

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Council**

**THURSDAY, 6 DECEMBER 1917**

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THURSDAY, 6 DECEMBER, 1917.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. W. Hamilton) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

## PAPER.

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

Additional regulations under the Public Curator Act of 1915.

## APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 4.

## SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The title of this Bill is—

“A Bill to apply certain sums of money out of the consolidated revenue fund to the service of the years ending on the last days of June, 1918 and 1919, and certain further sums to the service of the year ended on the last day of June, 1917, and to appropriate the Supplies granted in the present session of Parliament.”

It will be seen that there is an Appropriation in the Bill on account of the financial year ending June, 1918. It is not altogether looked upon as an unusual thing to ask Parliament in the financial Appropriation Bill of a financial year for Appropriation for a short period on account of the next year.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: We want some justification for it, though.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We can justify it. This is the justification. Hon. members know that Parliament will expire by effluxion of time some time before the end of the financial year, and it may be impossible for a new Parliament to be constituted in time to pass a Supply Bill for meeting the railway payments which fall due in July.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Government can pay that—that is current expenditure.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The elections take place in May, and the writ has to be returned and a new Parliament to be constituted.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: It can meet on the last Tuesday in June.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Is the hon. gentleman going to quibble about a fortnight's Supply to the public servants?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Why ask for it?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Because it is necessary to avoid any inconvenience that might occur. This is not an unusual thing. In New Zealand, there is a statutory authority which allows the Minister for Finance to make payments up to three months beyond the time provided for in the annual Appropriation. That practice is also authorised to the extent of one month in New South Wales by the Audit Act; so that there is nothing unreasonable in the request made on this occasion for a vote of credit for one month of the year 1918-19. The sum asked for is to cover one month's Supply, based on the amount provided on the current year's Estimates, which would mean that

Parliament should meet in the first week in August.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: You want to spend the next Parliament's money.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is a mere quibble. The hon. gentleman knows that the public servants have to be paid and that any Parliament has to spend the money. The money will have to be spent in any case.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is current expenditure. The Governor can pay that.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We are only asking for one month's Supply in the following year. That is a reasonable thing, and it is not unprecedented. It is not that we are doing anything very unusual.

Hon. F. T. BRETNALL: It is very unusual.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman must know when the elections will occur, or somewhere about the time; but it will be difficult for the new Parliament to meet earlier than the date I have suggested, and so that there may not be any inconvenience caused to the public servants, the railway men, those faithful servants of the Government—it may not be required—this Appropriation for one month is asked for most reasonably.

Hon. H. TURNER: Why not bring the election on a month earlier?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I remember when the hon. gentleman was in the Assembly he was always one of those who were in favour of keeping the elections off as long as they possibly could. (Laughter.)

Hon. W. J. RIORNAN: Was he a Labour man then?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes, and I was with him. Hon. gentlemen say, “Why not bring the elections on earlier?” We are not discussing the matter of when the elections should take place. Parliament expires by effluxion of time in May next; I do not know the exact date.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: 22nd May.

Hon. C. F. NIELSON: We are not worrying about it, either.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I move—that the Bill be now read a second time. I feel sure that on the last day of the session we shall get on with business and that the Bill will be carried without any discussion beyond the ordinary discussion applied to an Appropriation Bill. I beg to move—that the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I am very disappointed with the explanation of the Minister: (Hear, hear!) He has practically given us no reason at all for the inclusion of Supply for the month of July next year in this Bill. There have been occasions before this when Supply had been asked for for an extra term—when an even larger sum than this has been agreed to. I remember that, when the Hon. Mr. Kidston was Premier in 1908, he was going to England, and we knew that he could not be back until October or November, but we knew before he went away that he was going to do good work for us in England. On that occasion we passed for the services of the year 1908-9 votes for £850,000 from the consolidated revenue fund, £100,000 from trust and special funds, and £400,000 from loan fund, or a total of £1,350,000—about four months'

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Supply. But, as I say, there was a justification for that. We knew that Mr. Kidston could not get back until about November, and it was not a bit of good calling Parliament together until we found what were the results of his mission to England.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Was that not during the life of that Parliament?

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Yes, it was about the second year of that Parliament. Certainly it was not in the last year of an expiring Parliament, as this is. We did something of the same kind in 1915. In Appropriation Act No. 4 for 1915-16, in addition to the Appropriation to 30th June, 1917, we granted on account to the services of the year 1916-17, £325,000 from the consolidated revenue fund, £50,000 from trust and special funds, and £150,000 from the loan fund, or a total of £525,000. But there was some justification for that. Mr. Ryan, like Mr. Kidston in 1908, was going to England.

Hon. F. T. BRENTNALL: A Labour Government again.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: We gave him an extra month's Supply. But that was in the first year of the present Parliament, and not in the expiring year. That is where the difference comes in as compared with this present demand. We object strongly to granting Supply beyond the term of the financial year to a Government that is going out before the end of June next, and probably will not return.

Hon. W. H. DEMAINE: The wish is father to the thought.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The wish is certainly father to the thought, and the belief is there too. (Hear, hear!) Because I am confident that the extravagance of the Government, their acts of repudiation, their entering into various forms of State enterprise without justification and without Parliamentary authority or Appropriations, have so opened the eyes of the people of Queensland that at the next election they will turn the present Government out of office. There is not the slightest justification for this extra money being voted on this occasion. The Minister stated that Parliament will not be able to meet after the elections in time for the first railway pay in July, to be voted by the next Parliament. Now, this Parliament expires by the effluxion of time about 22nd May next, and, if the Government get their writs in shortly after that date, they can quite easily summon Parliament in time to get this first month's Supply. This is an unusual procedure, and one that should not be approved of unless proper justification can be given for it. So far the Minister has failed to give us any such justification. The Government are asking us in this Bill to pass not only the unforeseen expenditure that is included in the Estimates-in-Chief, but they are also asking us to pass tremendous amounts included in the Supplementary Estimates. From the trust and special funds we are asked to pass no less than £2,051,849 on account of the services of the year 1917-18. But, in addition to that, we are asked to pass on account of the services of the year ended 30th June, 1917, further sums of £320,809 15s. from the consolidated revenue fund, £560,980 15s. from trust and special funds, and £180,818 6s. 4d. from the loan fund. Included in the payments from trust and special funds for the current financial year are such items as

£396,425 for State stations, in addition to the amounts already passed, which amounted to £103,000, £220,000 for State insurance, £1,000,000 for central sugar-mills, £400,000 for loans to local bodies. Then, from the loan fund, there is an item of £135,633 for State stations, making on that account about £530,000, in addition to what has already been passed on the ordinary Estimates. Those are tremendous amounts to ask us to ratify, and at least the Council should enter a serious protest against the extravagance of the Government if we pass the Bill. We should intimate to the present and any future Government that they are not doing a fair thing by the taxpayers in going in for such extravagant expenditure. The Government seem to have no idea of what liabilities we have to meet in the future. We have at the present time a public debt of no less than £61,373,614.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is a legacy from the Liberals.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It has been largely increased by the present Government. The other day they asked us to approve of the issue of Treasury Bills for £230,000 to meet the deficit of last year. That amount has to be added to the £61,373,614 of indebtedness.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Then they have left off payments to the sinking fund.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: They seem to forget, quite apart from the present necessity for economy, that during the next four or five years some very heavy loans will be falling due. In 1918 we have £50,000 falling due, in 1922 £2,788,750, and in 1924 £12,973,834. Are the Government making any preparations to meet those liabilities? The estimated revenue for the current financial year is £8,252,629, and out of that revenue the Treasurer should have no difficulty in making ends meet. He certainly should not go in for an expenditure of £8,749,241, which means a deficit of £496,612. Any sane Government at the present time could easily make ends meet out of a revenue of over £8,200,000.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I would sooner see the debt remain where it is than starve our public servants.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Apparently the Government would sooner see it increasing, as it has been doing during the last two years. The astonishing fact about this Government is that they came in as a non-borrowing Government. (Hear, hear!) One of the planks of their platform at the last election was "non-borrowing." They have broken every plank in their platform.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: And borrowed some from the Liberals.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: They have suspended payments to the sinking fund. They have gone in for just as much borrowing as any previous Government, and they have not attempted in any way to keep their expenditure within their revenue. They are absolutely reckless. And now we are asked on the last day of the last session of this Parliament to ratify all the unforeseen expenditure of this Government, and to give them practically a free hand to go on as they are doing at the present time by giving them Supply for one month in the next financial year. The suggestion is a preposterous one. Even if the Council does agree

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to it, we should certainly enter a most serious protest against it when we send the Bill back to the Assembly.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: That won't hurt.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I do not know that it will hurt, but it will show that the Council does not approve of the extravagance of the Government. We are in the unfortunate position that we cannot amend the Bill in such a way that it will be acceptable to the Assembly. To do that is not really within our power, because the Assembly would not agree to it. We must either throw out this Bill, with all its injustices to the taxpayers, or we must accept it without amendment. But I say the least we can do is to give our reasons. We should not send the Bill back with the usual message, but should return it with a message setting out the grounds why we object to their expenditure, and showing the reasons why they are not to be trusted with the handling of so much money.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: Is there any reason why we should grant it?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The only reason is that unless we do grant it the Government cannot carry on. I would be in favour of postponing the passage of the measure and getting the Government to withdraw the objectionable clause providing for an additional one month's Supply.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You know you cannot do that.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: We are here to do our duty. Last night the Minister made the threat that he was going to get reinforcements. If the Government attempt anything of that kind the people will very soon be on their heels. We have not raised much objection to the appointment of thirteen members to this House.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Why should you?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: When nine members were appointed we were perfectly satisfied, and I expressed approval of those appointments, because I had been advocating for two years that the number of members should be brought up to its normal limit. Forty-five members was the greatest number we had ever had in the Council, and when nine new members were appointed I did not object. But when four more came up the majority of members in this House were very much put out about the matter. We looked upon that as an infringement by the Governor of his powers under the Constitution Act.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member is bringing into the debate something entirely different from the question before the House, which is that the Appropriation Bill be read a second time; not the appointment of new members.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I submit that I am perfectly justified in discussing this question on this Bill. We have here £1,500 for the Legislative Council—£1,000 for the President and £500 for the Chairman of Committees—and I say I am entitled to discuss the appointment of new members to the Council, especially when those appointments are made for the purpose of swamping the Council. I do not want to fall foul of the President, but I shall go so far as to object to his ruling, and move that it be disagreed with if he attempts to stop my

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discussing this matter, and I am sure that in so doing I shall have the support of the majority of the House.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Who is threatening now?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I am not threatening. I say distinctly that if at any time the Government attempt to swamp this House the people of Queensland will be up in arms against them. We have already had a resolution passed by an association disapproving of the appointments that have been made, and that resolution has been forwarded to His Excellency the Governor.

HON. R. BEDFORD: What association is that?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The Returned Soldiers' Association.

HON. R. BEDFORD: What do they count for?

HON. A. A. DAVEY: Loafers only count with you.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: That resolution expressed very largely the opinion of the law-abiding people of the State.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I rise to a point of order. Is the Hon. Mr. Davey in order in saying that loafers only count with us over here?

The PRESIDENT: I did not hear the expression, but if the hon. gentleman made use of that expression he must withdraw it.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: I withdraw the statement, and will not do as members on the other side do—try to qualify it—as I am perfectly willing that it should go into the Press and let the public form their own conclusions.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I say the opinion expressed by the Returned Soldiers' Association was the opinion of the whole of the law-abiding members of the community. The Government have no right to attempt to swamp the Council in view of the opinion expressed by the people when in May last they decided by a majority of 60,000 votes that this House should be retained as it was. No attempt should be made by the Government to interfere with the will of the people as expressed last year on the referendum on the abolition of the Legislative Council. If anything is done to put this House out against the will of the people, then such action will react on those who ask for it and those who grant it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You know very well you are wrong in saying that.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I am not wrong in saying that.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You have no right to question His Excellency's action in this House.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Will you show me anything in "May" which says that I cannot do it?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: In any case it is indecent.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: That is a matter of taste. Simply because my remarks do not suit the hon. gentleman, he says my comment is indecent.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I do not think it is necessary for me to prolong the debate, as I have no doubt that other members will have a good deal to say, but I contend that in view of the extravagance of the present Government, in view of their attempt to repudiate contracts entered into with such persons as the Crown lessees, and in

view of the way they have generally acted during the last three years, incurring unauthorised expenditure to the extent of £1,000,000, it is not judicious, and it is not right, that we should assist the Government any further than would allow them to carry on in accordance with their Estimates. As long as they do that I am quite prepared to support them, but directly they attempt to go beyond that and pledge another Parliament, they are not doing what is the proper thing. I do not say they are not legally entitled to do it, seeing that the Governor sent down his warrant to the Assembly for the amount.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: Why not obey your masters?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You obey your masters; you come to heel very quickly when you are called to order by the Australian Workers' Union.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I do not propose to say much more. We have shown the extravagance of the Government on many previous occasions. In this measure they ask us to allow them to continue that extravagance, not only for the term of three years for which they have been elected, but also for part of the term of another Parliament, without giving any reason for their proposal. The Minister should have given some reason why the next Parliament will not meet before July. It will be quite easy to get all the writs returned before the end of May and meet Parliament early in June.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: You cannot dictate to the Government.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I am not trying to dictate to the Government. I am putting the case clearly before the House, and I say that, in view of the extravagance of the Government, it is injudicious to allow them further play than we have given them. And if we decide to allow that extra month, then we should certainly, when sending the message back to the Assembly, add to it a very strong protest against the [4 p.m.] action of the Government, giving full reasons and showing the people of Queensland, at any rate, that, although we passed the Bill, we did not endorse the extravagance of the Government.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I trust that this idea of tagging a message on to this Bill will not be persisted in. Everybody recognises that this is grievance day, and that general usage permits members to speak on any subject more or less remotely connected with the matter of the Bill. I presume that the Opposition—true to its incurable habit of being disappointed and in its tremendous agony of mind at seeing Labour in power, and knowing that Labour is coming back again—(laughter)—is unable, even on this Bill, which it has really no power to alter, to get away from its other incurable habit of tinkering. Surely it should be sufficient for it, if it really believes that Labour is going to be turned down at the next election, with the Liberal caucus already torn by the conflicting claims of half-a-dozen would-be leaders—surely it at least should get to the real work which it will have to do if the tremendous miracle of the defeat of the Ryan Government happens next May! Its work in that remote contingency will be assassinating five of the six would-be leaders, and if it

feels that it is overworked in that task I will cheerfully give it a hand. (Laughter.)

HON. A. A. DAVEY: Are you a leader over there?

HON. R. BEDFORD: No, we have only one leader here, and I do not think anybody questions the loyalty of all of us to him; but hon. members have many parties over there—here one man with a following of himself, and never catching up to himself, and there another man with a following of one, and no politics absolutely uniting them in any way.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: We are independent of party.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Yes, independent of the habit or capacity for thought.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: That is really a compliment.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Yes, and I did not mean it for the hon. member. To take one particular case of a public utility being held up or affected, I wish to refer to the item of salaries and contingencies in connection with the Printing Office. Now, that includes an item called "Hansard" representing the privileges, the rights, and the record of this Council. The attempt at wiping out No. 37 of "Hansard" was in itself an infringement of the sovereign rights of this State, and may also be an offence against art, seeing that thereby it censored a number of my very interesting interjections. (Laughter.) The reasons given for this attempted censoring of No. 37 of "Hansard"—

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I would like to ask if the hon. member is in order, seeing that this thing is at present sub judice and that there is a prosecution in respect to it?

HON. R. BEDFORD: It is not sub judice yet.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We do not usually say here what we are afraid to say outside.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I will say anything outside that I say here.

The PRESIDENT: "May," with reference to the point of order, on page 248, says—

"Certain matters cannot be debated, save upon a substantive motion which can be dealt with by amendment or by the distinct vote of the House. Among these may be mentioned the conduct of the Sovereign, the heir to the throne, the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the Governors-General of the Dominions, the Speaker, the Chairman of Ways and Means, members of either House of Parliament, and judges of the superior courts of the United Kingdom, including persons holding the position of a judge, such as a judge in a court of bankruptcy and of a county court. These matters cannot, therefore, be questioned by way of amendment or upon a motion for adjournment under Standing Order No. 10 (see page 226). For the same reason, no charge of a personal character can be raised, save upon a direct and substantive motion to that effect."

I take it that if the hon. member wants to discuss the actions of the member of another House of Parliament, such as the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth—

HON. R. BEDFORD: Of a Government department—which is not included in that passage.

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The PRESIDENT: I thought the hon. member was referring to the actions of the Prime Minister. That can only be done on a substantive motion.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: I think I can keep within the four walls of it.

The PRESIDENT: As long as the hon. member does, he will be all right.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: The point of order surely cannot refer, and does not refer—I think the ruling is in my favour, anyhow—to any objection taken by a member of this Council to a breach of one of its privileges. And one of its privileges, one of its rights, is that the record of its proceedings published in "Hansard" shall not in any way be open to censorship.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is a question before the courts now.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: Quite so. I am not interfering with that at all. Now, section 37 of the Queensland Criminal Code says—

"Any person who in order by force or constraint to compel the Sovereign to change her measures or counsels or in order to put any force or constraint thereon or in order to intimidate or overawe any House of Parliament of any of Her Majesty's dominions is guilty of a crime which is called treason and is liable to the punishment of death."

I do not ask for the death penalty, gentlemen of the jury, in this case. (Laughter.)

Hon. F. T. BRENTNALL: You tried to kill us, but you did not.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: I did not—may you live for a thousand years! As I have said before, "I came to bury Caesar, not to praise him." I also said I was not going to do it off my own bat, and seeing that the people—foolishly, I think—decided to give a new lease of life to this Council by referendum, that I would certainly wait until another referendum was held before we gave it its quietus.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: Are you one of the Suicide Club of thirteen?

Hon. R. BEDFORD: No, I am not pledged to suicide, except that as an elector I shall vote "Yes" to the abolition of the Council. Section 39 of that same Criminal Code makes guilty also any person who forms an intention to do any of those things.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Criminal Code also deals with misappropriation; this is an Appropriation Bill.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: It also deals with the misappropriation of the privileges of this House. Section 44 of the Code says it is sedition—

"to excite disaffection against the Sovereign or the Government or Constitution of the U.K. or of Queensland, as by law established, or against either House of Parliament of the U.K. or of Queensland or against the administration of justice."

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Who is the U.K.?

Hon. R. BEDFORD: The United Kingdom. (Laughter.)

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I thought it was the I.W.W.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: You have the I.W.W. on the brain. Then, again, the

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Code, in a clause dealing with offences against the Executive and legislative power, in section 54 provides—

"Any person who advisedly does any act calculated to interfere with the free exercise by a member of the Executive Council of the duties or authority of his office as a member of the Executive Council or as a Minister of State is guilty of a misdemeanour and is liable to imprisonment for three years."

Section 55 says—

"Any person who advisedly by force or fraud interferes or attempts to interfere with the free exercise of either House of Parliament of their authority, or with the free exercise by any member of either House of his duties or authority as such member or as member of a Committee of either House, or of a joint committee of both Houses, is guilty of a misdemeanour and is liable to imprisonment for three years."

And for anybody who wants a little more retirement, there is a provision that any person who attempts to influence a member of Parliament in his vote, opinion, judgment, or action is liable to a penalty not exceeding seven years.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Oh, you are a wag!

Hon. R. BEDFORD: Now, if this political censorship did not exist, this article of mine (holding up papers)—which is being turned into a very fine patchwork quilt—(laughter)—could not have been censored. The Prime Minister of the Commonwealth is reported in the "Sydney Morning Herald" of Tuesday, 4th December, as saying this—

"There is absolutely no political censorship in Australia to-day. Every elector is perfectly free to say or write what he pleases for or against the Government proposals."

Hon. A. A. DAVEY: So long as it is true.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: Who is saying that there is no truth in my article? You do not know anything about it, to start with. Mr. Hughes continues—

"This applies to platform, leaflet, or the Press."

That is not true for a start. Fraser and Jenkinson, printers, of Melbourne, were fined only two days ago for not filling up the blanks caused by the deletions of the censor, and yet he says there is no such thing as political censorship. The statement that the platform, the Press, and the leaflet are free from censorship is untrue. Everybody knows that every man who advocates anti-conscription as I do is called a pro-German or a shirker, or a loafer, or a Sinn Feiner. It is utterly impossible to be an Australian, representing the true Australian national sentiment as it appeals to us, without having some Imperial faddist saying we are disloyal. We are just as loyal as the people on the other side.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: We are discussing the Appropriation Bill.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: I am talking about the Appropriation Bill, which includes the printing of "Hansard." If hon. gentlemen opposite object to wasteful expenditure they should certainly object to the amount spent on that publication having been wasted by the illegal action of an authority outside the State.

Hon. F. T. BRENTNALL interjected.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I am certainly with the Hon. Mr. Brentnall in that wonderful and beautiful jealousy which he shows for the privileges of this Council. It is the privileges of this Council that I am here to guard until the next referendum. I came here for the purpose of guarding the hon. gentleman.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: Who put you here?

HON. R. BEDFORD: The King. Parliament has to be jealous of its privileges and authority, or surely the dignity of the law is gone. The whole Press of this State, and the whole force of public opinion, have been poisoned, and the people of this country have been insulted as assassins. Because of the fact that a discredited politician had a bad egg thrown at him at Warwick he immediately considered that it was an assault on a demi-god.

HON. G. S. CURTIS: He is not a discredited politician.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I know he is by a big majority of the people of Australia. But for his attempt to stick to his present position, you would never have heard of conscription again. Strangely enough, just prior to the month of October, 1916, Mr. Hughes, who lives at Kew, in close proximity to the asylum, was stated to have had his life attempted. The matter was never ventilated until 28th October, although it was alleged to have taken place on 24th September.

HON. T. M. HALL: What has this to do with the Appropriation Bill?

HON. R. BEDFORD: A great deal.

HON. T. M. HALL: It did not appear in "Hansard."

HON. R. BEDFORD: It appeared in the Victorian "Hansard"; and I am speaking as much for the "Hansards" of the other States as I am speaking for the Queensland "Hansard."

HON. T. M. HALL: You have no right to do that.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I am doing it because I believe in doing good by stealth. The State had its printing account increased to a great extent by reason of the actions of a mysterious gentleman hinting at dark plots, and who told us that the last man and the last woman would be sent out of Australia if we only knew the terrible thing impending over us.

THE PRESIDENT: I must call the hon. gentleman to order. The question before the House at the present time has nothing to do with anti-conscription or conscription. I would like to call the hon. gentleman's attention to "May," who says—

"Matters awaiting the adjudication of a court of law should not be brought forward in debate. This rule was observed by Sir R. Peel and by Lord J. Russell, both by the wording of the Speech from the Throne and by their procedure in the House."

If the hon. gentleman considers that the privileges of Parliament are being infringed, there is a constitutional way of dealing with it, and that is by a substantive motion. I hope the hon. gentleman will confine himself to the items in the Bill now before the Council.

HON. R. BEDFORD: When I alluded to the Warwick incident, I knew very well it was not under judgment, because the matter

had been closed; and when I alluded to the Kew incident I knew it was never under judgment at all, because the matter was never before the court. Having made my general protest against the fact that the records of this Council have been suppressed by somebody who cannot touch this Council, I am perfectly willing to let it go at that. This censorship has been acting all on the side of the forces to which this Government are opposed.

THE PRESIDENT: I must call the hon. gentleman to order. The censorship has nothing to do with the Appropriation Bill, and the hon. gentleman must confine himself to the question.

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: As long as he treats us as gentlemen we will treat him as one.

HON. R. BEDFORD: You do not know how.

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: You do not know how.

HON. R. BEDFORD: You do not. You insulted us the first day we came to the Council. The many leaders on the other side have objected to the unforeseen expenditure by the Government. Surely no man can say that the work which the Government have done can in any way be attacked in regard to State insurance, butchers' shops, station purchases, and even the hotel at Babinda, which wiped out a score or so of sly-grog shops, and which fact should be dear to the heart of every moralist on the other side; the moralists who do not drink lager until after 6 o'clock. Surely no attack can be made on this Government in that regard. Hon. gentlemen on the other side are perfectly prepared that the State should take up any public utility which will not pay. It is a well-recognised thing that the railways should not pay; that, generally, land should be given away to some patriot who will afterwards take the State down for wire netting; that the wire netting patriot should get his land for nothing, and then get his railway built at the expense of people who do not have any land, and that the low fares and freights should cause deficits. It is recognised that the Government should hold the telephone services, because they do not pay. It is recognised that the Government should send sixteen words for a shilling over 10,000 miles of land line because it does not pay. Private enterprise does not want anything that does not pay, but when it comes to a utility which will pay, then it is absolutely wrong and immoral for the Government to have any connection with it at all. It is wrong, for instance, that the Government should cut the price of meat in half. It is wrong that the Government, for the purpose of carrying out its policy of State butchers' shops, should have gone in for the purchase of stations. Everybody knows that, largely, the reason why public utilities have failed in the past on being taken over by the State is because the State has only taken one profit, or a small loss, and left the big profits to the other man. These are the patriots who squeal against every Bill to impose taxation which is brought into this House, and in the last two or three days have thrown out every taxation proposal of the Government. Let us take the statements made in the other House when the war commenced as to the price which should be fixed for meat. It was stated then that, in the interests

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of the war, and in the interests of the people generally, the pastoralists would be content with a price of 25s. per 100 lb. Now that price has been almost doubled—it is 45s. per 100 lb., or something like that.

HON. T. M. HALL: What are the Government doing to allow it?

HON. R. BEDFORD: They have been squealing at the Government for fixing prices where they have been fixed, although at the beginning of the war they were prepared to do a tremendous lot of patriotic squealing on paper. The people who are abusing this Government are the people who improperly take money for wire netting. They got the Government's wire netting, and the Government's money, too. It is easy to put the finger on the sore spots of patriotism of that sort. I hope that the House will not consent to send a message to the other place tagged on to the Appropriation Bill. It is right that this House should grant the Government the extra month's Supply which they ask for, for the reasons given by the Government in "another place," and by the representative of the Government in this House. I strongly support the Appropriation Bill as it is, and I ask hon. members on the other side to withdraw the message which they wish to tack on to the Appropriation Bill.

HON. G. S. CURTIS: I quite agree with what has been said by the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn in reference to this Appropriation Bill. I hope, if the House adopts the Bill, that it will also attach the rider suggested by the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn in reference to the extravagance of the Government, more especially in connection with the unauthorised expenditure. I quite agree with what has been said by the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn in reference to the appointment of new members of this Council. In view of the verdict given by the people on the 5th May last, I affirm that the appointment of thirteen socialist supporters of the Government, who have publicly avowed their intention to discredit and destroy the Council, was a flouting of the will of the people of Queensland. It was an unconstitutional thing to do and, in my opinion, was a gross abuse of the Royal prerogative. It seems to me that His Excellency the Governor did not attach the significance which should be attached to the vote given by the people on the 5th May, when they said they wished to preserve the Legislative Council. Yet we have hon. members appointed to the Council who have publicly avowed their hostility to the Council and have stated their desire to discredit and destroy it in direct antagonism to the vote given by the people on the 5th May. Bearing in mind the verdict of the people, and bearing in mind that this is a moribund Parliament, and also that the Parliamentary Bills Referendum Act of 1908 affords a speedy means of dealing with disputes between the two Chambers, it made it unnecessary for any undue exercise of the Royal prerogative. I say that what was done was unconstitutional and uncalled for and was in opposition to the wishes of the people of the State as well as a gross abuse of the Royal prerogative.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: That is a disloyal statement.

HON. G. S. CURTIS: I do not think so. We are all liable to make mistakes. Even Governors make mistakes, and I say that with all due respect to His Excellency.

[Hon. R. Bedford.]

THE PRESIDENT: Order! I must call the attention of the hon. member to the passage from "May" which I read a few minutes ago. If the hon. gentleman wants to impugn the integrity or question the action of His Excellency, he can only do it by introducing a substantive motion.

HON. G. S. CURTIS: I bow to your ruling. I have no desire to say anything further about the matter. I do not suppose that anything would have been said about the question at all if the Minister had not said that further reinforcements would be brought in to assist the Government in passing their measures. But, for that threat, I do not suppose anything would have been said about the matter. I quite approve of what has been said by the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn in regard to the Appropriation Bill, and if the House adopts it I hope they will also attach the rider suggested by the hon. gentleman.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Appropriation Bill before us is the climax of the reckless career of the present Government. It is brought down by a Government which well deserves the condemnation of the electors of Queensland. The financial record of this Government is inglorious.

HON. F. McDONNELL: The best Government you ever had.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The way they have dealt with the public funds of Queensland during the last three years, and the way they propose now to deal with the funds, not only those which belong to this Parliament, but those which belong to another Parliament, is a situation which calls for the most careful consideration of this Council. If we take a rapid survey of the actions of this Government financially since it came into office, we will find out they have put up a record for illegal expenditure, that they have turned a surplus into a substantial deficit, that they have so treated the public funds that they were unable, at one time, to give a full and frank statement as to the position of those funds to the public of Queensland, and their actions with regard to industrial enterprises and with regard to other items of illegal expenditure, to which I will call attention in detail later on, are such as to produce a feeling of insecurity throughout the whole community. They are such as to put upon this Government a heavy cloud of suspicion. The Government have received an annual sum of over £1,000,000 more than any previous Government, and they came into office with all debts paid and a surplus in the Treasury, yet they go out of office having spent a good way over £20,000,000 of money while they have been in office, after having committed this State to further large expenditure and having fastened upon the workers of Queensland a heavier interest Bill than has been fastened on them in any other State in the Commonwealth.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: They fastened higher wages, too.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I might interrupt my speech for a moment to ask the hon. gentleman what is the good of giving higher wages to the workers in the community when by doing so they skied the price of living to a higher summit than any other State in the Commonwealth. They have made the cost of living soar up so that the value of the wages received by the



workers in Queensland to-day is less than they received under any Liberal Administration in Queensland in the last ten years.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: Do you say that the cost of living is higher in this State than any other State.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I read the figures from the "Standard" the other day, and if the hon. gentleman likes to contradict those figures he can do so. They are official figures, and I have no wish to contradict them or criticise them in any way. We know that the Government have laid violent hands on the industries of the State, and that is one of the reasons why they are bringing in such an Appropriation measure. They laid violent hands on the sugar industry, and also on the pastoral industry. I rapidly pass over these different items, because instances and examples will occur to most hon. gentlemen, and will not be forgotten by the electors of Queensland. They laid violent hands on the pastoral industry; in fact, their desire in that direction was, as they said, to make the pastoralists squeal. They laid violent hands on the farming industry by putting a huge incubus on to it in the shape of increased freights, and they threw all sorts of obstacles in the way of the farmers. They introduced a couple of sop Bills just at the end of Parliament for the benefit of the farmers. They also endeavoured by means of the Stamp Act and other vexatious Acts to throw the trading community into chaos. Fortunately, the trading commercial community of Queensland had their eyes opened by these last gigantic taxation proposals, by which trade would be practically [4.30 p.m.] throttled, and the commercial community would be raided—and all what for? In order to find enough taxation to make up for the financial orgies of the present Government. They have even gone so far as to flout Parliament itself in their endeavour to govern this country by regulation only, in their endeavour, as they do in this Appropriation Bill, to get more money from the State than belongs to them as a Parliament. Never in the last fifty years of Queensland's history am I able to find any example in which a dying Parliament has laid violent hands upon the money that belongs to its successors.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is quite usual; we have proved that.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Can the hon. gentleman find one instance in which that has been done?

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: You will get it before you have finished.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: If there has ever been a single instance it is a vicious precedent, and this House will do honour to itself in refusing to follow such a vicious precedent rather than in seeking to get expenditure for a term which is beyond the life of the present Parliament. If we want to have a month's expenditure of the next Parliament, why not take two, three, or four months?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Because we only want one month.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Why not take the whole year, and dip into the purse of our successors and take as much money as

we like? It is a vicious principle, and contrary to all constitutional precedent.

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: We gave you two instances.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Those are in the life of a Parliament—midway in the three years. The Government have not only flouted Parliament itself in endeavouring to rule this country by a coterie without consulting Parliament, but they have really raided the public purse.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: In what way?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: First of all by illegal expenditure, in which they have been severely condemned by the Full Court. If the hon. gentleman is not au fait with current events, I am not here, at any rate, to give him brains to enable him to understand current events.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Mr. Justice Lukin, in very severe terms, condemned the illegal expenditure of £100,000 by the present Government, and the country will not forget it. This is supposed to be a Government that stands for the Crown. The Crown is supposed to be the soul of integrity and to put information upon the table which will not be misleading or fabricated. The Crown is supposed to be the soul of honour in all things with regard to public administration, and here we have had papers put upon the table, and upon the table of another House, that have been absolutely false. I will not say they have been intentionally fabricated, but they have been absolutely false, and I shall read one of those papers later on.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: Read the "Courier."

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No, I will read from the "Standard," if you like.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I will read from the "Daily Standard" of 6th December, with regard to the laying of documents on the table which are absolutely false. The "Daily Standard" report of that date states—

"The Treasurer (Mr. Theodore), for the Attorney-General, in reply to Mr. Winstanley (Labour, Quenton), stated in the Legislative Assembly yesterday that it was a fact that he had received a communication from the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in regard to the number of decisions affirmed and reversed on appeal from the Supreme Court to the High Court, a copy of which he laid upon the table."

It seems to be the object of certain gentlemen in the community to throw august tribunals into disrepute.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: What is wrong with that?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: As if we can help ourselves by burning our own house down; as if every sensible citizen does not know that if he touches certain institutions—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Your memory must be very short. What did you say about Mr. Justice McCawley?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I have not yet read the proceedings which took place in

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reference to that matter before the Full Court this morning. The report proceeds—

“ I have the honour to call your attention to the answer given in the Legislative Assembly on the 20th instant, by your colleague the Assistant Minister for Justice, to the following questions put by Mr. Foley, M.L.A. :—

“ Mr. Foley, pursuant to notice, asked the Assistant Minister for Justice—

(1) How many Supreme Court decisions have been appealed against since the establishment of the High Court in Australia?

(2) Also give the names of the judges and the number of judgments appealed against with (a) the number affirmed; and (b) the number reversed?

“ Answers—

(1) Seventy-nine appeals from decisions of the Supreme Court.”

Then the particulars are set out in tabulated form—

Judge.	Number of Judgments Affirmed by High Court.	Number Reversed.
Sir Pope A. Cooper, Chief Justice ...	21 ...	43
Mr. Justice Real, Senior Puisne Judge ...	17 ...	31
Mr. Justice Chubb, Puisne Judge ...	20 ...	29
Mr. Justice Shand, Puisne Judge ...	— ...	—
And Northern Judge (appointed 3rd November, 1908)	14 ...	8
Mr. Justice Lukin, Puisne Judge (appointed 12th July, 1910) ...	12 ...	13

In the case of Purcell v. Bacon, the High Court judgment was overruled by the Privy Council, who affirmed the judgments of Cooper, C.J., Shand, and Lukin, J.J. In the above figures the judgments of these judges have been regarded as having been upheld by the High Court.

“ I append a certificate of the Registrar of the Court, compiled by my direction, of the correct answers to the aforesaid questions, assuming that you wish it to be understood that your colleague regarded those questions and answers as a matter of public importance. I draw your attention to the remarkable discrepancies between your colleague's answers and the facts. I desire that you will be good enough to give as much publicity to these official figures as was given by your colleague's in his reply to Mr. Foley's questions, and I invite you to offer such explanation as you may think fit to make of these irreconcilable statements.

“ Awaiting your reply, I have the honour to be, sir,

“ Your most obedient servant,

“ (Sgd.) POPE A. COOPER.”

“ Here followed the certificate of Mr. C. S. Norris, Registrar of the Supreme Court, certifying to the correctness of the figures supplied.

“ The number of Supreme Court decisions appealed against since the estab-

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lishment of the High Court of Australia, including those in which leave to appeal has been asked. The particulars were—

With and not proceeded or retried and re- or granted and re- Leave to appeal refused.	19	16	17	10	8
No. of appeals given and not proceeded with.	10	11	11	6	8
Varied.	4	2	4	2	..
Reversed.	29	25	21	7	10
Affirmed.	22	13	17	11	12
Sir Pope A. Cooper, Chief Justice	..	..	..	..	..
His Honour Mr. Justice Real	..	..	..	..	..
His Honour Mr. Justice Chubb	..	..	..	..	..
His Honour Mr. Justice Shand	..	..	..	..	..
His Honour Mr. Justice Lukin	..	..	..	..	..

“ The Registrar stated that in the case, Attorney-General and Isles v. the Council of the City of Brisbane, the Chief Justice was overruled by the High Court, but his judgment was in part affirmed and in part varied on appeal to the Privy Council. In the figures quoted his judgment was regarded as being varied by the High Court. In Bacon v. Purcell, the Privy Council affirmed the judgments of the Chief Justice, Mr. Justice Shand, and Mr. Justice Lukin. In the above figures it had been regarded as having been upheld in the High Court.”

Then follows the report of the debate in another place, which I will not quote. I state this: that that question was asked with regard to certain facts which must have been in the possession of the Assistant Minister for Justice, and a reply was given in Parliament which was directly against the facts.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: How do you know?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Perhaps the hon. gentleman was asleep when I read it.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: There is no proof that that is a fact.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: An application was made to the Registrar of the Supreme Court, who has all the facts and details in front of him, and the evidence of the Chief Justice with regard to the matter, and the result showed that the statements given in the Assembly were absolutely irreconcilable with facts. I do not know why they were given. The Assistant Minister for Justice makes the following statement afterwards:—

“ Mr. Fihelly said it would be foolish and the height of stupidity for any officer of the Justice Department to put in his

hands a garbled return. Officers of the Justice Department and of the Supreme Court were at present consulting on the matter. It would not be difficult to ascertain the position."

Is this the attempt to ascertain the position? The answer has been given to the country as a fact.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The answer will be the fact, too.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The head of the department says—

"It would not be difficult to ascertain the position."

He has now to make inquiries regarding what was given by him as the fact. Is not that on a par with the return of counsels' fees that has been laid on the table of the House, and which is the laughing-stock of the legal profession? Is it not on a par with the answers that have been given to questions put by hon. members in this Council, and which have been proved to be absolutely incorrect?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Not one incorrect answer has been given in this Council.

HON. T. J. O'SHEA: Yes, there was.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Which one?

HON. T. J. O'SHEA: Ask the President.

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: Untrue answers have been given to questions put by me; and they have been proved to be untrue in this House; and they came from the same department—the Department of Justice.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The answers I refer to were given before the hon. gentleman came here.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Some of them may have been a little evasive.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is not a question of evasiveness. They were absolutely untrue, and their untruth was proved up to the hilt. In the same way, the return of counsels' fees which was tabled by the Department of Justice was absolutely misleading to anyone who is not a lawyer.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: What fees were those?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is rather too small a matter to waste time over.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: Why mention it if it is so small?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I just pass it by with that slight reference; I do not wish to spend half an hour over it. I know that Sir Samuel Griffith received handsome fees, and earned them, when he was Attorney-General. So did Sir Arthur Rutledge, and so did the Hon. T. O'Sullivan; and I do not see any reason why the present Attorney-General should be ashamed to say how much he has received in fees.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: Do you remember any judge getting two guineas a day for ice and threatening not to sit on the bench if he was not paid?

HON. A. A. DAVEY: What was the price of ice in that part of the country?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Doubtless he was worth it. We could also give instances of an hon. gentleman receiving fifty guineas for each of six trifling cases, one of which was a test case and the others went by default.

HON. H. C. JONES: That is not a fact.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We have quite enough information on that point to satisfy the hon. gentleman. In connection with this matter of illegal expenditure, I desire to refer to the admirable report of the Select Committee which was appointed by the Council to inquire into unauthorised expenditure by the present Government in connection with industrial enterprises, and which was presented to the Council by the chairman, the Hon. Mr. Leahy. That report will go a long way towards showing the people of Queensland the reason why they are threatened with oppressive taxation, and why the Government are asking for more money than they should ask for. It is all done in order to spend it upon reckless enterprises in the future without the consent of Parliament. I shall read the report of the Select Committee, because it puts the position briefly and in better language than can be chosen on the spur of the moment.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Where is the Hon. Mr. Leahy?

HON. T. M. HALL: He is ill.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I may be allowed to explain that the Hon. Mr. Leahy is unfortunately ill to-day; he has a temperature, and I am sure every hon. member regrets that in these last and stormy days of the session—which will end, I have no doubt, with expressions of good will all round, for all that—we should lose the benefit of the hon. gentleman's helpful and illuminating discussion. (Hear, hear!)

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am very sorry. I did not know he was ill.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am sorry that he should be the first to fall a victim to the designs of the Government. (Laughter.) I am sure we all hope that, if we sit tomorrow, the Hon. Mr. Leahy will be present with us. (Hear, hear!) In his absence, I desire to refer to the report, and I do so because it is a most interesting document, and one which will open the eyes of the people of Queensland to the fact that this Government have been playing ducks and drakes with the public finances of the State. We were all prepared, when the Government came into office, to give them a fair run. They came in heralded by the sound of trumpets. They were going to bring in the millennium by return post; they were going to make everyone happy; no one was going to do too much work.

HON. H. C. JONES: They have done good work.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I think I have done more work in a week than the hon. gentleman has done in a year, and I hope that I shall always continue to work. I would be in hospital in a week if I started loafing. This report will open the eyes of Queensland to the way in which the public finances have been dealt with by the present Government. I was just saying that they came into office heralded by a brass band, and everyone was ready to shout "Hurrah" at that time, but they will go out of office to the tune of "The Dead March" in "Saul," "unwept, unhonoured, and unsung." Before I proceed to read the report of the Select Committee, I may say that it is couched in language of studied moderation. There is no exaggeration from end to end—no hyperbole of any kind. Much more could have been said, but we felt that it was wiser to leave it unsaid.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: You would be ashamed to say it.

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HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We would.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: You were ashamed of yourselves.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We would be ashamed to say it. If we had said all we might have said in the report, the electors would not wait until the 5th May, or any May, to have another election.

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: You would have a revolution.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Exactly, and we do not know how near we are to the brink of a volcano. We had a peaceful revolution on 5th May last, and there might be a revolution of another kind later on.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I will now proceed to read the report—

“REPORT.

“The Select Committee appointed on 19th September, 1917, to consider and report on the practice of the Government in spending large sums of public money in acquiring freehold and other properties and carrying on various enterprises in violation of law, and subsequently inviting the sanction of this Council to such unauthorised expenditure by including it in Appropriation Bills, beg to report as follows:—

“That the committee have examined the witnesses named in the margin, and have carefully considered their evidence.

“At the first meeting the Crown Solicitor asked permission to watch the proceedings on behalf of the Crown, which was granted.

“At the second meeting the Under Secretary for Lands, who was re-examined, refused to produce documents in regard to completed State purchases of stations, and said that he could not do so without the consent of the Minister.

“The Premier appeared as Attorney-General on behalf of the Minister for Lands, and lodged a number of objections against the committee continuing their investigations. A few days later, in the Legislative Council, the Minister for Mines, on behalf of the Government, moved a motion to discharge the order appointing the Select Committee. The motion was lost, and the committee continued to sit from time to time. The day after the motion was lost the committee again sat. The Premier and the Crown Solicitor were present, and the chairman made a brief statement in reply to the Premier's objections, and pointed out that the committee considered that his objections had no warrant either in law or fact. It was intended to give a fuller reply later, but on considering the matter the committee decided that the objections raised by the Attorney-General needed no further reply.

“The Under Secretary of the Treasury and Mr. Ross, who is in charge of the State butchers' shops, were also asked for papers, and pointed out that they could not produce them without the authority of their respective Ministers. The ordinary course for the committee to adopt would be to report the matter to the Council to deal with these witnesses according to the Constitution Act.

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“There was considerable doubt as to whether they or their Ministers were the custodians of the papers, and the committee did not think it was quite fair to deal with these officials under the powers given by the Constitution in such cases. When the committee was formed, the chairman, speaking in the Council, mentioned that the committee invited evidence from any person who had any knowledge of the matters which the committee was appointed to investigate. The Government did not in any way facilitate the work of the committee. Indeed, it would not be saying too much to state that the Government appeared to be hostile to it. A letter was written to the Minister for Lands asking whether he wished to give evidence, and stating that a day to suit his convenience would be appointed, and a reply was received from him stating that he had not at any time expressed a wish to give evidence, and pointing out that there was a recognised way of approaching him on this matter. Presumably he referred to the right of the Council to send a message to the Assembly requesting that the Minister be authorised to give evidence. From the hostility shown by the Government, the Select Committee was of opinion that to do this would be a waste of time, and might cause friction between the two branches of the Legislature.

“All the officials of the Government who were examined were sent for by the committee, and neither in procuring witnesses nor in any other way did the Government give the committee the slightest help.

“The Auditor-General, in giving evidence, referred us to his report on State enterprises, and we have taken this report in conjunction with the evidence given by the Auditor-General.

“STATE STATIONS.

“The manager of the State stations has had long experience of sheep, but has not had so much experience of cattle, and has had no experience of purchasing and taking delivery of stations. He did not in all instances inspect the properties himself, and, in at least one instance, adopted the report of one of his subordinates.

“All the stations were bought on ‘book muster,’ which, according to the evidence, is likely to be below the numbers disclosed by the actual muster at a later stage. The figures in connection with the actual muster at Mount Hutton were very much below the number of the book muster, and though it is claimed that, taking the station properties as a whole, the numbers of the actual muster exceeded the book muster, the committee was unable to obtain documentary evidence to that effect.

“The evidence of Mr. Anning is of particular value. He stated that the Government gave too large a sum for Wando Vale, and thus artificially raised the price of the stations subsequently purchased. His evidence with regard to the character of the country and the herd (which he described as the worst in the district) has not been disputed, and there is no doubt that, taking the facts

as known at the time of the purchase, it was a transaction which cannot be justified.

"The State stations pay neither local authority nor any other rates. This is very unfair to the local authorities whose roads they use. The time devoted to the inspection of the stations and stock prior to purchasing was in most cases insufficient, and, taking these purchases on the whole, the committee is strongly of opinion that no prudent company, firm, or individual with experience of station properties would have made these purchases with the limited information at the disposal of the Government. Stock was sold from several of the stations, but only a small number (about 800) was for Imperial purposes, and the great bulk of these cattle were sold to residents of New South Wales, who, as far as the committee could ascertain, removed the cattle to that State.

"There is evidence that, taking into consideration the drought and other factors, the running of stations is more or less a risky enterprise, and, quite apart from the legal objection, it was not wise for the Government to undertake this class of business. Cattle have increased in value since the Government purchased the stations, and probably the properties are at the present time worth the amount paid for them or a little more, but it is not likely that the price of cattle will continue at quite the same figure after the war, and it is too soon at present to state whether ultimately the ventures will result in profit or loss.

#### "STATE SAWMILLS AND JOINERY WORKS.

"The mills have been run at a considerable loss, as disclosed by the Auditor-General's report and the evidence of the accountant of the State sawmills, and there does not seem to be any likelihood of the Government being able to run the mills at a profit.

"Increases in the price of sawn timber have been made by the private millowners and the Government since the Government purchased the sawmill; and though the Government witnesses claim that they are selling timber somewhat lower than private mills, there does not appear to be much in this contention if discounts, etc., by private mills are taken into consideration. There is evidence that the mills have sold at a somewhat reduced rate to some Government institutions, but there is also evidence that timber has been sent from Brisbane to Rockhampton for Government buildings in that district, and that similar timber could be purchased in Rockhampton for about 6s. per hundred feet less than the price which the timber from Brisbane cost delivered in Rockhampton.

"The Government paid too high a price for the timber in stock in Raymond's mill at the time of the purchase, and Messrs. Raymond and Company, according to the evidence of the accountant for that firm, were losing money at the time of the sale to the Government. At the end of June last the stock-in-trade amounted to about £27,000, and was only insured for half that sum. Had premiums been paid for the whole amount the loss in running the business for the year would, of course, have been

greater. The loss up to the end of June, 1917, was £1,915 2s., and it does not appear from the evidence that there is any likelihood of running the mill at a profit. Neither from the Government view, nor from the point of view of the purchasers of timber, can it be said that the purchase of the mill has been beneficial to the Government or to the public.

"On the State joinery works a sum of £31,000 has been expended on buildings, but there is as yet no machinery, and the money lies unproductive. The evidence of timber and joinery experts shows that the whole plan was misconceived, and that there is little or no prospect of successfully running these works.

#### "STATE HOTELS.

"Evidence was given showing that two hotels had been closed by the Government owing to their being in a prohibited area, and that the Government had paid compensation—in one case amounting to £2,000. In the same prohibited area the Government then established a State hotel at Babinda, and, apparently, in doing so acted contrary to law. The hotel has not been in existence long enough to make out a balance-sheet, but it is run without a license and without paying rates or taxes. Apparently it is being run at a profit.

#### "STATE BUTCHERS' SHOPS.

"These shops show a profit of about £35,000 for the financial year ending June, 1917; but included in this is the sum of £19,000 received from the Commonwealth Government, an amount in dispute regarding meat purchased by the Federal Government, apparently for the troops. It does not appear that the Government gave any value for this £19,000, and, in any case, it cannot be said to be a legitimate profit made by the State butchers' shops. The transaction does not show much solicitude for the Federal Government or the Imperial Government in their purchase of meat for the troops. The evidence disclosed that the Government, in consequence of their contract with the Imperial Government for the supply of meat for the Imperial troops, supplied meat to the State butchers' shops at a price nearly 30 per cent. lower than the Imperial Government were paying.

#### "ILLEGAL EXPENDITURE.

"From questions put to the Auditor-General and other witnesses, and from reference made to the decision of the Supreme Court in the insurance case, it is clear that the expenditure on these enterprises was incurred without parliamentary or any legal authority, and as such deserves the strongest reprobation.

"As pointed out by the Auditor-General, expenditure of this character is quite different from unforeseen expenditure, where the parliamentary vote is exhausted and the extra amount is paid pending parliamentary authority. With the object of safeguarding the public funds, your committee strongly supports the recommendations of the Auditor-General relating to the definition and control of unforeseen expenditure. (See report 1916-17, page 12.)

*Hon. E. W. H. Fowles.]*

"The committee is pleased to be able to report that, in the matter of establishing the State produce agency and steel and iron works, the Government have taken the proper course—namely, obtaining the authority of Parliament for these purposes; and the committee is strongly of opinion that a similar course should have been adopted with regard to the other State enterprises.

"P. J. LEAHY, Chairman.

"Committee Room No. 1,

"Legislative Council,  
"4th December, 1917."

I have been requested, in fairness to the Manager of the State Butchers' Shops, to read a letter written by him, so as to put his position very clearly with regard to answers which he gave when giving evidence before the Select Committee. It is a rule of courtesy in this Council that no public servant should be attacked, because he has no right of reply. This letter is addressed to the clerk of the Select Committee, and reads as follows—

"Retail Butchery Department,  
"Executive Buildings, Brisbane,  
"3rd December, 1917.

"T. Dickson, Esq.,

"Clerk of Select Committee on Ex-  
penditure on Industrial Enterprises,  
"Legislative Council Chambers,  
"Brisbane."

"Dear Sir,—

"On Wednesday last, the 28th November, I received from you proof of my evidence given before the committee, with a request that I would revise it and return as soon as possible. This I did, returning it on the following day.

"In Brisbane papers on Thursday and Friday, the 29th and 30th November, appeared extracts from my evidence, towards the close of which the following question put to me by a member of the committee was published—

You didn't do it from a sense of duty, did you?

And alongside the answer reads—

I know if I did a thing like that in war time I'd expect to go to gaol for it.

"Readers generally would naturally conclude—and many have done so—that the answer was mine, whereas it was given by the member of the committee who asked the question (Hon. Wm. Stephens).

"As I specially pointed this out when returning the revised proof, by underlining my correction in red ink, and assuming that copy of my evidence was sent officially through you to the Press, I will ask you to officially and publicly make the necessary correction.

"Yours faithfully,

"CHAS. J. ROSS,

"Supervisor,  
"State Butchery Department."

I may say that that misprint—although it got into the public Press—has, of course, been corrected in the final report. So that a very large sum of money—running into nearly £1,000,000—has gone into questionable State enterprises—a practice which has received severe condemnation from the Full

[Hon. E. W. H. Fowles.

Court and at the hands of the citizens of Queensland, who will be called [5 p.m.] upon to "foot the bill." This Government, after the experience of Western Australia, in the face of the experience of New South Wales, in defiance of the experience in Victoria, where the red flag was hung up in front of the coalmine, in defiance of the experience of every part of Australia, proceed stubbornly to invest public funds in questionable State enterprises, will not refrain from throwing away the public money, and are even reduced to this position—that in the dying hours of the Parliament they come to us and ask us to impose gigantic taxation on the public of Queensland in order to make up for their wild extravagance.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We do not take any notice of the Full Court in that matter.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: You take no notice of the Full Court, or the High Court, or anything else. This is a lawless Government.

Hon. W. J. RIORDAN: What are you going to do about it?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is not a question of what this Council does about it, but what the people do next May.

Hon. W. J. RIORDAN: Is this your peroration?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: This is no peroration. It has all the eloquence of fact. I know that hon. members opposite are not impervious to fact or reason either, and I would just like to fortify, very briefly, the argument as to illegal expenditure. I shall refer to one or two paragraphs in the Auditor-General's report—and there is no wild and whirling verbosity about the Auditor-General's report. There is nothing Bedfordian about that. As a matter of fact it is just the dry facts of an accountant.

Hon. I. PEREL: I would draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that the Hon. Mr. Bedford is not present.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am sorry for that, because I had just a few Christmas bouquets to give to him. I refer first of all to the Auditor-General's reference to the illegal expenditure of £100,000 on insurance, and then I come to this paragraph on page 16—

"With regard to the purchase of station and other properties, it would appear from certain expressions in the records relating to these purchases that Government debentures constitute part of the purchase money.

"I am advised, however, by the Crown solicitor that, in a legal sense, debentures under the Government Loan Act of 1914 cannot be applied in payment of the purchase money of stations."

So the Government act against the legal opinion of their own Crown solicitor, and when they have pointed out to them the subterfuge to which they have resorted, when they find out that they were flouting the law and that they might be personally liable, and that a Warren Hastings case might be tried here in Queensland—if I could compare minnows with a Triton—what really happens is that—

"The purchase money of the stations is provided from 'Unforeseen Expenditure' under Warrants signed by the Governor, but not 'counter-signed by

me.' I am aware that the power of the Executive in this respect is practically unlimited.

"I am informed that it is, in effect, made a condition of the purchase that some portion of the price should be invested by the purchaser in Government debentures, which are issued under the authority of the Government Loan Act of 1914.

"I have been advised by the Hon. the Attorney-General that there is no legal objection to my counter-signing debentures issued under those circumstances."

If ever there was a gigantic piece of financial thimble-rigging, hon. members will find an account of it in those four paragraphs of the Auditor-General's report. He is an accountant; he does not deal in language, but in figures I just take now from the interesting although exceedingly simple statement on page 20, which shows how the public accounts are kept, and which is particularly pertinent when we are asked not only to give money for this Parliament, but also for next Parliament, to hand over a blank cheque—to be spent in this way—

"Department of Public Works.—The inspectors' recent reports indicate that there is room for improvement in the method of dealing with the accounts, and there is evidence of weakness in the system of internal check. It would appear that, so far as the accounts branch is concerned, this department is either insufficiently staffed or requires to be reorganised."

That is studied language. I take a second paragraph from page 20, with reference to the Department of Justice—where the scales should be balanced to the penny—

"Department of Justice.—Recent examinations of the accounts of this department revealed very great carelessness in that branch."

Can any public department live under the stigma of a report like that, an absolute brand from an independent critic, the Auditor-General, the watchdog of Queensland's finances to-day? The taxpayers should be grateful that we have one man who is independent in the community, and can act as a sentinel on the wild extravagance of the present Government. He says that an examination of the accounts reveals very great carelessness in the department of the Assistant Minister for Justice—and when the Auditor-General says there is very great carelessness, we know, with his use of moderate English—

Hon. W. J. RIORDAN: Does it say anything about the Assistant Minister?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am talking about the head of the department. I will give the hon. member a little more than he wants—

"Recent examinations of the accounts of this department revealed very great carelessness in that branch, and, as this unsatisfactory state of things had continued for fully eighteen months, I communicated with the Minister on the subject, and asked that some action be taken to insure improvement."

He does not say the Attorney-General, but the Minister.

Hon. W. J. RIORDAN: He does not mention the Assistant Minister at all.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Everybody knows that the Department of Justice is run by the Assistant Minister, and that the Premier is Chief Secretary as well. As a matter of fact, there is really no office of Assistant Minister; it is simply a courtesy. The Premier, what with his visits to the police court and the western front, has no time to look after these things.

Hon. W. J. RIORDAN: Who is Minister for Justice?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: There is no Minister for Justice; when there is an Attorney-General, there is no Minister for Justice. With regard to other illegal expenditure I need only refer hon. gentlemen to page 41, where there is pointed out an illegal expenditure of £14,014 for junketing to Melbourne.

Hon. W. R. CRAMPTON: Would you mind quoting the Auditor-General's report for 1908, page 78?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is 1918 next year; we are moving on. There is page after page in the Auditor-General's report where there is very strong criticism of the financial methods of the present Government, and what I am ashamed of in being a member of the democracy of Queensland is that a Government which pretended to be a democratic Government, which pretended to act on ideals of the absolute cleanest administration, should throw these ideals overboard, and before eighteen months should come under the scathing condemnation of the Auditor-General. This Government came into power, and the country was prepared to give it a fair trial, but almost every transaction on a big or small scale that they have entered into seems to show their incompetence or something else.

Hon. W. J. RIORDAN: You are an inventor.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am the reporter in this case of the Auditor-General's remarks. This Government has acted in a way to excite suspicion in the eyes of the people who have the welfare of the State at heart. They have disgraced the ideals of public life, and one can only wonder what is the next chapter in their wild orgy of expenditure. The next chapter is that this Government wish to get seven months' money from Queensland to play all sorts of fantastic tricks with public finance between now and June. It does not matter whether they go out of office; it does not matter whether they absolutely scour the Treasury and leave not a Hawbee behind; they can say we had the sanction of Parliament to spend seven months' money. If we go back it will be all right, as nobody will be able to search the pigeonholes, and if we do not go back, well, we will have had the pleasure of spending seven months' money. That is evidently the programme. Was the Minister able to give us any definite information about what was behind the Iron and Steel Works Bill financially? Why that hesitancy? He could not tell us whether any agreements were in sight; whether there were any contracts.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I told you of the only agreement; a tinpot thing, too.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: The hon. gentleman knows that there are other agreements on the horizon.

Hon. F. T. BRETNALL: Unforeseen agreements, the same as unforeseen contingencies.

*Hon. E. W. H. Fowles.]*

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: This Government came in with very great pretensions. In fact, they came in on a cheap food cry; they were going to make everything cheap for the public as far as food was concerned, and the end of it is they go out and leave Queensland the dearest place to live in of any State in the Commonwealth.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is not correct. Take Knibbs's tables.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: You tried to come in on 6 o'clock closing.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I do not know that 6 o'clock closing was on the programme when I entered Parliament. This Government think more of beer dividends than of the lives of the soldiers.

The PRESIDENT: Order! These interjections must cease, and the hon. gentleman must confine himself to the question before the Council.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: On the question of the expenditure on the Babinda State Hotel, which appears in the Appropriation Bill, one refrains in deference to the wishes of the President to make any further remarks on that subject, although we might say that it ill agrees with the unanimous spirit of loyalty in all the rest of the British dominions that our State is the only State that thinks it worth while to advertise its loyalty by being different to the other States.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: You are irresponsible.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am responsible for a tour through Queensland which enabled three out of four people to know that 6 o'clock closing was the wisest thing, and I am not responsible for this Government being deaf to the entreaties and petitions of thousands of people in Queensland, and the hon. gentleman, who is a strong temperance advocate, is one of those who is responsible for blocking liquor reform in Queensland, and he has received his reward. I hope the day will not come when he regrets it.

HON. H. C. JONES: What about riding about in the licensed victuallers' motor-cars?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: With regard to assistance, shall I give the hon. gentleman the contents of a letter already sent out by some of the Workers' Political Organisations to the Licensed Victuallers' Association making negotiations and requests with regard to the next election? Shall I give him the contents of a letter sent out before the last election asking for a levy in defence of the trade?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You can give no official letter from the Central Political Executive asking for a levy.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I cannot give that, and I admit that the letter that was written was very carefully written indeed, and I admit that it was wise of the trade to look just ahead, and I admit also that at one time the Labour Government was strong for liquor reform, and that at the present time they are absolutely tied by dividends. The whole of Queensland can see the miserable way they scotched liquor reform, and the Labour party absolutely made the tool of those whose interests are in the beer of Queensland rather than in the welfare of the country. This Government came into office, and they shouted democracy until the heavens rang with it, and, as a matter of fact, they have acted tyranny; they prated about freedom and they preached class and mob rule

ever since they came into office. They talked about clean finance, and all that kind of thing; and all honour is due to those who founded the Labour party in this State; but in the last three years they have simply Tammanysed politics.

HON. H. C. JONES: They made it a country worth living in.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Not worth dying for, at any rate.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: You are not prepared to die for it; others have.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The last thing some people would think of doing would be to die for their country. In three years they have Tammanysed politics. They have spread discontent in a number of departments in the public service. They have painted some of the departments of the public service. They have injured the public credit. They have degraded the Government into a series of petty quarrels with the Federal Government. These are the beautiful democratic ideals of the so-called Labour party, which has fallen into very bad hands. Its leaders are misleaders.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: Do you think the people will return them again?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am very sure that this present Cabinet will not be the Government next Parliament.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: Are you sure of that?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The party which the hon. gentleman has the honour to lead received a rude shock on 5th May last, when the conscience of the people was awakened to the elements that are in the country at the present time. They are the elements that I have seen drifting across the Pacific and coming here. They are revolutionary, anti-British, disloyal elements which are coming into the country at the present time.

HON. H. C. JONES: Those are the names you call to the returned soldiers.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: There are some soldiers who would rather return than fight. I am giving facts, and the Queensland public know they are facts.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: You will not face the electors.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I did face the electors, and they sent me here. I gave up a sure seat and contested a seat against a Labour man who was a real Labour man. He was a member of a different Labour party to that we have to-day. The Labour party have drifted right away from the feelings of the people altogether. With regard to the present Appropriation Bill, no one objects to giving Supply to the Government—even the most reckless, extravagant Government. It is our duty as we are saddled with them, to give them a fair amount of money to spend until their term expires. This Council, according to the traditions of fifty years, would be quite willing to pass an Appropriation Bill up to 30th June next, and it is our duty to do that, because that is the end of the financial year. But when they want to dip into the money that belongs to the successors of the present Parliament I submit that it would be neither

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constitutional nor just for us to agree to that. It is all right to grant Supply up to the 30th June next.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Hon. Mr. Hawthorn said it was constitutional, and I believe he is right.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I was not objecting to it on that ground, but on the ground that it is done in the last year of an expiring Parliament.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I do not suppose, even if it was illegal, that it would make any difference to the present Government. If the Government could cajole or browbeat this House into giving them unlimited sums of money they would feel inclined to do so, but this Council are here as the custodians of the public purse, and we are here to see that no more money is frittered away by this Government.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You illegally inserted an amendment in the Iron and Steel Works Bill.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We did not reduce or increase taxation. This House would feel justified in granting Supply to the 30th June, and if the representative of the Government thought it out deliberately and calmly he would see that it was unfair for us to tie the hands of the successors of the present Government. What right have we to use money that belongs to the next Parliament? What right have we to give this Parliament next July's money?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: To meet the convenience of the public service.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I will meet that argument straight away. The hon. gentleman knows perfectly well that the Governor in Council can pay all current expenses simply by warrant. The Governor in Council can pay the railway servants and salaries of the other public servants until Parliament meets next year.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Is this not the better way to do it?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No, certainly not. The Government ask us to give them £900,000 to spend just as they like in illegal enterprises. What hold have the people of Queensland on that £900,000 once we grant it? The Government will snap their fingers at the Council once it is passed. The attitude taken up by the Council on financial questions and in keeping as strict a surveillance as possible on the public funds has been justified and strongly approved of by the people of Queensland. The people look to this Council at the present time to stop the extravagance of the present Government.

HON. I. PEREL: One section only—those who pay the taxes.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The hon. gentleman is enough of a business man to know that when a man is taxed he passes it on. You cannot tax one section of the community without it percolating right through the community, so that instead of putting a tax of £1 on one individual you will find it a tax of 240 pennies on 240 individuals, or perhaps it might be doubled. Everybody passes the tax on.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: Can the primary industry pass it on?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Yes. I have the figures here showing the gigantic war

expenditure of the Federal Government. All these amounts have to be paid, and the people of Queensland, numbering 670,000, have to pay their proportion of it. Knowing that all these burdens are inescapable, and have to be paid by the people of Queensland in the next three or four years, this Government comes along and wants to dip into the Treasury of next Parliament to the extent of £900,000, so that they can spend it on a wild rake's progress between now and the time Parliament meets again. If they get this money to spend they can snap their fingers at the taxpayers of Queensland. This is the proposal which the Government brings before us. They have the hardy, unblushing effrontery to ask this Council to give their assent to a proposal like this. They managed to manœuvre the proposal through another place.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Are you taking your instructions from the leader of the Opposition?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No. I read in the paper that there was a strong but futile protest made by someone in another place. I submit that this Council would be quite prepared to grant full Supply to the end of the financial year, or even for the term of the present Parliament. If I suggested a wise course at the present time I would suggest that Parliament should be called together next March. In political times like these it is madness to allow the finances of the country to be spent or misspent by a few men who are no longer responsible to the electors?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Which men?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The few men who may be the Cabinet, or the caucus junta, or whoever it is who pulls the strings of the present Government.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Are we not responsible to the electors?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No, you have finished your term. You are no longer responsible to the electors. In these times it would be the acme of folly for us to give these millions of money into the hands of half a dozen individuals to do what they liked within the next six months without the searchlight of Parliament being put on their actions.

HON. H. C. JONES: You can apply that statement to any Government—to the one you were connected with.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am applying it to the present Government.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: What would be the object of meeting Parliament in March?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I should have Parliament prorogued every fortnight. Can the hon. gentleman say what will happen in the next twenty-four hours, yet we go dancing on the edge of a volcano.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Parliament is prorogued from time to time.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The people have no confidence in the Premier of the day.

What confidence have the people [5.30 p.m.] of Queensland at the present time in the Government of this country?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is the most popular Government we have had.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: As a matter of fact, it would be very wise to ask Parliament to meet for one day, or two or three times,

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between now and the next election, in order that full discussion may take place upon the acts of the Government, and in order that the searchlight may be put on their doings. If I had my way, I would have an Auditor-General's report every quarter on the present Government. This report is absolutely the hangman's rope of the present Government, as far as their finances are concerned.

HON. H. C. JONES: Are you not satisfied?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No, I am ashamed. It does not matter twopence to me, personally, which Government is in office, as everybody knows.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I would not go as far as that. I think the sooner we oust the present Government the better.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The better for the country.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I think it would be for the good of the country.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Order! There is too much conversation and interjection going on.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: As a matter of fact, the proposals of the present Government may be considered to be these: Give us three and a-half millions or four millions—give us millions of money, and then shut down Parliament, muzzle all criticism, let us have no Auditor-General's report, and give us a free wicket until the 30th June next to spend all the money given to us, plus a month's money of next year. That is the proposal of the present Government—a most audacious proposal—and it can only win if the Council absolutely shut their eyes to the facts.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: With the exception of the one month, it is done every year.

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: No, it has only been done once before.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: These are abnormal times, when Parliament should be called together. How do we know what may happen from month to month? Here the proposal is to ring down the curtain, to absolutely shut down Parliament and stop all public criticism, and to turn off the searchlight and simply allow the present Government to do what they like with the public funds, with six or seven months' money. As a matter of fact, the proposal is one that is not constitutional; it is a very great departure from constitutional practice to grant Supply to a present Government out of the money that belongs to a future Parliament. This Council would be justified in protesting against the unjustifiable extravagance which has depleted the public funds, turned a surplus into a substantial deficit, and threatened all citizens with oppressive taxation.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Apart from that, what is there unusual in this measure, other than a month's Supply in the coming year?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: There is nothing unusual in this, except that we are sorry to see that the amounts are not less than they are. In these days of economy, I think it would be a better cry for this Government to say—"We have seen the need there was for economy and we have cut down all unnecessary expenditure." That would be a better cry to go to the electors with. When one considers the Appropriation Bill before us—and this is perhaps the opportunity in which reference may be made to quite a

large number of matters—the proposals are such as to excite suspicion all over Queensland. The Government ask for a larger amount of money than is necessary, and an amount that must inevitably be made up by new taxation, or else we must be plunged into greater debt, and have fastened upon us increased interest expenditure later on. I would suggest that, even at this stage, a temporary wave of wisdom may come to the brain of the Government, and that they will cut out a clause which is obnoxious to the whole of the people of Queensland, by which the Government—I will not say is robbing, but is dipping into the resources of its successor with no reason whatever.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Oh, yes; good reasons.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: They have; they have to account to the country directly.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: How many will come back?

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: All of them.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is the difference between this House and another place. In another place they will be there for three years, and nothing more will be heard of them. We are always before the people, and always subject to criticism. What we did yesterday is criticised to-day. We are responsible representatives of the people of Queensland. I would suggest that the Council might act well in accord with the traditions of Parliament and with Constitutional requirements and with the need for economy if it refused to give this Parliament money for a longer term than the life of this Parliament, and if we safeguarded the public funds in such a way that no one could afterwards reprove us or say that we were unduly extravagant with things that did not belong to us. That last month belongs to next Parliament, and the next Parliament should have the raising of it and the spending of it.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. I. PEREL: The principal theme of the debate seems to be the excessive expenditure involved under this Bill. This, of course, means public ownership of butchers' shops and sources of supplies for such. The principal grievance in connection with every argument used appears to be the extravagance of the Government in connection with our meat supplies, the buying of cattle stations, and the selling of meat to the people. Before condemning these projects, hon. members should wait to see the results of the expenditure. It is useless to say that these are ruinous enterprises when everything points to the fact that they are magnificent successes. Personally, from my own experience of these shops, I am of opinion the money has been wisely spent. The proof of that is shown by the way the people patronise the State butchers' shops and are making them a very big Government success. That is all we have to guide us at the present time. Why all this talk about extravagance, and these ill-judged remarks? We must take the reports which have been presented, and everything points to their being fine investments. Before condemning these undertakings we should wait to see whether they are really failures. In my opinion, by including the money in this Bill for the purpose of State stations and the meat supply for the people, we are taking a step in the right direction, because it means public ownership of necessaries and utilities,

[Hon. E. W. H. Fowles.]

and the more we have of that the better. The Government should undertake everything of a profitable nature. They should not be pinned down to take up everything of an unprofitable nature. There was a Bill introduced in this Chamber the other night, and it was thrown out—as I am sorry to say a number of useful Bills have been thrown out—because it had a clause whereby the soldiers at the front had to pay succession duty.

How can the Government get that if they have no means of raising revenue? Why should we take away all the means of obtaining revenue from the Government and then blame them for going in for what we call extravagance in connection with non-paying concerns when we clip their wings? It does not appear to me to be reasonable at all. Another very strong condemnation has been in connection with the railway expenditure. Well, we understand that the increase in expenditure has been caused by large increases in wages rendered necessary by the large increase in the price of commodities. It has been my experience that, when a working man asks for an increase in wages, you face him with this, "Yes, my gentleman, we will give you an increase in wages, but little good will it do you, because you will have to take it out in the price of commodities." That is very unfair. You cannot get away from the fact that the difficulties in connection with the Railway Department and the losses they have made are due in a large measure to the fact that they have had to increase the wages of their employees to such an extent as to make their living conditions good. It should be the object of all of us to improve the conditions of the working classes. That can only be done by elevating them to the positions that we ourselves enjoy. The working man produces everything; we owe all our wealth to him; and it is only right that he should enjoy certain conditions, and that we profiteers should not put up the price of commodities to such an extent that he cannot afford to get the conditions to which he is rightly entitled.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Increased production is the secret.

Hon. I. PEREL: I am not going to enter into a discussion on economics. When I see the immense number of men employed in the Railway Department, and the demands of those men, I know that the Commissioner and all those connected with this very large State concern have got a very, very heavy task in front of them, because I know from my own experience that the Railway Department suffers from the same inconveniences, disabilities, and handicaps that all we little private enterprisers suffer from. I am running a very small business, and yet my expenses have doubled, though I am a private enterpriser, and have my expenses under my own careful management. If that is so, how can we expect these huge Government departments to be run for the same amount of money as before? I know that, in spite of all the talk of hon. members, in spite of all their condemnation of the Government, in their heart of hearts they know that the Government are doing what is right. They know that they are not justified in condemning the Government for raising wages when necessary and reducing the hours of work when they are excessive.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: They promised cheap food, you know

Hon. I. PEREL: I am not here to champion the Railway Department, because I do not know anything about it; but the fact remains that we have this Bill in front of us, and that we know how the expenses of the Railway Department have increased. I notice, from the official report of the department, that £40,000 more was paid last year for stores than in previous years on account of the war; and yet I have heard some hon. members say that the war does not affect us here. The war affects us very considerably on account of the increased price of all the goods that are brought here. I am sure that my remarks will be borne out by every balance-sheet that is presented in every concern. I am sure the Hon. Mr. Hall will bear me out. He is connected with a huge concern, and he must have been astounded at the terrific increase in wages, and he must have felt highly satisfied at the management being able to show a profit in spite of the increase in wages. The Hon. Mr. Fowles said, "Can't we pass it on?" Of course, we private individuals can pass it on. We are all passing it on.

Hon. T. M. HALL: You can't pass it on in your business.

Hon. I. PEREL: But how can the Government pass it on? They have big engagements to meet, which caused them to send certain Bills here to give them more money and which would have enabled them to pass it on. But we would not allow them to pass it on and refused to pass those Bills. Hon. gentlemen assume that because certain railways are not paying interest they are a losing concern, and they proudly point to others that are paying good interest as fine concerns. But it is quite possible that a railway that is only paying 3 per cent. is a better investment for the country than another that is paying 6 per cent. or 7 per cent. Railways are built to open up the country and enhance the value of lands; and if a railway does that, even if it only pays 3 per cent., it may be a very profitable thing for the community, even though it does not pay from another point of view. The purport of the message that it is intended to put at the end of this Bill amounts to this—that the Council is opposed to the expenditure of public money in connection with public utilities that can be turned to a profit by private enterprise. The speeches in the majority of cases have been very lengthy, though hon. members had no occasion to try to convince us of their ability to make speeches, or of their ability to be leaders of this party. The Hon. Mr. Fowles put the matter plainly. He doubts the honesty of the Government, and he does not wish to trust them with any more money than he can help, or to allow them to occupy their positions any longer than he can help.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Queensland doubts them now.

Hon. I. PEREL: When you suspect Governments of such things as these, you are getting into such a state of mind that it is impossible for you to give an honest opinion regarding their intentions. The attitude in this Chamber with respect to the Government is one of morbid suspicion.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It is well justified.

Hon. I. PEREL: I do not think it is well justified. Since my advent into this House I have seen nothing to suspect in any of the Government's Bills. Perhaps it is because

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I am not an experienced campaigner. Perhaps I cannot see eye to eye with my legal friends, and perhaps there are things hidden in these Bills which I cannot understand, though to me they appear very plain.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: "To the pure all things are pure."

HON. I. PEREL: I think I am pure in this, and I think I am pure in my thoughts in connection with the other House. I think they desire to do their duty. I do not think there is anything dishonest about this House, and in respect of the financial measures I most certainly say that it would be wrong for anyone in this House to doubt the honesty and integrity of the other House. I have proof of the honesty of this House—proof which shows that the terms "corruption" and "lobbying" cannot be applied to members of this House. We have had a Bill before us for the purchase of a railway, involving an expenditure of over £400,000. That Bill was thrown out on the honest conviction of some hon. members, and was supported on the honest conviction of others; but, if this had occurred in America, the votes of members opposite would have been worth thousands of pounds, while our votes were assured, because we were the Government party. I am satisfied regarding the honesty and integrity of hon. members opposite, and I feel that I must pay them that compliment because that is my honest conviction.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: Public life is purer in Queensland than it is in any part of the world.

HON. P. J. O'SHEA: Up till now.

HON. I. PEREL: Now, hon. gentlemen, as a practical man, I wish to draw attention to a matter which may be regarded as only a little thing, but you all know that economy in little things shows that a person will manage big things well. I think you will all agree with me that there is a little extravagance in connection with "Hansard" and other reports. Paper at the present time is £55 per ton, and it appears to me that wasteful extravagance is shown in those publications. In the past it did not matter very much, as paper was very cheap; but when I see all this mass of stuff, which is not read—it would be an utter impossibility for us to sit down and read all that stuff—I think that by a judicious arrangement some part of that expenditure might be saved. The Government Printer might ask us if we are desirous of being supplied with all this stuff, and, if we are, to notify him to that effect. I do not want all the "Hansards" that are supplied to me, as I have no one to send them to; a quarter of the number would suit me. I do not want to see all those voluminous reports weighing several pounds that are sent to me, and I think some arrangement might be made whereby this extravagance could be reduced. In deference to the wishes of hon. members who, I know, are anxious to get to work and hear less speaking, I conclude my speech now.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: I do not intend to take up much time on this matter; but I think that the financial transactions of the Government are open to very serious criticism and to condemnation. It seems to me that the mere fact of the Government having received more revenue than has ever been received in the past by any Queensland Government, combined with the fact that a war is going on—the conclusion of which no

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one can foretell—and the fact that there are very distinct prospects of increased Commonwealth taxation, is sufficient to prove that this Government are worthy of the severest condemnation for the manner in which they have handled the finances of the country during the past three years. One would have thought that at a time like this, during the whole period of their office, when the resources of the country should be husbanded, everything would be done which could reasonably be done without inflicting injustice upon anybody to bring the expenditure within the revenue, but we find, on the contrary, that during the term of the present Government there has been the wildest expenditure—the most extravagant expenditure. I will give the Government credit for having endeavoured to place upon the statute-books the platform of the Labour Party, which, amongst other things, means the State ownership of all means of production and distribution. I am not, for the time being, saying anything against that; I am simply saying, as a judicious business man, that, in my opinion, the Government should have been very careful during the last two or three years, because it did not, and does not, require very much foresight to see that the drain upon the taxable resources of the Commonwealth is becoming greater and greater, and will become very much greater than at present. In fact, it looks as if they will be used to the very uttermost. In view of that fact, it should have been the duty of the Government to husband their resources, to hold back the execution of some of the planks of their platform and wait for a more opportune time. The purchase of stations, going in for State joinery works, even butchers' shops, may or may not be good—they are all debatable questions—it all depends on from what point of view you regard them. But I say there has been no justification for a Government in the financial position in which we have been the last two or three years to enter upon them. So I want to enter my strong protest against the Government's methods, and also to say that, in my opinion, judged from the information that has come before us, on the evidence of the Select Committee, these business transactions have not been in many cases of a sound nature. Providence may be very kind, and we may have plenty of rain, prices of meat may go up, and everything may go on splendidly for a season or two, and these station properties may become very valuable. But there is likely to come a drought, when the losses will be as great as any profits, and probably very much greater. It is only ten weeks ago since I was on the Downs. At that time there was a drought, and a general mourning because it was thought there was going to be no wheat this season. About six weeks afterwards I was up there, and the danger then was that everything would be ruined because of too much rain. These are things which we know are likely to happen in a semi-tropical country like Queensland. Another point about the Government's undertaking in respect to stations is that I could understand it if that branch of industry were being neglected. The Government then might say: "If these valuable properties are not going to be used we will enter the station business." But at the present time, I suppose, the pastoral industry is in a very prosperous condition. The prices paid for stations have been very high. That will probably con-

tinue so long as seasons remain good, but seasons change quickly, and next year we may have a drought, and therefore I say that no judicious Government would incur such huge expenditure as this Government have done in the face of the financial circumstances to-day.

In the Appropriation Bill there is a request that money shall be granted to be spent during the life of the next Parliament. I think that is altogether unjustifiable. Surely this or any other Government should be content to take the expenditure which may reasonably be expected to arise during their term of office. To ask that Appropriation be granted to cover a month after—let us hope—they will have gone out of power for ever—is a most unreasonable request. I sincerely trust that at the next election the people will have been so educated by the debates in this Council, and by reading the reports of the Select Committee, that they will be able to come to no other conclusion than that the Government are utterly and absolutely incapable of dealing with any matters of important finance. I believe that to be so myself. I do not know that any prudent ordinary business man would undertake these great risks, and no hon. member on the other side can say that there are not great risks. There are losses in some of them at the present time, and even in the most favourable of them there will be losses. This is not a concern of one, or two, or three years. We may have three, or four, or five years of serious drought, and then the people will be called upon to put their hands in their pockets to make up the losses the Government have incurred by mere speculation.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: If, if, if!

HON. A. A. DAVEY: There are a lot of "ifs" about it. I am not hostile to the Government. I want to look at matters from a businesslike standpoint, and I want to say that the Government have shown absolute incapacity to deal in any businesslike way with finance, and when they come before the electors next time I do not think any extraordinary side issue will settle the matter. I believe the people of the country are sane enough to know that if they leave the business of the country in the hands of the present Government it is the matter of only a very short time before they will land them in bankruptcy. Something has been said about this Council, and I think it is right that we should use this the only chance we shall have of speaking about it. There have been threats. The Minister practically made a threat that the Council was going to be swamped. I should like to say that, in the appointment to this Council of a number of gentlemen—I am not referring to any of them personally—more were appointed than were warranted by past experience. And if the actual number of members of the Legislative Council is not embodied in the law, the British Constitution—to which we owe our own Constitution—is based largely upon precedent, and an honourable regard for those precedents. Some five or six more members have been introduced into this Council than were ever here before. Now, it is reasonable to suppose that the Minister and the Premier are in the confidence, perhaps, of the King's representative in this State, and there may not be anything in the threat that the Council will be swamped.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I did not use the word "swamped." I said "reinforcements."

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You can only get reinforcements in one way.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: Somebody used the word "swamped." I would like hon. members to remember that those appointments were made after the actions of this Council had been clearly put before the people, after they had been denounced throughout the length and breadth of this country by the representatives of the Government. So far as I know, not one hon. member of this Council thought it worth while, or believed it to be his duty, or regarded it as a right and proper thing to say anything on a platform in the defence of our position. Nevertheless, the question was tried in the country, and it is no use saying that the people voted for the bi-cameral system. The people voted on the actions of this particular Council, on the charge of having been a wheel upon progress, a block upon everything, a House of fossils and doddering idiots, and that kind of thing. It was the personality of this particular Council that was submitted to the people, and the people said that they preferred the doddering age and imbecility of this Council—as hon. members would put it—to the combined intelligence of the Government, led by the distinguished Premier of to-day. I am satisfied that if the thing were submitted to the people again they would give the same result. There was no misunderstanding. If hon. members say the people did not understand the question, they are reflecting on the intelligence of their own friends. I have met scores and scores of people who are not above saying that they regard this Council—

Hon. W. J. RIORDAN: As a museum.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: As being and having been the salvation of the country, as having stood between the present iconoclastic Government and the people.

Hon. W. J. RIORDAN: Do you not like us?

HON. A. A. DAVEY: I have nothing to say against any hon. member. I believe that the action was unconstitutional, that the appointments were quite unwarrantable, and I hesitate to believe that the representative of the Government has any authority for supposing that there will be reinforcements to swamp this House.

Hon. W. J. RIORDAN: Do you think we ought to be put out?

HON. A. A. DAVEY: No. I have no hesitation in saying that before hon. members came in here the Council as a body were interested in one thing, and one thing only—the furtherance of the best interests of this State. There was no party here before. Hon. members opposite are a party, and were sent in here to do certain things, and are bound hand and foot, and [7.30 p.m.] their opinion on any public question is valueless, because they come here committed to a certain action, in spite of any evidence which may be produced. There is a party on that side, but there is no party on this side.

Hon. G. PAGE-HANIFY: There was one party before, and there are two parties now.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: I am satisfied there was no party in this House until hon. members opposite came in. If this House were made into a party House, there would have to be two sides, and the Council would become as useless as the Senate in the Commonwealth to-day, which, owing to the Labour party's tactics, is a useless House

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because it is a party House and simply a rubber stamp of the other Chamber.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: What other system is possible except party politics?

Hon. A. A. DAVEY: There are not parties in this House, this is a business House.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: If you have no party you have no opinion.

Hon. A. A. DAVEY: We have pretty strong opinions. If a man had any opinion he would always leave himself open to be convinced about any question which arises. This House has been degraded, not personally, by the introduction of hon. members opposite, by the fact that they have been put in here as representatives of a party. That is a serious loss to Queensland. If the people had had the question submitted to them as to whether this should be made a party House, they would have said "No, we are fed up by the party politics in another place, but we have been in the habit of looking to the Council in the past to deal with matters fairly and squarely."

Hon. H. LLEWELYN: It is very strange that there was not a Labour man appointed when the other Administration was in office. The Labour party was never recognised.

Hon. A. A. DAVEY: Yes, the Labour party had its representatives here in the Hon. Mr. Hinchcliffe, and the Hon. Mr. Jensen, who was a very able representative of the Labour party. Mr. Jensen took an intelligent and generous attitude on all questions, and was as consistent and fervent and a more able Labour member than anyone I have seen in this House. He was superior in his ability and enthusiastic in his advocacy. I want to pay this tribute to the late Hon. Mr. Jensen, who was a democrat of whom everyone might become enthusiastic. He was sincere and able, and a gentleman.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: And respected by both sides of the House.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: And harmless.

Hon. A. A. DAVEY: He was not harmless. I believe he was one of the most useful members of the House, and one of the things which influenced me in my attitude when I came into the House was that when the Hon. Mr. Jensen made out a good case he very often got a majority of members in the House to vote with him.

I think it is an unreasonable thing to ask this House to sanction an Appropriation which will extend for a month beyond the term of this Parliament. If the Appropriation is passed, I will heartily support a message being attached to the Bill stating that this House does not approve of trenching upon the rights of other people.

Hon. F. McDONNELL: It would be a surprise to the country if this Council passed this Appropriation Bill without making this attack. Hon. gentlemen on the other side represent the capitalists in this House, and are opposed to the action of the Government right through. The Hon. Mr. Davey, who, like myself, is a nominee representative in this House, has very severely condemned the appointment of certain gentlemen on the part of the Government to this Chamber. I regret that the Government did not, at a very early stage, instead of thirteen, appoint at least twenty-five or thirty members to the Council. On every opportunity I have strongly recommended to the Government that, from my point of view, they should

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send up to this House sufficient representatives to see that the Government policy, which the people of the State have approved of, be carried through this Chamber. The hon. gentlemen in this House who are most representative of the people are the thirteen who have lately been appointed by the Government. They are not the nominees of the Premier alone, but are selected from a larger number of representative Labour men by the representatives of the people, the caucus of the Government party, and have been elected by the people somewhat on the same lines as the members of the Senate are appointed in the United States. You have these men selected by the representatives of the people in conference and picked out as the representative men of their party in Queensland, and they have come here, in my opinion, with ten times more authority, responsibility, and representation than any other members of this Chamber.

Hon. F. T. BRENTNALL: That is a matter of opinion.

Hon. F. McDONNELL: It is my opinion, and I think the opinion of a great number of people in Queensland. The bulk of us are here as the representative of the people of Queensland for the time being, but these gentlemen come in a different place altogether. As I said before, they are the representatives of the majority of the members of the Legislative Assembly—the men who are responsible to the people and who will be called to account by the people.

Hon. B. FAHEY: So is everybody who is appointed.

Hon. F. McDONNELL: No. The hon. gentleman, like myself, is simply the nominee of the Premier for the time being. (Laughter.) These new nominees are the representatives of the people. I say that the Minister in his remarks last night about reinforcements next session was amply justified. What has this Council been doing for the past few weeks? They have been throwing out the Bills that the Government have had a direct mandate from the people to introduce into Parliament. Take the Iron and Steel Works Bill.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is going through.

Hon. F. McDONNELL: Yes, it is going through in the usual mutilated condition that the hon. gentleman accomplished last night. It is made absolutely useless, and no self-respecting Government would accept that Bill in the condition in which it has been sent back from this Chamber. I am not going to attempt to follow the hon. gentleman in his tirade of abuse. The hon. gentleman, of course, can see nothing good in this Government. He stands up as a Simon Pure, but there is a good deal of inconsistency about him. I do not want to indulge in any personalities, but I think I could show the hollow way in which the hon. gentleman has carried on for a very long time. The Hon. Mr. Fowles went on in his usual exaggerated style. The bulk of his statements can never be verified, because he has been proved again and again to make statements in this House which are absolutely false and which have been proved to be false.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. gentleman is out of order in accusing another hon. gentleman of making a false statement on the floor of this House. I must ask the hon. gentleman to withdraw this remark.

HON. F. McDONNELL: I do not desire to do anything out of order.

The PRESIDENT: I must ask the hon. gentleman to withdraw that statement.

HON. F. McDONNELL: What statement?

The PRESIDENT: The hon. gentleman made a statement that another hon. gentleman had made a false statement in this House, and that is entirely disorderly. I ask the hon. gentleman to withdraw the statement.

HON. F. McDONNELL: I withdraw that statement. The only thing I would like to point out is that the hon. gentleman has made statements in this House that have been afterwards proved to be false. I am amply justified in making that statement.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I rise to a point or order. I do not wish to prolong this discussion, but I take strong exception to the remarks of the hon. gentleman in making that last statement, and would like your ruling on the question as to whether that is a satisfactory withdrawal. I know of no statement I have ever made in this House that has been proved to be false.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. gentleman must withdraw unreservedly the statement that he made that the hon. gentleman had made a false statement, or statements, in this House which were proved to be false, which is really one and the same thing. I would ask the hon. gentleman to withdraw the statement.

HON. F. McDONNELL: I withdraw the statement if it is unparliamentary.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER interjected.

HON. F. McDONNELL: The hon. gentleman is grunting like an old pig.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I think it is hardly fair for an hon. member to say that a senior member of the House is grunting like an old pig.

The PRESIDENT: I must ask the hon. gentleman to withdraw that statement. I did not catch what the hon. gentleman said, but he must withdraw that statement.

HON. F. McDONNELL: I withdraw the statement, but I hope hon. gentlemen on the other side will control their insulting interjections. If they do not, I am going to retaliate very strongly. The Hon. Mr. Davey has spoken about the Government undertakings. I would remind the hon. gentleman that he spoke here as a judicious business man, which I believe he is. I would like to say that all these undertakings are similar to those which have been entered upon by private individuals. At the outset of any big undertaking the difficulties are greater than they are later, and after a year or two most of the initial difficulties are surmounted. That is the position in connection with these State undertakings. Big fortunes have been made in the pastoral industry, and is it not very probable that the big command of money that the Government have, and the big selection they have of competent men to run those undertakings, will give them a greater chance of making those undertakings prosperous than any private individual can have. In the particular undertakings to which the hon. gentleman referred the Government are affording the people of Queensland very great benefits. Does the hon. gentleman not admit that the price of meat has been considerably reduced

wherever the Government have established a State butchers' shop? There is no doubt some of the Government undertakings are novel, but even in the short time they have been in operation, they have shown a healthy condition and good promise for the future. The Government have to face the same risks as private individuals in connection with their undertakings, but they are in a better position to face those risks than any private employer. If any of the enterprises have not shown much profit so far, there are great prospects before them. We have been told that some of the station properties purchased by the Government could be sold at a very large profit, and other industries in which the Government have embarked are in exactly the same position. We have heard a great deal about the big deficit in the railway earnings for the last financial year, but that is due to bad seasons. It has surprised me to hear hon. members oppose this Bill so bitterly, particularly when we remember that some years ago a Government got into power with a very small minority in the other place. That Government could not get Supply, and they incurred a large amount of expenditure without Parliamentary authority, carrying on simply on the Governor's warrant. What was the attitude taken up by this House at that time? Did they condemn that Government—a Government which had only twenty-two or twenty-three supporters, with about fifty members opposed to them? I think the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn is conversant with that particular incident.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I have heard of it before.

HON. F. McDONNELL: He ought to, because he was a member of the Government which was then defeated in a most unconstitutional way.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The country endorsed it, though.

HON. F. McDONNELL: The country did not endorse it. The country endorsed the Kidston Government and sent it back again. The Hon. Robert Philp was sent for at that time by the Governor, Lord Chelmsford, and he formed a Government which was only twenty-two or twenty-three strong in the other House.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Bushrangers they were.

HON. F. McDONNELL: They were practically bushrangers.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You would make a good one.

HON. F. McDONNELL: The Philp Government incurred a great deal of expenditure, and they obtained every penny of the money by means of Governor's warrants. A big majority of the present members of the Council were members at that time, but they did not express any indignation about the unconstitutional action of the Philp Government. To-day we have in power the first Labour Government we have had in Queensland—a Government who are making big efforts against great odds, both in this House and outside—and when this Government ask for an Appropriation to pay their legitimate debts that have been incurred in the interests of the country, they are met with abuse, opposition, and vilification. But this is the last chance that this Chamber will have to abuse the present Government. I am positive that, when the people of Queensland have an opportunity of giving their verdict on the Government and on the undertakings that

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have been so severely criticised to-day in this Chamber, they will show that the Government have the entire confidence of a big majority of the electors of Queensland. And, when the Government get that expression of confidence, I hope they will insist that they will have sufficient members in this House to pass their measures through, and that they will not be dependent upon members who are here only in their own interests and in the interests of their class, because that is all we have seen here for the last couple of months. Every Bill that has been brought here to impose legitimate taxation has been rejected in the most shameful manner and without any ceremony. Take the Income Tax Act Amendment Bill, which was only to apply to incomes of more than £3,000. That was a very fair proposal, and one that no man with an income of over £3,000 had any reason to grumble at. The same treatment was meted out to the Bill which proposed to impose a super tax on all landed estates valued at £2,500 and upwards. Then, look at the treatment extended to the Bill which proposed to give the Government power to establish the iron industry. Then, we have an hon. member like the Hon. Mr. Fowles getting up—

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Why not impose a brewery dividend tax on a personal friend of yours?

HON. F. McDONNELL: The hon. member should not say a word about brewers or licensed victuallers, because they were very good friends to him when he stood for Fortitude Valley.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. F. McDONNELL: Look at the money they subscribed for him.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Order!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I take exception to the hon. gentleman's statement. Neither the Licensed Victuallers' Association nor any publican in Queensland gave me one penny for my expenses.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Mr. Welsby says he did.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Mr. Welsby owes me £46 to this day, which he promised to pay, and I have not received one penny of it. The Hon. Mr. Murphy lent me his motor-car, and I wrote him a nice letter of thanks.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I would ask hon. members to allow the speaker to continue his speech without any interjections, because they only seem to call for reply.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The hon. member referred to me personally.

HON. F. McDONNELL: The representatives of certain interests in this House certainly fight for those interests very loyally; but, when it comes to a question of Government enterprise or legitimate taxation in the interests of the people, we find the measures of the Government receive no courtesy at all at the hands of those hon. members. On the contrary, they receive every opposition in this Chamber. But, when the Government lay before the electors the facts connected with this Chamber, and the way that small part of their legislation that has gone through here has been mutilated, and how a big portion of it has been kicked out, I think the people will agree that the Government have a very good case. So far as this Bill is concerned, hon. members have not the courage

[Hon. F. McDonnell.]

to throw it out, in spite of all their talk, and they will not throw it out.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Won't they? We will see about that.

HON. F. McDONNELL: The Hon. Mr. Hawthorn, who has some little reputation as an ex-Treasurer, criticised this Bill. His speech was not very convincing; there were very few points in it that commended themselves to this House. Even though we do support the Government over here, sometimes we are bound to be influenced by facts; but the criticism of the hon. gentleman to-day was not what we might have expected from a man who occupied the position of Treasurer for some time. So far as the Hon. Mr. Fowles is concerned, we all anticipated the class of speech we would get from that hon. gentleman.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. F. McDONNELL: We knew exactly what we might expect, and we were not disappointed. We got his usual facts. I would not expect the hon. gentleman's word to carry much more weight than mine, although I do not pose as a financier. The position taken

[8 p.m.] up by hon. members of this

House in regard to the Appropriation Bill is extraordinary. I should like to refer to some other matters which the Hon. Mr. Bedford referred to, but I do not wish to get into conflict with the Chair. I will not say that I hope hon. gentlemen opposite will reconsider their action in this matter, because I know exactly how they feel. But they are not game to take up an extreme attitude, because the debts which have been contracted by the Government are debts legitimately contracted in the interests of Queensland, and no self-respecting House, no body of honest men, could refuse the Government the money to pay those debts.

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: I rise to propose an amendment to the motion now before the House. I am not going to detain you with any speech of my own on the subject. I came here prepared to say something on this very important question, because it covers an immense lot of ground, and some of that ground I have been over very closely lately as a member of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into unauthorised expenditure by the Government. However, I shall not detain you by making a speech. I beg to move the following amendment:—

“That all the words after the word ‘That’ be omitted, and the following words be inserted in lieu thereof—‘before reading Appropriation Bill No. 4 a second time it be returned to the Legislative Assembly with a request that they will omit clause 2, on the ground that it is not reasonable that Parliament in its last session should deal with the finances that properly belong to and should be dealt with by a future Parliament.’”

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: With regard to the amendment, I may say that there has always been a dispute on the question as to whether we can amend a money Bill. The Hon. Mr. McDonnell has twitted us with not being game to throw out a Bill which provides for the payment of debts properly incurred by the Government. No liabilities have been incurred by the Government beyond the 30th June, 1913, and they are asking in this measure for provision till



the 31st July, 1918. In order to do away with any disagreeableness between the two Chambers, we propose to send a courteous message to the Assembly. That has been done in the Senate of the Federal Parliament. On the 14th December, 1916, Senator Gardiner moved—

“That the House of Representatives be requested to leave out the words ‘three million two hundred and ninety-three thousand two hundred and ninety,’ and to insert in lieu thereof the words ‘two million one hundred and ninety-five thousand five hundred and twenty-seven.’”

In that case the House of Representatives asked for three months' Supply, but the Senate were not inclined to give them more than two months, and that motion was carried. The Bill was sent back to the House of Representatives, but they did not agree to the request of the Senate. Later on, on the 15th December, another Bill was introduced on the motion—

“That there be granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending the 30th day of June, 1917, a sum not exceeding £2,195,527.”

That was for two months' Supply which was proposed by the Senate. There were difficulties, of course, as to the powers of the Senate in the matter, but eventually the House of Representatives came to the conclusion that they could agree to that proposal without admitting that the Senate had power to amend a money Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They are governed by a different Constitution.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: We are not proposing to amend this Bill, but we simply propose in a dignified way to ask the Assembly to omit the provision for that extra money, and I hope the Assembly will consider the proposal favourably. We are not raising any difficulty about their Supplementary Estimates, although they amount to £1,000,000, and cover unforeseen expenditure.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am glad the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn gave some explanation of the motive for the amendment. I was inclined to question whether the amendment is in order or not. There is no doubt that that is a very moot point, and one which would take some time to consider. I do not rise to oppose the amendment on that ground, because it is proposed to send a courteous message back to the Assembly; but I rise to reply to some of the misstatements that have been made in this Chamber, and to the condemnation, as the Hon. Mr. Davey termed it, hurled at the present Government. Regarding the Bill itself, we are not asking for anything that is very unusual. The asking for Appropriation till the 30th June, 1918, is a usual procedure, but, as I have previously explained, knowing that the election will take place about the end of the financial year—

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Who knows?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Government know. Parliament will then expire by effluxion of time, and in order that there should be no inconvenience caused to the public servants by not having the necessary Appropriation granted, the Government are asking for one month's Appropriation for the following year.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Can you show us where any expiring Parliament has done that?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes, I am going to quote from the New South Wales Audit Act of 1898.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Has it ever been done in Queensland?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We are not under New South Wales rule here.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Neither are we under Commonwealth rule here.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Yes, we are.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Hon. Mr. Hawthorn quoted from the Commonwealth “Hansard.” Therefore, I am right in quoting an authority in another State.

HON. P. J. O'SHEA: They have an Act there.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It would be a good thing if we had an Act here like it.

HON. P. J. O'SHEA: You have not got it yet.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Section 25 of the New South Wales Audit Act of 1898 says—

“If before the close of any financial year no Act is passed granting and appropriating moneys out of the consolidated revenue fund to meet the requirements of the next succeeding financial year, the Treasurer may pay or make advances against such sums as may be necessary to meet such requirements, current and accruing, subject to the following conditions:—

(a) That the authority of the Treasurer hereunder shall cease immediately upon the passing of the Appropriation Act for such next succeeding financial year within which such authority may be exercised, and shall not in any event extend beyond the period of the first month thereof.

(b) That upon the passing of such Appropriation Act all payments made under the authority of this section shall be regarded and treated for all purposes as payments made out of the Supply granted by such Act under the head or class of service appropriate thereto.

(c) That the payments hereby authorised shall be at such rates and shall not in the whole exceed such an amount as would be equivalent to the authorised expenditure under the Appropriation Act for the immediately preceding financial year for a corresponding period of time in respect of all salaries, pay, wages, allowances, contracts for supplies, or services, rents, Treasurer's advance, and other recurrent charges, and of all ordinary contingencies of any office or department provided for by the Appropriation Act for such immediately preceding financial year and set forth in the Estimates relating thereto:

Provided always that if the Estimates of expenditure for such succeeding financial year have been presented to the Legislative Assembly before the thirtieth day of June in any year, and the rate of expenditure in such Estimates is, in any case, lower for any service than the rate of expenditure authorised in the last Appropriation Act, the expenditure under the authority of this section shall not exceed such lower rates.”

[Hon. A. J. Jones.]

The Hon. Mr. Fowles this afternoon tried to make the House and the country believe that we were asking for something which is very unusual.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: In Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I have quoted the exact words of the provision in the New South Wales Audit Act. The hon. gentleman also said that the present Government of Queensland would suppress "Hansard"—he knows very well who is suppressing "Hansard"—that they would suppress the Auditor-General's report, and that they are spending money illegally. It was just one of those vague statements of his. He did not quote one item of expenditure that was illegal when challenged by interjection. Certainly he quoted the decision of the Full Court. I am not so much concerned about the opinion of the Full Court. The Full Court has been known to be wrong.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: And prejudiced.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: And prejudiced. I do not know whether it is out of order—but I say here that probably the Full Court has no sympathy with the Labour Government, and especially no sympathy with this Government.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: You did not appeal against the decision.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I give another opinion. In New Zealand, section 44 of the Public Revenues Act says—

"(1) If during the space of three months after the commencement of any financial year or period no Act is passed granting and appropriating money for the service thereof, the Minister of Finance may issue and pay moneys during such three months, but no longer:

"Provided that payments in respect of any service shall not exceed the amount of the unexpended balance of the vote for such service provided in the respective Appropriation Act for the year or period immediately preceding, together with an amount equal to one-fourth part of such vote:

"Provided also that no payment shall be made for any services other than those for which provision was made in the respective Appropriation Act and the Estimates for such preceding year or period, or in excess of the scale therein set forth.

"(2) All moneys issued and paid under the authority of this section shall be included in the Estimates and accounts for the year or other period in which the same are paid."

Hon. member know that we are moving the usual motion for Supply to the end of the financial year—and one month after the commencement of the next year.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: That is the only unusual thing.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I have quoted precedents for our action. If my memory serves me correctly, there is a precedent in Queensland. Anyhow, this is the honest thing, the proper thing to do. We cannot be accused of not coming before Parliament and acquainting Parliament of our actions. Somebody has suggested that we could act on the Governor's warrant. If we went on and expended money in another way and paid the public servants, the hon. member would be the first to rise in his place after our Government was returned

again and say that we had done something illegal. Now, we are letting Parliament know exactly what we require. Financial reports have been placed on the table. Estimates for the current year are included as a schedule to this Bill. The proper thing to do is to come before the House and ask for Appropriation for the time for which the Government know they will require it. The people will know the fair and proper thing to do. The hon. member vilified the Government. He said that we laid papers on the table which were false; he did not prove it. Since then I have had an opportunity of speaking to the Minister in charge of the department he mentioned, and he said he gave instructions that the figures should be compiled for him, and they were compiled by responsible officers of his department, who this afternoon say that their figures are correct, and they will defy correction. I thought the Minister would be able to come out pretty clean in that matter. One other statement that the hon. member made was that the cost of living in Queensland was much higher than in any other State of the Commonwealth.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: I said that the cost of living had increased more in Queensland than in any other State.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member gave the percentage of increase for certain articles. Everybody knows that the price of bread is lower in Queensland than in the other States. Everybody knows that the price of meat is much lower, because of the action of the Government, as pointed out by the Hon. Mr. McDonnell. According to Knibbs, the Commonwealth Statistician, the purchasing power of money in the metropolitan towns, taking 1,000 as the basis in 1911, works out as follows in 1916:—

Sydney ... ..	1,394
Melbourne ... ..	1,309
Brisbane ... ..	1,188
Perth ... ..	1,266
Adelaide ... ..	1,285
Hobart ... ..	1,278

Average ... .. 1,324

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: That means that the dearest food was in Brisbane.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: If the hon. member wants to know the purchasing power of the sovereign, I will give it to him:—Brisbane, 23s. 9d.; Sydney, 27s. 10d.; Melbourne, 26s. 2d.; Adelaide, 25s. 8d.; Perth, 25s. 4d.; Hobart, 25s. 7d.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: That bears me out completely—it is the lowest.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am putting it in the way Knibbs puts it. That table gives the amount necessary on the average to purchase in each capital town what would have cost on the average £1 in the year 1911. The hon. member knows that the table I am quoting from proves that the purchasing power of the sovereign is greater in Queensland than in any other State. A pound goes farther—you can get more for it, if he wants it in plainer language—more beef, more flour, more tea, more sugar, than in any other capital. Now, if the hon. member had any great charge against the Government, he would have made it; but what did he say? He made one or two unfounded, vague statements, and quoted a report from the Select Committee appointed to inquire into State enterprises, and said that if he did his duty he would let the

people of Queensland know something—as if there was something to hide! Does anybody think for a moment that the hon. member knew anything?

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: The hon. member brought forward a motion to suppress that committee.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Because it prejudged the Government. Every member who was appointed to that committee rose in his place and condemned the Government, and then sat upon the committee. Only one hon. member in this House, the Hon. Mr. Fahey, said, "No, I could not conscientiously sit on that committee, because I have made a speech condemning the actions of the Government." The hon. gentleman made another charge—that the Government had something to hide regarding the Iron and Steel Works Bill. I want to reply to that personally, because I said last night the whole papers could be laid on the table of the House. I am willing, even now, to send down for them and lay them on the table. There is nothing to hide in the matter of any agreement—there is only one—and I am not going to allow that statement to go to the country as if we had something up our sleeve in regard to that Bill. I have taken very many notes of the unpleasant things the hon. member has said about this Government, but I do not think it is worth while replying to them.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: They cut no ice, anyhow.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Getting back to the amendment, the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn explained that the Railway Department made a greater revenue for this Government than for any previous Government. That is correct. I am not complaining about that statement, but I do want to say that this Government increased the wages of an underpaid staff—and that is one of the legacies of conservatism handed down to the present Government. So far as I am concerned, I believe a surplus is always better in the pockets of the people. (Hear, hear!) I would rather have a small deficit, especially in times like these—I am speaking personally, and not so much on behalf of the Government—than I would underpay and sweat the public service, because I know that this country can very soon make up a deficit with a run of good seasons.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Which you have had.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Since we have come into office we have experienced one of the most severe droughts Queensland has had, and it was followed by a flood which caused a great deal of damage to our railway lines and involved a good deal of expenditure. This Government assisted the Clermont people immediately they knew they were in distress.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Assisted by us.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes, this Council helped us by passing the Bill. They helped us the other day by passing the State Produce Agency Bill, although they amended it so as not to give the Government the full power they require; they helped us with the State Children Act Amendment Bill; they helped us with nearly every Bill I have introduced; they have helped the Government to spend some money, and yet they throw out all our taxation proposals—the Land Tax Act Amendment Bill, which

would have given the Government power to raise £180,000 by a super land tax on land values over £3,000; the Income Tax Act Amendment Bill, which proposed to tax all incomes over £3,000; the Stamp Duties Acts Amendment Bill, and the Succession Duties Acts Amendment Bill—four measures in one week. And what argument did they use for throwing them out? What arguments did they use for doing that? The Hon. Mr. Fowles referred to the Land Tax Act, and said that it would be an imposition on the poor farmer. Then he said:

Why should the poor working [8.30 p.m.] man, with an income of £3,000, pay more income tax? (Laughter.)

He thinks that that statement is going out to the country. I do not think that I need say any more on this amendment, except that the State enterprises hon. gentlemen have mentioned, as far as they have gone, have been highly successful, irrespective of the reports of the Select Committee appointed by this Council to inquire into them. If the Council had wanted an unbiassed report, they would have included some members from this side of the House on the committee, or would have constituted the committee in such a way that it would have been composed of members of both Houses.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We have got the Auditor-General's professional report on State industrial enterprises, which bears out every word that we say.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman criticised the Government regarding State stations. Will he say that any money has been used illegally, or that the State stations are not profitable to the people of Queensland? We have given the people cheaper meat by our State butchers' shops, and we are going to extend that principle so that the people living along the branch lines may be able to get cheaper meat. The day is not far distant when, if this Government is returned to power, the whole of the people of Queensland will be supplied with meat grown and distributed by the State. The hon. gentleman knows that the amendment he moved this evening is not acceptable to the Legislative Assembly.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: That is for them to say.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Probably I have no right to anticipate the action of the Legislative Assembly, but I think that this Appropriation Bill should have been passed by this House in the form in which it came from the Assembly, without any amendments or message or request.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Without any criticism at all.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Hon. Mr. Davey said that he rose to criticise and condemn the Government. I think criticism is quite necessary, and no Government should be free from or afraid of criticism. But the charges have not been proved, and they are very vague, in my opinion. The Council should have passed this Bill, or have thrown it out, as the Hon. Mr. McDonnell said.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Do you want it thrown out?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman can take whatever action he likes. He is responsible for his own actions, and I am responsible for mine. With regard to an Appropriation Bill, the only power this House

*Hon. A. J. Jones.]*

has is to either throw it out or send it back to the Assembly in the form in which it came.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Oh, no; you can do half a dozen different things.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I have no objection to a courteous message being sent to the Legislative Assembly.

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: Let it go, and we will finish all the sooner.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman is getting tired, and wants to go home. I moved the second reading of the Bill, anticipating that we would have sent it to the Assembly at 7 o'clock, and if the hon. gentleman is willing to let it go to the Assembly I am also willing.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I have spoken on the motion, but I would not have spoken on the amendment except that it is the usual vexatious thing which is done by the Opposition, whose opposition I appreciate, in so far that, while party government continues, an intelligent Opposition is always a good brake on any Government, as long as it is honest in the exercise of its rights. But in this case there have been no reasons given for even interfering with the Appropriation Bill as it is. The Hon. Mr. Hawthorn quoted some precedent from the Senate which is not on all-fours with anything that has ever happened in this Council. This House is largely governed by the usage of the House of Lords.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You are always thinking of phrases.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I was thinking of the Opposition for a moment; I was thinking of a Government which, while not having the confidence of the country, spent a million of money quite illegally, and was then fired into outer darkness, where I think they gnash their teeth unto this day, as soon as the electors could get to them. But to show the general insincerity of the amendment, the Hon. Mr. Fowles attempted to give the House a perfectly wrong impression as to all this unforeseen expenditure.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: You are all having a shot at me.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I want to have a shot at the hon. gentleman on this. I do not believe he knew anything about it, but simply said what was in his mind. He talked about the £220,000 for the State Insurance Office, which is necessary for the carrying on of an absolutely solvent and profitable concern, as if it were a general tax on the country. It is money spent for the purpose of getting a profit. In the old days of private insurance, the claims only amounted to about 4d. for every 1s. paid.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: You are off the track.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I am not off the track. The hon. gentleman mentioned this as being unforeseen expenditure.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Have the Government not paid £100,000 for State insurance without the sanction of Parliament?

HON. R. BEDFORD: But the hon. gentleman left the House under the impression that that advance had not been paid back, whereas it was immediately repaid. The State Insurance Department, as far as workers' compensation is concerned, gives 75 per cent. more benefit for 10 per cent. less than the

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old premium, and will reduce the expenditure to less than the present record rate of 9.28 per cent. The Hon. Mr. Davey said that there was no party in this House before; but there was. The minority over here represent 87 per cent. of the people of the country, and the majority over there represents 13 per cent. The State Children Act Amendment Bill, because there was no money item concerned in it, went through without any trouble, but there is always an attempt to represent this Government as a gang of bushrangers, whereas the greatest bushrangers on record were the minority, who never had the mandate of the people and spent £1,000,000 without authority, and should have been put into the graving dock or some other dock.

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: Do you say I used the word "bushranger"?

HON. R. BEDFORD: Yes.

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: I have never used it since I came into the House.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I beg your pardon. Members on this side have been charged with everything in the nature of dishonesty or fraud. Even the Hon. Mr. Fahey, having lost an umbrella, puts up an advertisement on the Government side of the House. I can assure him that the Government have not got his umbrella. They would not be seen with it. (Laughter.) While speaking this afternoon on the question of censorship I was stopped because the question of "Hansard" No. 37 was then sub judice. It is that no longer. I am very glad to say that the Government has won, and that the case has been given against the Commonwealth, with 20 guineas costs. The amendment is altogether vexatious and ridiculous, and I hope the House will not insist on it.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted (*Hon. Mr. Brentnall's amendment*) stand part of the question—put and negatived.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted (*Hon. Mr. Brentnall's amendment*) be so inserted—put and passed.

Question, as amended, put and passed.

MESSAGE TO ASSEMBLY, No. 1—REQUESTING OMISSION OF CLAUSE 2.

"Mr. Speaker,—

"The Legislative Council having come to the following resolution, viz.:—That before reading Appropriation Bill No. 4 a second time, it be returned to the Legislative Assembly with a request that they will omit clause 2 on the ground that it is not reasonable that a Parliament in its last session should deal with the finances that properly belong to, and should be dealt with by, a future Parliament," beg now to intimate the same to the Legislative Assembly, and herewith return the Bill."

STATE IRON AND STEEL WORKS BILL.

MESSAGE FROM ASSEMBLY, No. 2.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt from the Assembly of a message stating that the Assembly insisted on their disagreement to the Council's amendments upon which the Council had insisted.

The message was ordered to be taken into consideration at a later hour of the sitting.

## LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

## SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

HON. A. H. WHITTINGHAM: This important Bill has been looked for with a great deal of interest by the man on the land for some months past. As all will remember, in the Governor's Opening Speech a further amendment of the Land Act of 1910 was mentioned, and pastoralists and others were somewhat concerned as to the extent to which the amendment of the Act would go. The Bill has come to us at last, and I must say that it is rather strange that such an important measure, containing what are known as the repudiation clauses, should have been left till such a very late period of the session. However, I suppose the Government have their own reasons for delaying its introduction till this late hour, and we must deal with it, now that it has come before us. The Bill contains nine clauses. Clause 2 proposes to repeal the proviso in section 43 of the principal Act, which lays down the limit of increments when pastoral rents are being reassessed—a limitation which, in one form or another, has found a place in all Land Acts since 1869. Clause 4 makes a similar amendment with respect to the rents of grazing selections, and clause 9 makes an amendment in the same direction in Schedule II. Clause 3 proposes to amend section 53 (a) of the principal Act, which also deals with pastoral holdings and grazing selections. I do not intend to refer to the clauses in detail, because that is more a matter for Committee. No doubt, there are certain amendments required in the Act of 1910, and probably the Government have every right to seek to amend the Act in those directions. Personally, I have no intention of opposing those six clauses, but I understand the Minister will not insist on the passage of clauses 2, 4, and 9, to which I have already referred. I would like to have an assurance from the hon. gentleman on that point. Before the Bill goes into Committee, I think it is my duty to give a brief résumé of the provisions of the various Land Acts since 1869 with respect to reappraisements of pastoral rents for the benefit of hon. members who were not here when this question was last before us. Before doing so, for their information, I might state that the proviso in section 43, which it is proposed to repeal by clause 2 of the Bill, reads—

“Provided that, with respect to all pastoral holdings mentioned in the second schedule, except when otherwise expressly stated in the said schedule, the annual rent for each period after the first shall not exceed the annual rent payable for the next preceding period by more than one-half of the annual rent payable for such preceding period.”

In plain language, that means that, when pastoral rents are to be reassessed, the Land Court has not the power to increase the rents by more than 50 per cent. By repealing that proviso, the Land Court will have the power to increase pastoral rents to whatever extent they think fit. Clause 4 will give them a similar power with respect to grazing selections. I now propose to give a brief history of the restriction or limitation section, from which hon. members will see that there never has been a time when some form of restriction to increases of rent upon reassessment did not exist.

Land Act, 1869.—In the leases issued under

this Act the rents were definitely fixed for the first period of the lease at 5s. per square mile, the second at 10s., and the third at 15s. There was a proviso for reappraisal, but the rent was not to be less than 7s. nor more than 15s. for the second period, and for the third not less than 12s. nor more than £1 5s. This continued until the passing of the Land Act of 1884.

Land Act, 1884.—Under this the rent was to be computed according to the number of square miles, dense scrub, ranges, etc., being omitted. Under this Act a board, which afterwards became the Land Court, was constituted, and, under section 30, subsection (3), the rent was to be determined by the board, but was not to exceed £4 10s. nor be less than 10s.

Land Act, 1886.—Two years after the passing of the above the Crown Land Act of 1886 was passed, making the following provision (section 8):—“The annual rent for each period after the first shall not exceed,” etc., “by more than one-half,” etc.

Land Act, 1897.—The next step is the Land Act of 1897, which contained the same provision as the Act of 1884—that is, the rent be not less than 5s. nor more than £4 10s. per square mile (section 64, subsection (3)).

Land Act, 1902.—This Act passed with a view of reconstructing the pastoral leases, making provision for parts being from time to time available for selection, and giving greater security of tenure for the balance. It did not touch the question of rent generally, but it contained a clause (section 11) whereby a reassessment of rent was to be made in the event of any public works being executed at or near the holding. (Special Act passed by a then Liberal Government to induce settlement on drought-stricken areas.)

Land Act, 1905.—The pastoral tenants were not coming under the Land Act of 1902 sufficiently to satisfy the wishes of the Government. The disastrous drought which had preceded and terminated in 1902 had left the greater part of them in the position in which they could not proceed further without financial assistance, and that could not be obtained unless definite terms of lease and rents were granted. To meet this difficulty, the Morgan-Kidston Government passed the Land Act of 1905, which re-enacted the clause limiting the power of the court to increase the rent beyond 50 per cent of the rental for the preceding period. The Government were supported at that time by the Labour party, and, without that support, the Bill could not have been passed.

Land Act, 1910.—This Act was merely intended to be a consolidation Act, but the Government at the time, in drawing it, omitted the restriction clause (being the present proviso to section 43). When, however, it was shown to them that this restriction was used as an incentive to pastoralists to come under the 1902 Act, and that to drop it after they had come in would be a deliberate breach of faith with them, the Government determined to reinsert, and did reinsert, the clause. Reference to “Hansard” at the time the 1905 Act was brought in will show that the Government of the time considered the Act was necessary, as, though the 1902 Act had been in force for two years, a great number of pastoral lessees still declined to bring their properties and leases under that Act.

As I believe the Minister is prepared to give way with respect to clauses 2, 4, and 9,

*Hon. A. H. Whittingham.]*

although I have a good deal more that I might say, I have no wish to prolong my speech at this stage. There is only one point to which I might make a brief reference. A question was asked in another place a little while ago as to the number of pastoral holdings and grazing farms that would be affected by the removal of the present limitations, and the information supplied was that it would affect 1,261 pastoral holdings and 2,449 grazing farms, so that it will be seen that a very considerable number of individuals will be directly affected by the passage of these clauses. In 1915, when a similar Bill was before us, a free conference was held between representatives of the two Houses. As a member of that conference, I may say that I am somewhat surprised to find these three clauses reintroduced in this Bill, because in 1915 the representatives of the other Chamber gave way completely on these repudiation clauses, and it is therefore somewhat surprising to find them submitted to us again so soon. I shall support the second reading of the Bill, but I hope that in Committee the repudiation clauses will be excised.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!  
[9 p.m.]

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

The committal of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for a later hour.

APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 4.  
MESSAGE FROM ASSEMBLY, No. 1—FREE  
CONFERENCE.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt from the Assembly of the following message:—

“Mr. President,—

“The Legislative Assembly having considered the Legislative Council’s message of this day’s date, relative to the Appropriation Bill, No. 4, request a free conference with the Legislative Council with a view of arriving at a mutual agreement with respect to the said Bill.

“The Legislative Assembly appoint the Hon. T. J. Ryan and the Hon. E. G. Theodore to be the managers to represent them at such conference, and name No. 1 Committee Room, Legislative Assembly, to be the place, the conference to be held forthwith.

“W. McCORMACK,  
“Speaker.

“Legislative Assembly Chamber,  
“Brisbane, 6th December, 1917.”

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I move—

“That the Legislative Council agree to the free conference requested by the Legislative Assembly in its message of 6th December on the subject of the Appropriation Bill, No. 4.”

Question put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I move—

“That the free conference be held in the Legislative Council’s Committee Room, No. 1, at 9.15 o’clock p.m. this day, and that the managers thereof on behalf of the Council be the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn, the Hon. Mr. Hall, and the Hon. Mr. Fowles.”

Question put and passed.

(Hon. A. H. Whittingham.

MESSAGE TO ASSEMBLY, No. 2.

The following message was ordered to be sent to the Assembly:—

“Mr. Speaker,—

“The Legislative Council agree to the free conference requested by the Legislative Assembly in their message of date 6th December, on the subject of the Appropriation Bill, No. 4.

“The Legislative Council name No. 1 Committee Room, Legislative Council, to be the place, and 9.15 o’clock p.m. this day to be the hour and date of meeting, and appoint the Hon. E. W. H. Fowles, the Hon. T. M. Hall, and the Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn to be the managers thereof in their behalf.”

At ten minutes past 9 o’clock p.m.,

The PRESIDENT said: I shall resume the Chair at such time as the bell is rung by the Usher of the Black Rod.

At twenty minutes to 10 o’clock p.m.,

The PRESIDENT resumed the chair.

LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL.  
COMMITTEE.

(Hon. W. F. Taylor in the chair.)

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2—“Amendment of section 43—*Reassessment of pastoral holdings*”—put and negatived.

Clause 3 put and passed.

Clause 4—“Amendment of section 109—*Reassessment of grazing selections*”—put and negatived.

Clauses 5 to 8, both inclusive, put and passed.

Clause 9—“Amendment of Schedule II.—*Special conditions in leases of pastoral holdings*”—put and negatived.

The Council resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments. The report was adopted.

THIRD READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES, the Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be returned to the Assembly by message in the usual form.

At eleven minutes to 10 o’clock p.m.,

The PRESIDENT left the chair, and resumed it at four minutes past 10 o’clock.

STATE IRON AND STEEL WORKS BILL.  
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF ASSEMBLY’S  
MESSAGE, No. 2.

(Hon. W. F. Taylor in the chair.)

Clause 3—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

“That the Committee do not further insist on the omission of the words in clause 3, lines 12 to 16, and on the insertion, in lieu thereof, of the words on lines 16 to 19.”

Question put and negatived.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN moved—

“That the Committee do further insist on their amendment, for the reasons previously given.”

Question put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

“That the Committee do not further insist on their amendments in clause 3, lines 40 to 42.”

Question put and negatived.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN moved—

“That the Committee do further insist on their amendment on lines 40 to 42, for the reasons previously given.”

Question put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

“That the Committee do not further insist on their amendment on lines 53 to 55.”

Question put and negatived.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN moved—

“That the Committee do further insist upon their amendment in lines 53 to 55, for the reasons previously given.”

Question put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

“That the Committee do not further insist on their amendment on page 3, lines 16 and 17.”

Question put and negatived.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN moved—

“That the Committee do further insist upon their amendment on page 3, lines 16 and 17, for the reasons previously given.”

Question put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

“That the Committee do not further insist on their amendment on page 3, lines 55 to 57.”

Question put and negatived.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN moved—

“That the Committee do further insist upon their amendment on page 3, lines 55 to 57, for the reasons previously given.”

Question put and passed.

Clause 9 (now 8)—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

“That the Committee do not further insist upon their amendments in clause 9 (now 8).”

Question put and negatived.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN moved—

“That the Committee do further insist upon their amendment in clause 9 (now 8), for the reasons previously given.”

Question put and passed.

On clause 10 (now 9)—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

“That the Committee do not further insist upon their amendment in clause 10 (now 9).”

Question put and negatived.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN moved—

“That the Committee do further insist upon their amendment in clause 10 (now 9), but offer to insert, after the words ‘one hundred,’ on line 7, the words ‘and fifty.’”

Question put and passed.

New clause 11—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

“That the Committee do not further insist on the insertion of new clause 11.”

Question put and negatived.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN moved—

“That the Committee do further insist upon the insertion of new clause 11 for the reasons previously given.”

Question put and passed.

Title—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

“That the Committee do not further insist on their amendment in the title, omitting the words ‘and other industries, and for other purposes.’”

Question put and negatived.

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HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN moved—

“That the Committee do further insist on their amendment in the title, for the reasons previously given.”

Question put and passed.

The Council resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had further insisted on one of their amendments with an amendment, and had further insisted on their other amendments. The report was adopted.

MESSAGE TO ASSEMBLY, No. 3.

The Bill was ordered to be returned to the Assembly with the following message:—

“Mr. Speaker,—

“The Legislative Council having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Assembly of date 6th December, relative to the State Iron and Steel Works Bill, beg now to intimate that they—

“Further insist on their amendments in clause 10 (now 9), but offer the following further amendment:—On line 7, after ‘hundred’ to insert ‘and fifty’; and

“Further insist on their other amendments in the Bill, including the amendment in the title, to which the Legislative Assembly have insisted on disagreeing.”

LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

MESSAGE FROM ASSEMBLY.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt of a message from the Assembly agreeing to the Council’s amendments in this Bill.

APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 4.

FREE CONFERENCE—REPORT OF MANAGERS.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I have to present the following report from the free conference:—

“The managers of the free conference upon the subject of the Legislative Council’s amendments in the Appropriation Bill, No. 4, have met the managers of the Legislative Assembly in free conference, and after discussion an agreement was come to as follows:—

“That clause 2 of the Bill be amended as follows:—On page 2, line 34, omit the words ‘five hundred’ and insert the words ‘two hundred and fifty’; on lines 35 and 36 omit the words ‘two hundred and fifty’ and insert the words ‘one hundred and twenty-five’; on lines 38 and 39 omit the words ‘one hundred and fifty’ and insert the words ‘seventy-five.’”

SECOND READING.

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

COMMITTEE.

(Hon. W. F. Taylor in the chair.)

Clause 1 put and passed.

On clause 2—“Appropriation”—

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: He had some little doubt about the arrangement made with regard to the State Iron and Steel Works Bill, and he should like the Minister to explain the matter.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He thought he made it pretty clear the previous evening that if certain amendments were in-

Hon. A. J. Jones.]

sisted upon by the Council the Bill would be useless to the Government, and would probably be lost. As a matter of fact, three or four hon. gentlemen on the other side accused him of endeavouring to intimidate the House, and said he made a threat. He said now that the Council had no right to amend the Bill in the direction in which they had amended it, and that it was an infringement of the rights of the Assembly.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Certainly not.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Hon. gentlemen the other night offered to amend clause 9 by increasing the amount the Government might expend from £100,000 to £150,000.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Which you agreed to.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He agreed that the Bill should go back to the Assembly as so amended. Hon. gentlemen wanted him to move the amendment, but he said he would not do so, as he knew the uselessness of trying to start the iron and steel industry with any limitation at all. That was the stand he took all through the Bill. Hon. members had insisted upon their amendments in clauses 8 and 9, and the Government felt that the amendments of the Council had restricted them to such an extent that the Bill would be useless.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: Evidently the Government do not want the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The amount of work the Government had already put into the matter was evidence that they did want the Bill. They might not spend £100,000 in six months or in twelve months, but the amendment limiting their expenditure to that amount was an infringement of the rights of the Assembly.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Not at all.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Council had no right to amend a money clause in the Bill.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: There is no increase or reduction in taxation in that amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The message from the Governor did not place any limit on the amount that was to be appropriated.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Go without the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They would not go without the Bill, because the Bill would be passed by the people. He was not going to allow the hon. member to say that the Government were not sincere without contradicting him. If they were not sincere, would they have had a geologist doing nothing else since July but investigating their iron deposits, etc., or made all the necessary arrangements they had made or made the agreement with the lessee of the Mount Biggenden Mine?

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: You told us that your total expenditure was only £300 to date.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: As a matter of fact, he had a statement regarding the legislation thrown out by the Council, which he proposed to make when moving the adjournment. He had pleaded with the Council to give them an opportunity to launch out, but members saw blood in every clause of the Bill.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You do not want the Bill.

[Hon. A. J. Jones.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They did want the Bill, and the people knew that they were sincere in the matter.

Hon. W. STEPHENS: You told us yourself you did not want more than £100,000.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He never did, and hon. members would find that that was so if they read up his speeches in "Hansard." He always opposed the limitation. As a matter of fact, he knew that the most modest estimate of the cost of steel and iron works was £500,000, and he used the arguments that if a man set out to build a house costing £300 he would not restrict himself to £100. No self-respecting Government was to be limited to the extent of a few paltry thousands of pounds. As a matter of fact, they probably could recommit clauses 8 and 9?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is the funny business clause?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: There was no funny business. The only funny business in the Chamber was the hon. member himself. He had been indulging in wild statements—most exaggerated and incorrect statements.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would call the attention of the hon. member to the fact that the question before the Committee is—That clause 2, as read, stand part of the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He was not going to allow the Hon. Mr. Fowles to interject that there was funny business without contradicting him. He had spent half an hour on the Bill that night contradicting misstatements that the hon. member had made.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: It takes half the time of the session to do that.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Half their time had been taken up replying to charges which had been put into "Hansard" with a view to getting them before the country.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The Minister explained at considerable length his idea of the agreement they came to. His own idea was entirely different. The Minister came over there and they made an arrangement by which they were to give an extra £50,000 and he would give way on the other amendments. They were afraid of clause 8, and he was more than ever afraid of it now. He was more than ever convinced that it was loaded. If the Assembly liked to throw out the Iron Works Bill, let them do so. (Hear, hear!)

On the motion of the Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN, the clause, which read—

"2. There shall and may be issued and applied, towards making good the Supplies granted to His Majesty for the services of the year ending on the thirtieth day of June, one thousand nine hundred and nineteen, the sums following, that is to say—

From the consolidated revenue fund of Queensland, exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the loan fund account, the sum of five hundred thousand pounds;

From the trust and special funds the sum of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds;

From the moneys standing to the credit of the loan fund account the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds."



was amended to read—

"2. There shall and may be issued and applied, towards making good the Supplies granted to His Majesty for the services of the year ending on the thirtieth day of June, one thousand nine hundred and nineteen, the sums following, that is to say—

From the consolidated revenue fund of Queensland, exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the loan fund account, the sum of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds;

From the trust and special funds the sum of one hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds;

From the moneys standing to the credit of the loan fund account the sum of seventy-five thousand pounds."

Clauses 3 to 8, both inclusive, schedule, and preamble, put and passed.

The Council resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments. The report was adopted.

### THIRD READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

### MESSAGE TO ASSEMBLY, No. 3—AMENDMENT MADE BY COUNCIL AS RESULT OF FREE CONFERENCE.

The Bill was ordered to be returned to the Assembly with the following message:—

"Mr. Speaker,—

"The Legislative Council have this day agreed to the Bill intituled 'A Bill to Apply Certain Sums of Money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund to the Service of the Years ending on the last days of June, 1918 and 1919, and certain further Sums to the Service of the Year ended on the last day of June, 1917, and to appropriate the Supplies granted in the present Session of Parliament,' with the amendments indicated by the accompanying schedule, which were agreed to as a result of the free conference between the two Houses. The Legislative Council accordingly request the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly in these amendments.

At three minutes to 11 o'clock p.m., the PRESIDENT left the chair, resuming it at twenty minutes past 11 o'clock p.m.

### STATE IRON AND STEEL WORKS BILL.

#### MESSAGE FROM ASSEMBLY DECLARING BILL "LOST."

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt from the Assembly of the following message:—

"Mr. President,—

"The Legislative Assembly having had under consideration the Legislative Council's message of this day's date, insisting on their amendments in the State Iron and Steel Works Bill, to which the Legislative Assembly have already disagreed, beg now to intimate that the Legislative Assembly being unable to concur in the said amendments, the Bill, in the terms of the Parliamentary Bills Referendum Act of 1908, is now lost.

"W. McCORMACK,

Speaker.

"Legislative Assembly Chamber,

"Brisbane, 6th December, 1917."

### APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 4.

#### MESSAGE FROM ASSEMBLY No. 2—AGREEMENT WITH COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS NOT TO BE REGARDED AS PRECEDENT OF RIGHT OF COUNCIL TO AMEND AN APPROPRIATION BILL.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt from the Assembly of the following message:—

"Mr. President,—

"The Legislative Assembly having had under consideration the Legislative Council's message of this day's date relative to the Appropriation Bill, No. 4, beg now to intimate that they—

"Agree to the amendments in the said Bill.

"The Legislative Assembly desire it to be understood that they agree to this unusual procedure (being the result of a free conference) for the purpose of facilitating the passage of the Bill, but on no account is it to be regarded as a precedent or an admission of the right of the Legislative Council to amend an Appropriation Bill.

"W. McCORMACK,

Speaker.

"Legislative Assembly Chamber,  
"Brisbane, 6th December, 1917."

### SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

#### CLOSE OF SESSION.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES moved—

"That the Council, at its rising, do adjourn until Thursday, 27th December."

Question put and passed.

### ADJOURNMENT.

#### VALEDICTORY.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—That the Council do now adjourn. As this is the close of the session, I would like to say a few words. (Hear, hear!) I think I would be less a man and more of a hypocrite if I said that I was satisfied that the legislation of the Government has been treated in this House in a manner such as I, as the representative of the Government, would have liked it to be treated. Naturally, I would have liked to see the whole of the measures introduced by the Government carried. However, I did not have my own way entirely in the matter. Some of the Bills have been thrown right out; others have been mutilated.

Hon. B. FAHEY: No—improved.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: However, that is a matter for the majority of the Council. I do not want to be hypocritical in the matter. I am not satisfied that the Chamber, as a whole, has done the right thing in throwing out certain legislation, especially the measures that have been thrown out in the dying hours of the session. But, apart from that, I want to say, as the representative of the Government, that I am very satisfied with the treatment that has been meted out to me personally. (Hear, hear!)

Hon. B. FAHEY: You deserved it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The other difference is a political difference. I want also to thank the officers of the House and the "Hansard" staff—(Hear, hear!)—for the valuable services they have rendered during the session. At this period of the year, when we are drawing near to the anniversary of the birth of Christ, the Prince of Peace, though the world is not at peace,

Hon. A. J. Jones.]

the usual thing is to wish hon. members a very happy Christmas, but on this occasion I think we in Australia cannot be as truly happy as we would like to be this Yuletide—(Hear, hear!)—because so many of our brave Australian sons are fighting at the front. They are not having the merry time that we would like them to have—(Hear, hear!)—and therefore it is not a time for us to be merry. As a matter of fact, it is a time for us to make some little sacrifices, probably greater sacrifices than we have made in the past. However, I do quite sincerely wish that hon. gentlemen may have a well-earned rest and enjoy good health and as much happiness as we can in times like the present, when we know that so many of our relatives, friends, and others are suffering, and when some have been laid to rest. I hope that we shall meet here again, perhaps in a better frame of mind politically than we are in this evening, and that when we do meet victory will have been won and the war terminated with honour to our country—(Hear, hear!)—that many of our Australian soldiers will come back—we cannot expect them all to come back—and engage in our industries, and that the world will once more be at peace.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I should like to reply to the few words the Minister has said with reference to the business of the House. Naturally, he is not satisfied. To a certain extent we regret that, but had he been satisfied we certainly should not have been, and the country would not have been. Any Bills we have passed out or amended have been passed out or amended from a sense of duty. More particularly is that the case with regard to the taxation and money Bills we have recently dealt with. We have done our duty with reference to those measures, and the reason we dealt with them in the way we did was because we considered that the Government were extravagant, and we desired to prevent them putting excessive taxation on the people. We hope and feel sure that what we have done will meet with the approval of the majority of the people of Queensland. As to the personal felicitations offered by the hon. gentlemen to members of the House, I am sure we all reciprocate his good wishes. We have certainly had from the Minister a great measure of forbearance, and his conduct has been such that we could not raise any objection to it. He has met us in most cases very fairly, but, of course, we have to complain that he has not given us as much as we should have liked to have got. However, that was no doubt because of the position he holds as a Minister of the Crown. I hope, with him, that we shall all meet again next year without the shadow of the war over us. That is the greatest thing that could happen to Queensland at the present time and to the world generally. I hope that we shall all be able to do something, no matter how small, during the coming month to help to bring the war to an end. I endorse the Minister's good wishes to the officers and messengers of the House, and hope we shall all have a good Christmas and a better new year than the past has been from a war-time point of view. (Hear, hear!)

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am sure that the country appreciates the arduous and continuous work that has been done by the House during the long session which is now about to close. We have sat on Mondays and

Fridays, and have started work at 2.30 p.m., and continued at it, as we have done to-day, until 11.30 p.m., with approximately twenty members in the Chamber. I feel certain that the country appreciates the patriotic work that has been done by the Council during the whole of the session. I might add to what has fallen from the lips of other hon. members by saying that I feel sure members of the Council recognise that the [11.30 p.m.] Minister has had a difficult task, and has performed it with credit. (Hear, hear!) He has generally had a good temper, has quickly accustomed himself to the forms of the Council, and has carried through very intricate measures which are now on the statute-book. In fact, we have passed about twenty-two measures, seven have been lost, and four have been lost in another place, so that really the Council has done very excellent work. If the President were not present I would also say that I feel sure that the Council appreciates the admirable tact with which he has restrained "interjectionable" members. (Laughter.)

HON. R. BEDFORD: Hear, hear!

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: He has given us a fair deal all round. (Hear, hear!)

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Might I also say that Queensland owes a debt of gratitude to the country members who have put in excellent attendances almost throughout the entire session? I would like to thank the officers of the Council and the shorthand writers. It is wonderful how we have listened to what appeared to be nonsense from some hon. members and when we read it in "Hansard" next day it appeared to be very eloquent and persuasive matter.

HON. R. BEDFORD: They edit your stuff.

HON. C. F. NIELSON: Which of your speeches are you referring to? (Laughter.)

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We might also thank the daily Press for the reports they give to this House—

HON. R. BEDFORD: For their suppression.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: And also everybody who has contributed to the smooth working of a particularly difficult session. The best wish that can spring from the lips of anybody, I suppose, is that this nightmare of bloodshed and terror will pass away from this war-wearied world, and that peace, like some beautiful sunrise, will soon dawn on the earth. We do not know what will happen during the next six or seven months before Parliament meets again, but I trust that we all may come back here, with our ranks unbroken, prepared to do the best we can in the interests of Queensland.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. R. BEDFORD: I would not have spoken on this occasion, because my leader has already spoken, had I not discovered that the numerous leaders on the other side, from the very kindness of their hearts, of course, were attempting to get in their little fine work in the closing hours of the session. It is perfectly correct they should do so. I only wish to ask pardon of those to whom I have unwittingly done injury during the little time I have been in this House. (Hear, hear!)

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I freely forgive you for all I have said.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I never did you any harm—not enough harm. But, if any of the older members of the House think I have been intolerant—

HON. T. J. O'SHEA: Flippant.

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HON. R. BERFORD: Flippancy is a perfectly correct thing, and to the hon. member is natural, or to any man with a sense of humour, but to anybody whom I have in any way injured, to whom I have given any cause for resentment—

HON. T. J. O'SHEA: You take it back?

HON. R. BEDFORD: No. I only wish him a better heart and tolerance of human nature and knowledge of men. Anything I have done here has been at the direction of my beliefs, of my own sense of duty to my own party and to the country, and no resentment has ever passed the bar of the House.—(Hear, hear!)—the nasty bar, the non-existent bar that hit me when I first attempted to get in. (Laughter.) And, for the rest, I am very pleased to be in the game. The majority of people outside disbelieve in the idea that men can take joy in a business in which there is no money. I take a great amount of joy in the mere mental fighting in this Chamber, for the things which I believe to be right, and against the things which other hon. members do not believe to be wrong. But there is this much about it—I have made a great number of friends on both sides of the House since I have been here. (Hear, hear.) Although the Hon. Mr. Fahey puts his umbrella down with me, I can assure him that the Hon. Mr. Crampton has also lost an umbrella, and thinks that this is a matter of retaliation from one side of the House to the other. (Laughter.) I thank hon. gentlemen for all their kindness to me. I thank the officers of the House. The President has been more kindly than the Chairman of Committees, who once threatened to name me, and I was afraid until I discovered that he was going to give me my real name. I found that he was only going to call me "Randolph Bedford," and the sting of his threat went right outside. He can call me "Randolph Bedford" as often as he pleases, inside or outside the House.

HON. W. F. TAYLOR: Sir Randolph! (Laughter.)

HON. R. BEDFORD: We recognise that all we have done this session has been in the interests of the country, as it appears to us. I believe hon. gentlemen on the other side are narrow-minded in the choice of a leader, but outside of that, according to their lights, they have done their best; and, according to our lights as a minority, we have done our best. Before we meet again our great hope is that this nightmare shall have gone out of Europe, and that the natural corollary of a war-scarred country being tired of strife shall result in a tremendously increasing emigration to Australia; and, naturally, if people come to Australia, they will come to the best governed State in Australia, and that is Queensland.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: After the next elections.

HON. R. BEDFORD: After the next elections we will find that all the good work that has been done will result in producing a bigger immigration to this country than has ever happened before.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: We have finished the business of a very strenuous session, and I am quite prepared to admit that every member of the House has done what he thinks to be in the interests of the country

since he has been here. We have had some strenuous fights, and, on the whole, the temper of the House has been very good. But what I want to point out is that we are just approaching the great Christian season of the world, the commemoration of the birth of Christ, the Prince of Peace, as has been very properly mentioned by the representative of the Government here. I do not think we should make any further reflection or remarks on what has been done here in the season we are approaching. The world is suffering now—I think it will be admitted by all members of the Chamber—from an attempt to impose the principles of hell in the world—

HON. R. BEDFORD: Hear, hear!

HON. A. A. DAVEY: The principles of damnation and wrath, which are the life-blood of the Germans to-day. I hope that now we have settled up our little battles here—admitting that everyone has done what he conceives to be best in the interests of the country, although we may differ in our ideas—we shall leave this Chamber with the determination that, as democrats, we will sink all party feeling, and make up our minds to try to bring about the downfall of that empire which is fighting against all the principles that are dear to Christianity, and that we will not allow our party ideas to come in in any way to influence us. I hope after leaving here that we will spend the rest of our time in trying to assist the forces which we believe are necessary to bring about the downfall of the damnable principles that underlie the actions of the Germans to-day.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I have been assisting in connection with the reinforcements all the time.

HON. A. A. DAVEY: As members of the State, we are just like a human body, and we must have the whole of our organs working in unison before we can do anything. I hope we shall forget our little differences, and try and work together in the true interests of Australia. We love our Australian boys who have gone and done their duty at the front, and, in the name of God, I ask every member of this Chamber and this community to do what they can so that those poor fellows who have been fighting at the front for twelve and eighteen months may be enabled to come back to see their friends in Australia. By assisting to pass the referendum we can do that. We can ensure that reinforcements will be forthcoming if volunteers do not offer themselves, so that the boys who have been fighting for us may come back and have at least the pleasure of looking upon their old parents and their brothers and sisters before they die. I wish every hon. member a very happy Christmas, and I hope that this will not be the last Christmas that we shall spend together here.

HON. B. FAHEY: I am not going to touch upon anything of a rancorous or a contentious nature on this occasion. Some months ago I had the pleasure and the honour of complimenting you, Mr. President, upon your elevation to your distinguished position. Now, I take the liberty and enjoy the pleasure of complimenting you upon the satisfactory manner in which you have carried out the onerous duties of your high office. (Hear, hear!) You have filled that chair with credit to yourself, and you have been as impartial as any man who has ever occupied the position. I wish you

*Hon. B. Fahey.]*

long years to enjoy the emoluments and the honours of your position. I wish you also a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. I desire to convey the same compliments and the same congratulations to the reporters of this House. I think they have done their duty creditably to the country and to themselves, both the "Hansard" reporters and our journalistic friends, the reporters of the daily Press. I wish them also a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year, and I trust that every one of them will be a step ahead in their profession before we meet again. The Minister has made statements this evening that I was delighted to hear. He acknowledged that he had difficulties in carrying out the very onerous duties of his office. I do not think he can complain that he has been dealt with severely by this House. The hon. gentleman's natural disposition has disarmed any opposition that this side of the House might have been inclined under certain circumstances to offer to him. (Hear, hear!) He has a disposition that will always make him acceptable whatever may be his environment or whatever position he may be called upon to occupy. I do not think that he can complain, under the circumstances, of the treatment that he has received at the hands of what the phalanx behind him are good enough to call "the Opposition" in this House. There is no Opposition in this House. There is only a desire on the part of those who love Queensland that Queensland should be governed as it ought to be. The duty of this House is to refine and improve legislation that comes here, and I am quite certain that never a particle of prejudice has animated a single member on this side of the House during the session in carrying out his duty. Each one has acted solely in the interests of Queensland, and as long as we do that, the hon. gentleman who leads the Council will never have reason to complain. I wish you all, hon. gentlemen, you, Mr. President, the reporters, and all, a very happy and merry Christmas and a bright and prosperous New Year. I hope that every one of us will meet here again next year. I shall not be a hypocrite, and I must say that I hope we shall be predominant in this House and elsewhere.

The PRESIDENT: Before putting the motion, I should like, on behalf of myself and the officers of the House, to express our thanks for the kindly sentiments hon. members have expressed towards all of us. We all have certain duties to perform, and we have done our best. I know that I have endeavoured to fulfil my duties as President impartially and fearlessly.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PRESIDENT: How far I have succeeded hon. members are the best judges.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: We are quite satisfied.

The PRESIDENT: I am new to the position, and I know I have my faults, failings, and weaknesses the same as everyone else. I hope we shall all be here again next year. As the Minister has said, this is not a time when we can be as happy as we could under other circumstances. Still, I hope hon. gentlemen will enjoy the happiest Christmas possible under the circumstances.

Question—That the Council do now adjourn—put and passed.

The Council adjourned at ten minutes to 12 o'clock p.m.

[Hon. B. Fahey.]