise it looks purely and simply what hon. members on this side have said, that the commission was only formed to placate certain members opposite who were disappointed, and so that they might receive an increase of emoluments. The people in the locality wondered why they were going there. It was all at the expense of the country. The Treasury was being exploited, not only by that particular commission, but unfortunately by almost every man opposite who had an opportunity of exploiting it. The extravagance in numerous ways is simply deplorable, especially at a time when there are hundreds of people practically on the verge of starvation. There are people who have just got over the drought, who have had no opportunity of re-stocking, and when they ask the Government for a few pounds to enable them to buy dairy cattle they are told that there is no money. But the Assistant Minister for Justice goes all over the place and down South drawing £2 2s. a day, and sends in a bill for £30 in addition. That is what is being done, not only in connection with the Assistant Minister, but every man on the Treasury bench has done his level best during the last seven or eight months to do all the travelling he possibly could in order to draw extra money, not satisfied with the emoluments he was getting as a Minister of the Crown. The Ministers evidently think they have only a short time to reign on the front Treasury benches, and they are going to make the most of their opportunities. We will find them directly as capitalists buying property, not only in Queen street, but suburban residences as well. We will find that the Labour party will cease to be the representative of the worker. We have now a gentleman representing one of the Labour seats in Brisbane—

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: He is a gentleman.

Mr. KIRWAN: More than ever you were, at any rate.

Mr. MORGAN: His occupation is that of a gentleman, and he is one of the rich men representing the city of Brisbane. That is what is occurring. Here on this side are the poor men; there sit the rich men. It is not for the first time we have known men representing the Labour party who have come, as it were, from some humble position where the wages would not be too high, and who eventually get into rich capitalists, capable of buying mansions and having motor-cars, all made out of politics.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: They do not make it out of horse dealings.

Mr. MORGAN: As a matter of fact, if members opposite are able to sit on the

Treasury benches for four or five years they will not care a snap of the finger for the people they represent in Parliament. What is "Andy" Fisher doing to-day? Living a life of ease and of a gentleman, battering upon money made out of politics during the time he represented the down-trodden working men of Queensland. That is what many of the Ministers in this Parliament are doing, representing the down-trodden workmen of Queensland, and battering at their expense every day.

Mr. KIRWAN: The income tax will hit them hard.

Mr. MORGAN: There is no doubt that the income tax will hit them hard. Some of them are paying income tax to the Government at the present time. I am one of the unfortunates; I do not own an acre of freehold land in Queensland. I am not in the position of some of my friends opposite, able to work on the sympathies of the working classes and put boodle into their own pockets.

Another important matter is in connection with the cattle embargo. The Government decided not to allow cattle to cross the border into the Southern States, and, in doing so, they entered into what may be termed a contract with the meat trust. They formed one of the greatest combines with the meat trust that ever existed in Australia before. They practically agreed with the meat companies that, if they would allow them to have meat at a certain price, they would see that the cattle were not allowed to go out of Queensland—that they would have to come and be slaughtered in Brisbane or in any other place where the meatworks were established. That is why the Government did that at the expense of the producer. While cattle in the Southern States were worth a certain price, in Queensland they were 100 per cent. lower; in fact, stock in the Brisbane market during four or five months has been bringing exactly 100 per cent. lower than fat cattle of similar quality have been bringing in Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide. That embargo was illegal. They did that by a kind of bluff. The Premier has introduced the bluff system into the legislation of Queensland from the first day he sat upon the Treasury benches. He is looked upon as the bluffing Premier—the man who endeavours to bluff all and sundry, if he possibly can. He succeeded in bluffing the poor, unfortunate little dairyman who was not capable of taking care of himself to such an extent that he robbed him of his butter and of his means of livelihood. But when it came to bluffing the grazier—the man who had money—the graziers said, "We are not going to be bluffed; we are going to fight." We know what occurred in connection with cattle. We know the agreement which was entered into. When cattle were, perhaps, in the Brisbane market worth more than £11 a head, the Government agreed to give £18 12s. 6d. for cattle on the far Western border—cattle that would not bring in Brisbane market more than £11 or £12. They are not even fit for the market at present. Then, in connection with another matter on the border, in connection with stock, the Government also fell into the soup, and the Premier had to come to the assistance of those he left in command, and wired, "Settle the case, no matter what it costs; we want three months' time in order to think this matter over." This is exactly what happened in connection with that

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stock embargo: Store stock in New South Wales were worth more money than fat stock in Queensland. The people on the border of New South Wales and Queensland, in order to get the market value of store stock in New South Wales, deliberately put their stock into paddocks that were not fattening paddocks, in order that they might be able to cross the border as store stock. Had there been no interference, this stock would have been brought to Brisbane and slaughtered, and that would have given work to the workers of Brisbane and provided meat; but the Government said, "You cannot cross that stock over; you will not be allowed to take them into New South Wales unless they are poor." The dealers took jolly good care that the stock were poor, and that was the effect of the cattle embargo so far as Queensland was concerned.

That is one of many blunders that the Government have committed since they have been in office. They do not care a rap for anything except Brisbane. Brisbane is Queensland with them. So long as Brisbane is prosperous, so long as Brisbane hotelkeepers are prosperous, so long as the breweries are making money, then Queensland is prosperous according to the Government. We know that at the present time there is a false prosperity in Queensland brought about by the £100,000 spent by the Federal Government in connection with the soldiers in Queensland. That is the prosperity we have in Brisbane to-day, and which is not experienced in other parts of Queensland. If you go to any of the towns in the West, you will see that they have not got the same prosperity that you see in Brisbane. In fact, in those towns you will find more or less stagnation. You will find things there are not as they are represented to be. We find that in Brisbane the balance-sheets of all the different companies trading here show that their profits during the last twelve months have been greater than they were before the war.

Mr. KIRWAN: I thought that the Labour party was going to ruin the country.

Mr. MORGAN: You are ruining the country, although you are not ruining the businesses in Brisbane. The hon. member for Brisbane cannot see anything further than Brisbane. So long as he can walk down Queen street or George street and go to the picture shows, either day or night, he will go home to his humble bed and say that Queensland is prosperous. He says that Queensland must be prosperous because of the picture shows in Brisbane and the race-courses and the attendances at these places, and because of all the money spent in the "pubs" in Brisbane. Look at all the money that passed through the totalisator at the races. Those are the things that they call prosperity.

Mr. BOOKER: They are the shareholders.

Mr. MORGAN: My friends opposite are always shareholders in everything that is payable. They are always in where there is anything good, and not when there is anything bad.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: Didn't you try to go in to see the Les D'Arcy fight on your parliamentary pass?

Mr. MORGAN: I did not try to go in to see the Les D'Arcy fight. I went into the fight, and I went in on my parliamentary pass, and when I got inside I noticed there were

two Liberals there and thirty-seven Labour members. (Loud laughter.) There were only two little Liberals, and yet I counted thirty-seven members from the other side of the House, including the Assistant Minister for Justice and the Treasurer. (Loud laughter.) I also saw you there, Mr. Speaker, but I do not know whether you got in on your pass or not. (Laughter.) However, it was a very good fight and I enjoyed it very much, and I have no doubt you did, too.

Hon. J. A. FIDELLY: Did you have the hon. member for Warwick with you?

Mr. MORGAN: No. With regard to the hon. member who asked me whether I was at the fight, I may say that I saw him walking up and down outside the stadium like a lost sheep. He did not know whether to go in or stay out. (Laughter.)

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: That is absolutely false.

Mr. MORGAN: I would like to know if the Government are going to make any provision to compensate the people who will lose their stock under the tubercular test. The Government at the present time are vigorously enforcing the regulations throughout the dairying districts of Queensland. I know that a number of farmers paid from £14 to £16 per ton for fodder to keep their cows alive, and the Government are going to come along and kill them. They borrowed this money from the Government, and now their cattle are going to be killed because it is supposed that this imaginary tubercular test is going to rid the country of tuberculosis. Experienced men know that so far as the test is concerned it is a sham.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. gentleman has exceeded the time allowed him by the Standing Orders.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): On these occasions the public servants look to us for their salaries, and it is not for us to block them from getting their salaries, but this is an opportunity that we have to criticise the Government for not keeping their promises to the public servants, and we are going to take advantage of it. The public servants in the Education Department have not received that which has been their due ever since the Liberal party left the front benches. (Hear, hear!) I may say that a definite promise was given to the teachers of Queensland by the Liberal party that if the revenue exceeded the expenditure that year that the teachers would get their increases. We find now that the Government have not given them the emoluments to which they are entitled, and which they were promised by the Liberal Administration. We know that the sugar-workers' award appeared yesterday. We know that various awards have been given in favour of the employees lately on the good grounds of increased cost of living. We know that the Government supporters are fighting for higher wages because of their increased cost of living. In fact, it has been nothing but increased cost of living ever since the Labour party took over the reins of power. The public servants in the Education Department, principally the school teachers, have not only been robbed of their regular increases, but they have also to pay the increased cost of living.

Mr. KIRWAN: Your Government stopped the automatic increases.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. member for Brisbane knows perfectly well that the money

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which should have gone to pay the State school teachers their increases was withheld by the present Government.

Mr. KIRWAN: That was only an election cry of the late Government.

Mr. CORSER: What do we find? We find the Government entering into the business of trucking with the produce of the small men in the country. They are bartering across the border with an amount of produce that does not belong to them. They are bringing about a state of border barbarism which is playing the very devil with our settlers in the country. It is bringing about the breaking up of many happy homes. Many a settler has had to lay down his tools, and where he would otherwise take his swag and march off with a broken heart he has said, "No, I will take up the gun and fight for those who are injuring us to-day." This border barbarism will act detrimentally to the self-preservation of the State. It will mean that those who do not believe in federation will have the best argument to put up against its continuance. We know perfectly well that our friends on the other side have claimed that there should be a great comradeship between man and man, not only within our own walls but right throughout the civilised world. They talk about the comradeship which should bring men together, to live for each other, and to assist in uplifting each other. What do we find in our Commonwealth? We find that the State seizes certain products which are demanded by the people in the other States of the Commonwealth. Does not that break up the fundamental principle which we entered into as a great Commonwealth? We have the State seizing the property of those who have not got a backing like the pastoralists and who have no money to defend themselves against the present Administration owing to the bad seasons. It is time we considered the comradeship and the Commonwealth we have advocated so long, and break down the arguments of the present Government which are detrimental to the self-preservation of the State.

Mr. KIRWAN: When did you join the socialist party?

Mr. CORSER: We are not troubling with the socialism which was preached to us many years ago. To-day we have anarchy and socialism preached by many supporters of the present Government, notably the Independent Workers of the World. If that is the socialism the hon. gentleman refers to, then I am not a socialist. If socialism means a comradeship which will provide men with an equal right to live, and an equal right to work, and everything else equal, then I say I am a socialist. If the socialists only want to look after those within their own walls to the detriment of those outside, then I am not a socialist. We have a right to see that the teachers get the increases that were promised to them. We know that the taxation put on by the present Government has been acting to the detriment of the industries in the country. The Government have put on taxation which has returned them hundreds of thousands of pounds to squander amongst their friends. We know that the men on the farms have not had crops for two years, and yet they are asked to pay the income tax. I know one man who bought a farm of 1,000 acres for £4 per acre, and he put the whole of his savings,

amounting to £500, into that farm. He is now called upon to pay £47 in taxation in connection with that farm. He has not paid it, and I do not suppose he ever will. The Government should make inquiries into the various prickly-pear remedies to see if they are effective in destroying the prickly-pear. If it cannot be destroyed, then it is only right that the settlers who took up their farms in good faith should be granted some concession in the amounts they have to pay the Government. Things have turned out different from what they expected. The anticipations of the farmer, the same as the anticipations of the Government when they took over the Treasury benches, have not been realised. The results have shown that the farmers on our fair lands will not be able to carry on unless something further is done to make it possible for them not only to be taxpayers but to find some money to enable them to keep their families going in the meantime, and not to extract from them the 10 per cent. fine for not paying their rents when they become due. The excuse was made in my district that this fine was being collected simply because it appeared on the statute-books. We know perfectly well that when the sewerage workers here broke the law, attempts were made in this House to legalise their action, but no action was taken to enable the farmers to be freed of that 10 per cent. fine which the Government are attempting to extract from them.

We are concerned somewhat in the amount of Supply that will possibly be appropriated for the starting of Government ventures, and if these Government ventures are to turn out the same as that wrecked ship in Western Australia, then far better would it be for the Government to say, "We will go to the country on the records of the oldest Labour party in Australia, on what they have accomplished, and see whether the country is willing to put in force in Queensland that which poor Western Australia has had to endure for some time." I have figures here which show that the farming estate in Western Australia has shown a deficit of £14,000. On the State sawmills they lost £103,000; on their implement works—as advocated by the Government here—they have lost £131,000; on fish supplies, £5,500; on brickworks, £1,500. Other ventures might show a surplus, more particularly those that have received some benefit through the war, but otherwise everything the Government has handled has shown a loss.

Mr. COLLINS: Did you never hear of any private failures?

Mr. CORSER: When they are failures you hear nothing about them—(Government laughter)—but when they are successful our friends on the other side say the workers should get the profits and not the man who has put his capital into the venture. When a man fails, the workers who have had all the money he could collect or borrow do not say through their Labour members that they should do something to help him.

At the present time we are not suffering the disadvantages from day labour that we are going to suffer in the near future. I am not going to say that day labour is the best class of labour, because in many instances it is not, and I would instance the Mundubbera Traffic Bridge as a case in point. The Mundubbera Traffic Bridge was estimated to cost £5,105. It was built by day labour, and the last figures I could get

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showed that it had cost £7,300. The greatest danger in day labour does not confront us to-day, because we have not amongst our workers the fully organised I.W.W. that threatens us in the near future.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I was very kind to your friends.

Mr. CORSER: I do not forget that, and I know the Secretary for Railways is going to be very kind to the Burnett. When we have in our Government works under day labour a system of slow work, then we will see the real trouble in connection with day labour.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Your Government provided for slow workers.

Mr. CORSER: The Liberal Government did provide a means of finding work for slow workers, but members opposite are throwing interjections across this Chamber to hide their actions in publishing the names of those slow workers. That is the biggest insult they could have offered to those men—instead of finding them work they published their names throughout the length and breadth of Queensland in their "Industrial Gazette."

They told the people of Brisbane that the Liberal Administration was responsible for the high cost of living, and instanced the destruction of a certain amount of fish. I would like the Government to say whether that has not taken place since they have been in office. I will say further that within the last five days an amount of fish was dumped in the bay simply to keep up the cost of living, as was the case when the Liberal party were in power. You find the same things existing under the present Administration, but to a greater extent than they existed whilst we were in office, and these things are likely to continue.

Another matter that has interested me to some extent is the withdrawal of the police magistrate from Maryborough. I am sorry the member for Maryborough is unavoidably absent, and on his behalf I enter a protest, with the member for Wide Bay, against the withdrawal of the police magistrate from Maryborough. We have every right to be considered in that the Burnett district is still a court of petty sessions district administered from Maryborough, and how is it possible for the officers concerned to carry on without extra assistance? It means that we are throwing upon those officers work that was previously performed by the police magistrate. Many of the police in my district act as clerks of petty sessions, and when the police magistrate was there they had to work fourteen or fifteen hours a day; and how long will it be necessary for them to work now that the Maryborough police magistrate has been withdrawn?

Mr. WELLINGTON: Is this the first time you have entered a protest against overwork?

Mr. CORSER: The hon. member's ignorance of my appeals in the interests of workers makes it necessary for him to say that. Now that the Secretary for Railways thoroughly appreciates the position, I sincerely hope that whatever provision is being made for money there will be the fullest provision made by the department over which he presides, and I sincerely hope that those settlers who are waiting for railways will receive first consideration, because in such districts we will find the land necessary for those who are fighting for us on the other

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side to-day. Would it not be possible for the Government to act with our Federal Administration—

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Are you smooching now?

Mr. CORSER: If I had tried to smooch to the Secretary for Railways, we would not have been in the good position we are in to-day.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You had nothing to do with it.

Mr. CORSER: The Government of Queensland should take action with the Federal authorities to see if they cannot stamp out something that is endangering every trooper in and around this district. It has had a serious effect on the soldiers who have come from the Burnett, and I know of two young fellows who came down here at different times and both of them died in Brisbane before they were able to strike one blow for their country. Since then I have had a protest from another selector asking that the wages of his deceased son be made available to him, and before this matter was fixed up I heard that his neighbour's son has also died here in camp. Would it not be possible for the Government on the spot to do something to put an end to this serious state of affairs. How serious it is will be seen when we know that those who have lost them are not only sorry that their sons are gone, but doubly sorry that they have lost them before they were able to strike one blow in defence of their country. There is a large amount of it going on at the present time. I am not trying to make political capital out of it, as it is not a matter for the Government here, but I think they might very well act in conjunction with the Federal authorities and see if something cannot be done to put an end to the trouble. If there is any treachery in it, it should be at once discovered and abolished, because it has a very serious effect on recruiting as well as on everything else. I sincerely hope that during the absence of these people from the country districts the Railway Department, as well as other departments, seeing that our revenue has been greater than was expected, will see that the freights and fares are restored to what they were when the present Government took office.

The PREMIER, who, on rising, was received with Government cheers, said: I rise to make an appeal to hon. members to allow us to get on with business.

Mr. STEVENS: We are in your hands.

The PREMIER: It is not in my hands, although perhaps it may be a little later, if hon. members are not reasonable enough to fall in with our wishes.

Mr. STEVENS: Is that a threat?

The PREMIER: The position is this: that the Legislative Council, whose sanction to this Bill is necessary in order to make the money available to pay the public servants by Friday, have intimated that they are unwilling to remain longer than about an hour, and consequently it is necessary for us to get the Bill through this House.

Mr. CORSER: Who made that statement?

The PREMIER: I am informed by the Government's representative in the Legislative Council, Mr. Hamilton—

Mr. CORSER: That that resolution was carried by the Council?

The PREMIER: And I take it he is speaking on reliable information, or he would not have conveyed that information to me. Now, it is desirable that the public servants should be paid on

[8 p.m.] Friday, as Australia Day takes place on Saturday, and the patriotic committee have made a special request to the Government that they should be paid on that day. I discharged my duty when I placed those facts before hon. members of this House, and I hope they will be reasonable enough to allow the Bill to go through, and also to go through the Legislative Council to-night. I have listened to the discussion very patiently up to the present moment, and I think everyone will agree with me when I say that the nature of the discussion has been such as might well take place on the Address in Reply—(Government "Hear, hears")—which will be at once continued when this business has been disposed of. The only effect of a continuation of the discussion of this Bill will be to prevent the public servants being paid on Friday, and detrimentally affect Australia Day on Saturday.

Mr. MORGAN: You must take the responsibility for that.

The PREMIER: I am quite prepared to lay the position before the House, and if they do not fall in with my request, well, then, it may become necessary to consider what other steps we should take to facilitate the passage of this Bill during the hour. (Hear, hear!) Now, so many matters have been referred to during the discussion by hon. members opposite that I do not think we would facilitate the passage of the measure if we attempted to reply to all of them to-night. I do not propose to do so, but I do wish to make reference to some very ungenerous criticism by some hon. members opposite with regard to the nature of the business which made it necessary for me to visit England during the last year. I think I have taken the opportunity on several occasions to explain that cablegrams were received from the Agent-General a considerable time before I went home, that I did not go home in connection with particular cases, but incidentally I appeared—and appeared for the Government—in a very important case when I was at home. That was the case of an appeal from the Supreme Court of Queensland in connection with the stranding of the steamer "Eastern."

Now, there is some business which I dealt with at home, and which has been hinted at by some hon. members opposite, and there is no one more cognisant of the fact than they are that it is impossible for us to discuss those matters here. Reference has been made by the leader of the Opposition to the sugar industry, and he stated that I had written an article in "Reynolds's Newspaper," stating that one of the things I was dealing with was industrial matters connected with the sugar industry. Now, I never made any reference to industrial matters in any thing I said or wrote with regard to the sugar industry when I was in England, and I quote for the information of hon. members opposite from "Reynolds's Newspaper" of the 14th May, when I made this reference—

"The sugar industry is developing very rapidly. Questions affecting it are among those that I have come over to

discuss with the Imperial Government; and within a year or two I anticipate that we shall increase our supply of sugar beyond the requirements of Australia."

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Would not that be an industrial question in connection with the industry?

The PREMIER: If the hon. member will notice the context, he will find that I am referring to the supply of more sugar than will be required for Australia, and the matter I was publicly advocating—and which the Prime Minister of Australia was advocating—was that some arrangements might be made whereby any extra sugar we might produce would be consumed by the British Empire, instead of allowing sugar to be "dumped" from Germany. The other matters in connection with the sugar industry that I dealt with I do not wish to refer to here; but if the leader of the Opposition calls on me at the office, I will give him some confidential information that I am quite sure he will not use publicly.

The HOME SECRETARY: Why did he not come before?

Hon. J. TOLMIE: I thank you for what you say, but I do not desire to be in possession of confidential information.

The PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition knows that the Chief Secretary has to be in possession of confidential information, whether he likes it or not, and it is hardly a right thing for the leader of the Opposition, or anyone else, to ask for information he knows cannot be given, as was done this afternoon. It is an unfair kind of criticism. It is trying to throw the onus on me in respect to matters upon which they know I must be silent, making the suggestion to the public that nothing has been done with regard to it.

There are some other matters that I hope to be able to deal with in the near future, that I attended to while I was at home, and will result, I think, in the bringing of many hundreds of thousands of pounds to Queensland, and also of making a considerable addition to the supplies of material which the Imperial Government will have for the manufacture of munitions.

Mr. STEVENS: That will be a reversal of your present policy.

The PREMIER: It is not necessary for me to reply to these irrelevant interjections. The leader of the Country party, the member for Albert, has very pointedly put the question to me as to whether I went home in an official capacity or a professional capacity. In other words, he wants to know whether I received any fees from the Government for arguing the "Eastern" case in England. He also refers to the question of expenses. Now, for the information of the House, I may say that the late Government had made arrangements that counsel should visit England in connection with that case. They thought it was necessary that counsel should visit England, and no doubt the Privy Council did postpone the hearing of the "Eastern" case to permit the arrival of counsel from this State. So far, I might tell you, Mr. Speaker, and hon. members, I have not received the usual fees in connection with the "Eastern" case, and if the leader of the

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Opposition, or the leader of the Country party, thinks that I should not receive them, then I shall not do so.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: If you acted professionally, you are entitled to them.

The PREMIER: Then why do these gentlemen not say so? Do they suggest that when work is done, for which anyone else would be adequately paid, I should not be so? If such is the case, it is an extraordinary position.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MORGAN: Did you not get a verdict carrying costs?

The PREMIER: Yes, we got a verdict with costs, but it has been suggested by the hon. member for Wide Bay that the Liberal Government had all this arranged beforehand, that it was not necessary to argue the case. Well, if that was so, it is a very poor compliment to all the judges of the Supreme Court of Queensland who heard the matter argued on behalf of that Liberal Government and were unanimous against them.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: It was either necessary that we should have the case argued in London by counsel having full knowledge of all the circumstances, or it is a strange reflection on the capacity of the Supreme Court bench of Queensland. (Government "Hear, hears.")

There is one other matter that I feel bound to reply to to-night, and that was the reference to the purchase of certain cattle by the Chief Secretary's Department, I think 600 head of fat cattle, from Mr. Purcell. It became necessary in March last to get cattle somewhere to supply our State butcher shops, and Mr. Purcell supplied 600 head of cattle to the Government at a cost of £12 per head. Inquiries were made by the department to see if it was possible to get cattle anywhere else, and they were then selling in the Enoggera markets at from 50 per cent. to 75 per cent. higher than that.

Mr. MORGAN: Higher than £12 per head on the ground, that you paid?

The PREMIER: Yes, higher than £12 on the ground. The supply of those cattle was entirely to oblige the Government.

Mr. MORGAN: What did they weigh?

The PREMIER: And to keep up the supply of meat to the State butcher shops. The whole of the meat did not go into the State butcher shops, and a quantity was supplied to the Imperial Government at the price of 4½d. per lb. f.o.b., and the Government, after supplying their shops and sending the balance to the Imperial Government, made a profit of £600 on the deal.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. D. ARMSTRONG: Are there many more philanthropists like Mr. Purcell?

The PREMIER: I am quite certain that no other similar cattle could be purchased at such a low price. I am asked what they weighed. Those cattle weighed about 7 cwt.; 784 lb. was the killed weight. They were the best fat cattle he had, and he could have got £13 per head from any other buyer. I hope the hon. member will be satisfied—that he will not feel proud of the suggestion he made that those cattle were bought at some fancy price, or at some price at which they ought not to have been purchased.

[Hon. T. J. Ryan.]

I will have a further opportunity of dealing with the criticisms that have been levelled at us by the Opposition, and I will content myself now by saying that if any individual on the opposite side of the House had the opportunity of receiving the monetary advantage that will accrue to Queensland as the result of my visit to the old country he would be very nearly a millionaire.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FORSYTH (*Murrumba*): I am very glad indeed that the leader of the House has given us at least something to go on with. It has been the usual thing, right since he left, to try to find out what he went home for. He has explained to a certain extent why he did, but I notice in the "Daily Mail," a paper which supports the Government very fully, this same question only a very short time ago. They said—

"Mr. Ryan is on his way back to Australia. Mr. Hughes is also on his way back to Australia. Mr. Hughes having started first, ought to get here first. These two great men—who are not necessarily mentioned in this paragraph in order of greatness—will arouse varying degrees of enthusiasm on their return. Mr. Hughes will bring home the laurels; Mr. Ryan will bring home—Mr. Ryan. He will also bring home some illustrated pictures, a report of a speech or two, recollections of something said at a banquet, and memories of a few motor trips in Ireland, Scotland, and other interesting places. We were told before he left that his visit was necessary in some way for the good of Australia. Perhaps it was. We don't exactly know how or why, but we are all willing to learn."

That is an extract taken from the "Daily Mail," which supports the present Government, and I think that opinion is general throughout Queensland as to what he went home for. He has done something which will be of benefit to Queensland, but he took no less than two Under Secretaries, and the general consensus of opinion is that there was not the slightest necessity for taking two, as one would have been enough, more especially as we have to try and save money in every way we can. However, as the hon. gentleman says he will review this question later on, I do not intend to keep the House on that subject, and I see no reason why this motion should not pass during the next hour.

I want to make some reference to the finances of the State. I look upon the finances of Queensland at the present time as being in one of the most serious conditions they have been in for many years. Twelve months ago the Treasurer, when he made his financial speech, said—

"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. The present Government, on assuming office, realised the immediate necessity either to raise money at an early date or to shorten down expenditure on public works. We believed in the wisdom of proceeding cautiously with loan expenditure, but also realised the serious effect upon our industries and progress which would result from too drastic a slackening of developmental works. Railways

are required more urgently than ever to bring into use for closer settlement agricultural and grazing lands which are now being made available."

It was proved most conclusively—and no one knows better than the hon. gentleman—that the late Government left a very large amount of money. I am going to discuss the question of the actual hard cash we had, and compare it with the amount we had in hand on the 30th June. The hon. gentleman said distinctly that the late Government only left a little money. As a matter of fact, the late Government left the Treasurer in hard cash, in money and bills, no less than £2,400,000. And how much has he got now at the end of June? The total amount the hon. gentleman had at the end of June in Brisbane, from all sources, was only some £774,000. But when we left the Treasury twelve months ago, we left him in hard cash in Brisbane no less than £2,387,106. I do not want to be unfair. He said that he had £400,000 hard in London, as against about £300,000, which we left. I say that it is most contemptible to be placed in the position of having so very little money. Where are we going to get the money we require from? The hon. gentleman expects to get some money from the Commonwealth Government, and I hope he will get it, but he had no right to spend the enormous quantity of loan money which he spent last year. He says we have only £2,400,000 to spend this year. How much more does he want to spend? I remember the Labour Government getting into power in 1902. How much did they spend then? How did the people live? I do not say for one moment that public works should stop, but it is quite evident to me that the Government have any quantity of money to go in for all sorts of wild schemes which must inevitably result in loss. They are going in for hotels and for cattle stations. They have paid £66,000 away already from the trust fund, besides giving debentures. For sawmills they have paid £28,915 from trust funds, and in industrial undertakings £43,173 from loan fund. Would it not have been very much better than spending money in this way if they had spent it in some of the agricultural districts and given the people railways?

Mr. BERTRAM: You believe in station property, don't you?

Mr. FORSYTH: These undertakings, I think the Government will find, would be better left to private enterprise. They would then have infinitely more money in hand to go on with the building of railways and other necessary works throughout Queensland. We know what has happened in Western Australia and New South Wales in connection with these industries, and the loss which has been made. The hon. gentleman wants to give the people of Queensland fish, but in going into an industry like that he stands the risk of losing a lot of money, which means that extra taxation will have to be imposed on the people to make up the loss. The Treasurer said that the State sawmill has been the means of reducing the price of timber. I think it has been the means of raising the price of timber.

The TREASURER: I have direct evidence, so be careful what you say.

Mr. FORSYTH: I know that two of the largest sawmillers lost thousands of pounds last year, and they could not go on unless

they got a higher rate, and at the present time they are getting 3s. a hundred feet more than they got then.

The TREASURER: They delayed in increasing the price for six months.

Mr. FORSYTH: As a matter of fact, the State sawmills are getting the same price as they are. In any case, there will not be enough money made out of it, and I say the sawmills are a dangerous proposition, and one which the Government should leave alone.

The Government are going in for hotels. We see that tenders have been called for the erection of an hotel to cost £16,000 or £17,000. Would it not be better if the Government went in for legitimate businesses instead of private enterprises like these, which are going to be the means of losing money? The people in Western Australia have been losing money in these enterprises.

Then the Government are going in for butcher shops. The object is to provide cheap meat, but the conditions under which the Government arranged to give meat at 3½d. for fresh beef and charged the people at home 4½d. is an absolute scandal. All the people in Brisbane cannot go to get the meat. Those who go there get the benefit, but there are thousands who cannot avail themselves of it, and have to pay a higher price. Why should we cater for a particular section in the community and allow some people in Brisbane, Rockhampton, and Townsville to get meat at a lower price than others? I think the Minister said that there were 1,000 customers a day, but that number is nothing in comparison to the total population of Queensland. I say that it is scandalous for the Government to charge 4½d. to the home people who are fighting our battle and give the people remaining behind meat at 3½d. I would advise the Government to leave these industries alone, and stick to legitimate business.

Take the butter business for example, and read the statement of the hon. member for Oxley in the "Daily Mail" of 26th July, in which he condemns the Government out and out in connection with the butter deal. It is the people and the producers of Queensland who have to suffer. The farmers have been suffering through drought, and selectors have been losing stock, and yet the Government say they do not care twopence for them, and that they will protect their supporters in Brisbane at the expense of the general community. It is the duty of whatever Government is in power to endeavour to act fairly to all sections of the community, but the present Government have imposed burdens on the people right and left. They have dragged money out of the pockets of the people, and have been spending hundreds of thousands of pounds which they might have saved.

I hope that what has been said this afternoon will be the means of inducing the Government to go slow and try to deal fairly with all sections of the community, and not for the benefit of one class only.

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): In regard to the last remark of the hon. gentleman, I can tell him that, so far as this party is concerned, the Government are very much opposed to the "go slow" policy.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Hon. E. G. Theodore.]

The TREASURER: The hon. member has asked some questions in regard to the loan fund, and it is only right that I should rise and make a remark or two in regard to that fund. It is an important question, and the hon. member is quite justi-

[8.30 p.m.] fied in asking for any information about it. The hon. member

tried to make out that the position to-day is worse than the position was at this time last year. He has also said that the satisfactory position of the finances at this time last year was due to the Liberal party. He said that the condition of affairs to-day was unfortunate and deplorable, or words to that effect. I can inform the hon. gentleman that we can see further ahead at the present time than we could at this time last year, owing to the caution that has been exercised by the present Government.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The TREASURER: We are in a more secure position to-day, and we are able to carry on at the rate which we have set for ourselves, not only to the end of the present calendar year, but to the end of next calendar year.

Mr. BARNES: How long have you known that?

The TREASURER: We have known it for some time, and I have made no secret of it for some time past. I said at the close of the last session, when the hon. member for Murrumba asked me what arrangements had been made in connection with the loan fund, and how long we could carry on. I told him that I had no hesitation in saying that I felt sure we could carry on at the rate we had set for ourselves for the whole of this calendar year. Since then, I felt quite sure that we could carry on, not only for this calendar year, but to the end of next calendar year also, without any difficulty at all, within the limit we have set for ourselves—that is, provided, of course, that we are not called upon to meet any exceptional expenditure.

Mr. ROBERTS: That means that you have slowed down.

The TREASURER: That means that the hon. member does not know what he is talking about.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and laughter.

The TREASURER: The loan fund at the present time is as the hon. member stated it to be, but we have yet to receive some money from the Commonwealth Government. We have to receive from the Commonwealth Government a further £1,362,000 in regard to this calendar year. So that will supplement the fund which the hon. gentleman stated we had in hand at the 30th June last. The hon. gentleman has quoted the condition of the fund correctly, but we have definite knowledge now of what we will get during the balance of this year.

Mr. FORSYTH: The loan money you have at the present time is not any more than you had at this time last year.

The TREASURER: No; but we know what we are going to get—that we are going to get a certain sum during the remaining portion of this and during next year. When the hon. gentleman's Government went out of office last year they did not know how much money they had left to the credit of the loan fund. They did not know the position at all. The hon. gentleman can see that

himself by looking up "Hansard." He can see where, in the early stages of last session, he called attention to the fact that my predecessor in office, Mr. Barnes, had made a statement, some months previously, stating that the loan fund was such as would enable the Government to carry on until September. I think it was in August that the hon. gentleman asked the question; and he said that, as it was nearing September, he would like to know the condition of the loan fund and how long it would last. The hon. gentleman did not know the position at that time, and my predecessor, as Treasurer, was not able to say exactly how the loan fund stood when the late Government went out of office. The hon. member for Murrumba was left in entire ignorance of the position, and so was the leader of the Opposition, and it was not until the information was given to the House by myself that they knew exactly what condition they left the loan fund in. I merely rose to-night to show the position. The hon. member for Murrumba expressed the belief that there was cause for considerable anxiety in connection with the financial situation.

Mr. FORSYTH: I should think so, too.

The TREASURER: So long as we do not exceed the present rate of expenditure, we have sufficient money to carry on, not only to the end of the present year, but to the end of next calendar year as well. Unless there is something that is quite unforeseen at the present time—something which our financial advisers know nothing about, or which the Commonwealth financial advisers know nothing about, then we will be able to carry on quite easily until the end of next year.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Will you give us some information about the expenditure?

The TREASURER: The hon. member for Murrumba stated that we spent £3,000,000 last year, and that provision was made for the expenditure of £2,400,000 this year. He pointed out that the expenditure was too great; yet, I must say, there is no member more emphatic in his demands for money from the loan fund than the hon. member for Murrumba himself. (Government laughter.)

Hon. J. TOLMIE: And you are quite consistent in turning it down.

The TREASURER: The hon. member for Murrumba, on behalf of his electorate, certainly advanced some very good propositions for loans to local authorities. A lot of the requests were financially sound, and would be profitable undertakings to the Government, if the Government could finance them without difficulty or embarrassment. But there are other local authorities who have propositions to advance which are equally sound, and we have to some extent to regulate the amount due for advancement to local authorities, and it happens that a great number of local authorities have to wait. The position is that this year we have had to deal with applications from local authorities for loans involving £1,400,000. Of course we could not meet them. I have no hesitation in saying that if times were normal and the money was readily available we could safely finance all those undertakings.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: You are getting money in from the local authorities every year at the rate of £500,000, and you can reloan that to them.

[Hon. E. G. Theodore.]

The TREASURER: We are not getting £500,000 a year, but we are getting a large sum, and it is also available to loan again to local authorities. I think that the hon. gentleman will admit that the Government is exercising the greatest caution, consistent with the present situation, and at the same time making advances to local authorities who have pressing works on hand. If we carried out the hon. gentleman's own views with regard to the curtailing of the loan expenditure, I do not know how much he would wish us to curtail it to. He knows that the loan expenditure for this year is £2,400,000.

Mr. FORSYTH: Too much!

The TREASURER: Supposing we limited it to £1,000,000, would that suit the hon. gentleman?

Mr. FORSYTH: No. Make it £2,000,000.

The TREASURER: That would be only £400,000 less than the sum we have allotted for this year, and that would make very little difference in the financial situation.

Mr. FORSYTH: It would be £600,000 less than you spent last year.

The TREASURER: I think that the position is eminently satisfactory.

Mr. FORSYTH: How will the trust fund help you at all? It is only £3,600,000 in debt.

The TREASURER: What would the hon. member advocate in regard to the trust fund?

Mr. FORSYTH: I advocate that you should be a little more careful with the money you have in hand at the present.

The TREASURER: We can do that by limiting the amount advanced to agricultural settlers from the Agricultural Bank. Would the hon. gentleman advocate that? The hon. gentleman must realise that the Government, so far as it can proceed with safety, has not done anything more than they are entitled to. They are endeavouring to meet all the applications from agriculturists and others who look to the Government for assistance; and, so long as we go on doing that with safety, it is the best policy to adopt. So far we see no reason for being in any way afraid of the present financial position. We can see further ahead to-day than we could see at any time during the last twelve months. Before sitting down I might refer to one or two questions that have been raised by hon. members on the other side. The hon. member for Drayton referred to something which he described as "scandalous action" on the part of the Government in connection with the Great Fitzroy Mine. The hon. member was sadly misinformed with regard to that particular business, and I want to correct any false impression he may have in regard to it. The hon. member said we had the option of purchasing the whole of the machinery, valued at £80,000, and putting into commission again the whole of the mine employing 500 men, with an expenditure of £20,000, but that we turned down the offer, thus doing irreparable harm, he said, to the mining industry and preventing the possibility of employing a large number of men. He also reflected upon the action of the hon. member for Fitzroy in setting the value of the machinery at a ridiculously low value in his report to the Government. It is quite true that, at the suggestion of the Minister for Mines, the hon. member for Fitzroy consulted the Minister for Mines with regard to that plant.

There is no member of the House who is more competent to give information as to the value of machinery than is the hon. member for Fitzroy. (Hear, hear!) So far from decrying the value of the machinery of the Fitzroy Mine, the hon. member for Fitzroy informed the Government, long before the negotiations were broken off, that the value of the machinery even at a forced sale would be at least £20,000.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Did he not say this afternoon that it was worn out?

The TREASURER: No. The hon. gentleman could not have followed him. I will show that the Government, instead of turning down this proposition, made every effort to assist them. When they first approached the Government the Minister for Mines, Mr. Hamilton, agreed to a proposition to give financial assistance at the rate of £1 for £1 up to £10,000. Subsequently, the debenture-holders foreclosed on the property, and they made an offer to the Government. The Government had reports made, and then made a proposition something like this: That if the debenture-holders, who were in possession of the property, agreed to unwater the mine and enable the Mines Department to thoroughly sample the mine, and would, in the event of the examination being satisfactory, give the Government a first mortgage over the assets of the company, the Government would advance them £20,000, in order to enable them to carry on. That was an absolutely reasonable proposition, and a more favourable one than was made, under similar circumstances, by any previous Government. The debenture-holders declined to avail themselves of the offer. They disapproved of the condition which required them to give the Government a first mortgage over all the assets of the company; and, of course, the Government could not do business with them. I just mention this to show how badly informed the hon. member for Drayton was. If the Government had done what he suggested and advanced £10,000 or £12,000 without any security, he, as a representative of an agricultural district, would have been one of the first to complain.

Then, the hon. member for Dalby said that the Government had been guilty of appropriating money illegally, and that it had also been pointed out by Mr. Justice Lukin. The hon. member said to-night that the Government had been making illegal payments because warrants had not been issued.

Mr. VOWLES: No. I said because the House had never sanctioned the appropriation.

The TREASURER: Let me inform the hon. member that he sat behind the Government which did exactly the same thing that he is now complaining about—that is, making payments without parliamentary appropriation. It is done every year, and it has been done every year since the Audit Act was passed in 1874.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: When you were in opposition you always objected to it.

The TREASURER: No. The then Opposition never objected to the payment of unforeseen expenditure under the authority of the Governor's warrant. What a certain judge called attention to was—the hon. member apparently did not follow carefully that particular point—that payments were made under the Governor's warrant, but such warrants were not countersigned by the Auditor-General. The Audit Act provides that,

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where contingencies arise and payments have to be made, such payments can be made in anticipation of parliamentary approval. This has been done for many years past, and previous Governments, under which the hon. member served, on scores of occasions issued such warrants and made such payments. The Audit Act requires that the warrants are to be presented to the Auditor-General, who is prohibited himself from signing them, but he has to state in the margin his reason for withholding his signature, and the reason always stated is "No parliamentary appropriation," but the warrants are then presented to the Governor, who invariably signs them and the payments are then made, and that is how past Governments have proceeded. That is how the Philp Government carried on the business of the country during the crisis in 1908, when they had no parliamentary authority at all for spending not a few hundreds, but hundreds of thousands of pounds. I ask hon. members who are getting so particular on this point what happened last year, when the Supplementary Estimates were presented to them? Did they not give parliamentary sanction to all those payments, which had been made on the Governor's warrant? Of course, they did, and will they not do the same this year? When the Labour party was in opposition, we always passed the Supplementary Estimates, practically without discussion, because we were reasonable enough to recognise that, during the parliamentary recess, parliamentary authority cannot be got for unforeseen expenditure, and hon. members opposite will, I am sure, do so now, because they recognise that Executive authority must be sufficient in such cases.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BARNES: Justification for the attitude taken up on this side of the House has been shown in the speech of the Premier, supplemented by the speech just made by the Treasurer. This House wanted information, and we have had to put in about four or five hours pegging away before the slightest response was made to the requests from this side of the House. Now we have got some information, and we understand that in connection with the administration there are matters of very great importance, and we are glad to know that our friends on the Government side of the House now realise, as the Liberal party did when they were in power, that there are matters of very delicate importance that cannot be blabbed about, so to speak, in the House. But, however much information we may have received from the Premier and the Treasurer, we are still in want of further information in regard to some very important matters which have been mentioned by various members on this side of the House.

We still want to know what justification there has been for the expenditure of large sums of money in connection with State hotels. We want to know how it is that the Government to-day are making a departure from their platform. Their platform heretofore, and their platform to-day, so far as we know, is the nationalisation of the drink traffic, with a view to prohibition. Instead of that, what are they doing? In one instance—I think it was in the case of Babinda—they assisted this party to carry a resolution which decided that no hotel was to be erected within a given distance of a sugar-mill. They know that that resolution was

carried on the voices, and what do we find now? They are making a departure from their platform, and are practically entering into the business of hotelkeepers. After their great protestations as to what they intended doing—and many people believed in their sincerity in regard to nationalisation with a view to prohibition—one feels disappointed that men who for years have been supporting and aiding temperance are to-day found supporting, by their influence and their power, the carrying out of such proposals. It will be my duty, in the course of a day or two, with others, to wait on the Secretary for Public Instruction, and one of the thoughts given expression to in connection with the petition which I am to present is this: The teachers want to know why the automatic increases have been kept back from them when the Government of the day could find money to put into hotels.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I can explain matters.

Mr. BARNES: The hon. gentleman, we are aware, has been trying to explain that again and again. We know he is in a confused state of mind over this business. We know that that body of public servants in Queensland are being treated very badly, and they want an explanation from the Minister in regard to this matter.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Hear, hear! I hope they will come along.

Mr. BARNES: They are coming along, and we want to know when you are going to make good your promises—when you are going to give them their automatic increases. That they are an underpaid body of men, who are doing magnificent service for this country, no one can doubt, and it is manifestly unfair that they should be kept out of their just dues.

Mr. KIRWAN: Yes, after ten years of Liberal administration and ten years of unparalleled prosperity.

Mr. BARNES: The revenue to-day is greater than ever. The cost of living we know is greater, and there should be a response on that account alone; and the teachers say, "If the Government are able to find money for this enterprise and that enterprise, in all fairness they should find money to pay us our back dues."

It is well known that there is considerable unrest in the Railway Department, because men are not getting all that they should get, and we on this side of the House want to know when these matters are going to be attended to. Then there is this sugar matter which has been referred to to-night. I am very disappointed that no reference has been made either by the Treasurer or the Chief Secretary as to what the attitude of the Government is going to be in that matter. This is our greatest agricultural industry, and its very life is at stake, and notwithstanding all that has been said there is not a word from the Government side of the House as to what the Government's intentions are. They know the extreme conditions which obtain to-day owing to the last determination of the court, and we wish to know whether they are going to place the sugar-growers on a safe and sure foundation. There is evidence here to-night received by telegram that a crisis is inevitable, and yet the Premier, who is so interested in the industry, has nothing to say. He has stated

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that when he went to England one of the chief matters to receive his attention was in connection with that industry and its development, and yet in the most critical moment of that industry—

Mr. GILLIES: More stinking fish.

Mr. BARNES: When the hon. gentleman is asked to express himself—when he is asked to state whether he is going to give the growers their due and enable them to meet the extraordinary expenditure thrust upon them—there is not a word from the Treasury benches. Information has been given by the Premier and the Treasurer, but further information with regard to these matters is required. We want to know what their attitude is going to be in connection with the sugar industry. It is a matter of the very greatest importance, and some statement should be forthcoming from the Treasurer or from the Premier as to whether the demands of the sugar-growers are going to be met or whether an effort will be made—

Mr. COLLINS: Are you aware that a sugar farm of 100 acres changed hands the other day for £15,000?

Mr. BARNES: I question whether it would change to-day. We want to know what the Government are going to do with regard to the automatic allowances. It is only fair that we should have some statement from them in regard to this matter.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): I was somewhat surprised at the statement of the Treasurer when he said that some months ago he knew that they had quite sufficient to carry on within reasonable grounds. Apparently that is not in accordance with the views of the Minister for Railways, or the Minister for Education, because time and again those gentlemen have shown to various deputations the position as they considered it—that they did not know at all how it would be possible to carry on. In fact, I remember the Minister for Railways asking the men not to ask him to make promises, because it was quite impossible for him to carry them out. There is not the least doubt that the Treasurer knows the position thoroughly well, but he clouds the position in this House. I am quite satisfied that he is aware through his position as Minister for Public Works that there is a crisis in Queensland as far as unemployment is concerned.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Rubbish! Rot!

Mr. ROBERTS: It is no use saying it is "rot." We had a meeting of the building trades' group committee only on Monday night last, and they explained at that meeting at the Trades Hall that there were more members unemployed than at any period during the currency of the present war, and they decided to put the position before the Minister for Public Works, Mr. Theodore, and the Federal Works Registrar, Mr. Todd, in order to see if any work could be started to absorb the unemployed.

Mr. COLLINS: What are you quoting from?

Mr. ROBERTS: I am quoting from the "Daily Standard" of the 23rd of August. We know that there is nothing sensational about it, because they are just as conversant with it as we are, and they do not wish to hide the issue. This same position is rife

throughout Queensland. It is very rife at Toowoomba. If you read your [9 p.m.] "Industrial Gazette," you will find that men are out of employment, and it is because of the actions of this Government during the last few months, which tend to create and will continue to create a larger amount of unemployment. Yet we are asked to-night, after some eight months, to push along on the first day of the session with these votes, and we are told it must be done to pay the public servants. The Government knew, and the leader of the Government knew before he left for the old country, that they had provided for the position thirteen months ago; and the Secretary for Mines, in another place, when explaining the reasons for voting thirteen months' Supply, said that it would carry them through July, so that if they did not meet in July it is the fault of the Government and not the fault of the Opposition.

We are justified in raising our voices to-night against this vote, because there are not only things to which we object which they have done in accordance with the law, but there are other things which they have done contrary to Acts of Parliament. We understand that they propose to provide money for the creation of hotels in districts where this House has specially said there should be no hotels, and that if there were hotels in those sugar districts they should be bought out. It went unanimously through this House, Labour and the then Government voting for it. The Secretary for Public Instruction says that, of course, this hotel is not to be a private hotel. I contend that no member of this House at that time thought that the Government of the day would consider the building of State hotels, and I further contend that it was against the policy of the Labour party. If you ask them for an explanation of their platform, they say that they propose to buy out the hotels, or to confiscate them if you like, with the object of prohibition. Surely it is not necessary first to create in order later to do away! I say that we have every reason for entering our strongest protest on every occasion on this particular matter.

And then we find the Secretary for Public Works, the Treasurer, speaking about the "go slow" policy. I make a very careful study of the various departments, and the only one in which I find any suggestion of going slow is the State Children Department, where you have your widows and orphan children. That is the one department where I find they are trying to cut down expenditure.

Mr. KIRWAN: They have increased it, and well you know it.

Mr. ROBERTS: Whilst members opposite will tell the people that they are the only party working in their interests, we find that is the only department where the question of cutting down expenditure is being put into effect.

Mr. KIRWAN: It is absolutely untrue, and well you know it.

Mr. ROBERTS: I will stake my word in this House that that is correct—that they are making inquiries as to where they can cut off children immediately they reach the age. I give my word, independent of the hon. member for Brisbane. The Treasurer talks about having such a large sum of money to go on with public works, and yet

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at the East Toowoomba School, with 700 children, we find—I have brought it twice under the department's notice within the last few months—that there are over 200 children who have to be taught in the open air, and that in a place where climatic conditions in winter are anything but satisfactory. They can't even find the money to build a shelter shed, can't even find the money to put on a coat of paint. We had the Home Secretary up that way only a short time ago, and it was pointed out to him and the member for Bulimba and other hon. members of the party that in the interests of the State itself this money should be found. But it has not been found, and now the hon. member comes and tells us about the thousands of pounds he has to carry him on for the next twelve months.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I did not intend to say anything to-night, but I do not see why we should allow ourselves to be threatened by the Premier. If we are going to allow ourselves to be threatened like that, we are never going to be allowed to say anything.

The PREMIER: I appealed to your good sense.

Mr. MOORE: It was not an appeal, because a little while afterwards it was said that the Philp Government paid the public servants for three months without authority, and the same thing could be done now.

The PREMIER: We do not want to follow their example.

Mr. MOORE: You can follow any example when you want to, but when you don't want to follow it, it is time to make us shut up. There is one thing the people in my district want to know, and that is: What is going to happen to this butter in the cold stores, and what is going to happen to the money? They want to know whether the loss and cost is going to be distributed amongst the general taxpayers, or have the dairy farmers to bear the whole loss. We do not think it is a fair or a square thing that the producers should suffer for the bungling of the department. At the present time the farmers have to borrow money, because their butter is in cold storage, and they have got to go on paying.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It has all been paid for.

Mr. MOORE: They have not been paid, and they are waiting to know what they are going to get. The sale of the butter has been bungled, and the farmers are losing money, and they do not see why they should.

To refer to another matter: There are various rumours going about with regard to the Warra coalmine. I came down in the train the other night with two miners, and they told me that it was costing £8 per ton to get the coal out of that mine.

The TREASURER: Wholly incorrect.

Mr. MOORE: I told them I thought it was, and I would give the Government an opportunity to contradict it. Then, when the Gowrie mine was purchased, the men were living in a number of cottages, and paying rent, but they have been taken away.

The TREASURER: Did these men know you were a Liberal?

Mr. MOORE: I do not know. I do not inquire what a man's politics are. I go where the company is, and if they have things to tell me I take it in.

[*Mr. Roberts.*

Hon. J. A. FIEHELLY: How did they come to tell you a tale like that?

Mr. MOORE: They are not all tales. In regard to the Warra mine, the inspector of mines is put on as manager. He bought the whole of the houses from Gowrie coalmine when it was closed down, and pulled them down almost over the miners' heads, and took them away to Warra, and there they lie out in the wet and sun, and they are not up yet, whilst the other men at Gowrie have had to go and buy cottages. They were never given a chance to buy the ones they had paid rent for years. Then, a hall was given by Colonel King, out of his own pocket, to the miners for their own use, but it also has been taken away to Warra. Those men think that they should have some consideration, because the timber is only being wasted at the present time. I could understand this treatment if they were farmers, but they are miners, and there must be some mistake for the present Government to do such a thing as that. Then, the inspector of mines, who has to inspect private mines, is also manager of the State mine. Is it right? Is it decent?

Mr. GLEDSON: He is not the manager.

Mr. MOORE: Everybody knows that the conditions at Warra are disgraceful. They would not be tolerated for a moment in a private mine.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: The Minister for Mines is not here.

Mr. MOORE: The Minister for Education looks after things for the Minister for Mines. He took care of the Petroleum Bill, and surely he can take care of the Warra State Mine.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It is all right.

Mr. MOORE: It is all right when you are sitting on the front bench, but when the miners are sitting out in the rain it is not all right.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: What about the miners' party?

Mr. MOORE: Yes; if they have not got a party, I will take up their case every time. There are several of them in my district, and I take the opportunity to put their side of the case; and if the Government have a valid excuse for treating them in this way, I hope they will give it.

There is one other thing I want to mention—that is, about prickly-pear. The Government have closed down the experimental station. We all recognise there is a great deal more work to be done, and yet, for the sake of a paltry £3,000 or £4,000, they have turned down a station which was doing good work, and was going to do more good work. What was the reason? Apparently, there was no reason at all. A little economy like that is no good. It is not going to build a hotel or anything else. Apparently that station was closed because it was established by a Liberal Government. A certain poison was found to affect the pear, and everybody was watching the experiments and looking for the results from it, but now they have to go on in the same old way with the pear growing and the land depreciating.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Do you not know that the Commonwealth have taken over these experiments?

Mr. MOORE: What is the use of the Commonwealth taking them over? The pear is here—it is a Queensland matter, not a

Commonwealth matter. If the station is going to do the slightest good, why should it not be kept on? I suppose it is like what I was told about the Minister who went up to see the cochineal insects at Cairns, but when he got there he said they were not worth looking at because a Liberal Government put them there. (Laughter.) I do not know whether that is true.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They have no prickly-pear in Cairns. That is all you know about it. And they have no cochineal insects there.

Mr. MOORE: I was told by the director of the institute, who ought to know something about it.

The TREASURER: You have Cairns and Mundubbera mixed up.

Mr. MOORE: I know it was at Cairns, or a few miles from it. It may have been Charters Towers. (Government laughter.) Prickly-pear is by no means a joke in Queensland; and if the station was likely to produce any good, why should it not be kept on?

Hon. J. A. FIDELLY: There is none at Cairns, so you don't know much about it.

Mr. MOORE: You do not know anything about prickly-pear. You think it is nothing but a joke; but if you had to stay and fight it, as many people have, you would know it is no joke. Many people cannot walk out of their houses because of it. At any rate, something had been accomplished, and it seems a pity to stop experimentation for the eradication of the pest for the sake of saving a few hundred or a few thousand pounds.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

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

The TREASURER moved—

“That there be granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1916-1917, a further sum not exceeding £1,400,000 towards defraying the expenses of the various departments and services of the State.”

For the information of hon. members he would point out that the No. 1 Appropriation Bill of the last financial year 1915-16 was for two months' supply. During that time they asked for £650,000 from revenue, £100,000 from trust funds, and £300,000 from the loan fund. To avoid the necessity of calling together the House early in July, one month's supply was asked for on account of the financial year 1916-17. No. 4 Appropriation Bill of 1915-16 included an amount from revenue of £345,000, from trust funds £50,000, and from the loan fund £150,000. As heavy payments were not made until the end of the month, the amounts asked for them and granted by the House had enabled them to carry on to the present date.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: How long does this appropriation carry?

The TREASURER: The present Appropriation Bill would cover two months' supply.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Does that include anything outside the appropriation passed last session?

The TREASURER: It is supplemental to that.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Is the expenditure to be on the same lines?

1916—F

The TREASURER: Exactly on the same lines. The only difference as compared with the corresponding period of last year was that in connection with trust funds they were asking for £50,000 more, in consequence of payments to the contractors in connection with the South Johnstone Sugar Mill.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: The salaries are on the same lines.

The TREASURER: Exactly the same.

Hon. J. TOLMIE asked if the sum included any new expenditure that had not been brought before the House. He did not catch whether the Treasurer indicated the amount of loan money at the disposal of the Government this year, or the amount they were going to expend.

The TREASURER: It was the intention of the Government to set the pace in accordance with the amount of loan money which they had definitely shown they would be able to raise during the financial year. He would give the following statement for the information of hon. members:—

DISPOSAL OF THE PUBLIC BALANCES, 31ST JULY, 1916.

	DR.	£	s.	d.
Bank of England	...	475,754	8	6
Q. N. Bank—				
Extended Deposit	£149,334	8	1	
Current Account	1,022,160	15	5	
		1,171,495	3	6
Treasury Notes Coin Account		28,560	0	0
Agent-General—				
Current Account for Deposit Bank of England	...	49,099	5	11
Australian Bank of Commerce Shares, etc.	...	6,129	0	0
English, Scottish, and Australian Bank—P.D. Relief	...	1,365	0	0
		£1,732,402	17	11
	CR.			
Consolidated Revenue	...	169,947	7	2
Loan Account	...	828,492	4	3
Government Savings Bank	...	3,714,285	17	4
Treasury Notes	...	28,560	0	0
Government Savings Bank Inscribed Stock	...	298,365	4	6
		£5,039,650	13	3
Less Dr. Balances—				
Trust Funds	£3,307,147	15	4	
Treasury Notes Account	100	0	0	
		3,307,247	15	4
		£1,732,402	17	11

Mr. BRIDGES (*Nundah*) asked the Treasurer if any of this money was to be applied to State hotels.

The TREASURER said it was improbable that any of this money would be required for the erection of those hotels.

Hon. J. G. APPEL wished to have something more definite than the answer given to the hon. member for *Nundah*. He thought the Treasurer should give them a definite

Hon. J. G. Appel.]

assurance that none of the money being now asked for would be used for the State hotels until the matter had been dealt with and authorised by Parliament.

THE TREASURER: He did not know that he could give the assurance the hon. member had asked for. It was improbable that, during the time for which this Supply was granted, any expenditure would be made on the object he referred to. He might inform the hon. member, in respect to his statement that money had been spent on State sawmills without parliamentary approval, that his statement was incorrect, as provision for State sawmills was made on last year's Estimates.

Mr. ROBERTS said that he was not satisfied with the statement of the Treasurer, and moved, with the view of getting the opinion of the House, that the vote be reduced by £5. When the Sugar Bill was before the House, it was resolved that there should be no liquor sold in these areas. Hon. members opposite said that these hotels were houses of accommodation; but it appeared to him that they were houses of luxury, as a differentiation was made in the matter of accommodation. There were to be two distinct classes of tariff. Without authority from the House, that was most unfair. Then, again, there was a great body of people in the country who had entered their protest to the Acting Premier, in the absence of the Premier, and he was going to give an opportunity to define the position of men who talked about their temperance principles. He personally was not very keen on it; but he had heard these men advocating the abolition of the drink traffic, and saying that liquor should not be sold to the working men, and yet they were going to establish an hotel right in their midst and derive a profit from it. He was not a pledged abstainer himself, but he believed it was in the interests of the working men in the sugar districts that there should be no liquor sold there. He had here a reply by the Treasurer to a body of men representative of all the temperance people in Queensland. The Treasurer told them that it was impossible to put down sly grog-selling in that particular district, and for that reason they were going to open an hotel. Did the Treasurer think that the opening of the hotel in that particular district would wipe out all the sly grog-shops? He maintained that if there was only one State hotel—even if it was worked as he had heard that the refreshment-rooms should be worked, but which, unfortunately, they were not—these sly grogeries would still exist.

HON. J. G. APPEL was inclined to support the amendment. When the House passed the present Liquor Act, provision was made under which it was possible for the Executive to prohibit the sale of liquor on railway lines under construction, and also in the vicinity of sugar-mills.

THE TREASURER: This action is not taken under the Liquor Act.

HON. J. G. APPEL: He was simply pointing out the policy which was then adopted in connection with the sale of liquor in certain localities. Now they had quite a reversal of that policy by the present Administration.

Mr. SMITH: Why should not sugar workers have equal facilities with city workers?

[*Hon. J. G. Appel.*]

HON. J. G. APPEL: These houses where drink could be obtained were a curse to the men engaged in the industry. There were men who made a cheque of not less than £105 at these mills for the sugar [9.30 p.m.] season, and they went away without the swags they brought often, the whole of the money having gone in liquor. That was the policy of the Liberal party, and the amendment would enable the public of Queensland to judge what was the policy of the present Administration. It was a policy to establish State hotels where drink could be obtained in places where the late Administration and Parliament considered drink should be prohibited.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I helped to pass it.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The Secretary for Railways was always in support of that proposal, but now he had reversed his opinion, and he (Mr. Appel) wanted the public of Queensland to realise that. That was the reason he supported the amendment.

THE TREASURER pointed out that, even if the amendment were carried, it would have no effect in reducing the amount spent in the construction of the State hotels.

Mr. ROBERTS: It will if we carry it.

THE TREASURER: Certainly not. It would only have the effect of perhaps knocking £5 off the salary of some unfortunate messenger. No portion of the money mentioned in the appropriation could be used for the purpose of constructing State hotels. If any expense was incurred in connection with such hotels it would be met out of unforeseen expenditure, and it must be covered by a subsequent appropriation in the Supplementary Estimates. No portion of this sum could be devoted to building State hotels. He pointed that out to show how futile the amendment of the hon. member was.

Mr. BRIDGES pointed out that when the House passed the Sugar Works Bill, it was intended that no intoxicant liquors should be sold in sugar areas. Both sides of the House agreed to that. What was the use of the House passing legislation which could be upset during the recess? He had read in the daily papers that the Government had decided to build a hotel costing something like £18,000 in a district in which they had decided there should be no intoxicating drinks sold. The Treasurer said there was no possibility of the matter being affected by the passing of the amendment, as the money for the construction of State hotels was not included in the appropriation now before the Committee. He supported the amendment, as he knew that, if it were carried, the hotels would not be built.

Mr. SWAYNE supported the amendment. Speaking on behalf of the workers in the sugar areas, he knew that it was far better to have the liquor trade excluded from the area around sugar-mills. In support of his contention he quoted from the evidence of Dr. Sylvester Clarke, who gave evidence before the Sugar Commission in 1912. Dr. Clarke was Government Medical Officer at Port Douglas, and he said that amongst other causes of illness and sickness in the sugar districts alcoholic intemperance had been the most potent cause of sickness amongst the field workers in the district. That district was close to Babinda and South Johnstone, where it was proposed to erect a State hotel. Dr. Clarke also said that when the men were

lying at night in an intoxicated condition they fell an easy prey to malaria and other parasites. The Government were evidently going to encourage that trade, and it was most prejudicial to the men that the hotels should be built.

Mr. ROBERTS pointed out that section 12 of the Sugar Works Act of 1912 laid it down—

“The sale of intoxicating liquor in a sugar-works area is hereby declared to be unlawful. For the purposes of this provision, all the provisions of the laws in force for the time being relating to the sale of intoxicating liquor by unlicensed or unregistered persons shall be applicable.”

Then it went on to point out that no licensed victuallers' license or winesellers' license should be granted or made or renewed in respect of premises situated in a sugar-works area. He informed the hon. member for Maree that a deputation from the Independent Order of Rechabites, one of the most successful friendly societies, waited on the Treasurer asking that the hotel should not be built.

Mr. BERTRAM: Do you know that the hotel is being built to prevent sly grog-selling?

Mr. ROBERTS: No. He did not know that.

Question—That the amount of the appropriation be reduced by £5 (*Mr. Roberts's amendment*)—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 17.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Moore
„ Armstrong	„ Morgan
„ Barnes	„ Roberts
„ Bell	„ Stevens
„ Bridges	„ Stodart
„ Forsyth	„ Swayne
„ Grayson	„ Tolmie
„ Gunn	„ Vowles
„ Hodge	

Tellers: Mr. Bridges and Mr. Roberts.

NOES, 39.

Mr. Adamson	Mr. Lacombe
„ Armfield	„ Lennon
„ Bertram	„ Lloyd
„ Carter	„ McLachlan
„ Collins	„ McInn
„ Cooper	„ McPhail
„ Dunstan	„ O'Sullivan
„ Fihelly	„ Payne
„ Foley	„ Peterson
„ Free	„ Pollock
„ Gilday	„ Ryan, D.
„ Gillies	„ Ryan, H. J.
„ Gledson	„ Ryan, T. J.
„ Hardacre	„ Smith
„ Hartley, H. L.	„ Stopford
„ Hartley, W.	„ Theodore
„ Huxham	„ Wellington
„ Jones, T. L.	„ Wilson
„ Kirwan	„ Winstanley
„ Land	

Tellers: Mr. McLachlan and Mr. Pollock.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Lieut.-Colonel Rankin, Mr. Petrie, and Mr. Bayley.

Noes—Mr. Hunter, Mr. A. J. Jones, and Mr. Barber.

Resolved in the negative.

Original question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution.

The resolution was received and agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS.

COMMITTEE.

The TREASURER moved—

“That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, there be granted a sum not exceeding £800,000 from the consolidated revenue fund, exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the loan fund account, £300,000 from the trust and special funds, and £300,000 from the loan fund account.”

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to certain resolutions.

The resolutions were received and agreed to.

APPROPRIATION BILL No. 1.

FIRST AND SECOND READINGS.

The TREASURER presented a Bill founded on the resolutions, and it was read a first and second time.

COMMITTEE.

On clause 1—“Appropriation”—

Mr. FORSYTH: At the end of last year the Government had £350,000 in gold. He asked the Treasurer if they still held that amount in gold.

The TREASURER explained that it was necessary, at a certain period last year, to make a payment of £60,000 full weight in gold, and that the gold accumulation had otherwise been depleted to some extent.

Clause put and passed.

The remaining clauses of the Bill and the preamble were put and passed without discussion or amendment.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment, and the report was agreed to.

THIRD READING.

On the motion of the TREASURER, the Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence by message in the usual form.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

The PREMIER, in moving—

“That, unless otherwise ordered, the House will meet for the despatch of business at 3 o'clock p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday in each week, and that on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, and after 7 o'clock p.m. on Thursday, Government business do take precedence of all other business.”

said: I may say that I hope it will not be necessary to keep private members' day, Thursday, for very long.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I called “Not formal” to this motion, not because I have any objection to sitting four days a week, or—if it comes to that—five days a week. The reason why we are sitting on four days a week this year straight off is, no doubt, due to the fact that Parliament has been called together at such a late period of the year and

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the Government appear to have a considerable amount of business to get through. I would point out, in regard to sitting on Friday this week, that it would be very inconvenient for quite a number of members on this side of the House. Some members have come a considerable distance and made all their arrangements for returning to their homes on Friday, as they have been accustomed to, being quite unaware that this alteration was to take place. Further than that, I would like to point out that this week is being devoted very largely to the purpose of raising funds for our soldiers, and quite a number of members have made engagements in connection with that work, and if they are to carry them out they will take them away from this House. I may say that I myself have an engagement at Greenmount on Saturday morning. I cannot be present in this Chamber on Friday evening and fulfil my engagement, and I will have to forego that engagement. I would regret having to do it, and I think—taking all the circumstances into consideration—the Premier might see his way to agree that on Friday of this week we do not sit. I would like him to take that matter into consideration. I do not wish to divide the House on the question, nor do I wish to take up the time of the House in discussing this motion. It would suit our convenience very much if we did not sit on this Friday, as we have already made engagements in connection with other public matters.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I would like to urge the Premier in the same direction. Members of the Country party, with one exception, have their homes in their districts, and they have made no provision to be away on Friday, and, of course, the [10 p.m.] reasons given by the leader of the Opposition likewise apply to them. I have no objection, if necessary, to sitting every day of the week, except Sunday—I want that day to myself. Of course, it is unfortunate that this has to be done. It arises from the matter that we have already discussed—the calling of Parliament together late, but I would urge the Premier not to sit on this Friday.

The PREMIER: I have listened with some interest to the remarks that have been made by the leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Albert, and I might explain that the motion which I have moved is intended to cover the whole of the session—at all events, for some considerable time. We may have to increase the number of sitting days later on, but if a considerable number of members have made engagements this week, particularly in view of the circumstances that it is alleged that they have made them in connection with the day set apart for patriotic purposes, I think, under those circumstances, the request may be acceded to.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Question put and passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL No. 1.

RETURNED FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Council, returning this Bill without amendment.

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

[*Hon. J. Tolmie.*]