

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 1917

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FRIDAY, 2 NOVEMBER, 1917.

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

STANDING ORDER No. 306.

SPEAKER'S RULING.

The SPEAKER: Hon. members,—Last night, as you are aware, a question of order was raised as to whether under the Standing Order No. 306 it is competent for the Government, after the Chairman of Committees has made his report at 10.30 p.m. in pursuance of the Standing Order, to make Supply an order for a later hour of the day and to resume the consideration of Supply at any time during that sitting of the House.

The question came upon me rather suddenly, and at the moment, not seeing anything in the Standing Order forbidding such a course, I declared that such a procedure was nowhere prohibited, and therefore was in order.

Furthermore, I was led to that conclusion by the fact that that course had been adopted on the previous night without the point of order being raised.

A careful consideration of Standing Order No. 306 has, however, led me to change my opinion.

The Standing Order is clearly intended to terminate the sittings of the Committee of Supply at 10.30 p.m. on allotted days. That is certainly the intent and spirit of the Order, and no attempt to infringe that has been made before.

Our Standing Orders are to be read not merely by the bare word, but also by the spirit and intent when that is clearly apparent; and past usage and practice must also be taken into consideration in determining any point.

I now think that I was in error in my decision last night, and I do not propose to allow such a motion to be made in future.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS.

SALE OF VANROOK BULLOCKS.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

“1. Is the report published in the ‘*Courier*’ (30th October) of the sale of 2,400 Vanrook bullocks correct?”

“2. Were these bullocks the property of the Queensland Government, and were they intended for fattening on Dillalah?”

“3. Is it correct, as published, that the purchaser was a Mr. Williams, of Bathurst, New South Wales?”

“4. At what price were the bullocks sold?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. J. M. Hunter, *Maranoa*) replied—

“1 to 4. Two thousand four hundred Vanrook bullocks, the property of the Queensland Government, and being portion of the 6,192 which this House had been previously informed were travelling

towards Charleville, were sold to a Mr. Williams, the State manager considering it inadvisable to risk the whole lot on Dillalah, the balance being, in his opinion, as many as it would be safe to hold there for fattening purposes."

ENGINE-DRIVERS AND FIREMEN.

Mr. BERTRAM (*Maree*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. The number of railway employees attached to the Roma Street and Woolloongabba railway yards who have qualified for engine-driving but who are still employed as firemen only?

"2. The number of overtime hours worked by engine-drivers, for the month ended 31st October ultimo, in the yards mentioned?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. H. Coyne, *Warrego*) replied—

"1. Roma Street, 14; Woolloongabba, 5—total 19.

"2. Roma Street, 2,793½; Woolloongabba, 1,539½—total, 4,333."

AGRICULTURAL INSPECTION FEES.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*) asked the Treasurer—

"What amount is to credit of inspection fees account in the Agricultural Branch of the State Savings Bank?"

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*) replied—

"The statements of accounts and balance-sheet of the bank, which were laid on the table of the House on 25th September last, contain all the information relative to the accounts of the institution available for publication."

CARPENTERS' UNION DUES.

Mr. CORSER asked the Chief Secretary—

"Has his attention been called to an order in the City Summons Court on Wednesday last, when the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners proceeded against one T. Wilkinson, charging him with being indebted to the extent of 15s. 2d., being membership dues; that the defendant admitted indebtedness, stating he was unable to earn a sixpence in the trade for the last three years, and had no property; that the police magistrate ordered defendant to pay the amount, plus costs, in default forty-eight hours' imprisonment, to which defendant replied that he could not pay. If this is correct, would the Chief Secretary take action to save this individual from imprisonment?"

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

"I have made inquiries from the police magistrate regarding this case, and have ascertained that no action will be necessary to save Mr. Wilkinson from imprisonment, because fourteen days was allowed by the court for the payment of the amount, and the amount was paid into the office of the clerk of petty sessions on the day following the making of the order."

DROVING OF VANROOK CATTLE.

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

"1. When did the Vanrook cattle recently sold by the Government leave Vanrook Station?

"2. How many cattle were started on the road, and how many were delivered?

"3. What drovers were in charge of these cattle, and in how many mobs were they driven?

"4. Were tenders called for droving these cattle?

"5. What rate of payment was made?

"6. What number of drovers were engaged, and what amount of remuneration did each man receive?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS replied—

"1. About 30th July, 1917.

"2. Three thousand seven hundred and nine bullocks started, 3,683 delivered.

"3. Drove Cameron, in three mobs.

"4. No.

"5. 11s. 9d. per head per 100 miles.

"6. See answer to No. 3."

WORKMEN AND CATTLE ON CECIL PLAINS.

Mr. GUNN (*Carnarvon*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

"1. At what date did the Government enter into possession of Cecil Plains?

"2. How many men are now employed—(a) As station hands; (b) as burrcutters or pearcutters?

"3. What number of cattle, horses, or sheep are now on the station owned by the State?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS replied—

"1. 18th September, 1916.

"2. (a) Four; (b) three as general hands.

"3. Eight hundred and seventy-seven head of cattle; fifteen horses."

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—FOURTH ALLOTTED DAY.

(*Mr. Bertram, Maree, in the chair.*)

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS—BALANCE OF VOTES POSTPONED.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS moved—That the balance of the votes of the Department of Public Works be postponed until after the consideration of the Estimates of the Chief Secretary's Department.

Question put and passed.

EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

The PREMIER moved—That £2,265 be granted for "His Excellency the Governor." The amount represented a decrease in the vote of £60, the amount of a gratuity paid to the widow of the late Mr. P. Gorman, late lodgekeeper. Otherwise the amounts were the same as last year.

Hon. T. J. Ryan.]

HON. J. TOLMIE (*Toowoomba*): He did not know that this vote was part of the Chief Secretary's Estimates. However, he was not going to cavil at passing those Estimates. He noticed that they were practically the same as last year. The Parliamentary Library did not receive as much. It was a pity that a little more could not be given to it with a view to having all the books bound. They had one of the best libraries in the whole of Australia, and it was something of which they should be proud. It was a pity the Government could not find some more money to keep the binding more uniform. The reference to the matter in the Chamber might result in more attention being given to the library in future in the direction of seeing that the books were uniformly bound. It would not add to the value of the contents of the books, but anyone who had a library always liked to see the books uniformly bound.

The PREMIER: We will attend to that matter.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Misaki*) congratulated the Premier on taking advice from the Opposition. The shipping of the State came under the Premier's control and he would be in order in referring to the fact that on 19th September he and the leader of the Opposition advised the Premier to utilise the s.s. "Allinga" in connection with the carriage of sugar from the North.

The PREMIER: The "Allinga" is under the Treasurer.

Mr. SWAYNE: He commended the Premier for taking the advice given to him by the Opposition, and it would be to the advantage of the country if he took the advice tendered by the Opposition a little oftener. In the beginning of the session he asked a fair question and he was sorry to notice the attitude taken up by the Premier and members of the Cabinet so far as answering questions were concerned. They had a perfect right to ask questions on matters of public interest and they expected to get answers. He asked the Premier what arrangements had been made for handling the sugar crop for this year.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I suggest to the hon. member that he would be more in order if he waited until we got to the Chief Secretary's Estimates to deal with the subject he is referring to.

Mr. SWAYNE: I shall have another opportunity.

The PREMIER: We are dealing with the Governor's establishment now.

Question put and passed.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

The PREMIER moved—That £120 be granted for "Executive Council" There was an increase of £20, which represented the increase to the messenger. No provision was made for the Clerk of the Executive Council because the salary was paid to that officer as Assistant Secretary to the Premier. He would refer to that when the vote came under consideration.

Question put and passed.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The PREMIER moved—That £1,185 be granted for "Legislative Council." There

[*Hon. J. Tolmie.*

was an increase of £20 in the vote as compared with last year, and it was made up of an increase of £10 each granted to the two messengers.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He knew it was impossible to increase the vote, but he was wondering if the Chief Secretary had taken cognisance of the fact that there was a great increase in the number of members in the Upper House lately.

The PREMIER: Are you suggesting payment of members?

HON. J. TOLMIE: He was of the opinion that more money would be required for postage and incidentals. It might be provided under "unforeseen expenditure."

The PREMIER: We will include it in "unforeseen expenditure."

Question put and passed.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

The PREMIER moved—That £3,730 be granted for "Legislative Assembly." There was an increase of £5 as compared with last year, made up by an increase of £3 to the seasonal messenger, who received £110 instead of £104. Otherwise there was no change in the vote.

Question put and passed.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

The PREMIER moved—That £13,569 be granted for "Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly." The appropriation represented an increase of £1,395. There was an increase of £20 to the junior messenger, and an increase of £1,500 for the printing of "Hansard" and other papers. There was a reduction in the gas account of £25, and a reduction in the library vote of £100. The other items were the same as last year.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He was particularly struck with the reduction in the gas account. That was an indication that there were less all-night sittings.

The PREMIER: It is on account of the operation of the Government's Gas Act.

HON. J. TOLMIE noticed an increase of £1,500 in the printing of "Hansard." That arose indirectly from the fact that there had been an addition to the number of members in the other House. There was one fact that was noticeable, and that was that the "Hansard" staff had arrived at a breaking down strain in order to cope with the extra work entailed on them during the session. He thought it would be necessary that the "Hansard" staff should be increased by at least two or three members. The Speaker was thoroughly in touch with this matter, and would be able to give the Chief Secretary some advice on the matter, and make some arrangements to relieve the staff.

The PREMIER: I understand there are two extra hands.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He could speak feelingly on the matter, as he knew from personal experience what a heavy strain was imposed upon the reporting staff. He was quite certain hon. members did not wish to place too great a burden on the men who, to a very great extent, made the speeches of members of Parliament, and he hoped that the necessary assistance in that direction would be forthcoming.

* Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*) rose to advocate something he had advocated for years in connection with this vote. He was one of those who believed that the vote for "Hansard" should be increased, and that they should send "Hansard" to every person who made application for it. If the electors were able to read the speeches that were delivered in that Chamber, the return of the Government at the next election would be certain. He supposed he sent out as many copies of "Hansard" as any member, besides getting his own speeches published and circulated from time to time in his electorate, owing to the fact that some of the Press would not report those speeches. It would be a good idea for the Committee to consider the advisableness of circulating "Hansard" much more largely, especially as the cost of reporting would not be increased by the increased circulation. He would not send it to every elector in the State, but only to those who applied for it. When the electors read the speeches of the hon. member for Drayton, who was always talking about stealing, they would realise the type of man who went to make up the Opposition, and then the return of the Government would be secure. If the party were returned at the next election, he would insist upon his proposal being carried out, as the people could not have too much knowledge in connection with the proceedings of that House. He hoped Ministers would take the matter into consideration.

Mr. VOWLES: I hope you will circulate in my electorate the report of the debates on the motion of censure.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*) said he was glad to see that there was an increase in the vote for "Hansard" and other printing, but he would like a little more information as to what the "other printing" was. He did not know whether the Government had in their minds what was in his mind. Owing to the unscrupulous methods lately adopted by a big percentage of the public Press, an accurate account of the transactions of the Government could not be obtained through that source. At one time there was a Press that was free and untrammelled, and that recognised that it owed a duty to the public, but now apparently it considered its only duty was to its shareholders and to the big financial institutions that kept those newspapers going. He hoped that the increase was not due to the cause suggested by the leader of the Opposition, but that it was the intention of the Government to establish a parliamentary public paper. Such a thing was absolutely necessary at the present time, when they saw the unscrupulous, unblushing suppression of public facts and the distortion of public facts and of utterances of members of the Government by the Press. He thought the thing could be done in connection with that vote. A true statement of fact could be given about various departmental matters and the various matters affecting the Government. It must be patent to everyone that the Press campaign of suppression and slander had gone beyond all bounds, especially on the part of what were supposed to be the two big papers in Brisbane.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: You include the "Standard," of course.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: He included the "Courier"—the paper of which hon. members opposite were so fond. He did not

know if the "Courier" was naturally vindictive against a Labour Government, or whether that vindictiveness had been increased by the fact that the Government found it necessary to suppress the German edition which the "Courier" formerly published for the benefit of the people with whom the Empire was at war. He did not know whether the action of the Government in suppressing that German supplement was responsible for some of the venom with which the "Courier" pursued the Government. It would undoubtedly be a good thing to publish a parliamentary paper to combat some of that influence. Possibly, the "Daily Mail" was actuated by similar motives owing to the very stringent criticism it had received for its connection with the various unregistered racecourse institutions. It must be patent to everyone that there was an unscrupulous campaign of misrepresentation of the Government going on. The "Courier" had even gone so far as to interpolate its own editorial remarks in statements made by the Premier and other Ministers. It would appear as if it hoped to lead the public to believe that those interpolations were part of the statements made by Ministers. In view of such a state of affairs, the Government would be fully justified in publishing a parliamentary paper to give the facts to the people of Queensland. The suggestion had been made by Mr. KIDSTON before he entered into an alliance with the party sitting opposite, and it was his intention to publish such a paper. In fact, there was a paper published, although not a Government paper, to combat Press misrepresentations and criticism of the Government of the day.

Colonel RANKIN (*Burrum*): To hear the remarks of the two preceding speakers, both of whom supported the Government, one would hardly imagine that the Government closed the year's financial transactions with an enormous deficit. They advocated increased expenditure on what, to a large extent, was an unnecessary vote. One would think the Government were rolling in money instead of having to pass a Bill authorising the issue of Treasury bills to make good the deficit. Personally, he desired to pay a tribute to the very excellent work of the "Hansard" staff—(Hear, hear!)—but it was ridiculous to suggest that they should extend the scope or the circulation of "Hansard" and make it available to everybody in the country.

Mr. COLLINS: The leader of the Opposition agrees with the suggestion.

Colonel RANKIN: He did not care who agreed with it; he held his own opinion, just as the hon. member did. With regard to the proposal of the hon. member for Fitzroy, that they should issue a parliamentary paper, he supposed the hon. member wanted it to be a daily publication.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: Yes.

Colonel RANKIN: Who was going to edit it—the hon. member for Fitzroy or the hon. member for Bowen? (Laughter.)

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: You would get the truth, anyway.

Colonel RANKIN: If anyone wanted to see what one might term the gross misuse

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of public money—if they went into the reading-room and the various rooms of the building—they would see bundles of “Hansard” there that had not been sent away.

Mr. PETERSON: It is your members who are ashamed to send them out.

Colonel RANKIN: Yet, forsooth, they were asked to increase this waste at a time when everybody, not only throughout Queensland, but the whole British Empire, was endeavouring to cut down every penny of unnecessary expense. Yet members of the Government party had the audacity to propose—and one hon. member even went so far as to say that next year he would insist on additional expenditure—to circulate speeches delivered in the House. If hon. members really knew the value placed upon these utterances by the average elector, it would take a good deal of the conceit out of themselves.

Mr. SMITH: You get your speeches well circulated.

Colonel RANKIN: This was not the time to go in for unnecessary expense. It would be well if the whole question of the printing and issue of parliamentary papers was gone into, with the view of effecting economy in that direction. A number of the papers that were issued were never looked at, and some of the returns which were printed were never used. The cost of paper was very high, and they should try to cut down expenses as much as possible. He did not think that in doing so they would interfere with the rights and privileges of members in any way. It was unwarranted and unjustifiable for any hon. members to suggest an increase in expenditure in view of the present state of the finances.

Mr. PETERSON: The Wando Vale inquiry cost £600.

* The PREMIER: With regard to the remarks of the leader of the Opposition, he might say that two additional hands had been put on the “Hansard” staff, so the Speaker advised him—one in the Council and one in the Assembly. He quite agreed with the remarks which had fallen from hon. members with regard to the competency of the “Hansard” staff—(Hear, hear!)—and if it was necessary to give them assistance, provided representations were made to him by the Speaker or President, he should be pleased to give attention to them. A rather interesting proposition had been made by the hon. member for Bowen, and supported by the hon. member for Fitzroy, which he thought might in the future require very serious consideration.

Mr. VOWLES: When you are sitting in Opposition.

The PREMIER: That was too far ahead altogether. (Laughter.) There was no doubt that a tremendous amount of misrepresentation took place with regard to the actual happenings in the House. A very wrong impression of the debates was very often conveyed through headings, or otherwise, by certain sections of the Press.

Colonel RANKIN: Is that confined to any one section?

The PREMIER: He was not now speaking of any particular section of the Press—it would be unfitting to do so—but there was no doubt that there was a good deal of misrepresentation and misapprehension through the fact that the people had not the oppor-

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tunity of reading the debates as they occurred. That would be got over if it was possible to place the actual debates in the hands of the people, so that they could see matters for themselves. When he opened his paper that morning he thought he was going to read about a terrible murder, or tragedy of some sort, when he saw the heading “The Mount Hutton Sensation.” He looked down and found that it dealt with the large profits which had been made by the Government on the sale of the cattle on Mount Hutton. (Laughter.) But he did not altogether see eye to eye with the hon. member for Bowen and the hon. member for Fitzroy. He was inclined to think that the papers were overdoing the matter so much that the intelligent electors must see through the ridiculous misrepresentation that was going on. It was a campaign of so much misrepresentation that it almost omitted to give the public credit for ordinary intelligence. He was sure that anyone reading the heading to that report, “The Mount Hutton Sensation,” and then reading what was underneath it, would come to the conclusion that it was “over the odds,” to use the vernacular. The interpolations, for example, that were put into the remarks which certain Ministers made to representatives of the Press, he was certain, were not approved of by those who thoroughly understood what proper high-class journalism was.

Mr. CARTER: Grossly unfair.

The PREMIER: The man who took up his paper to read what a Minister said, and found the remarks interpolated in this way, got disgusted, and he was inclined to think that it acted as a boomerang, and probably they would find that it would have exactly the opposite effect to what was intended. The fact that such a very large amount of money was being contributed at the present time to the funds of the opponents of the Labour party—

Hon. J. TOLMIE: We do not have liberty fairs, though.

The PREMIER: Made it obvious that that money must be spent in some sort of a campaign which would place a wrong complexion on the political position before the people. The electors certainly could not be bought, but a large staff could be paid to carry on a campaign of slander and misrepresentation. They need only look through the columns of the country Press to see that there was a constant stream of matter contributed from the National Political Council and other bodies, and all that had to be paid for. The staff had to be paid to keep up that campaign of misrepresentation. For reasons of that sort he thought that the suggestion of the hon. member for Bowen, which had been supported by the hon. member for Fitzroy, was well worthy of consideration. The hon. member for Fitzroy also asked: What was the additional printing besides “Hansard”? It referred to parliamentary papers and such like, the taking of minutes of committees of both Houses, and also to postage on parliamentary papers.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): He was rather surprised after the remarks of the Premier last night, when he talked about getting through the Estimates to-day, that the hon. gentleman should get up and make a speech lasting ten minutes purely for the purpose of political propaganda.

The PREMIER: I was replying to questions.

Mr. MOORE: He quite agreed with some of the remarks made by the Premier. He remembered taking up a paper a little while ago and saw a paragraph headed "A Dastardly Outrage."

Mr. VOWLES: What paper was that?

Mr. MOORE: The "Standard." (Laughter.) Those were the sorts of things published by the Press on both sides. He did not think a parliamentary newspaper would affect the position very much. Who was to be the editor? Probably a member on the Government side, and when they had a Minister of the Crown suppressing information—reading part of a letter and suppressing the balance—was it likely that everything would be stated honestly in a parliamentary newspaper? In Western Australia they had abolished "Hansard" owing to the hard times there. In various places in the country districts they could find heaps of "Hansards" piled up behind the doors. The people never even took the trouble to open them. He did not agree with extending "Hansard" or extending the printing of parliamentary papers during the present hard times, especially when the people had to pay such an enormous rate of taxation.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: He was opposed to any extra expenditure on printing, but at the same time, if the truth was published and the actions of the Government plainly put, the Opposition would have nothing to fear. One had only to look at the Auditor-General's last report to see the way the Government had been financing their State enterprises and everything else.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If it was a question of finding the money to pay for the extra printing, a good way would be to get the money in something like the way the Lands Department had made money—simply by altering the entries in the books. By increasing the value of the lease of Mount Hutton they seemed to have made a few thousands.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: He recommended that "Hansard" be paid for out of those increases.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): The Premier, in referring to the question of publishing a parliamentary newspaper, said it might do away with the present circulation of literature by the National Political Council. He (Mr. Corser) had in his possession some communications that he had received, he thought, from the Chief Secretary's Office, printed on Government water-lined paper, and also a letter from a certain organisation here—the Country Press Agency—which was circulated amongst all the papers in the country asking them if they were prepared to come under the Government's free mailing list, and if they did they would secure information twenty-four hours before it was supplied to the city papers. He understood all that was being paid for by the Crown.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member will be in order in dealing with that question on a later vote, but not on this vote.

Mr. CORSER: He just wished to refer to it in passing owing to the Premier's statement that certain organisations were distri-

buted that stuff and a parliamentary newspaper would counteract it.

The PREMIER: I said they were collecting £25,000 to carry on a campaign against this Government, and I defy contradiction of that statement.

Mr. CORSER: To counteract the amount the Government would have at its disposal they would require a lot more than £25,000.

The PREMIER: I think it would be a good thing if the contributors' names were made public.

Mr. CORSER: The Premier's information was certainly news to him. If there was any spoil to help a man at election time, he hoped he would get a little more than he had had in the past.

The PREMIER: If you are not satisfied you had better consult me and I will give you a little information as to what the amounts are.

Mr. CORSER: He did not think all the misrepresentation could be claimed to be on one side. The whole of the misrepresentation was certainly not on the Opposition side of the House. The Premier would not forget a little leaflet—"The Parliamentary Lobby Scandal"—where it said the visitors' room of the Legislative Council was crowded by business magnates and insurance corporations—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. CORSER: If the Government were coming out with that sort of propaganda work, then there was some little excuse for Opposition supporters doing a little in that way. He would not mind how information in regard to the debates was circulated throughout the country. He had never seen anything coming from the National Political Council, but he had seen an amount of stuff coming from the Government publicity organisation and published in the country Press.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): He was sorry that Government supporters should start a stone-wall this afternoon, and he regretted that the Premier himself should support it. It would be very interesting if they had some regular political journal other than "Hansard." Let him pay this tribute to the "Hansard" staff: the reports of the speeches were, to his mind, something marvellous when one came to consider the circumstances under which those reports were made. It was remarkable that the reporters could hear anything above the din of interjections, but the reports they turned out were splendid, and very often they did not require any correction at all. As far as "Hansard" was concerned, if a member was misrepresented, he had an opportunity of going through his speech, and if he was too tired to do that it was his own fault.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: We are not complaining about "Hansard," but the "Courier" reports. Twisting again!

Mr. VOWLES: Who was going to do the editing of the parliamentary newspaper? Probably some partisan person sitting behind the Government, or some member of the House, and under those circumstances were they likely to get a true statement of the facts? The only honest report they could expect was in "Hansard." They could not expect to get a real statement of the facts from any newspaper, because they

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locked at all matters from their own particular standpoint. If hon. members opposite said there was misrepresentation in the "Courier," then members of the Opposition could say the same about the "Standard." Read the "Daily Mail," look at the "Worker," and then read "Hansard." That was the only way of reading between the lines.

Mr. PETERSON: That justifies a parliamentary newspaper.

Mr. VOWLES: Who was going to be the editor? It would be something like the pamphlets issued at election time. They knew how honest the political statements were; how patriotic they were. Then, on the subject of the tremendous waste of material. One had only to go into the little room off the Chamber, and they would find bags full to the top of material which had cost hundreds of pounds to print. There was certain political literature distributed in country towns, and it was generally to be found in barbers' shops, where they would see the "Worker" and other newspapers, and the barbers said they used the cartoons in the "Worker" to paste on the walls and the "Hansards" for shaving paper. He sincerely trusted that the Premier would not seriously consider the suggestion to issue a parliamentary newspaper. If such a publication was issued, the hon. gentleman would find that after next May he would be sitting in opposition, and the present Opposition would be editing the paper. (Government laughter.)

Question put and passed.

PREMIER AND CHIEF SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT. CHIEF OFFICE.

The PREMIER moved—That £8,418 be granted for the "Chief Office" of the Premier and Chief Secretary's Department. Hon. members would observe that there was a change in the name of this department. The former title did not correspond with the actual state of things. While, for many years past, the portfolio held by the Premier was that of Chief Secretary, the department included many matters which, in the other Australian States, were no longer placed under the Premier's direct control. In each of those other States a separate Premier's Department was created to embrace only the administrative functions properly appertaining to the Premier. In Queensland, the Government did not propose to go so far at present, but had taken what might be called the transition step. The department became formally what it had long been actually—the Premier and Chief Secretary's Department, the Premier reserving for his own immediate action the matters that in all the States were regarded as being within the Premier's particular province, and the other matters being attended to by a colleague. The Under Secretary took the additional title of Secretary to the Premier. The change had enabled him (Mr. Ryan) to give well-deserved promotion to some of the officers of the department. The late Chief Clerk had been appointed Assistant Under Secretary, with an increase of £100 per annum, the late accountant had been made also chief clerk, with an increase of £50 per annum, and the senior clerk had been made Clerk of the Executive Council and Assistant Secretary to the Premier, with an increase of

£50. The only extra expense entailed by the change was this £200 a year, divided among meritorious officers of long standing. There were certain ordinary increases ranging from £10 to £20 granted to messengers and others, and these made up the increase of £418 on last year's Estimates. The leader of the Opposition would know that while the late Government were in power they were contemplating the formation of a Premier's Department. The necessity for it must be absolutely obvious to anyone who considered the matter for a moment, particularly on account of the manner in which the work of the Chief Secretary's Department had increased. The business connected with Imperial meat supplies, State butchers' shops, and other matters, had made the work of the department very heavy indeed, but, fortunately, he had been able to have the assistance of some colleague throughout. For instance, his colleague the Secretary for Public Lands did the work which attached to what might be called the Chief Secretary's Department, as distinct from the Premier's Department. He was sorry the leader of the Opposition had not understood that the Estimates for the Executive and Legislative were included in the arrangement made yesterday evening. However, the hon. gentleman had made no demur to proceeding with those votes, and in view of the fact that some hon. members might want to get away later, he would state that, if it was more agreeable to them, he was quite prepared to adjourn when the Estimates for the Premier and Chief Secretary's Department were finished—assuming, of course, that they were finished in a reasonable time—and to take the balance of the Works Estimates on some other day, on the understanding that they would get through them by 6 o'clock on that day.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. J. TOLMIE: With regard to the announcement made by the Premier, members of the Opposition certainly did not anticipate that the votes for the Executive and Legislative would be taken with the Chief Secretary's Department. However, as they had seen, the Opposition made no objection to that being done. An arrangement had been made, and they had tried to keep the arrangement. After the statement made by the Speaker earlier in the sitting, there was no possibility of their sitting after half-past 10 o'clock. He had been going to question the Speaker's ruling given yesterday evening, but there was no need to do that now, and he should like to say that, though he had intended taking that course, at no time did he think that the Speaker was actuated by other than a sense of justice in the discharge of his duties. (Hear, hear!) As the Speaker had himself pointed out this afternoon, the motion that the Committee of Supply should be resumed at a later hour of the sitting caught him on the hop, and they knew that all men were apt to take a different view of a matter which came before them suddenly than they would after giving it consideration. There was no resentment or any feeling of that kind on the part of the Opposition in connection with the matter. All they desired was to have the matter thrashed out, and there was no necessity for that now, seeing that the Speaker, in the most magnanimous way, had stated that he gave his ruling yesterday evening under a misconception.

[Mr. Vowles.

With reference to the statement of the Premier that he had altered the name of his department, and called it the Premier and Chief Secretary's Department, he would point out that there was no such office as Premier known under our Constitution, but provision was made for a Chief Secretary. He quite admitted that there must be a considerable amount of work at certain times in the department. He knew that when Mr. Denham was head of the department he was very much overtaxed by the work, and it was suggested that they should subdivide the department. The present arrangement would probably lead to greater efficiency—he did not use this term with the view of implying that there had not been efficiency—and it would certainly save a considerable amount of wear and tear on the officers of the department. He believed that the department was efficiently managed under the conditions previously existing, and he hoped that under the new arrangement there would not be too much strain on the head of the department.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*) did not intend to criticise any of the amounts in the vote, but wished to refer to the [4.30 p.m.] effects of a proclamation issued by the Chief Secretary. The "Daily Mail" gave the following account of an interview with the Premier in relation to it:—

"The attention of the Premier was called to the fact that the steamer 'Buninyong' had sailed on Friday night for the North with a cargo of coal, this being one of the vessels affected by the proclamation issued earlier in the week. Mr. Ryan pointed out that under those proclamations the Government was in a position to acquire a vessel on reaching any Queensland port, but they did not worry about this so long as the vessel sailed."

It was the general impression that the practical state of famine and a good deal of the dislocation of trade throughout the North, and in particular in connection with the sugar industry, were caused by that proclamation, for the reason that shipowners in Sydney and Melbourne were not foolish enough to send a vessel to Queensland with a proclamation like that hanging over their heads, under which it could be commandeered. (Government dissent.) If there was any doubt about it, he could read a communication from Senator Crawford, who was reported as follows in the Press:—

"Senator Crawford (president of the association) stated that when recently in Sydney he was given to understand that arrangements had been made to charter another steamer to bring bags to Queensland, but when Mr. Ryan's proclamation respecting the commandeering of shipping was issued the shipowners were afraid to send any vessels to this coast lest they be seized by the Government."

Mr. COLLINS: I would not believe him on his oath. Labour rat!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Those were plain, unvarnished words. They had it on the authority of one of the Queensland senators, a man who polled more votes than any other man ever got in Queensland, that that

was so. The few hundred votes of the hon. member were nothing whatever to what that man got.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member did not run.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: When such a man made the statement that the shipowners were afraid to send their vessels here, they had to put down the proclamation issued by the Premier as being the cause of the whole of the trade of Queensland being hung up. The hon. member for Mirani, like the man he was, always representing the sugar industry, spent his own time and money in going to Sydney, and was the man who had settled the difficulty in the sugar industry. (Government laughter.) He had told him that it was very difficult to convince the shipowners that they could send their ships to Queensland and that they would come back. That proclamation was the cause of all the distress in Queensland and losses to the producers and the strikes. His sympathy went out to the producers in North Queensland who had lost so much through the upsetting of Government, and they in that House were under a duty to expose it.

Mr. GUNN (*Carnarvon*) asked what proportion of the salary of Mr. Ross, the superintendent of the State butchers' shops, was paid by the Imperial Government and what proportion by the State Government? He understood that a very big proportion was paid by the Imperial Government. No doubt that was all very well when he had to attend to all the meat required for Imperial uses, but since that time he understood that he had been put on by the Government to look after the meat-shops.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Drayton alleged that the proclamation extending the provisions of the Sugar Acquisition Act to shipping was the reason why the owners of certain ships were afraid to send them to Queensland. The proposition was almost too ridiculous for words.

Mr. SWAYNE: Quite true.

The PREMIER: The hon. member must think that the public were a lot of simpletons if he thought they were going to believe that sort of stuff. The proclamation only applied to ships within the State, not to those that afterwards were to come within the State, and when an inquiry was made with reference to a ship that was to bring bags from Sydney to Queensland, he pointed out in his telegram in reply that the proclamation only applied to ships within the State and that it would not apply to any ship bringing bags.

Mr. SWAYNE: They would not trust you.

The PREMIER: They had the assurance of the Government that they would not interfere with any ship bringing bags, so that no delay could have been caused by the fact that the proclamation was issued. He was surprised that the hon. member thought there were people simple enough to swallow his statement.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The shipowners did.

The PREMIER: They did not. None of the shipowners ever referred to it. Mr. Pritchard, who was president of the National Political Council, happened to be in Sydney and he sent a telegram to the effect that they were afraid to send the ship, but the Colonial Sugar Refining Company—who were

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mainly concerned—made no communication on the matter. It was Mr. Pritchard whom he advised that the proclamation did not apply to the ship, and that in any case they would not interfere with it. With regard to the question of the hon. member for Carnarvon, Mr. Ross was an officer representing the Imperial authorities, and for that he received a salary of £600, which was paid by the Imperial Government. He also did some work for the State Government, for which, he thought, a bonus of £150 was paid last year.

Mr. FORSYTH: He gets £750 now?

The PREMIER: Yes. He took it that there was no suggestion that the State were utilising the services of an officer paid by the Imperial Government.

Mr. GUNN: He does more for the State than he does for the Imperial Government.

The PREMIER: He would not say that, because the officer had the whole control of the arrangements with regard to the Imperial meat supplies, and there was certainly nothing in the suggestion. He hoped the hon. member was not making the suggestion that the Government were using the services of an officer paid for by the Imperial Government, because the Imperial Government had the use of the whole of the State's officers free of charge. The Under Secretary and the whole staff in the Chief Secretary's office—and also the Chief Secretary himself—gave their services to the Imperial Government without any charge. It was also well known in addition that the whole salary of the Agent-General was paid for by the Queensland Government, although that officer's time was mostly taken up in looking after the meat supplies for the Imperial authorities.

Mr. FORSYTH (*Murrumba*): There were one or two items he would like some information on. The Chief Secretary mentioned that there was an increase of only £200.

The PREMIER: As a result of the change.

Mr. FORSYTH: The total amount of the increase was actually £518. So far as the Assistant Under Secretary was concerned, he was a most deserving officer, and his increase to £600 was fully deserved. He was one of the best officers that they had in the service, and he was pleased to see that his salary had been raised to £600. He noticed that "incidental expenses" were increasing every year. Last year the Premier asked for £3,000 for incidentals, and this year he asked for the same amount, although, as a matter of fact, the sum of £4,335 was spent in incidentals last year, an increase of over 50 per cent. above the estimate. He hoped the Premier would give them some information as to how the incidental expenses were expended. He noticed that £1,300 was put down for "railway fares and freights, stationery, etc." the same as last year, although £1,740 was spent under this heading during the financial year. "European cablegrams" were reduced from £700 to £600. As the sum of £608 was spent on European cablegrams, he thought that that was about the right amount to put on the Estimates.

Mr. SWAYNE repeated his former remarks congratulating the Premier on taking the advice of the Opposition and running the s.s. "Allinga" to carry sugar from the

North. The Treasurer, in his Financial Statement, said, with regard to the "Allinga"—

"It has also been possible to some extent to relieve the sugar congestion, as on one occasion the vessel took a full cargo of sugar to Sydney."

On the 19th September the leader of the Opposition and he waited on the Premier and asked him to use the "Allinga" for this purpose, but he then ridiculed the suggestion he afterwards adopted. There was no doubt that the threat of the Premier to commandeer the shipping instilled new life into the strike down South, as advices had been received at that time that the strike was just about petering out.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY rose to a point of order, and asked if the hon. member for Mirani were in order in discussing a matter in the Treasurer's Estimates on the Chief Secretary's vote.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Mirani is not out of order. He is referring to some action taken in the Chief Secretary's Department.

Mr. SWAYNE: The vote was controlled by the Chief Secretary's Department.

The PREMIER: The vote is not controlled by the Chief Secretary's Department. It is controlled by the Treasury.

Mr. SWAYNE: The Premier's threat to commandeer the shipping instilled new life into the strike.

Mr. GILDAY: There would be no ships running to-day if he had not taken that action.

Mr. SWAYNE: Their advices from the South showed them that the strike was dying out. The whole thing was obvious. The strikers were syndicalists, and their great object was to take over, or confiscate, the owners' working plant, machinery, etc., and when the State Government of Queensland talked about commandeering the ships it played right into their hands. There was no doubt that the Chief Secretary and the strikers were working into one another's hands. Seeing the losses the producers were put to, the Premier's action was most reprehensible. With regard to the sacks mentioned by the hon. member for Drayton, when he (Mr. Swayne) was in Sydney he was much concerned about the sacks, because a lot of mills in his electorate were hung up through want of sacks, and it threatened ruin to the farmers in those districts. He found that there was a difficulty in getting a small craft, and it was only small craft that could then ply on the coast. The owners were afraid to allow their vessels to come into Queensland waters, because of the Government's threat to commandeer the shipping on the Queensland coast. One small boat had come here before the threat to commandeer was made. When he was in Sydney he asked if another small boat could not be sent to relieve the situation until the big boats resumed running, but his information was that the ship-owners were afraid to send their vessels into Queensland waters for fear they should be commandeered by the Queensland Government.

Mr. SMITH: What nonsense!

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Mr. SWAYNE: He knew the proclamation only applied to shipping in Queensland waters, and that the Chief Secretary had stated that it was intended to restrict it to vessels in Queensland waters, but unfortunately the people throughout Australia did not trust the Ryan Government, and ship-owners were afraid that, when their boats came here, another proclamation would be issued under which they could be commandeered.

The PREMIER: I am quite satisfied so long as the people of Queensland trust the Ryan Government.

Mr. SWAYNE: Whether that impression was well founded or not he was not expressing any opinion, but he was stating what was the feeling of people in Sydney when he was there early in October. There were other matters to which he wished to refer. During this session members of the Opposition had frequently to complain—he would not say of the lack of courtesy shown them by members of the Government, because they did not expect courtesy from the Government—but of the refusal of the Government to give them information which they were entitled to get. They had a perfect right to ask for the fullest information on all matters of public interest. At the beginning of the session he asked the Premier a question regarding the arrangements that had been made under which the sugar crop for 1917 was acquired by the Commonwealth Government. The State Government were a party to that arrangement, and the sugar was acquired under a proclamation issued by the Premier under an Act passed by him. He found that the Premier actually boasted outside that he was making Mr. Hughes do this and do that in regard to that arrangement.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: So he did.

Mr. SWAYNE: Well, if he had so much influence in the making of the arrangement, why did he not inform the House as to the terms of the arrangement?

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: You would have gone and told the Colonial Sugar Refining Company.

Mr. SWAYNE: The hon. gentleman went about the country electioneering and telling the growers in the North that he was afraid the Colonial Sugar Refining Company were going to get an unfair advantage of them, and all that sort of thing, and he (Mr. Swayne) wanted to ascertain whether there was any such danger. The question he asked the Premier was perfectly fair, and one that he was entitled to ask. Yet the hon. gentleman refused to answer that question and referred him to Mr. Hughes. He had nothing to do with Mr. Hughes. He was not a member of the Parliament in which Mr. Hughes sat; he was a member of the Queensland Parliament, and he was entitled to know what were the terms of the arrangement. If the hon. gentleman had done what was right, he would have answered the question.

The PREMIER: I did answer the question.

Mr. SWAYNE: The hon. gentleman did not answer the question; he referred him to Mr. Hughes.

The PREMIER: Was not that an answer? Mr. Hughes may give you more information than he gives me. He has not answered a great many of my telegrams. He answers you and your friend Mr. Pritchard.

Mr. SWAYNE: If the Premier would tell the truth, he knew what the terms of the arrangement were; and if he did not know then he ought to know.

The PREMIER: The terms of what arrangement?

Mr. SWAYNE: The arrangement between the Commonwealth, the State of Queensland, and the refiners, for the acquirement of the 1917 sugar crop.

The PREMIER: The State has nothing to do with the arrangement with the refiners. That is a matter between Mr. Hughes and your friends.

Mr. SWAYNE: He was not talking about friends; he was talking about business. He did not think he had spoken to Mr. Hughes more than once in his life. The hon. gentleman told the growers that he was afraid they were not getting a fair deal under the arrangement, and he (Mr. Swayne) took the ground that, if they were not, then the Premier was to blame, because he should have seen that they got a fair agreement before he acquired the sugar under his proclamation.

The PREMIER: We did not acquire the sugar until the Commonwealth made the arrangement.

Mr. SWAYNE: If the Premier had any doubts as to whether the growers were being treated fairly or not, he should have refused to be a party to the agreement. That was the stand he (Mr. Swayne) took, and it was a fair stand.

The PREMIER: I did what the growers asked me to do.

Mr. SWAYNE: The hon. gentleman should have given him all the particulars about the arrangement, and not referred him to a man sitting in another Parliament altogether. It was a Queensland crop, and the hon. gentleman was a party to the arrangement; and, if he did not know the terms of the arrangement, then it was his duty to know.

The PREMIER: Your friend Mr. Hughes is in the habit of binding me to secrecy when he tells me anything, and then you get up and ask questions about it.

Mr. SWAYNE: If that was the case, the hon. gentleman should not have been a party to the arrangement, and he should not have acquired the crop in the first place unless sure of fair treatment for the producers.

The PREMIER: The arrangement was made by the Commonwealth before we acquired it. I did not acquire it until the growers asked me to make the arrangement. Then I made the arrangement to acquire the sugar. I had nothing to do with the arrangement with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. No one knows that better than you.

Mr. SWAYNE: It was Queensland sugar, and it was in Queensland, and the hon. gentleman had ample powers, and if he did not use those powers he was not doing what he should have done. He was perfectly entitled to ask for the information, and it was the hon. gentleman's place to have had that information before he acquired the sugar under his proclamation. He (Mr. Swayne) brought this matter up on the first vote for Supply this session. He did not know whether the hon. gentleman was acting on the old axiom that, when one had a

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bad case, his policy was to abuse his adversary; but, when he mentioned the matter, the hon. gentleman said that he (Mr. Swayne) said one thing to him in private and another thing when he spoke on the floor of the House.

The PREMIER: That is quite correct.

Mr. SWAYNE: That was distinctly untrue.

The PREMIER: What is your version?

Mr. SWAYNE: When he came down from his electorate the position was serious. No arrangement had been made. The mills were sending their sugar to the stores, and the stores were refusing to take it, and no arrangements had been made to finance the transaction. It was upon that phase of the question that he went to see the Premier, and upon that phase alone. He pointed out to the hon. gentleman the need for completing arrangements, and for some arrangement being made about financing the crop.

On one occasion he saw the Premier without a witness being present, and, in view of his experience, he would advise members of the Opposition never to go to the Chief Secretary without a witness, as otherwise they would run a considerable risk of what they said being distorted.

The PREMIER: You will never be allowed to interview me without a witness.

Mr. SWAYNE: The business he went to the Premier about on that occasion was to ask him as far as he could to get the arrangement completed and the finances in connection with the purchase arranged. In the House he had dealt with quite a different matter altogether—a matter he had not mentioned to him—so how could he make two different statements on the same thing? The matter which was before the House at the time was not referred to by him at all when he waited on the Chief Secretary. What he did in the House on the occasion when Supply was asked for was to ask the Premier why he did not answer that question, and to state that if he had the information he was guilty of discourtesy in not doing so, and that if he had not the information he ought to have had it. Then the Premier simply got up and said that he (Mr. Swayne) was in the habit of making one statement to him in private and another one before the House. He did not think that more despicable, contemptible tactics than that could be conceived—when an adversary had the best of the case, to try by a lawyer trick to break down his evidence by casting aspersions on him of that kind. He wanted to draw attention to another matter. He asked the Chief Secretary on the 4th September—

“1. Is Mr. Randolph Bedford engaged, or has he been engaged, directly or indirectly, by the Government?”

“2. If so, in what capacity and at what remuneration? Will the Minister table any correspondence or agreements referring to the matter?”

“3. Does he enjoy, or has he enjoyed, the privilege of a railway pass?”

Mr. SMITH: Of course he does; he is a member of the Legislative Council.

Mr. SWAYNE: But not on the 4th September. This was a perfectly fair question, and one which he was entitled to ask, but

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he could not get any reply. He was asked to move for a return, and he had to do so to get information, but the return had not yet been laid on the table. That would indicate to the electors the tactics of the Government. They took refuge in that sort of thing. Months afterwards some typewritten stuff would be laid on the table of the House; no one saw it, and it did not get into “Hansard,” and they thought the member who had asked the question would have forgotten the matter by the time the return was made. Under such circumstances as that they had good grounds for complaint. If people believed the things which had been stated, the Chief Secretary had himself to blame, because he refused to give information on the points raised.

The PREMIER: They do not believe those things; they do not believe you.

Mr. SWAYNE: That gentleman at the time was being paid by the Queensland Government, and was kept here as a sort of retainer at the public expense, with a view of putting him into some seat in the Assembly or in the Upper House. If those things were said, the Chief Secretary had got himself to blame; he could very well have disabused people's minds.

The PREMIER: Who said it? It is a campaign of slander, and the more you do that the better it is for the Government.

Mr. SWAYNE: It was not too much for the Premier to assure them that, at the date mentioned, that gentleman was not getting anything of the kind—that he was not getting anything from the Tourists' Inquiry Branch—and set the matter at rest. He noticed that the Premier had made some very caustic remarks about the large sum of money the Opposition was supposed to have for the next election. All he could say was that, if such was the case, it was a new experience for him. His former friends last time had run his election for him at a cost of under £100, and they had published a balance-sheet, and showed where every penny came from and how it was disbursed. They set a good example to the present Government in that respect.

The PREMIER: Will you deny that it is a fact that supporters of your party are raising £25,000 now?

Mr. SWAYNE: He did not know anything about it; all he knew was what the Premier said. If these people thought that it was for the good of Queensland that a certain policy should be carried out, they were perfectly justified in subscribing their money openly and aboveboard. But it would be very interesting if they had an audit of some of the union funds to find out how the money had been expended. In the case he was speaking of, it was worse than that, because it looked very much as if the State funds had been used for electioneering purposes by the present party in power, and the Premier's refusal to give information on this point lent considerable colour to it.

The PREMIER: You say that under privilege of Parliament.

Mr. SWAYNE: There was another matter he brought up some time ago, which they could not get any information on. Away back in 1916 he wrote to the Chief Secretary, pointing out the disadvantage soldiers were

under by having to pay their fare when going on official leave home before leaving for the front from the last port north—Port Alma, or Gladstone, as the case might be. He got the following answer from the assistant secretary of the Queensland Recruiting Committee:—

“With reference to your letter of 13th January addressed to the Hon. T. J. Ryan, we have pleasure in informing you that the shipping companies have been approached on the matter, and we enclose herewith copy of their reply.”

The shipping companies—to their credit—remitted one-half of the fares, and the Government might fairly have financed the other half. It must be remembered that the Northern lads were in a worse position than those in Southern Queensland and in Victoria and New South Wales, as all those in the south-eastern portion of Australia were connected with their homes by railway.

The PREMIER: What about the duty of the Commonwealth Government in a case like that? You want to blame me for their fault.

Mr. SWAYNE: The Commonwealth Government had very heavy expenses as it was, and the States should look after the transport of those men. The shipping companies did not say, “Why do not the Commonwealth Government do it?”

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

Mr. SMITH: The Chief Secretary's Department was a very important one, and during the past year the department had had to deal with some very important matters affecting the welfare of the people of Queensland. The hon. member for Mirani referred to the question of the supply of shipping and he criticised unfairly, and in some cases untruthfully, the actions of the Premier and the Chief Secretary's Department in regard to the matter. The shipping companies and the Employers' Federation, through a dispute in which the Government was not concerned and in which the State played no part, brought about the isolation of the people of North Queensland, and the Premier had to take action to relieve the position. He (Mr. Smith) received many urgent communications from his electorate in connection with the matter, and he was, for a considerable time, scarcely away from the Chief Secretary's Office when the matter was being dealt with. The hon. member for Mirani, first of all, dealt with the “Allinga.” That was the vessel that the Treasury Department chartered with the view of sending supplies to the Northern railways during the present year. The shipping companies refused to send their vessels North, and the Premier arranged for the “Llewellyn,” “Allinga,” and the “Excelsior” to carry foodstuffs and other necessities to Bowen and Mackay, and thereby relieved the position very considerably. Space was reserved in the “Allinga” to the extent of several hundreds of tons for foodstuffs and sugar-sacks to be carried to Bowen and Mackay, but before the vessel left Brisbane they found that the shipping companies refused to send a tender out to Flat Top to unload the foodstuffs intended for the people in the Mackay district. Not only did they refuse to send a tender out to unload the vessel,

but when the Government asked to charter one of the tenders lying idle alongside the wharves in the Pioneer River they refused. Everyone knew that the coastal vessels could not go up the Pioneer River, but the companies, for whom the hon. member for Mirani made such a plea, cared little or nothing whether the district was held up in the production of sugar or anything else; and little did they care whether the people were short of food or not. They were prepared to starve the people in North Queensland, and they were prepared to stop all industry in North Queensland so long as they carried on their own particular quarrel in the South. The Premier, instead of being criticised, should be commended by every hon. member who represented a Northern constituency for the action he took in connection with the matter. The State having no part in the dispute in the South, the Premier was unable to bring it to an end, but having a duty to perform to the people in the North he secured vessels and sent them to the North with foodstuffs and sugar-sacks, and while the mills did close down for a time, the Premier, by his efforts, was able to bring about a resumption of the work. There was no doubt the hon. member for Mirani felt very sore about the position. The hon. member belonged to a party that was responsible for bringing about the industrial disturbance in Australia, and right from the time of the Northern railway strike and right from the time of the shipping dispute every effort was made by the Opposition and the interests which controlled them to spread industrial strife in Queensland, but, thanks to the efforts of the Premier—thanks to the wisdom of the Government, and their policy—the Opposition signally failed with regard to that matter. They knew that an arrangement had been entered into between the Premier and the Commonwealth Government whereby the whole of this year's sugar crop was bought at an average price, and the Commonwealth was to take charge of the refining and distribution. They knew that in arranging the matter the Premier had considerable difficulty with the Commonwealth Government. He had dealt with the question on a previous debate, and if anyone cared to read his speech in “Hansard” on the matter he would find that the Premier, in that connection, acted in the best interests of the people of Queensland. The Premier knew very well that this year there was a record sugar crop in Queensland. He also knew that shipping throughout the world was very scarce, and that there would be some difficulty in coping with the transport of the raw sugar to the refineries, and, so far back as March last, he was in communication with the Federal Government trying to arrange the matter. Mr. Hughes and his friends dilly-dallied a great deal with the matter, and failed to answer telegrams and letters in connection with the matter until after the election on the 5th of May. Two conferences of representatives of the sugar-growers with the Premier were held at the Chief Secretary's Office, and the sugar-growers asked the Premier to make the best arrangement possible in the interest of the industry. And, having regard to all the facts, he thought everyone would agree that the Chief Secretary made the best arrangement possible under the circumstances. (Hear, hear!) With regard to providing shipping to carry away the sugar, in the past

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the Adelaide Shipping Company had always acted as agents for the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, and had carried all the sugar. In view of the large sugar crop and the scarcity of shipping, the Premier asked that arrangements be made that all vessels trading from the North be requested to carry sugar. In addition to that, the Premier had been able to secure advances on sugar held in stock, which was a very important matter for the people in the sugar districts of the State. While members opposite were prating a good deal about the property owned by the shipping companies, they had nothing to say about the difficulties experienced by human beings owing to the industrial trouble. A mill in the hon. member for Mirani's district—in common with other mills—was confronted with the shipping difficulty, and the difficulty in connection with storage, and the Commonwealth Government were making no advances on the sugar already manufactured, so that the millers were unable to pay the farmers for their cane, and the farmers were not in a position to pay the cane-cutters and labourers. Through the representations made by the Premier of this State the Commonwealth Government were forced to give advances on sugar held in stock.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: He only did his duty.

Mr. SMITH: Quite right, and he was sure the hon. gentleman would agree that the Premier did his duty very well, too. He (Mr. Smith) put the position before the Premier in June last, and he brought it before him on every occasion when it was competent to discuss the sugar question. Having regard to all those facts, hon. members, instead of condemning the Premier, should have commended him for his actions. The chief trouble of the Opposition was that they were unable to extend their industrial strife to Queensland. He had stated on the floor of the House, and he stated it again, that there was a deliberate plot on the part of certain interests to bring about a huge industrial upheaval in Queensland, and hon. members knew that the leader of the Opposition, and those who followed him, also desired the same thing. They were probably in communication with interests in the Southern parts of Australia with a view to bringing that desired result about; and now they were complaining because they had been defeated in their endeavours.

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

Mr. FORSYTH: The hon. member who had just sat down had told them that members of the Opposition, and those they were associated with, were responsible for the recent industrial trouble. A more untrue statement was never made.

Mr. SMITH: You tried to foment and extend it, and you know it.

Mr. FORSYTH: If the hon. member did not know, he ought to know that the shipping companies had nothing whatever to do with the strike, but that the wharf labourers went out because of the trouble in New South Wales in connection with the card system, and thus caused the ships to be laid up. That was an absolute fact, and the hon. member could not deny that he belonged to the party who caused the whole of the trouble. The wharf labourers were working under an award, and they were being paid the award rates, and given the award con-

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ditions, and yet they declined to load ships, with the result that the ships were hung up. That condition of things was caused by the friends of the hon. member for Mackay.

Mr. SMITH: You belong to the party which caused the trouble.

Mr. FORSYTH: The party with which he was connected had nothing to do with the trouble.

Mr. SMITH: You belong to the party which has been exploiting the people for years past.

Mr. FORSYTH: The hon. member belonged to the party which caused all this trouble. Not a single ship could get away, because the wharf labourers would not handle the cargo. Would the hon. member deny that the ships were tied up because of the action of the wharf labourers?

Mr. SMITH: I would deny anything you say.

Mr. FORSYTH: With regard to the statement that the Premier applied to the shipping companies for one of their lighters, and that the shipping companies refused to give him one, he understood—he was not sure, because he did not know—that the reason they refused to let him have a lighter was that while the wharf labourers were prepared to unload vessels with inward cargo at Mackay, they were not prepared to load sugar on those vessels, because it was to go to Sydney. That was the reason for the action of the shipping companies, so he understood, but the hon. member

[5.30 p.m.] hid the facts, and was not manly enough to own up that the trouble was caused by his own people—the unionists. The hon. member would persist in saying a thing which was absolutely untrue, namely, that the shipping companies were to blame. The hon. member could not deny that even they were delayed. It appeared in every paper in Australia, and all because the men were determined that they would not man any ships. These men belonged to the same party that the hon. member belonged to. Could the hon. member deny that? He was quiet now. They were all agreed that it was a great pity that the trouble ever arose, but the statement that the shipping companies, or the party that the hon. member for Mirani belonged to, ever caused the trouble was a statement without one single vestige of foundation.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: The hon. member for Mirani and the hon. member for Murrumbidgee did not seem to appreciate the efforts that were put forward by the Government to settle the trouble that they had referred to. He could quite understand that they did not appeal to the hon. member for Murrumbidgee, because they interfered with the profits of the company of which the hon. member was a director. He (Mr. Forsyth) asked the hon. member for Mackay whether he could deny something; could he deny that? The hon. member, as a director of Burns, Philp, and Company, must know perfectly well that the shipping company was part and parcel of the scheme of the Employers' Federation to break down the conditions under which the waterside workers and the seamen were working.

Mr. FORSYTH: Absolutely untrue.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: And the only object behind it was that they might work their ships with alien crews. He proposed

to quote the profits made by the hon. member's company in a pre-war year and last year, and then he thought members would easily understand why he criticised the vote before the Committee adversely. In 1913, Burns, Philp, and Co. made a profit of £109,389, and in 1917 those profits had risen to £161,464, an increase of £52,000, or £1,000 per week.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: War profits!

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: The hon. member must take his responsibility as a director of Burns, Philp, and Co. for not trying to bring about industrial peace. The real trouble was that he was part and parcel of the Employers' Federation, who were out to try to break down the conditions of the men and work their ships with coloured alien crews.

Mr. FORSYTH: Absolutely untrue.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: Any hon. member who liked to follow up what had happened in Fiji and other possessions could see that the Australian companies were trying to have Javanese labour replace the labour previously there. He mentioned that to show that it was just part and parcel of the hon. member's repugnance to the Chief Secretary's administration on that subject—because it interfered with their profits, with their policy—which enabled them in a time when ships were urgently needed for national service, for carrying produce South, to make £1,000 a week more than ever before. When the hon. member got up to speak, he should remember that he was a director of one of the companies which had made the greatest profits on the Australian coast. There was no need to draw a red herring across the track. After the strike had practically concluded, it was the refusal to pay the back wages which were due to the men when they left the ships that caused it to continue, and that was one of the reasons why they refused to send that tender out from Mackay or charter it to the Government in order that they might bring in food supplies for the people.

Mr. FORSYTH: That money was handed over to the shipping master.

Mr. GILDAY (*Ithaca*): He realised that it was because the hon. member for Mirani and the hon. member for Murrumba represented a section of the community which was not out for the benefit of the State that they took up the attitude they did. He thought it was patent to every hon. member that everything had been done to relieve the distress in Northern Queensland. The hon. member for Mirani took up the attitude of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company; that was, to extend the strike to Queensland from the other States.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: You must give us some proof of a statement like that.

Mr. GILDAY: He would give them some proof. When having lunch at one of the restaurants in Brisbane, he overheard one of their leading merchants talking to a gentleman from New South Wales. He said it was a great pity there was a Labour Government in Queensland, and that if there were not there would be a possibility of having the strike extended to Queensland. The sugar-growers appreciated the good work done by the Chief Secretary. He happened to have just come back from the North, and particularly the district that the hon. member for

Mirani represented, and he wanted to tell the Committee that the people there realised the good work that the Government did, because many of the farmers expressed the opinion that if the Government had not taken up the attitude they did there was every prospect that there would have been no shipping before Christmas. It was said times out of number that the shipping companies—the very company to which the hon. member for Murrumba belonged—were desirous of keeping the strike going until Christmas, until they gained their ends.

Mr. FORSYTH: Do you not know that we do not trade at all in Queensland?

Mr. GILDAY: Could the hon. member deny that, when the Premier made overtures to the shipping companies and said that he could find labour to man and work the ships, not one hon. member opposite attempted to assist him? They did not care a jot whether the people starved; they did not care a tuppenny bit whether the cane farmers got an acre of cane taken off so long as they could help the big institutions to cripple unionism. When the Government sent a boat for the purpose of getting certain commodities from the South, they found that the hon. member for Mirani left Brisbane. How did they know that he was not going on behalf of people in Queensland to prevent any cargo being put on that boat? (Opposition dissent.) It was very hard to say what hon. members opposite were capable of doing. When hon. members made such charges against the Premier, knowing perfectly well that they were untrue, they were capable of doing anything. He was under the impression that they were going to hear something good from the hon. member for Murrumba, who was supposed to be the financial expert of the Opposition, but what did they find? First of all, what the hon. gentleman wanted to know was something about the "incidental expenses," and about the office boy who got a rise of £10. He wanted to know what it was all for. He dealt with matters of that kind. It was ridiculous for a financial expert to ask questions of that kind of the Minister in charge of the Estimates. He would be asking what the washerwoman got next. (Government laughter.) The hon. gentleman posed as the financial expert of the Opposition, but he did not criticise the financial aspect of the Estimates at all. The hon. member for Murrumba attempted to substantiate a charge brought by the hon. member for Mirani, although he admitted he knew nothing about the Mackay district at all. The hon. gentleman wanted to ask some questions about something that he knew nothing about. So far as the shipping interests were concerned, the people of Queensland were the best judges, and so long as they had an opportunity of knowing the true facts, they could not say other than that the Government did everything possible to relieve the situation. When the Bill was brought before the House by the Premier, did hon. members opposite do anything to assist the Government who were trying to do something to relieve the conditions that existed in the North? They did absolutely nothing. Members opposite just sat there like a lot of dummies. They would do nothing for anything in Queensland other than for the views they represented. Absolutely nothing was done by members opposite for the welfare of Queensland. He did not think that any

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leader had done so much for the people of Queensland as the present Premier had done. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. FORSYTH asked the Premier to give some information about the "incidentals."

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member has exhausted his time.

* The PREMIER: There was not much that called for any reply in the points raised by hon. members opposite. The hon. member for Murrumba referred to the amount appropriated for incidental expenses. The hon. member must know that it was a fluctuating amount, owing to the cost of material going up, and the cost of petrol. Petrol was used for motor-cars, and was included in incidentals. The expenses in connection with the visit to London—details of which had been given to the House—also came out of incidental expenses. Other matters were referred to by the hon. member for Mirani, who had indulged in a tirade of abuse. It was amusing the extent to which hon. members opposite were going of late in the way of slandering the Government. They seemed to have set out on a campaign of that sort, and were determined to stop at nothing.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Mirani referred to an answer which he (the Premier) gave in reply to his question in connection with the arrangements made between the Commonwealth and the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. The hon. gentleman said that he refused to answer the question. As a matter of fact, he referred the hon. gentleman to the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth. As the hon. gentleman knew, all that he could do was to make the actual arrangements for the sale of the Queensland sugar crop to the Commonwealth Government. But he had not the jurisdiction to follow the Commonwealth Government through its ramifications in dealing with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. The Prime Minister made an arrangement with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company with regard to refining, and he communicated it to him, but under the promise that it had to be kept an entirely secret and confidential document. The actual terms agreed on between the Commonwealth Government and the Colonial Sugar Refining Company with regard to this year's crop had not been communicated to the Queensland Government. No one knew better than the hon. member for Burrum that it was not a matter within the province of the Queensland Government to stipulate what the Commonwealth's relations should be with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, and it was most unfair for hon. members to get up in the House and suggest that he had power to tell Mr. Hughes what should be the terms of his arrangement with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. Was it suggested that he had anything to do with the arrangement at all?

Colonel RANKIN: You can find out.

The PREMIER: He could inquire, but the information was not given, or, if it were given, he was told that it was entirely confidential. The hon. member for Mirani knew that, and his friend, Mr. Pritchard, outside also knew it, and yet the hon. member asked him questions with the view of endeavouring to put on his shoulders a responsibility

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which was not his. The responsibility was with the Commonwealth Government. That sort of thing was going too far. He was satisfied that the public outside would see that, and appraise comments like that at their true value. One hon. member actually went so far as to suggest that State money was used in propaganda work for the Government.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: I may make reference to that later.

The PREMIER: Of course, if the hon. member thought that, well and good, and he was at liberty to say so, but the more the hon. gentleman slandered the Government, and the more those behind him slandered the Government, the lower would they stand in the estimation of the country. (Hear, hear!) It made one feel indignant that such a suggestion could be made, and it was only those who were capable of doing it who could suggest it against others. The hon. member referred to a piece of paper which bore the watermark of the Government. Did the hon. gentleman not write on paper bearing the watermark of the Government? Of course he did. Did not the hon. member for Mirani write on similar paper? Did not the leader of the Opposition write his private letters on paper bearing the watermark of the Government?

Hon. J. TOLMIE: No.

The PREMIER: Would the hon. gentleman deny that he wrote private letters on the paper supplied to him bearing the watermark of the Government?

Hon. J. TOLMIE: I don't think I have. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: Every member in the House knew that it was the practice to use Government paper for their public correspondence.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: That is all I use it for.

The PREMIER: He was not suggesting that the hon. gentleman should not use it. It was impossible to go and get private paper when they wanted to write a letter in the House. He called attention to another form of misrepresentation. The hon. member referred to a return he moved for with reference to work done by Mr. Randolph Bedford, and he was told it would be laid on the table in due course. Was it suggested that if Mr. Bedford were paid for work done in connection with advertising the State that the State funds were spent in an improper way? Previous Governments paid Mr. Bedford for doing similar work. Would the leader of the Opposition deny that the Government of which he was a member paid Mr. Bedford for doing similar work?

Hon. J. TOLMIE: I have no knowledge of it.

The PREMIER: He did not want to mention other names, but seeing that Mr. Bedford's name had been mentioned, he could tell the hon. gentleman that Mr. Bedford was paid for doing similar work by the late Government. It was well known that Mr. Bedford was a journalist, and the work that he did was well known, and surely no exception could be taken to his being paid for any work he did. Why should there be a charge made involving the integrity of Mr. Bedford and the integrity of the Government

because of what it was the duty of the Government to do and what had been done by previous Governments?

Mr. VOWLES: Why didn't you answer the question?

The PREMIER: The question was answered. The hon. member for Dalby was the last man who should interject in that Chamber in connection with the matter.

Mr. VOWLES: Why?

The PREMIER: The hon. member suggested that, because the answer to a question did not suit the member who asked the question, the questioner after that had *carte blanche* to utter any slanders he liked and suggest any corruption he liked.

Mr. LAND: He will not do it again, though.

The PREMIER: Even in his place that afternoon the hon. member made a suggestion of that sort.

Mr. VOWLES: About what?

The PREMIER: About the matter referred to by the hon. member for Aubigny.

Mr. VOWLES: That is not wound up yet.

The PREMIER: There was another little matter that the hon. member's name was associated with, and that they had not yet had explained. There was a suggestion made—

Mr. VOWLES: You might as well let us have it.

The PREMIER: A suggestion made with regard to the wreath that had been left on his (Mr. Ryan's) doorstep under circumstances that reflected no credit on any hon. member who was associated with it.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The hon. member suggested that his (Mr. Ryan's) card was on that wreath. It was a lie to make such a suggestion!

Mr. VOWLES: There was a card on it with the inscription, "T. J. Ryan. With deepest sympathy. R.I.P."

The PREMIER: Somebody in the Sydney "Bulletin" suggested that his card was on it. That was a lie. Whoever sent that paragraph to the Sydney "Bulletin" lied, and must have been prompted by some of the hon. members opposite who were associated with that disgraceful incident. He spoke now, not as a member of that House, but as a man, and if he found the man who did it, he would make him apologise. He would see that he apologised.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES: You knew about that card all the time, but you never told the public that your name was on it.

The PREMIER: The police were told of the card on the wreath. The card of the hon. member for Dalby was on it.

Mr. VOWLES: It was. I put it there.

The PREMIER: He (the Premier) specially told the Commissioner of Police that he was not to mention the fact that the card of the hon. member for Dalby was on the wreath, because he would not believe that the hon. member would be associated with such a thing. At the time he believed that someone had got one of the hon. member's cards and put it on the wreath.

Mr. VOWLES: I put it there myself, because your card was on the wreath when I got it.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

The PREMIER: They might try to wriggle out of it as they liked, but members on the other side who were associated with the incident knew that no friend of his had anything to do with that wreath.

Mr. VOWLES: Well, what was your card doing on it?

The PREMIER: That man said his card was on the wreath! His card was not on it, and the hon. member knew it was not, and he knew the man who wrote on that card.

Mr. VOWLES: It was a memorial card with "R.I.P." on it.

The PREMIER: It was between the hon. member for Dalby and other hon. members on that side of the House.

Mr. JONES: "Honourable" members?

The PREMIER: He had to refer to them as "honourable" members because the rules of the House required him to do so. That was all in connection with that incident.

Mr. VOWLES: This is the first time I have alluded to the matter.

The PREMIER: He would be glad to hear the hon. member's explanation, because anyone who was a man, under the circumstances, would have explained and expressed his regret for it.

Mr. VOWLES: You have been holding back the fact that your card was there.

The PREMIER: My card was not there.

Mr. VOWLES: "T. J. Ryan." Aren't you "T. J. Ryan"?

The PREMIER: His card was not there. It was some friend of the hon. member—he supposed the hon. member knew who it was—who wrote anything that was written on that card. It was done amongst hon. members opposite. Did not the hon. member know who did it?

Mr. VOWLES: No.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Ah! Ah! and laughter.

The PREMIER: Who paid for it? Did the hon. member know who carried it and placed it upon his doorstep?

Mr. VOWLES: No.

The PREMIER: He had nothing more to say if the hon. member said that; but the hon. member might get up and make some explanation as to how it got there.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: He was sorry that he should have been drawn on to this unpleasant subject.

Mr. VOWLES: We are getting at the truth now.

The PREMIER: He was drawn to refer to it because those men were prepared to go so far as to lie and to suggest that it was a friend of his who had insulted his wife in such a way.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Shame! Shame!

The HOME SECRETARY: The greatest scandal that has ever been perpetrated here!

Hon. T. J. Ryan.]

(Addressing Mr. Vowles): You ought to be damned well ashamed of yourself.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES: He asked that the hon. gentleman should be asked to withdraw that word and to apologise.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Get out!

The HOME SECRETARY: I am not going to apologise.

Mr. VOWLES: He insisted on an apology.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the Home Secretary to withdraw the word "damned."

The HOME SECRETARY: Well, I withdraw the word.

Mr. SMITH: Mr. Bertram—

The CHAIRMAN: It is most unusual for an hon. member to speak after the Minister has replied to criticism. I am not preventing the hon. member from speaking if he desires to do so, but I must point out that it is not usual.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: He may give rise to further discussion.

Mr. LAND: He rose at the same time as the Premier.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member for Dalby may want to explain.

Question put and passed.

AGENT-GENERAL FOR STATE.

The PREMIER moved—That £13,800 be granted for the "Agent-General for the State." There was a reduction in the vote of £1,160 as compared with the previous year's appropriation. Increases had been granted to certain members of the staff ranging from £10 to £20. Provision had been made on the Estimates for the appointment of a typist at £85. It was not a new appointment, as the amount was previously paid from contingencies. The contingency vote for advertising had been reduced by £1,500. The other items remained the same.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: He had no fault to find with the financial arrangements in connection with the office of the Agent-General, but it had been current rumour for almost the whole of this year—if not longer—that a change was going to be effected in the office and that they were getting rid of Sir Thomas Robinson, a gentleman who had very ably discharged the duties

[7 p.m.] of Agent-General for quite a number of years. He would be very sorry if they lost the services of Sir Thomas Robinson as Agent-General, but if the Government at any time felt so disposed it was within their power to make a change. He understood that the position was to be offered to the Secretary for Public Lands. It was a matter of public importance that they should know whether a change was to take place in the office, and who Sir Thomas Robinson's successor was likely to be. Looking at the various items in the vote, he found there was no very great increase. A number of clerks received increases totalling £300. The amount of £1,500 was set down for advertising and contingent expenses in promoting emigration to the State, but he took it that the amount was for advertising purposes.

Mr. FORSYTH: In discussing this vote last year he had made the suggestion that

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they should cut out the amount for advertising altogether. The amount spent last year was £1,495. Could they not cut this advertising item out altogether until the war was over? Of course, there were contingent expenses which, perhaps, the Premier could not cut out. He noticed that there had been a considerable increase in the amount spent last year for printing and stationery.

The PREMIER: With regard to the point raised by the leader of the Opposition, he might explain that Sir Thomas Robinson held office as Agent-General for Queensland for an indefinite period, but subject to three months' notice on either side. If it was decided to replace him, three months' notice would be given.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Has it been given yet?

The PREMIER: It has not been given. Any change in that respect would be made known by the Government at the proper time, when they had finally decided on the matter. With regard to the advertising expenses, he could assure the hon. member for Murrumba that they had cut them down as much as they possibly could.

Mr. FORSYTH: I am glad to see that you did it last year. I advised you to do so.

The PREMIER: He was glad the hon. member thought it was because of his advice. Where it was in the interests of the State to economise they would do so. It might be interesting to contrast the present Government's vote for miscellaneous advertising with that of the late Government. In 1914-15 provision was made for £5,000; this year it was £3,000.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: See what wonderful development there was!

The PREMIER: That would be an argument to raise the amount for advertising; but the hon. member for Murrumba was advising that it should be cut down.

Mr. FORSYTH: The Premier would agree with him that in Sir Thomas Robinson they had an exceptionally able Agent-General, and he felt sure that everyone would regret that Sir Thomas was likely to be shifted.

The PREMIER: You are aware that nearly the whole of his time is occupied now by his very important office in connection with the Board of Trade.

Mr. FORSYTH: He was not discussing that point. He thought that Sir Thomas Robinson was one of the ablest men they had ever had representing Queensland, and he had done most excellent work. He was sure that whoever was appointed to take his place would have a very difficult task. They had a pretty fair idea who the gentleman was who was likely to be appointed, and he was sure that he would do his best under the circumstances. He was sorry that the Government should think of making a change, but, of course, they had the power to do so on giving three months' notice. However, he sincerely trusted that whoever was appointed would fill the position with credit to himself and honour to the State. Whoever was appointed he would not find the climate of London so congenial as the climate of Queensland.

Question put and passed.

AUDIT OFFICE.

The PREMIER moved—That £10,145 be granted for "Audit Office." This amount represented an increase of £853 on last year's appropriation. The chief inspector and accountant, Mr. Austin, had received an increase of £70 per annum as from the 1st January, 1917. Certain officers had been transferred during the year, and three new appointments had been made. Opportunity was taken to promote and grant increases to other deserving officers. As to the correspondence and records clerk, the previous occupant of the position resigned and another officer was appointed in his stead at an increase of £15 per annum. The contingencies vote represented an increase of £250, being an increase of £150 in travelling expenses and £100 in railway fares and freights.

Mr. FORSYTH: He must say that the Premier had kept fairly well within the estimate in connection with this vote, because—according to the Auditor-General's report—he spent £9,485, while the appropriation was £9,292. He was pleased that the chief inspector had received an increase, because, when the present Auditor-General was appointed, the chief inspector was appointed to the dual position of chief inspector and accountant, and he did not receive the salary to which he was entitled. He was certainly one of the best officers in the department.

Question put and passed.

INTELLIGENCE AND TOURIST BUREAU.

The PREMIER: Hon. members would notice that the immigration vote had been omitted. That vote was now charged to trust funds, and would be dealt with later. He moved—That £2,122 be granted for "Intelligence and Tourist Bureau." This represented a decrease of £170 on last year's Estimates. The decrease was accounted for by a reduction of £200 in the contingency vote, and the acting director of the Sydney branch had received an increase of £30 per annum—£20 from the 1st January and £10 from the 1st July.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He agreed that the Intelligence Bureau was doing very good work, but what he wanted particularly to direct attention to was the fact that he was very glad to know that the criticism in connection with the department last year by the hon. member for Townsville and himself had borne fruit. That was in regard to the question of the preparation of a booklet describing the beauties of the North. There were beauties in the North such as could be found in few parts of the world.

Question put and passed.

MUSEUM, BRISBANE.

The PREMIER moved—That £2,490 be granted for "Museum, Brisbane." That represented an increase of £200 on last year's vote. There was a decrease in the contingencies vote of £50, while there was an increase of £250 in salaries. An additional attendant at £120 had been provided for, and an assistant at £100 had been appointed.

HON. J. TOLMIE: Who is the assistant?

The PREMIER: The appointment has not yet been made, but it was provided for. An increase in salary was provided for the

typist. The director, Dr. Hamlyn Harris, resigned during the year, and so far the position had not been filled.

Mr. BEBBINGTON asked why more assistance was necessary in a year like this when money was short? The people in the country had to pay heavy taxes, while many of their daughters were doing their sons' work while they were at the war, and they had to work very long hours. (Laughter.) Whom were they laughing at?

Mr. JONES: I am not laughing at you, although I would be justified in doing so.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: He would very often be justified in laughing at the hon. member for the position he occupied to-day. The people were laughing at him over it.

Mr. JONES: I am very glad to hear it.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: You are not sincere.

Mr. JONES: You arrant humbug.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Keep your hair on.

Mr. JONES: Don't you say I am not sincere.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: He would like to know the reason for the additional attendant.

The PREMIER: A young fellow enlisted and went to the front, and when he came back he got his old position.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He was sorry there was a conflict of opinion between the primary producers and the secondary industries. That vote was of considerable interest to him. He had heard—he did not know whether it was true or not—that the late director found his position untenable. He was sorry they had lost so good a director as Dr. Hamlyn Harris. He knew what the position was when Dr. Hamlyn Harris took it over, and he knew the condition of the Museum now as a result of the energies he infused into the place. He had heard that the cause of the director leaving was friction between himself and Mr. Cuthbert Butler.

The PREMIER: That is not the reason assigned, and I take Dr. Hamlyn Harris to be a truthful man.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He could not vouch for the truth of the statement, but it had been made to him by members of the House. Mr. Cuthbert Butler seemed to be a sort of offside for the Government. They had him in the Public Library until the Federal election took place; then he resigned his position in order to contest a seat; and, when he did not win the election, the Government found him a position in the Museum.

The PREMIER: That is not true.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He was not in the Museum?

The PREMIER: He is in the Museum; he got his old position back again.

HON. J. TOLMIE: He was not complaining that Mr. Cuthbert Butler was in the Museum, but it was a most remarkable thing that the Government should keep a man who was putting up for any vacancy that might occur at an election. He knew that at the time Mr. Butler was formerly in the Museum library political pamphlets were prepared and printed, bearing his signature. No fault could be found with Mr. Cuthbert Butler doing this work as a private individual, but it was an improper thing that a public

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servant should be engaged in doing political work. If the Government wanted to have a political agent to do that kind of work, it would be an innovation, but it would not be a good innovation. If a man was employed as a public servant in any branch of the public service, it was inadvisable that he should be engaged at the same time in propaganda work for any political party.

Mr. MCPHAIL (*Windsor*): The remarks of the leader of the Opposition with regard to the reason of Dr. Hamlyn Harris's retirement were not correct. He had known Dr. Hamlyn Harris, who lived in his electorate, for some time, and had had several conversations with him, and that gentleman had never on any occasion mentioned that he had had any disagreement with Mr. Butler. The chief reason for the retirement of Dr. Hamlyn Harris seemed to be that, owing to the financial stringency, he was not given power to make the expansion he desired to make in the work of the Museum. The doctor was an enthusiast in his work, and would have liked to be able to continue it in such a way as to bring the institution up to a very high standard. To say that Mr. Butler was simply a political agent was not correct. Mr. Butler was never in the Public Library, but was in charge of the library at the Museum in the Exhibition Hall.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: He was in the public service when he resigned to contest an election.

Mr. MCPHAIL: Mr. Butler was not the first public servant who had resigned to contest an election, and who received his position back again when he was defeated at the poll. It did not follow that because a man had an aspiration in a certain direction he should be penalised after he had failed to realise that aspiration. As long as an officer performed his work satisfactorily, and did not do things which had political significance, he should not be subjected to such criticism as they had heard that evening. There was no evidence to show that Mr. Butler, in his position at the Museum, had done anything to show that he favoured one political party or the other while he was at his work, and after he left his office he should be at liberty to use his time and express his opinions as he thought fit.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: You are quite sure that he did not write those things in Government time?

Mr. MCPHAIL: That remark was in keeping with statements which had been made by other members on that side of the House, and should not be made unless the hon. member had concrete evidence to substantiate his suggestion. As far as the Museum was concerned, he agreed with the leader of the Opposition that it had advanced considerably during recent years, and he was quite satisfied that, when the financial position was such as to allow of more money being spent on the institution, it would be made one of the most up-to-date institutions of its kind in Australia.

Colonel RANKIN: No objection was made to a member of the public service who desired to contest a seat resigning his position for that purpose, or to his being reinstated in his position if he failed to win [7.30 p.m.] the seat, provided the vacancy had not been filled in the meantime. With regard to the point raised by

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the leader of the Opposition as to Mr. Cuthbert Butler engaging in political propaganda, he understood the last speaker to practically admit it. He practically said that if he did it it was done in his own time. Whether it was done in his own time or in the time of someone else, it was a practice that was reprehensible and wrong. He thought it was quite outside the province of any public servant to devote any part of his time to propaganda work or actively take up outside work of that description.

The PREMIER: What evidence are you adducing to prove that?

Colonel RANKIN: He was talking to the statement made by the leader of the Opposition, which so far had not been disproved. If such a thing did exist—he had not said it did—then it was wrong, because he did not think any public officer should do it.

Mr. LAND: I would like to know how you are going to stop it.

Colonel RANKIN: You could very easily stop it. It was going to be subversive of the best interests of the service, because whatever happened it might tend to destroy the confidence which should exist between employer and employees. A man who did it must show that he had sympathies with some particular party. In "the whirligig of time" the party opposed to him might come into power.

The PREMIER: You would not interfere with him, would you?

Colonel RANKIN: He did not say he would, but he said it was not a good thing in the interests of the service. It would tend to destroy the confidence one had in his own officer if one knew that during an election campaign he had gone out of his way to endeavour to secure a change of Government. If he expressed his political views—to which he was perfectly entitled, just as much as the Premier or himself—in such a way as to show that he was opposed to the Premier—

The PREMIER: I should think he was under a misapprehension. (Laughter.)

Colonel RANKIN: He was quite sure the Premier would do nothing of the kind. He would certainly cease to have that confidence in his own servant which he should have—and very rightly so—because, if the officer were holding a high official position, he would know that, if he asked him to assist him in carrying out a political idea at the back of his mind, he would possibly do it in a haphazard manner, or half-heartedly.

The PREMIER: I cannot imagine such a thing happening.

Colonel RANKIN: He did not think it required a very great stretch of imagination, and he was sure the Premier would take very prompt steps to stop it.

Mr. COLLINS was surprised at the criticism passed by members of the Opposition on Mr. Cuthbert Butler. He was surprised at the views expressed by the hon. member for Burrum, who claimed to have a fairly broad mind. Surely, he must know that the gentleman who was called scientific assistant was the author of a very important work which was circulated by the Rationalist Press Association with a worldwide reputation.

Colonel RANKIN: Is it a political one?

Mr. COLLINS: It did not matter whether it was or not. If the hon. member were acquainted with the English mind, he would know that there had been in the employ of the British Government from time to time men who had never hesitated to write on political subjects in opposition to the Government that employed them. He had been reading Edward Clodd's memoirs, and he had been astonished to find that he was employed in a bank. He was one of the best writers on evolutionary subjects that Great Britain had produced, but the bank did not attempt to interfere with him in what he did outside his working hours, and it had come to a pretty pass if, after a man had performed six or seven hours of toil, whether as librarian or otherwise, they were going to stop his expressing his views, political or otherwise. He had a right to express them, even supposing they were in opposition to the Government or any Government. There was a danger creeping in there—if men were to be tied down simply because they were in the employ of the State. He honoured those men who were able to step out and risk their employment if need be. He had to risk his when he was employed by men like those sitting opposite; he had never allowed them to dictate to him. Why should not Mr. Cuthbert Butler express his views? Why should not any other man in the public service do likewise? He had no objection to it so long as they put their signatures to their work, came out into the open, and did not stab them in the back as they were stabbed by their pressmen to-day.

Question put and passed.

PUBLIC LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND.

The PREMIER moved—That £1,345 be granted for "Public Library of Queensland." The vote represented a decrease of £20. The vote for salaries showed an increase of £50, representing an increase to Mr. Brown, who had been promoted from acting librarian to librarian at a salary of £300. There was a decrease in the contingencies vote.

Question put and passed.

PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD.

The PREMIER moved—That £2,425 be granted for "Public Service Board." This was an increase of £145, caused by a re-arrangement of the staff, increases to clerks and typists.

HON. J. TOLMIE complimented the Public Service Board on the report which they had presented for the year. He was not going to take up any time in dealing with the merits of the report, but he mentioned it so that hon. members opposite might study it, and so that hon. members in opposition could also study it. Anyone studying the report would see the difference in the salaries given by the present Government and the late Government.

Mr. LAND: The public servants know it. The public servants were never as well off before as they are now.

HON. J. TOLMIE: If hon. members looked at the report they would find it contained information of the utmost value. He was

glad to be in the position to commend the Public Service Board for issuing such a very fine report.

Question put and passed.

STEAMER "LUCINDA."

The PREMIER moved—That £3,164 be granted for "Steamer 'Lucinda.'" The vote showed an increase of £350. Increases amounting to £50 were granted to certain officers, and there was an increase of £300 in contingencies, made up of £150 extra for coal, stores, and incidentals, and £150 increase for repairs and overhaul.

Mr. BEBBINGTON pointed out that they all appreciated the services which were rendered by the "Lucinda" to the children, who would be the future citizens of Queensland. The trips of the "Lucinda" were a means of education to the country children, as it gave them an opportunity of going down the bay and seeing the ocean-going steamers. The country children highly appreciated the trips they were enabled to make in the "Lucinda."

Colonel RANKIN endorsed the remarks of the hon. member for Drayton as to the educational value of the "Lucinda" trips. There was only one unfortunate part in connection with it, and that was that the children in the Burrum electorate were unable to participate in those trips. Previous Governments used to send the "Lucinda" to other parts of Queensland and enabled the children there to take advantage of a trip to the seaside, and he suggested that the Premier might see his way to adopt a similar course. With the opening of a deepwater port at Urangan, it would give the children in the Maryborough district unique opportunities of gaining some knowledge of educational value.

The PREMIER: I don't think the "Lucinda" will be allowed to go to sea.

Colonel RANKIN: If the "Lucinda" was unseaworthy, then the Government might send the "Otter" or some other vessel in her stead.

Mr. GUNN pointed out that when the Labour party were in opposition they were always opposed to the "Lucinda" vote.

The PREMIER: She was not used for the same purpose then that she is used for now.

Mr. GUNN: The people in the country districts had to pay their share of the cost of the "Lucinda" without getting any of the advantages that the metropolitan school children received. They could not take the "Lucinda" up the Macintyre River to Goondiwindi, but they might give free railway excursions to the children in country districts. He would not oppose the vote, but simply pointed out that the Brisbane children got advantages that were not given to the children in the country.

Question put and passed.

THURSDAY ISLAND.

The PREMIER moved—That £465 be granted for "Thursday Island." There was a decrease of £568 in the vote. Mr. Gilson Foxton had been appointed police magistrate

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in place of Mr. Lee-Bryce, but his salary was paid by the Justice Department. Contingencies had decreased by £68, and there was an increase in incidentals of £20. The sum of £48 previously paid to the Government Resident for extra cost of living was not payable by the Chief Secretary this year.

Question put and passed.

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES.

The PREMIER moved—That £73,850 be granted for "Miscellaneous Services." There was a decrease in the vote of £33,717. Hon. members could see for themselves the various reductions by comparing the items with those for last year. Some of the votes would not be required this year—for example, those for Queensland's share of expenses of Australian representation at Panama Exposition, Control of Trade Boards, subsidy to Residential Club for Soldiers, and grant to the widow of Hon. D. Bowman, M.L.A., late Home Secretary. There was a considerable decrease in the subsidy to the Queensland line of steamers for a four-weekly service *viâ* Torres Strait. That was due to the fact that there were not so many steamers able to come on account of war conditions, and some of those which did come were coming round the Cape, although the cargo was taken to North Queensland ports at the same rate as to Brisbane in accordance with the contract. But there was a reduction of £1,000 made with respect to each steamer which came round the Cape. That was the result of an arrangement he made when in London with the representatives of the British-India Steam Navigation Company.

Colonel RANKIN: That represents the canal dues?

The PREMIER: It represented the canal dues saved.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Wasn't that a condition in the original contract?

The PREMIER: No.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: I think it was. If they did not come down the coast they were to forfeit £1,000.

The PREMIER: The late Government had excused quite a number of steamers from coming through the canal, but they received no allowance. But, when he was in London, he talked the matter over with the representatives of the British-India Steam Navigation Company, and put it to them that, if they were excused from sending their vessels through the canal on account of the war risks in the Mediterranean, they should make an allowance to the Queensland Government; and, after considerable negotiation, they agreed to a refund of £1,000 in respect of every vessel that came round the Cape. The vote was reduced this year from £24,667 to £12,500. The expenditure for the benefit of returned soldiers and members of the Expeditionary Forces, and cost of services rendered to the Repatriation and Patriotic Funds, was reduced this year from £50,000 to £40,000, and the vote for assistance to returned maimed and wounded soldiers was reduced from £25,000 to £15,000. It was anticipated that the amount asked for would cover all that would be required during the year.

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Hon. J. TOLMIE: It was always with a great amount of repugnance that he discussed any vote having reference to the returned soldiers, but he wanted to point out to the Premier that members on the Government side had made a great outcry in the past about sufficient money not being forthcoming for the purpose of assisting the returned soldiers.

The PREMIER: The Legislative Council turned down the Income Tax Act Amendment Bill.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: That had nothing whatever to do with the amount voted by Parliament. Last year they voted £100,000 for that purpose—£75,000 on the Chief Secretary's Estimates and £25,000 on the Estimates of the Lands Department. But, notwithstanding the fact that £100,000 was voted, only £23,000 had been spent, and the Government alleged that the remaining £77,000 had not been spent because the Council refused to pass certain taxation legislation. Out of all the millions voted by Parliament last session, why should the returned soldiers alone be victimised? If the rejection by the Council of that legislation was the reason for not spending that money, why were the returned soldiers treated differently from all the public servants, whose salaries were voted in the same Estimates? This year the Government only asked for £55,000 for the assistance of returned soldiers—a reduction as compared with last year's appropriation of £45,000. He trusted that there was going to be some sense of fairness and justice in the utterances of hon. members on the other side in relation to the matter, and that they would not attempt to excuse themselves by reducing the vote from £100,000 to £55,000 by alleging that it was due to some action taken by someone outside that Chamber. He further hoped that, at the expiration of the financial year, they would find that the whole of the £55,000 which appeared on the Estimates had been expended, just the same as the money voted for all the various departments of the public service was expended. If anybody was to be victimised, let it be strong, healthy individuals, who were probably in a better position to bear it than the returned soldiers.

* The PREMIER: He was surprised at the leader of the Opposition making the remarks he had made, as he must be perfectly well aware of the circumstances which attended the rejection by the Upper House of the financial proposals of the Government last session.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Why victimise the soldiers alone?

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman knew that the Income Tax Act Amendment Bill was introduced for the specific purpose of raising—amongst other things—the sum of £100,000 that was passed on the Estimates for the returned soldiers—for repatriation and patriotic purposes. The Legislative Council rejected that Bill on the ground that the business of looking after returned soldiers was a Commonwealth matter; that they were being taxed by the Commonwealth for the purpose of carrying on the war and for the repatriation of the soldiers, and that the State Government had nothing to do

with the matter. He was one of the representatives of the Assembly at the free conference between the two Houses on the Bill, and more than one of the Council representatives said, "What have you to do with returned soldiers? What do you want money for returned soldiers for? That is a Commonwealth matter." The leader of the Opposition must be aware that those were the specific reasons why the Legislative Council

rejected the proposed taxation [8 p.m.] measure sent up to them last year with regard to income tax. The Queensland Government were dealing more liberally with returned soldiers than any other State of the Commonwealth. The returned soldiers recognised that, and their relatives recognised it. (Hear, hear!) It was instanced the other day at Rockhampton at a recruiting meeting. As reported by the Brisbane Press, a returned soldier's wife interjected that if other Governments in Australia would treat the returned soldiers as the Queensland Government were doing they would not need to be making appeals for so many recruits; they would get them. There was an acknowledgment that the Queensland Government was doing as much as it could for the repatriation of returned soldiers. (Hear, hear!) That fact was now recognised by returned soldiers and their relatives. The leader of the Opposition asked why they cut down this vote in particular, instead of taking it off another vote. The hon. member knew that in the Estimates of each department a large amount was for salaries of the officers of the department. Take the Chief Secretary's Office: There was a certain number of officers whose salaries were fixed. There was a contract with them, and that was the position with regard to most of the Estimates. But with regard to the vote for the returned soldiers, State children, and so on, there was not a definite contractual commitment—they could not sue the Government and compel payment—and therefore those votes were at the will of Parliament. If one House of Parliament said they were going to cut the amount down, they knew there was only one place it could come off, and that was where there was not a contractual obligation—where you could not be sued. That was the point which the leader of the Opposition seemed to wilfully evade.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: No.

The PREMIER: Could the hon. gentleman suggest what other vote should have been cut down?

Hon. J. TOLMIE: I suggest this to you: You said it was essential that you should get £158,000 from taxation. You got £158,000 and £45,000 additional taxation.

The PREMIER: No. It was all very well for the hon. gentleman to talk like that. They expected to get £158,000, or £160,000, from the Income Tax Act Amendment Bill, but the Council said, "You are not going to get any of it for that purpose." They were told that that money was being raised to assist returned soldiers, to supplement the efforts of the Commonwealth. The Council said, "It is not your business to look after returned soldiers; it is the business of the Commonwealth; we are not going to allow you to have that money," and they rejected the Bill. He hoped that the speech of the leader of the Opposition might be taken as an indication of a changed attitude on the

part of the Legislative Council, so that when the taxation Bill went up to them again they would not say that it was not our business to look after returned soldiers. He trusted that there were other hon. gentlemen there who would be able to refer them back to the speeches which they made last year on this subject. What was the use of the hon. gentleman saying that this Government had victimised the returned soldiers by cutting down that vote, when he knew that the Government had no option—that they were only following out the direction of Parliament in the matter?

Mr. FORSYTH said that on the discussion of this matter last year he had pointed out that he did not see how the Government could spend the money put down, because they had only six months in which to do it, and he could not see how they could spend the £100,000 in six months. He had strongly advised the hon. gentleman to only put down on his Estimates what he thought he could have spent.

The PREMIER: How much do you think we ought to have spent in that six months?

Mr. FORSYTH: The hon. gentleman had asked for the total amount. He did not think they would have spent more than £50,000 in the two departments—the Lands Department and the Chief Secretary's Department.

The PREMIER: You would have only asked for £50,000?

Mr. FORSYTH: Yes; because he did not think they would have wanted more than £50,000 for that particular year. His argument was proved, because the hon. gentleman only spent £53,000. There was not a penny-piece spent for road construction and other purposes by the Minister for Lands, in spite of the fact that £25,000 was put down on the Estimates for those purposes. The hon. gentleman had stated that the reason why the money was not spent was because the Upper House did not pass the Government's taxation proposals, but the hon. gentleman knew that although those proposals were not passed, the Government from their own Estimates expected to get from income tax £160,000. Would the hon. gentleman say—in spite of the fact that the Upper House threw out the Income Tax Bill—that he did not get the money he anticipated?

The PREMIER: We did not get the money we required.

Mr. FORSYTH: Although he did not get the £160,000 which he anticipated under this particular vote, the hon. gentleman actually got £153,000 more than his Estimates, which was within a couple of thousand pounds of what he expected to get under the Income Tax Act Amendment Bill. Would the hon. gentleman deny that?

The PREMIER: All Estimates are more or less imperfect: we cannot be absolutely accurate with Estimates.

Mr. FORSYTH: The hon. gentleman could see, as he was going along, that the money was coming in from income tax to a greater extent than he anticipated.

The PREMIER: The cost of material had gone up in many cases, and the expenditure increased. We could not get away from our commitments. Will you tell me anything we paid that we should not have paid?

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Mr. FORSYTH: He was not arguing about that. The hon. gentleman had put £100,000 on the Estimates when he knew there was no possible hope of spending that amount. The Government had not spent a solitary shilling out of the £25,000 voted in connection with the Lands Department.

The PREMIER: You are under a misapprehension again.

Mr. FORSYTH: If the hon. gentleman could show him in the Auditor-General's report where he had spent anything out of miscellaneous receipts last year, he would be very glad indeed. He had looked through the figures, but could not find it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: In surveys of roads. You are looking in the wrong place.

Mr. FORSYTH: As far as he could gather from the Auditor-General's report, there had not been one shilling spent from miscellaneous receipts, and that was where it was debited last year.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is not true. You know what has been done in your electorate.

Mr. FORSYTH: He knew there had been some money spent, and that money must be charged to some account.

The PREMIER: What does it matter where it is charged so long as the Government spent it?

Mr. FORSYTH: He wanted to see where it was. He very much doubted whether the Government would spend £55,000 this six months. However, the hon. gentleman had reduced the vote this year.

The PREMIER: We know you will not give us the money.

Mr. FORSYTH: We passed the Estimate last year.

The PREMIER: You passed the Estimate, but you refused the machinery to give us the money.

Mr. FORSYTH: The excuse given by the hon. gentleman with regard to the expenditure was not a very good one, and it only showed that there was a good deal of stuffing in connection with the departments sometimes.

Mr. GUNN: He did not think any hon. member wished to deprive the wounded soldiers of anything they were entitled to, but it was very convenient for the Premier to make a scapegoat of the Upper House. When the Government deprived the returned soldiers of anything, they always put the blame on to the Upper House. The Government wanted a lot of increased taxation last year—they wanted to pass a retrospective income tax, which the Upper House objected to. All they objected to was the retrospective clause in the Bill.

Mr. MURPHY: Just as the Premier objected to retrospectivity in connection with the Northern strike.

Mr. GUNN: The Premier objected to give the strikers in the North retrospective pay.

The PREMIER: You should know that all taxation proposals are retrospective.

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Mr. GUNN: If a man was earning an income and spent that income in improving his property, and then an income tax came along which said he had to pay tax on the money he had spent, it was very difficult to get the money. When the hon. gentleman was in opposition he said he could run the country without increased taxation.

The PREMIER: Like you are doing now.

Mr. GUNN: Instead of worrying about that extra taxation, the Government could go in for a little bit of economy in this vote alone. He noticed there was an amount of £1,500 for the Royal Commission on Public Works and State Iron and Steel Works. What on earth was the good of that Royal Commission at a time like this, when they had no money to spend on public works? Why not cut out that Public Works Commission and give that £1,500 to the returned soldiers.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: And still buy steel from Germany.

Mr. GUNN: They were not buying steel from Germany now, nor were they likely to buy any steel from Germany. The Government were not building any railways now. He had nothing against the members of the Public Works Commission, but they were appointed just to find billets for them. They could not be taken into the Cabinet, so they were appointed to the Public Works Commission. Then, when the Government were short of a couple of billets they went a little further and appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the workings of the Railway Department—a political commission. One member of the commission—he had nothing to say against him personally—was in the Railway Department at one time, and left under certain circumstances, and it was only natural that he should be biased. A biased commission to inquire into the Railway Department! Further up he saw an item of £3,500 for "Advertising the State." In a time of war why did they want to bother about advertising the State? The soldiers at the front gave Australia the best advertisement Australia ever had. The Government could cut that item out and put it on to "assistance to returned soldiers." This blaming the Upper House for not passing taxation to benefit the returned soldier was all electioneering piffle.

Mr. SMITH: In regard to the subsidy to the Queensland line of steamers for a four-weekly service via Torres Strait, he would point out that the system had been to subsidise the British-India Company to maintain a regular line of steamers between the old country and Queensland. The port of Mackay had never been made a port of call for those steamers, although the request had been made many times, and promises had been received that the matter would be gone into. A good deal of cargo went there at various times, but at present that cargo had to be unloaded at Townsville and transhipped to Mackay, which imposed a serious hardship on the people there.

Mr. FORSYTH: I think they have to call if you have a certain amount of freight.

Mr. SMITH: The condition was that if there were 20 tons of cargo they had to call, but they had always been able to avoid that condition on account of having

to wait at the anchorage, and so on. The freight of white lead from London to Townsville used to be £1 a ton, and the freight between Townsville and Mackay was £1 5s. a ton. That showed that the Mackay people suffered considerable hardship. If Mackay were made a port of call for those vessels, it would mean a saving of £1 5s. a ton on that line alone. When any fresh agreement was being entered into in connection with the subsidy, he would like the Premier to see that the claims of Mackay were not overlooked. In the past they had always evaded stopping at Mackay if they could possibly get out of it.

Colonel RANKIN: The only point he wished to emphasise in connection with the vote for repatriation purposes was that £109,000 was voted last year, that only £23,000 was spent, leaving a balance of £77,000, and that in the Estimates this year the Government had made provision for only £50,000. With regard to the question raised by the hon. member for Mackay, he would suggest that Urangan—the new port at Hervey Bay—should be included among the ports of call for the British-India boats. He understood that the arrangement was that the boats were to call at any port guaranteeing a certain quantity of cargo, and that it was not necessary that the port should be named in the contract with the company. That was his impression. If he was wrong, the Premier could correct him. At Urangan they had a port which had quite recently been described as one of the best ports along our seaboard, and he hoped its claims would be favourably considered.

The PREMIER: In reply to the hon. member for Mackay and the hon. member for Burrum, he might say that the provision in the contract with the British-India Company relative to this particular question was as follows:—

“The said steamers shall have liberty to proceed via any port or ports, and shall call outwards and homewards at Thursday Island, Cairns, Townsville, and Port Alma, or so near to those respective ports as the ship can safely get, and lie always afloat, and at any other safe port or ports in Queensland between Thursday Island and Brisbane to be nominated from time to time by the Chief Secretary or the Agent-General at which the Government will guarantee not less than 150 tons of cargo from or for each port of call.”

Those were the conditions. However, he would have the matter looked into. He understood the suggestion was that this provision had not been carried out, as far as Mackay was concerned. He would look into the matter, and also into the matter of making Urangan a port of call.

Mr. COLLINS: Don't forget Bowen.

The PREMIER: And Bowen, too. He would always be glad to consider the representations of members with regard to such matters. The whole question might be considered again if the agreement was revised.

Mr. FORSYTH: How long has that agreement got to run?

The PREMIER: The agreement could be terminated by six months' notice by either side. While he was in London a variation was made in the agreement with respect to the amount of subsidy in connection with each ship. The document bearing on this matter was dated 15th June, 1916, and read as follows:—

“The Agent-General for Queensland,
“409/10 Strand, W.C.

“MAIL CONTRACT TO QUEENSLAND.

“Sir,—Referring to the conversations which have taken place between the Honourable T. J. Ryan and Mr. Allan Hughes on this subject, we desire to put on record that it is understood that for the future when it is found necessary to ask that the steamer under this contract should proceed by the Cape instead of via the Suez Canal, in the event of your giving consent we are prepared to rebate the sum of one thousand pounds off the subsidy applicable to that sailing. It is understood that you will in the future, as in the past, allow the steamers homewards to proceed by the Southern route via the Cape, when you consider there are good reasons for doing so, without any rebate.

“We have the honour to be,

“Sir,

“Your obedient servants,

“GRAY, DAWES, AND CO.,

“Agents, British-India Steam Lines.”

Since then, under that agreement, the Government had received a rebate of £3,000—that was, £1,000 for each of three ships, which more than paid his expenses to the old country, as the total expenses in connection with that trip were only a little [8.30 p.m.] over £2,000. Prior to that, ships were given permission to come via the Cape without any rebate. He did not think the then Chief Secretary, Mr. Denham, could have refused consent to ships coming via the Cape, but no rebate was given in such a case.

Mr. FORSYTH: They save the canal dues.

The PREMIER: Yes, and the canal dues were a little more than £1,000. The company said they had to carry the cargo right along the coast to bring it to Brisbane, and that it really did not matter much to the Queensland Government which route they took.

Colonel RANKIN: With regard to his suggestion that Urangan should be included among the ports of call, he might correct that and say that the port should be Port Maryborough.

The PREMIER: Of course, proper representations will be made officially.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER: Mr. Bertram, I beg to move—That you do now leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again. I take it that this is a day.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Yes.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported progress, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again on Wednesday next.

The House adjourned at thirty-one minutes past 8 o'clock.

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