

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 1919

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WEDNESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER, 1919.

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Lennon, *Herberts*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock p.m.

PRESENTATION OF SPEAKER.

The SPEAKER reported to the House that he had this day proceeded to Government House where he presented himself to His Excellency the Governor as the member chosen by the Legislative Assembly to fill the high and honourable office of Speaker, and that His Excellency was pleased to make the following reply:—

“ Mr. Speaker,

“ I approve, on behalf of the King, of the choice which the Assembly has made in your person.”

PRESENTATION OF ADDRESS IN REPLY.

The SPEAKER reported to the House that the Address in Reply to the Governor's Opening Speech was yesterday presented to His Excellency by the late Speaker, and that His Excellency was pleased to make the following reply:—

“ Government House,

“ Brisbane.

“ MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

“ I receive, with great gratification, the assurance of your continued loyalty and affection to the Throne and Person of His Most Gracious Majesty our Sovereign.

“ I highly appreciate your reference to our mutual relationship during my tenure of office as Governor, and I most sincerely thank you for the good wishes which you give me from your House and the people of Queensland.

“ I feel confident that all matters that may be brought before you will receive your most careful consideration, and that it will be your earnest endeavour to promote the advancement and prosperity of this State.

“ HAMILTON GOOLD-ADAMS.

“ 9th September, 1919.”

QUESTIONS.

CHILLAGOE COMPANY'S LEASES.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*) asked the Premier—

“ 1. What leases were forfeited by the Chillagoe Company within the past four years?

“ 2. Have the lands and minerals affected by such leases been re-leased?

“ 3. If so, to whom?”

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

“ 1. On Etheridge Mineral Field— G.M. Lease 598 (Homeward Bound); G.M. Lease 682 (Bon Successo); G.M. Lease 690 (Union West); G.M. Lease 691 (Long Tunnel).

“ 2. No.

“ 3. Answered by No. 2.”

BRISBANE-ROCKHAMPTON MAIL TRAIN.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“ 1. Did the mail train from Brisbane to Rockhampton, leaving Brisbane on

Friday night last, the 29th ultimo, run to time-table time, as far as Gladstone?

"2. If late, how much was this train late at Gladstone?"

"3. If late, to what cause was the delay attributed?"

"4. Were any repairs booked against the engine taken off this train at Gladstone?"

"5. What was the nature of repairs in detail booked against this engine at Gladstone and entered in the repair book?"

"6. What were the repairs executed on this engine and marked off in the repair book against the repairs booked for attention, if any?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Fihelly, *Paddington*) replied—

"1. No.

"2. One hundred and five minutes late.

"3. This train was sixty-five minutes late leaving Bundaberg, having lost thirty minutes between Maryborough and Bundaberg owing to inferior coal. The train left Maryborough twenty-five minutes late, due to engine troubles between Gympie and Maryborough. After leaving Bundaberg with a fresh engine, time was lost cleaning fires at Rosedale and Bororen, owing to clinkery coal, which also caused engine to steam badly. A further delay took place at Benaraby, waiting for an 'Up' train, which would, had the train been on time, have been crossed at Gladstone.

"4. No, but the driver verbally informed the foreman, engine required an overhaul.

"5. None.

"6. None executed, but engine will go into shops for overhaul so soon as material arrives."

APPLICATIONS BY DISCHARGED SOLDIERS FOR LOANS.

Mr. SIZER (*Vundah*), in the absence of Mr. Warren, asked the Treasurer—

"What number of returned soldiers who, prior to their enlistment had benefited by the loan provisions of the Savings Bank Act, or other Act applying to the granting of loans to settlers, have arranged for the application of the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act to their loans, in lieu of the original conditions, since their return from the war?"

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

"Forty-seven."

PRICE OF BUCKINGHAM DOWNS.

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

"1. What was the sum paid for Buckingham Downs?"

"2. How much of this was paid for the country?"

"3. How much was paid for the stock?"

"4. How much was paid for the improvements?"

The PREMIER replied—

"1. £140,000, the purchase price, including the stock, leases, improvements, and plant.

"2, 3, and 4. See answer to No. 1."

PREMIER'S TRAVELLING EXPENSES.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*) asked the Premier—

"What is the total amount of travelling expenses paid, or to be paid, by the State, in respect of his various visits to the Southern and Western States and to Europe during the twelve months ended 30th June last, figures to include expenses of the whole of his party?"

The PREMIER replied—

"This information is being collated."

COPPER FOR BRITAIN AND ALLIES.

Mr. MORGAN asked the Premier—

"1. Did he at any time during 1916 inform the public that he had made arrangements for Queensland to provide 48,000 tons of copper for the use of Britain or her allies?"

"2. If so, will he immediately lay upon the table of the House all details as to the steps which he took to secure such copper, together with all papers and correspondence relating thereto?"

The PREMIER replied—

"1 and 2. While in London in 1916, I made arrangements whereby the Imperial Government guaranteed to accept 48,000 tons of copper from Queensland, for two years from September, 1916, at the maximum price of £105 per ton. Full particulars have already been disclosed to this House (vide 'Hansard,' 1916-1917, pp. 1914 et seq.). The honourable member must be aware that his friends in the Legislative Council by their refusal on two occasions to pass the Chillagoe and Etheridge Railways Bill prevented copper being supplied under the guarantee, and seriously hampered the production of copper in this State at a time when such production would have been of great assistance to Great Britain and her allies, and beneficial to this State generally."

(Opposition laughter.)

RAILWAY EXPENDITURE IN ROCKHAMPTON DISTRICT.

Mr. FORDE (*Rockhampton*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. What amount has been spent by the Railway Department on works in Rockhampton since the present Government came into office?"

"2. Has his attention been invited to the inadequacy of the existing railway station at Stanley street, Rockhampton?"

"3. When does he expect that a new railway station will be erected at Stanley street, Rockhampton?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

"1. £162,430.

"2. Yes.

"3. Improvements at Rockhampton are proceeding, the goods accommodation receiving first attention, and the work is well in hand."

PRICE OF FERTILISERS.

Mr. JAMES (*Logan*) asked the Chief Secretary—

"1. In view of the large quantities of fertilisers exported from Queensland to Japan during the year 1918-1919, will he acquire the fertilisers of the State to retain them for local requirements?"

"2. If 'no,' will he cause the prices of fertilisers within the State to be fixed at a reasonable figure?"

The PREMIER replied—

"1 and 2. Full inquiries will be made into the matter."

STATE PRODUCE AGENCY AND SMALL
CONSIGNMENTS.

Mr. JAMES asked the Minister in charge of State Enterprises—

"1. Is produce in consignments of less than 1 ton and, therefore, outside the scope of the Roma Street railway yards, accepted by the manager of the State produce markets?"

"2. If 'yes,' are such parcels 'bought in' by the manager of the State produce markets, or sold on commission on behalf of the consignors?"

"3. Do the methods pursued in such instances differ materially from those usual with competitive private concerns?"

"4. Is the manager of the State produce markets prepared to make a specialty of the receipt and sale by auction of produce in consignments of less than 1 ton, and so remove a serious difficulty hampering primary producers?"

The PREMIER replied—

"1. Yes.

"2. Handled on consignment, and the sender gets the price it is sold at, less commission and charges.

"3. Yes, in some instances. The State Produce Agency never buys in a consignment under any circumstances. Some of the other firms do.

"4. Under the railway regulations consignments of less than 1 ton are not allowed to be offered by auction, but the manager, State Produce Agency, will be pleased to receive consignments of any size and dispose of same to the best advantage for the sender."

TRUSTEES OF TRADES HALL.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*) asked the Premier—

"What are the names of the trustees of the Trades Hall, Brisbane, with the dates of their appointment, and the nature of their personal employment in each case?"

The PREMIER replied—

"I would ask the hon. member to direct his inquiries to the secretary of the trustees of the Trades Hall."

PROTECTION TO LOYAL WORKERS AT ROSS
CREEK.

Mr. SIZER asked the Premier—

"In view of his statement that all citizens have and will have the protection of the law during the regime of his Government, will he, if definite specific cases are brought to his notice, take steps to protect loyal workers who are being penalised at Ross Creek for obeying the ruling of the Arbitration Court?"

The PREMIER replied—

"See answer to question of the hon. member for Murrumba on 3rd September, 1919."

ATTENDANCE OF POLICE AT KEDRON PARK.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*) asked the Home Secretary—

"1. What number of—(a) Mounted

police; (b) foot police, are told off for duty at and in the neighbourhood of Kedron Park Racecourse on race days?"

"2. What number of these men are on duty—(a) On the race grounds; (b) outside the race grounds?"

"3. Is this course a proprietary course?"

"4. If so, who is the owner of the same?"

"5. Are any fees paid to police officers on such duties?"

"6. If so, what amount per man, and by whom?"

"7. Is it a fact that the police patrol part of a road adjoining this course from which a view can be had of the racing track and order citizens to 'move on' in order to prevent them viewing the racing?"

"8. Is this action taken to improve the morals of the public or to force them to pay admission to the race track?"

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*) replied—

"1. (a) One; (b) four.

"2. (a) Four foot police during the time racing is going on; (b) one mounted constable for same period. The five members of the service perform general duty outside during the time the public are arriving and departing from the course.

"3. Yes.

"4. It is registered in the name of Mr. F. C. Thomas, Box 628, G.P.O., Melbourne, owner.

"5. Yes.

"6. 10s. per man (rate 2s. per hour) paid by Mr. E. J. Lawrence, manager.

"7. No. The police patrol the roads to enforce the observance of the traffic regulations, and to prevent accidents and the blocking and congestion of traffic, particularly on a bridge, which is dangerous and causes a lot of trouble.

"8. No."

FEES PAID TO BARRISTERS AND
SOLICITORS.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*), without notice, asked the Assistant Minister for Justice—

"When may the House expect the return asked for in connection with the fees paid to barristers and solicitors?"

HON. W. N. GILLIES (*Eacham*) replied—

"The return is being prepared."

NUNDAH RAILWAY OVERBRIDGE
MENACE.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

The SPEAKER: I have to announce that I have received from the hon. member for Nundah notice in writing that he intends to move the adjournment of the House to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the great danger caused to the travelling public by the overbridge at Nundah Railway Station.

Mr. SIZER: I beg to move—

"That this House do now adjourn in order to discuss a matter of urgent public importance—namely, the danger to the travelling public of the railway overbridge at Nundah."

I do this not in any spirit of antagonism or with any wish to harass or embarrass the Government—

Mr. Sizer.]

The PREMIER: I rise to a point of order. I did not notice that any hon. members supported the hon. member for Nundah.

Several members of the Opposition then rose and indicated their support to the motion.

Mr. SIZER: I do not wish to embarrass or harass the Government in any shape or form, but I do think, in view of the menace which undoubtedly exists at the overbridge at Nundah, that it is time action was taken by the Government to remove this danger. Last year I brought this matter under the notice of the House, and I might point out that this is not the first occasion on which a fatal accident has taken place at that spot. A large number of accidents of a fatal nature have occurred at the place mentioned, and the last one was last Friday night, when a soldier who had recently returned from the front was on his way home with his parents. No doubt when he was passing Nundah he put his head out of the railway carriage window and his head collided with a pillar of the overbridge. This is the third accident of the same nature that has occurred within the last eighteen months. The clearance between the railway carriages and the pillar of this particular bridge is only a matter of 1 foot 4 inches, while modern bridges are built with a clearance of 2 feet 1 inch, and hon. members will agree that there is not much room at the Nundah overbridge. The bridge was built thirty years ago. Last year, as reported on page 2881 of "Hansard" for 1918, I addressed the following question to the Minister for Railways:—

"1. Has his attention been called to the accident which occurred at Nundah on Monday, 30th September, when Samuel Norman Smith met his death?"

"2. As this is the second fatal accident of the same nature within a comparatively short time, will he have inquiry made with a view of removing the existing menace to safety of travelling public whilst passing under the overbridge at Nundah?"

To those questions the Minister replied—

"1. Yes.

"2. Yes; immediately."

Practically twelve months ago that reply was given by the Minister and nothing has been done. Another life has been lost and no instructions have been given for that work to be carried out. I do not know who is responsible, but I can only think it must be the Minister for Railways; and I do say that whoever is responsible he should be dealt with in the most severe manner possible, because it is sheer neglect that has brought about the death of another unfortunate man who, after spending years at the front was on his way home. I do not intend to delay the question at all. I only wish to state the facts, and as a question apparently was of no avail last year, I think I am justified in taking the action I have in order to draw public attention to the matter. I have much pleasure in moving that this House do now adjourn.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): I rise to support the motion, and I think that with even slight consideration the Minister will admit that to have a pillar only 1 foot 4 inches from the railway carriages is a great mistake. There can be no excuse, as this matter has been twice brought under the notice of the Minister, and he has replied

on both occasions that the matter would receive attention. I think the community at large will agree that the Minister, as head of the department, is primarily responsible for the accident. Probably that is a very strong statement to make, but it will give the Minister an opportunity to come forward and defend himself.

Mr. WHITFORD: Why don't you blame the Government responsible for building the bridge?

Mr. FRY: This bridge was built thirty years ago. For thirty years that bridge has done duty, and during that time the width of the carriages has been increased, and the increased width of the carriages must necessarily reduce the distance between the carriages and the pillars of the bridge. Anyone travelling from the Southern States, as the soldiers do, when they come here naturally expect that there will be a little freeway outside the carriage windows. In the Southern States there is a greater distance, and it should not be necessary to come to this House and bring under the notice of the Minister something which it is undoubtedly his duty to attend to. There have been three deaths within the last eighteen months. I think that is a shocking state of affairs. Not only should it call forth the sympathy of the Minister, but I think the Minister is in duty bound to apologise to this House for the inaction of his department in this matter. Thirty years ago that bridge was built, and the Government have been spending a lot of money on railway stations in electorates represented by Labour members.

Mr. COLLINS: That is not true. Not a single station has been built in my electorate.

Mr. FRY: Yet here is a case of imminent danger, and they leave it go by. Why do they leave this thing go by? Either because they are too tired to attend to the necessary wants of the country or else they are out to do things for the purpose of catching votes. It is a question of life and death. The member for Bowen says the Government have not built any stations in his electorate. I do not require any railways in my electorate, but, without trying to use any undue influence, I would like the Government to consider whether they should not pay compensation for the death that has occurred.

Mr. SIZER: They get no compensation.

Mr. FRY: Of course they get no compensation, but that does not prevent the Government doing the right thing. No matter what the Government think on the compensation question, I think, if we took a vote of the people, they would say that the department was primarily responsible, and should pay compensation. I trust the Minister, without further argument, will make a statement to the House, and at the same time express regret on the part of himself and the Government for the sad death which has been caused through the department's neglect.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: This is a most extraordinary motion to put before the House this afternoon, and I think the language used, if not exactly hysterical, at all events was a trifle unbalanced. We all deplore any accident in the Railway Department, or anywhere else, and I think that hon. members on both sides of the House will agree that safety is always sought for in the department. Safety first is really the maxim of the department, but to imagine

[Hon. T. J. Ryan.

the Minister or Government can accept responsibility for every culvert or pillar or bridge on the railway system is most ridiculous. The facts here are very simple. The bridge was built thirty years ago by the Opposition—(Opposition laughter)—by the party who are now in Opposition. I admit that is not much of an argument, and I am not putting it forward as an argument, but hundreds of thousands of passengers have travelled safely past that particular bridge, and when the accidents of the past are examined, it will be found that on each occasion the unfortunate individuals who suffered were leaning some considerable distance out of the carriage window.

Mr. STOFFORD: More than you can lean out of Badger's trams on Victoria Bridge:

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I was going to mention that there was a greater menace on the Victoria Bridge when travelling between the north and south side on Mr. Badger's trams than there is in any part of Queensland, or in Australia. I do not say that that is a good argument to put up, but I emphasise the absurdity of the Opposition coming here and saying we can entirely obviate these dangers. The truth is, that hundreds of thousands of passengers have passed that spot without receiving any mishap at all. The matter will be further inquired into. There is a clearance of about 1½ feet there, I know, because I have had it examined three or four times.

Mr. FRY: Only 1 foot 4 inches.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The carriage on this occasion might have been wider, but previously I remember distinctly it was 1 foot 10 inches. At all events, we will have inquiries made, and [4 p.m.] if there is a danger to life there, it should be removed. It is not necessary for members to stand up in this House and make foolish, wild statements regarding these matters.

Mr. MACARTNEY (*Toowong*): This is not a matter requiring very lengthy discussion. If the hon. gentleman had not reflected upon the member who, I think, quite properly introduced the subject this afternoon, I would not have risen. I quite agree that the Government are not responsible for the erection of the bridge. I am sorry that there should be any room for laughter in connection with what is, after all, a serious subject, but the hon. gentleman makes somewhat of a joke of it when he suggests the Opposition were responsible for the erection of that bridge. It is only in keeping, apparently, with the attacks which recently have been made on the Opposition; if anything arises, the Opposition are always to blame.

The PREMIER: The bridge was built whilst the Opposition were in power.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The subject-matter is the existence of this danger. It is a danger, no doubt. That it was a danger has not been proved, apparently, until quite a recent date, and within the last eighteen months it has been shown that life has been lost on at least three occasions. On a previous occasion, apparently some little time ago now, the attention of the Minister was strongly called to it, and he gave the reply that the matter would be at once inquired into. Naturally, one would have expected that the matter would have been dealt with; but like most of the questions that are asked, in a casual sort of way an answer is given, and there

the matter ends. I think the hon. gentleman who moved the motion is within his rights in calling attention to this danger. I say it is an important matter that ought to be dealt with in this way. If we cannot have matters dealt with by question or private reference to the Minister, the only thing left for a member of Parliament is to bring it up in this way. This matter has been brought before the public in the proper way, and I think it is the wish of every member on both sides of the House that such attention will be given to it as will prevent future loss of life. (Hear, hear!)

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): Before the motion is put or withdrawn, I intend saying something regarding a matter to which the Minister made reference by interjection. If my memory does not fail me, not very long ago someone near Goodna met with a similar accident through striking his head on a pillar. The Minister remarked that there were many bridges similar to that where the accident took place.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Scores of them, all built by your Government.

HON. W. H. BARNES: That is an additional reason why the matter should be tackled, because the fact remains that during the past few years the Railway Department have been widening the carriages which are now very much wider than they used to be. I hold that, if we know there is a danger existing, it is our clear duty to prevent loss of life by rectifying that danger. It is not a bit of use the Minister getting up and saying that the Opposition did it. The matter is very much bigger than that. The fact remains that a boy who had been serving his country was returning home, doubtless expecting to be received by his parents with very great pleasure. He is killed through the bridge not being sufficiently wide to permit of persons looking out. It is only natural that a soldier who has been away for such a long period should be anxious to see where he is going. I sincerely and earnestly commend this matter to the Minister, and ask that not only shall he make a promise to-day, but he will go a step beyond that, and see that such promise—which in the past has been a pie-crust promise—will be carried out in the interest of the community.

Mr. SIZER: In view of the Minister's statement, and seeing that my object has been achieved, there is no necessity to go further with the matter. I think the Minister was very casual in his reply. I do not think that even now he takes the matter seriously. I admit that he cannot personally be held responsible for the bridge being there, but he can be held responsible for telling me in this Chamber last year that the matter would be seen to immediately, and then allow a year to elapse, with the result that a similar accident occurs. I beg leave, now, to withdraw the motion.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion be withdrawn?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Motion withdrawn accordingly.

DISSENT FROM MR. SPEAKER'S RULING.

NOTICE OF MOTION BY MR. VOWLES.

Mr. VOWLES: It is my intention to ask the leave of the House, at a later stage, to withdraw this motion. When I gave notice

Mr. Fowles.]

to dissent from the ruling of Mr. Speaker on the 19th August, a different gentleman occupied that chair.

The HOME SECRETARY: Why don't you argue it?

Mr. VOWLES: I feel that, as the motion to which I took exception has been carried by this House, it would be rather futile to argue it at all, because the harm is done which I endeavoured to prevent.

The PREMIER: You know there is nothing in the point.

Mr. VOWLES: I know there is a good deal in the point. The gentleman has been given the immunity the Government evidently intended him to have, and any argument from this side of the House would be futile, because we know that divisions are taken on party lines, and there would be a party division on it. I ask for leave to withdraw the motion standing in my name.

The SPEAKER: Is it the desire of the House that the hon. member be allowed to withdraw his motion?

The PREMIER and GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No, no.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member can withdraw it, if he pleases, without leave.

UNEMPLOYED WORKERS BILL.

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): It is a pleasure to pass from the debate which was fraught with dishonour to this House last Thursday night, and engage in one which calls for intellectual discussion and friendly debate. In opening, I commend the Treasurer's pluck and fortitude in attacking a subject which has called forth vast criticism from all parts of the country. To be fair to him, I would say that any measure which calls for the redress of unemployment is bound to invite adverse discussion from interested sections. I purpose attacking the subject from a broadminded attitude, and criticising it in the true sense of the word. I am inclined to do this, because Queensland is faced with a problem at the present moment which is a very terrific one; that is to say, we have greater unemployment in Queensland to-day than we have had for the last thirty years, and that state of affairs is one which calls for the consideration of every member of this House. During the last session the Opposition foreshadowed that this state of affairs was going to exist. We pointed out that, sooner or later, and very much sooner than the Government members thought, unemployment was going to be a serious problem in Queensland. We were met with the argument from the Government benches that Queensland was never more prosperous, forgetting all the time they were advancing that argument that while the war was on there was a certain amount of unnatural development, a certain amount of unnatural industrial activity, which meant the employment of large numbers of men which would cease immediately the war was ended. The war has, happily, ended, and now we are face to face with this problem—and it is a problem that is going to call for the best mental activities of every member in this House—to devise some measure which will be applicable to Queensland, and carry the confidence which is necessary in order to make

a Bill of this nature acceptable. Genuine unemployment—and I say genuine, because there is a certain amount which is not—is due to two causes. As we have always endeavoured to point out on this side of the House, it is, first of all, due to the present policy of antagonism to employers. It is due to the fact that there has been no encouragement given to employers to extend their business and engage in extra development. It is due also to the heavy direct taxation which has meant that those who are most inclined to encourage development in Queensland have shut up their pockets, and have refused to engage in ordinary industrial developments. It is further due to the perpetual industrial unrest through which Queensland has been passing for the last year or two. You cannot expect men who have any desire or intention to develop the resources of this country to run the unnatural risks which have been associated with the industrial unrest that has existed during the past two or three years. That, in my opinion, is one of the main causes of unemployment at the present moment. The second cause is inevitably associated with a young country which is depending upon its natural resources and, to a large extent, is dependent upon primary production, which is subject to seasonal influences. In a young country, that must bring in its train a certain amount of unemployment. I contend that the situation is not going to be remedied in its entirety by any Unemployment Bill, because, no matter what the nature of that Bill is, unless it is accompanied by a system of encouragement to production, it is bound to fail. Unemployment in Queensland to-day is too vast, and it cannot be tackled by any Bill, no matter what its nature, unless it has as its corollary a system of production which is going to absorb, naturally, a certain amount of labour that at the present moment cannot find an opening. I contend that the present unemployment disease requires two prescriptions. It is a disease, we must admit, that has to be tackled. In my opinion, it has to be tackled by two methods. I propose to lay down what, in my judgment, those two methods should be. I should, first of all, like to deal with the most important method, and that is the method of production. I would like to repeat to this House certain statements which the Premier made use of when he set foot in this Commonwealth after his recent visit to England. These were his statements—

"There are great problems confronting both the Commonwealth and States (said Mr. Ryan) problems which will require the very best that is in our public men, for upon the successful working out of our difficulties will depend the future of Australia. The time has arrived, when we must bend ourselves more than ever before to the development of our magnificent natural resources. We must become a great self-contained nation. History has shown us what could be accomplished by the United States of America, which now maintains in prosperity a population upwards of 100,000,000 in that country. There was marvellous development there, after the close of the Civil war."

Any man who cares to give any consideration to the question must admit that those utterances from the Premier are exactly the utterances which, if put into operation, would meet the situation almost in its entirety. I entirely endorse the remarks of the Premier

[*Mr. Vowles.*

in that regard, and I want to ask him this question: Is the Government encouraging the very best that is in our public men to-day?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Yes.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: That is a most important question to ask of the Government. I contend that any question of unemployment and a proposal to deal with it, must be accompanied by an encouragement of all that is best in our public men. I can only refer to what happened, unfortunately, in this Chamber last Thursday night to get an answer to that question. I ask the hon. the Premier, is a resolution of that description bludgeoned as it was through this House last Thursday night likely to encourage the best that is in our public men? Is it not more likely to encourage the passions and spleen of men, and to divide Queensland into camps and sections? Instead of encouraging the best that is in men, it is doing exactly the reverse. I contend that what Queensland needs to-day is to encourage the best that is in our public men, and if we want to seriously tackle this problem, that is the first thing that we should do. Another point the Premier made use of was this, that we should bend ourselves to the development of our magnificent natural resources. That is a very fine doctrine, and a doctrine in which everyone knows lies Queensland's salvation—to bend ourselves to the development of our magnificent natural resources. I think myself that the bending is in a different direction altogether, and the bending has reached a point that is almost breaking the productive back. If we wish to develop our natural resources, we must have co-operation between both sections of the community. We do not want the creation of class consciousness. We want the creation of what I might term national consciousness. If we only set about developing our magnificent natural resources, I am sure that we would satisfy many of those who are getting pessimistic of Queensland's future. We must do that if we wish to make this a great State. Another excellent doctrine of the Premier was that we must not rely on the imports of food and clothing from other parts of the world, but we must set about manufacturing these commodities for ourselves. The only way to do that is to encourage a spirit of co-operation in Queensland. That is the main solution of the unemployment problem and the problem of the development of Queensland in the future. If we encourage that spirit of co-operation it will be a good thing for Queensland, because I can see we are in front of very troublous times. I am not a pessimist by any means, but I see trouble ahead unless we bend our energies to encourage the proper development of Queensland. Queensland is suffering from the aftermath of the war like every other part of the world. We have obligations to fulfil, and we have to face them manfully and fairly. We are not going to solve the problems that are ahead of us by encouraging bitterness, strife, and hatred between different sections of the community. The one thing that is absolutely essential for us to do is to bring about a spirit of co-operation. If this Government set out on a policy which they have included in the Governor's Speech, and go in for a vigorous main roads construction policy—a policy which I, personally, have always advocated during the short time that I have been in this House—I am sure that we will find that

in the development of that policy lies a great cure for many of our troubles, and for the unfortunate position we find ourselves in to-day. If the Government embark on a main roads construction policy, and on a water conservation policy, it will help to solve this problem. These are two of the greatest needs in Queensland to-day, and the Government should not hesitate to start on them straight away. The Government should also embark on a system of fodder conservation, not like that advocated by the hon. member for Toowoomba the other day, but a system carried out on business and scientific lines. We should have some general development of our primary and secondary industries. If that were done, that would help to cure the problem of unemployment, and the introduction of such a Bill as this would not be necessary to anything like the extent which is proposed to-day. There is something more necessary in Queensland besides providing for our unemployed. There is the question of meeting our financial obligations. There is the question of meeting our debts as they fall due. To meet those debts it is necessary for the Premier and his party to put into operation those high sentiments which the Premier gave utterance to when he returned to Australia. He should see to it that we should set about our business once and for all in such a way as to cut out all this bitterness and strife that is cutting Queensland in twain. There is nothing to be gained by setting one section of the community against another, one set of politicians against another, and one party against another. How are we going to develop our resources and make provision for our unemployed unless we set about the matter in a broadminded way? Any member of the House must know that from all parts of the world there is a demand for our primary products. You, Mr. Speaker, in your last office in this House, must know that better than anyone. You must know that the whole world is crying out for primary products which this State is capable of producing. We can produce wool, cattle, sheep, cotton, and other products for which there is a demand from other parts of the world. When we know that we have the opportunity of producing these primary products for the benefit of other parts of the world, it is almost an insult to our intelligence to introduce a Bill to meet the unemployed situation. After all, this is a mere palliative, when all is said and done. Unfortunately, the doctrines which the Premier gave voice to on his arrival in Australia, and which I repeated this afternoon, do not fit in with the doctrines preached by the organisations of members supporting the Government, because they have committed themselves, whether rightly or wrongly, to a system of more widely distributing existing wealth amongst the community generally. Members opposite do not propose to dig into the earth and create more wealth, but their object is to divide the existing wealth and take from the man that has, and distribute it amongst the men who have not. That is a wrong conception altogether. We would be better employed if we directed our energies, to-day, towards getting more wealth out of the soil of Queensland rather than bending our energies towards taking from the man who has and distributing it over the population generally. Another feature which hon. members opposite are unfortunately committed to, is the doctrine of "Down with the capitalist." It

Mr. Elphinstone. }

is significant that the Minister in charge of this Bill has given utterance to the doctrine that it is within the power of the employees to kill the capitalistic system. I am sure the hon. gentleman must appreciate and acknowledge, when he is within the four walls of his private study and he considers this matter in a dispassionate manner, that to preach such a doctrine as that is greatly aggravating the position. It is unfortunate to hear a Minister emphasise that the doctrine of the Government is to down the capitalist. That will only discourage production, and will only aggravate the very position which the hon. gentleman is trying to remedy by the introduction of this Bill. Another doctrine the Government supporters in North Queensland have given utterance to is:—"To hell with thrift." They make use of those words because they see in thrift a danger. They see that once individuals become thrifty, they become less amenable to the dictates of Labour organisation.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It was a supporter of the Opposition that used those words; not a supporter of the Government.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: That has been uttered as the doctrine of the Labour party as a whole. An encouragement of thrift and the bending of our energies to assist in curing the unemployment evil by developing our resources, is the best doctrine we can have, instead of engaging in a crusade against thrift.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It was uttered by a supporter of your party.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The hon. gentleman knows quite well who made use of the expression. It was uttered by the leader of the meat workers in North Queensland.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It was uttered by Mr. Carney, one of the prime movers in the Labour movement in North Queensland. I have no doubt that Mr. Carney and his satellites were the means of returning the present member for Townsville at the last election.

Another doctrine preached by members opposite is the doctrine of common ownership. That has been taken under the wing of the Hon. the Premier himself. He contends that common ownership is the right kind of doctrine to inculcate into the minds of the people. That means, that as soon as the Government get sufficient power to carry this policy into operation, they will enforce the common ownership of property. It will be taken from the hands of those who possess it at the present moment, and it will become the property of the public in general or the Government in particular. Are you going to encourage development and encourage primary production by advocating a policy of that kind? Yet those are the doctrines that are written upon the escutcheon of the Labour party. I quite admit that the Treasurer has set about in a conscientious way to try and cure the unemployment problem as he finds it, but, on the other hand, there are his public utterances. It is speeches like that that will only disturb the confidence amongst those who are able to create employment, and will not tend to develop our industries on the lines that they should be developed.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You are dodging the main issue.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I will come to the main issue if you will give me time. There

[*Mr. Elphinstone.*

is no doubt about it that if every man in Queensland who was in a position to do so was given free opportunities to engage in primary production and secondary production, the evil of unemployment would only exist in Queensland to the smallest extent. Any man who studies the position must appreciate that. I said just now that those dependent on the development of the natural resources must of necessity be subject to certain periods of unemployment, because, as the natural resources get developed, there must be periods when the work ceases to exist. That means the removal of a large mass of population from one place to another. It means that one portion of the State is busily engaged in production at one moment, while at another moment it is starved. While that condition exists in Queensland, and while in a young country we have to be dependent on primary production, there must be a certain amount of unemployment. Another point is that many of our industries in Queensland are of a seasonable nature, including the sugar, meat, and shearing industries. They are carried on at certain periods of the year only, and, of course, that creates unemployment between the seasons for those engaged in them. Then there is the question of the seasons. The seasons are such in Queensland at times that it is impossible to engage in any employment. That also creates unemployment. Then, again, there is the shipping. We have a rush of ships coming to our shores at certain times, and at other times there is a scarcity. When the rush is on the ship owners require large numbers of men to immediately remove the cargoes. At other times, there is a scarcity of shipping, and there again you have unemployment. So for those four, if for no other reasons I think every right-minded man must admit that unemployment will always exist in the State of Queensland to a greater or less extent. Therefore, it devolves upon us to find some measure for meeting the situation. I contend that to permit large numbers of men to suffer from unemployment is most demoralising. The Government, by this measure, is endeavouring to meet this problem and it is our duty as an Opposition to help them.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Every hon. member must admit that nothing is worse, more pitiful, or more demoralising to a man than to have to come—as they do to me and no doubt to other hon. members—week after week begging for work; and nothing is more disconcerting than to have to turn them away without assistance, because the bulk of them are not looking for charity—they do not want you to put your hand in your pocket and give them the price of a meal—they are looking for work. It is the duty therefore of every member to set his mind to work and find proper, legitimate, and fair means of getting work for those men.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is the object of this Bill.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I quite understand that. To permit unemployment to exist in our midst occasions a great many evils. The first is that it prevents men marrying, and settling down and becoming citizens with responsibilities; and I argue that there is nothing worse for the State than to have a large number of men who wander from

one district to another with no responsibility other than what they carry under their hats. The welfare of Queensland demands that we should encourage proper settlement of men where they can take a little plot of land, build a house, take unto themselves a wife, and bring up a family in peace and comfort. Unless we are in a position to provide a man with employment when he wants it, we are discouraging the very principles which we contend are necessary to make a State what it should be. Therefore, if only for the object of stopping this migrating, I think it is our duty to have some measure of this kind. Another point is that it encourages the practice of paying more than a job is worth, and giving the men more than they immediately need for their wants. That is a great evil in Queensland to-day. The judges of the Arbitration Court, with the object of meeting the position, are in the habit of granting, in seasonal occupations, more than the men would reasonably be entitled to if they were employed for the full twelve months. The judges of the Arbitration Court are probably correct in taking that view into consideration; but I contend it is wrong, because, in the first place, the industry is being charged with a larger expenditure for employment than it otherwise would, and that a man being paid more than his work is actually worth is demoralised, and he generally demonstrates that money easily got is just as easily spent. It, therefore, does not have the effect which the Arbitration Court had, no doubt, in view in giving the man larger wages than he would have had if in continual employment. Therefore, I contend that it would be a great advantage if this Bill proves effective in that particular direction.

Again, if we are honest to ourselves, we must admit that there is an element of "go-slow" introduced into certain of our industries. This is demoralising. It is injurious to business and to the man engaged in the work. If a man is engaged in an occupation which he knows is only going to last four months if he works hard, and he knows he will have to look for another job for the remaining eight months, but by slacking off a little he will make the job spin out for five months, it is only human that he should do so. Most men if faced with that problem would probably ease their efforts to a certain extent. If by the introduction of a measure scientifically disposing of this unemployment problem, we can assist men to do the fair thing by giving their time honestly and conscientiously to their work, I consider the Bill would be achieving something good.

Those are some of the reasons why this Bill should be given proper attention. I think I have proved that unemployment is inevitable and must be provided for.

I now want to try to point out to the Treasurer wherein this Bill does and does not meet the situation. Firstly, I would reiterate that any measure of unemployment cannot be expected to fully meet the situation as it exists to-day, because, without a bold policy of production, we cannot meet this unemployment menace because you are setting out to tax a limited amount of industry to carry a very large amount of unemployment. If industry was encouraged and broadened very considerably, it could easily bear the burden of the small proportion of inevitable unemployment. But, when the

ranks of unemployment are increased by the large numbers who are thrown out of employment by reason of the lack of production, and the lack of encouragement of secondary industries, it is a problem that cannot be met in its entirety by any Unemployment Bill.

The outstanding weaknesses in this Bill, in my opinion, are as follows:—The Treasurer has pointed out—and I think quite rightly—that the success of this scheme will almost entirely depend upon the representative nature, ability, honesty, and fair-mindedness of the council. They have enormous powers, and it is necessary to give them very wide powers to make the Bill effective, but upon its constitution will depend its success, and also the confidence which the public generally are going to have in it. This problem cannot be met by one section of the community. It must be met by the community as a whole, and the council must carry the confidence of the community generally and not one section of it alone. I consider that five members on that council is quite sufficient. To make the council larger in numbers would defeat its object, make it unwieldy, but I consider that it should be differently constituted. I consider that the Minister must, of necessity, be one of that council. A judge of the Arbitration Court should also be a member; a representative of the unions should be a member, and also a representative of the employers should be a member. But I consider that the local authorities should, of necessity, have representation upon that council. The local authorities play a very wide part in this measure. They are called upon to do things at very short notice, and to undertake very big commitments. They are called upon to co-operate with the Minister in curing the system of unemployment, and yet they have no representation. I contend that the position which is allocated to the Director of Labour should be given to a representative of the local authorities. The Director of Labour can be called in as a consultative member. He is there as a Government official; he is continually in contact with labour, and his advice should be taken. He could be attached to the council, but not be a member as is proposed. In my judgment, it is not right to make a salaried officer of the Government a member of the board of directors. He is paid by the Government to attend to that work, just the same as the general manager of any business is paid to look after the affairs of that business and to carry out the directions of the board. That is what the Director of Labour should do. He should carry out the directions of the council. Let him be a kind of general manager to the council, and let the council consist of men such as I have enumerated. If the Director of Labour is removed from that position, and it is given to a representative of the local authorities, it is going to remove a lot of the adverse criticism which is at present hurled against this measure.

It is pointed out by those who looked for party motives in the measure that the council is oversized; that the Minister in charge of the Bill, the Director of Labour, and the member of a union must, of necessity, have the labour interests at heart.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Why the Director of Labour?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Why? Did not one hon. member opposite, speaking on the

Mr. Elphinstone.]

Address in Reply, practically let the cat out of the bag by stating that the time is coming when every Government official will have to sign the Labour platform?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He has not signed the Labour platform as far as I know.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: No doubt, he will be asked to do so. Therefore, the position is that the council as at present constituted has three Labour sympathisers on it, one Nationalist sympathiser, and one neutral. A man looking for a fair administration of this Act must therefore see that the whole thing is lopsided. By removing the Director of Labour you are making the body as nearly as possible a neutral one, and that will help to create confidence, and it is only what we should endeavour to accomplish in such a measure.

The method of raising revenue proposed in this Bill is totally unsound. I have many reasons for saying this, and would ask the Treasurer to be good enough to listen to what I have to say. At the present time, the employer is under the impression that he is being singled out to meet this problem, and it is only a very natural conclusion to come to. You say to the employer, "You have to find all the money to cure this unemployment evil." The employer naturally comes to the conclusion that he is being singled out for special adverse treatment in this measure; and, to single out any one section of the community in a problem of this description, which is a responsibility upon the community as a whole, is unfortunate, and should be discouraged. Again, you are calling upon the employer to make more returns. Any man carrying on business must know that his life is becoming very nearly unbearable owing to the excessive returns he is called upon to make, and under this Bill he is to be called upon to make further returns to the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: If making returns is his worst trouble he is not very badly off.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I agree that that is only one of his troubles, but I wish to mention several others. The next is that it is going to interfere with the feeling that exists between employer and employee.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: That argument may be used against the Workers' Compensation Act.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I do not think so, because the Workers' Compensation Act has come to be looked upon throughout the world as being an obligation on the employer. It has been in operation in Great Britain for a great many years.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Not a great many years.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Just as many as I care to remember. I contend also that this method of raising revenue is going to act harshly on struggling industries. You may have two industries, one well-established and the other just struggling. They are both turning out the same class of commodity. One can probably afford to pay its quota towards the fund, whereas the other, if called upon in struggling years to do so, may be very adversely affected. I contend, therefore, that to make a levy on all industries, independent of whether they are

[*Mr. Elphinstone.*

succeeding or not, is going to act harshly on struggling industries. Another point which might have escaped the hon. gentleman's notice is this: That it is a direct hit against those people who give, or create, employment, whereas those people who live on their investments and give no employment are not affected by this measure. That is one of the strongest criticisms against this measure.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: We make those people contribute to the revenues of the State through the income tax.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The employers pay income tax just the same.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Not necessarily. An employer may employ 1,000 men and yet pay no income tax.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Yes, but he may pay income tax the same as the other man. You might have two men each with £5,000. One thinks Queensland is going to the dogs, and says, "I am going to live as happily and contented as I can. I will put my £5,000 into the war loan." He gets 5 per cent. interest on his money, and is saved paying income tax to the State. The other man thinks that Queensland should be developed; that its primary industries should be encouraged, and he says, "I will put £5,000 into the development of this industry and will employ 100 men." That man, who is doing what we contend is the right thing, will have to pay £2 a head for each employee to this fund, whereas the man who puts his £5,000 into the war loan pays nothing to the unemployment fund. That is obviously unsound, and is one of the strongest arguments against the methods which the Secretary for Public Works is advancing for raising revenue for this purpose. Another question is this: The employer who is going to pay this extra £2 a head for each employee, is he not going to pass it on? Undoubtedly.

Mr. KIRWAN: Well, what is all the growl about?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I am not growling at all. I am trying to advance arguments to show wherein this measure is weak, and I contend that the £2 a head which the employer is going to be called upon to pay is going to be passed on to the consumer, and the cost of living is going to be increased.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed him by the Standing Orders.

Mr. GRAYSON (*Cunningham*): I move that the hon. member for Oxley be granted an extension of time.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. member be granted an extension of time?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I thank hon. members for this privilege. Another argument I have to advance is, that it is going to discourage new industries—the very thing we are going to set out to do, that is the encouragement of industries throughout the length and breadth of this State. I am not saying that the Unemployment Bill is going to do that. I am not going to say that a rational system of unemployment relief is going to discourage industry, but I say

the system of arriving at revenue under this Bill is going to discourage industry, because it will have the effect of making the employer think he is being singled out to "carry the baby," and I think that is an unfair method of doing it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is only part of the scheme. There is also the insurance scheme.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Then again, it is unfair to the primary producer. The man engaged in secondary industries—the man engaged in shopkeeping, the man employing labour in the city—can pass it on; he can make the consumer pay for it, but the primary producer who is employing five or more men cannot pass it on.

Mr. COLLINS: Give us the number of primary producers in Queensland who employ over five men.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I cannot give the number, but there is quite a large number of them. I would point out to the hon. member that there is quite a number engaged in the sugar industry.

Mr. COLLINS: Very few.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: At the present moment, there is an agitation going on in Australia to the detriment of Queensland sugar. There is a movement on foot to cease this spoon-feeding of Queensland in regard to the sugar industry; to permit the free importation of sugar into Australia, so that the Southern industries can be helped in the export of their manufactured goods where sugar is used. That is going to be a very dangerous thing for Queensland, and it has got to be scotched.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Not only scotched, but killed.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I thought "scotched" had the same meaning. My point is this: If we are going to add to the cost of sugar production, as I contend we would by this method of securing revenue, then we are going to make the position worse. I give that as an illustration, not that that is the only one I could mention, but it illustrates my point very clearly. Then, again, State enterprises under this proposal are going to be exempted. That is clearly and obviously unfair.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Exempted from what?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Exempted from contributing to this fund.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They are not exempted from finding employment.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Take, for example, the State sawmill, and just a few yards away there is a private sawmill. They are competing with one another in the way of sawn timber, and they are both engaging, say, 200 hands. The State sawmill makes no contribution to this fund, and the next door sawmill, say Brown and Broad's, for the sake of argument, pays £400 a year towards this fund. That is unfair.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They simply pay that out of their profits, and we keep the profits of the State sawmills down by giving cheap timber. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: There are times when the hon. gentleman does not use his

intelligence, and this is one of them. He makes silly interjections, which are not worthy of consideration. I do not want to be rude, but if he will only confine his arguments to sound, common sense, I will always be glad to listen to him, but silly interjections like that for party purposes are not worthy of consideration in connection with an important measure of this kind.

I would illustrate again the State Produce Agency. You have a State Produce Agency employing, say, twenty men. Whereas Mr. Barnes, on the opposite side of the street has to pay, say, £40 a year to the unemployment fund, the State Produce Agency contributes nothing. Is that fair? If the State Produce Agency has to embrace these advantages to bolster it up, then it has no right to exist. If it is going to enter into competition with business, let it pay its way like its competitors are forced to do.

I have criticised the methods as to how this revenue is to be raised, and I am going to suggest to the hon. gentleman in what directions he should look for his revenue. In my judgment, that should be a matter for taxation absolutely and solely. The revenue should be raised through the existing channels which he has at his disposal. We do not want to create new departments; we do not want to create new officers and new machinery, all of which mean a greater burden and greater expense. The hon. gentleman has got at his disposal quite sufficient opportunity of raising revenue for this purpose, and from an economical standpoint, and from the standpoint of introducing a measure which will be the least harmful to the community, and which will have the confidence of the community, he should use the existing means of taxation which are at his disposal, and I would suggest that he devotes his attention particularly to those people who derive large revenues from Queensland, and yet who go out of the State to spend them. I have no sympathy with those people—you find a large number of them in New South Wales and Victoria—who draw large sums of money from this State of Queensland, and yet give the Southern States the advantage of the expenditure of those moneys. If Queensland is a good enough State to earn money in, it is a good enough place to spend money in, and I consider that the person who comes here to drain Queensland of her resources in that regard, should be the one first taxed to see that unemployment is met in a sound method, such as I think we can devise under a Bill of this description, if it is amended in the way we suggest.

The next criticism I have to make against this measure is in regard to the plenary powers which the Minister proposes to take to himself under this Bill for forcing employers to invest money or to undertake work. I am not so much concerned about the powers to enforce employers to invest money, because it is going to take the hon. gentleman all his time to find industries paying 15 per cent. and men receiving larger incomes than £5,000 a year. There are very few of them, and, therefore, I am not very much concerned in that regard. Also I would say that if there are men in receipt of those incomes, and the Government can advance some sound investment to those men for the development of the State—an investment which will have the security of Government

Mr. Elphinstone.]

debentures—I think there is some reason for arguing that those men should have some coercion used against them to invest in Government debentures, if the money is to be used in the formation of roads, water conservation, or something which means the advancement and development of Queensland. I think there is something in that argument, but to force an employer to develop his own business, or to engage in some other business at the dictates of any Minister—I do not care who he is—is a system of coercion which cannot be tolerated.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: We give him the option to invest in Government securities.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Perhaps the clause can be amended so as to make that clear when we come to it, but I think it would be open to the construction I have placed on it. Whereas the local authorities are to be given compensation if any loss occurs through engaging in work under instructions from the Government, I have not noticed that the employer when asked to do any work, is also to get compensation if there is any loss.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No, because he has the option to invest in Government securities.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: If he has that option, it considerably reduces my argument; I am quite prepared to admit that. If these three bases of criticism which I have advanced are fairly and squarely dealt with in Committee, the hon. gentleman will go a long way towards making this measure acceptable. It will all depend upon the freedom with which he admits discussion, and the freedom with which he accepts amendments, as to whether he is sincere—I believe he is—in his original utterances in introducing this measure. If this measure is dealt with in that way, I believe we can make a good Bill out of it, and one which will be acceptable, because, as the deputy leader of the Opposition said, we are absolutely in sympathy with some scientific, fair, and reasonable measure of dealing with the unemployment problem. When he said that he was speaking for one and all of the Opposition, and I sincerely hope the Government will do something in that regard, and listen to what we have to say in connection with these three main objections, so that we can devise something that will be acceptable to all concerned. I have one other point I would like to raise. It is this: that the country at large is questioning whether they can absolutely rely upon the Government to carry out a measure of this description with that fairness which we would like to see.

Mr. COLLINS: Where is the evidence of that?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I am going to give you the evidence of it. I am not prepared to make a statement without giving my reasons, and I would point out to hon. members that it is just as necessary for them to listen to these reasons as it is to take advantage of any suggestions we may make for the improvement of the measure. Unemployment

has to be cured, but it is idle for [5 p.m.] them to think they are going to cure it while, at the same time, they are preaching this doctrine of class consciousness, because they are killing the very section which, if dealt with fairly and squarely, can assist them to cure this evil.

[*Mr. Elphinstone.*

If they are going to condemn these men, if they are going to destroy their confidence, they are not going to cure unemployment. But if they are going to say to them, "Here we are all in this State of Queensland, one section necessary to the other, let us pull together and work together," and back it up with some reasonable system of dealing with unemployment, they will be able to meet this problem. So long as hon. members opposite are prepared to listen to whatever favourable criticism is put forward, and shut their ears to unfavourable criticisms, so long will they be faced with a problem which they cannot tackle successfully. So long as it is the avowed principle of the Government to destroy capital, as undoubtedly it is—

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No, no.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Well, destroy the capitalist—put it that way—destroy the capitalist and destroy enterprise.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Make him a useful citizen.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Yes, by taking all his money away. So long will they be saddled with this problem without the co-operation of that man. So long as the Arbitration Act is going to be administered in the spineless way in which it has been, so long will unemployment exist and become aggravated. So long as we have the farce of railway super-arbitration, so long will we have unemployment, because the Government are giving powers into the hands of men who are not entitled to exercise them. So long as they make it a practise of punishing offenders one minute and forgiving them the next, so long will they be unable to administer an Act of this description. So long as a boat like the "Llewellyn" can be sent out to carry relief to the North while the "Allinga" is lying here equipped and waiting to carry food away, and the whole thing is hung up because the crew will not sail with the chief steward, so long will we have that lack of confidence in the Government administration. So long as that state of affairs exists, it is no good looking for a cure for unemployment. I repeat once more—cure that trouble, govern as you say you mean to, be fair, but be strong, see that the law is carried out. Such a course of action would help to establish confidence. The "man in the street" is not so much incensed against the Government's legislation as he is against their weakness and their inability to force the administration of the country to be carried out in a proper manner. The Government are weak, vacillating, spineless in the way they conduct the machinery of government. Let the Government be strong. Let them see that the Arbitration Act is amended, if necessary, so that it becomes fair and reasonable. But when it is an Act, let them see that it is observed, and so deprive the country of incidents similar to those we have had in the North during the last twelve months. By so doing they will help to establish the confidence of the employer, who is not opposed to helping, because a Labour Government is in power, but because he has no confidence in their administration. I have endeavoured to make the position clear, and give what little advice I could upon the matter. I close, as I started, with the statement that a measure of this description calls for the best that is in us all. I have endeavoured to give that, in the few remarks I have made.

Mr. SMITH (*Jackay*): I think the Government of the day ought to be congratulated for endeavouring to cope with the problem of unemployment in the way they have done. We know that this problem of unemployment is one which confronts every country in the world to-day. We know that it lies deep down in the social system of society, and it requires a good deal of consideration for any Parliament to devise an effective remedy for the disease. I desire to point out that this unemployment problem is a disease of the social system itself. It is the result of the existing methods of production, distribution, and exchange. We remember at one time, under the system of feudalism a serf had certain rights. Under that social system a man born on a certain estate, on which he lived and on which he was a serf, was entitled to demand sustenance from that estate. But as the result of what is known as "industrial revolution" that has been swept away. The privileges and conditions of one class in the community have been retained, but the workers, under the present system, have practically no rights at all. That is to say, if a man is cut off from the means of production—if a man has only his labour power to sell—he has to seek someone who is prepared to hire him, to enable him to live and maintain his dependents.

It is rather interesting to note the opposition that has taken place to this measure. Immediately notice of the Bill was given by the Treasurer, we find the anti-Labour Press of Brisbane and of the State set out to condemn the Bill lock, stock, and barrel. That condemnation, quite obviously, came from writers who had not studied, in many cases, the full principles of the Bill, and it reminds me of a statement made by a member of the Opposition in the last Parliament. I remember the ex-member for Burrum saying, in connection with this Government's proposals, that they were not here to criticise our policy, but were here to condemn it. That is practically the attitude taken up by the Opposition Press and many members sitting on that side of the House. They are not endeavouring to criticise the principles of this Bill so much as to condemn it. I wish, however, to make some exception in regard to the hon. member who has just resumed his seat. It was rather refreshing to find that the hon. member for Oxley admits the evil of unemployment, and also admits the sincerity of the Government in their attempt to cope with this problem. That it is the most serious problem of society itself there can be little doubt. There is no doubt in my mind that the Governments in every part of the British Empire who do not pass such legislation as this will have some additional and more serious problems to cope with. This is well recognised by the British Government. I remember that for many years unemployment existed in that country. I know perfectly well that, according to Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, about fifteen million of the population continually lived beneath the poverty line. We find that the Government of the present day in Britain have been forced to grant an allowance of so much per week to unemployed persons. Why do they do that? Simply because they have come to recognise the right of everyone inhabiting a State to a living in that State; and that, after all, is the main principle of the Bill. We lay down the vital principle that any citizen

of Queensland has a right to a living in the State of Queensland. That does not exist at the present time. A man goes from one employer to another, from one city to another, from one district to another, in the fruitless search for work. I have often wondered if those who write so condemnatory of this Bill have ever been in the position of the unemployed man. Have they known what it is to go from factory to factory, from shipyard to shipyard, from one industry to another, in the fruitless search for work, to be turned adrift with contumely on many occasions? I venture to say that, if those who oppose this measure had any knowledge of the difficulties, in times of dull trade, of finding employment; if they had any experience of going out early in the morning in the search for work and coming back late at night unsuccessful, and recognising that their wives and children were not being properly cared for as the result of their lack of employment; if "the iron had entered into their souls" at seeing their children not receiving what they would like to give them, I venture to say we would not have so much criticism of this Government in introducing this measure. (Hear, hear!) I think one Brisbane paper refers to it as "The Right to Loaf Bill." I haul the lie back in their teeth. I stand as the representative of an important district in Queensland, and I say that the majority of men desire to be employed usefully. I say there is scarcely 1 per cent. of the population who do not desire to live a decent life and engage in industry where they will be able to do something in the interests of the whole community. Consequently, I say that we are laying down what every citizen, what everyone who claims to be a patriot, what everyone who claims to believe in the rights of humanity, desires. This Bill lays down a principle that a man shall have the right to work in his own State; and that, failing employment being provided for him, he shall have the right to a decent subsistence for himself, his wife, and his dependents. There is this important point to bear in mind in dealing with this problem—that if men are unemployed for a definite period of time they and their dependents must exist in some shape or form. I remember the time when Mr. Balfour appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the Poor Law system and the problems of poverty generally. That Commission sat for six years, and gave a very extensive report. Some of the evidence that that Commission was able to elicit shocked a great number of the people who had been denying the existence of certain things in the past. In their recommendations, particularly in the recommendations of those who signed the minority report, there was this important point insisted upon, that men kept out of employment, living from hand to mouth, dependent to a certain extent upon charity, and compelled—in some other direction—perhaps to live on their wits—rapidly degenerated from the position of self-supporting workers or citizens and went to swell the ranks of unemployables. That is to say, the problem is not one of how to deal with the person who is unemployable, but of how to deal with those who are merely unemployed. If you do that, and introduce an equitable system whereby men can sustain themselves and their dependents in decency and comfort, you will have very little trouble in dealing with the question

Mr. Smith.]

of the unemployable. The hon. member for Oxley set out what he considered to be the three grave causes of unemployment. I do not agree with the hon. member's contentions. My contention is, that the causes of unemployment—as I have already stated—are deep down in the social system itself. The present methods, whereby the few who have control of the means of production and the many have to seek employment from them, are the root cause of unemployment. Then, again, we must also bear this in mind, that those who stand for the maintenance of the existing system of capitalistic production know that it is in their interests to have a body of unemployed men at all times. To a certain extent the hon. member for Oxley admitted that. He pointed out that certain industries were of a seasonable nature. He drew attention to the fact that sometimes there was more shipping coming to the ports of Queensland than there was at other times of the year, and as a result the men engaged in that line of business, particularly the wharf labourers and carters, had to deal with periods of unemployment. Our contention is, that under the present system it is to the convenience and to the interests of certain industries to have a number of men at their call in times of a boom in trade, or during certain seasons when work can be carried on. Then, if it is to their interests to have that body of men to draw upon, I claim it is the unalienable right on the part of the worker to get subsistence from the industry in which he is engaged. We know that the problem of unemployment is as old as the capitalistic system, and it will continue so long as that system remains. I do not claim that this Bill is going to remedy the social system, or bring about a new heaven on earth for the workers of Queensland, but it is an honest and straightforward attempt to alleviate the evils that exist at the present day, and it will, if properly carried out, mitigate many of the evils of unemployment. I have said, in dealing with this problem, that we must consider the whole area of the question dealing with the social system, and dealing with the problems of poverty and other things which affect the wellbeing of the people. I am one of those who desire to see the greatest amount of happiness existing amongst the people of the State. I contend that the prosperity or greatness of the State is not to be determined by the amount of wealth that certain individuals may possess in that State, but the prosperity or greatness of a country depends on the number of happy men and women living in that State. I might quote from the late Professor Huxley, dealing with the social problem—

“Anyone who is acquainted with the state of the population of all great industrial centres, whether in this or other countries, is aware that amidst a large and increasing body of that population there reigns supreme . . . that condition which the French call *la misère*, a word for which I do not think there is any exact English equivalent. It is a condition in which the food, warmth, and clothing, which are necessary for the mere maintenance of the functions of the body in their normal state, cannot be obtained: in which men, women, and children are forced to crowd into dens wherein decency is abolished, and the most ordinary conditions of healthful

[*Mr. Smith.*

existence are impossible of attainment: in which the pleasures within reach are reduced to brutality and drunkenness; in which the pains accumulate at compound interest in the shape of starvation, disease, stunted development, and moral degradation; in which the prospect of even steady and honest industry is a life of unsuccessful battling with hunger, rounded by a pauper's grave. . . . When the organisation of society, instead of mitigating this tendency, tends to continue and intensify it; when a given social order plainly makes for evil and not for good, men naturally enough begin to think it high time to try a fresh experiment. I take it to be a mere plain truth that throughout industrial Europe there is not a single large manufacturing city which is free from a vast mass of people whose condition is exactly that described, and from a still greater mass, who, living on the edge of the social swamp, are liable to be precipitated into it.”

Those are the remarks of the late Professor Huxley, one of the greatest thinkers of his time, and the words he used on that occasion are true to a large extent to-day! We often find members opposite, on hearing a quotation from this side, saying “that exists in another country,” or “that is something which happened in Europe, or some other place, and could not possibly happen here.” My contention is this, and it will be admitted by anyone who has studied the existing social system, that we have all the elements in Australia to-day which have given rise to the evils which arose in the older and more densely populated countries of the world, and the good conditions we have got at the present time are the direct results of Labour legislation and Labour activities in the past. It is the duty of members of this Parliament to see that they deal earnestly with questions of this kind and prevent the misery existing in the community which I have stated exists to some extent here, as well as elsewhere. Some members have objected to the methods of assessment proposed by this Bill. The hon. member for Oxley dealt at considerable length with that question. I do not think there is much point in his criticisms in that matter. I have pointed out that it is to the advantage of the employers to have a lot of men available to work. It is no fault of the unemployed worker that he is unemployed. It is due to the system of society, and, therefore, those who stand for that system, and those who are large employers of labour, find it to their advantage to have a lot of men available. I think it is right that the unemployment should be made a charge upon the industry itself. Then, again, the question has been raised by the deputy leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Oxley as to the position of local authorities on the unemployment council. We know that the unemployment council will be called upon to carry out some very important functions. They will be called upon to do what has been everybody's business in the past, and, therefore, nobody's particular business. They will be called upon to organise the available supplies of labour, and devise and put into operation some measures for absorbing the men who are unemployed. Hence, it follows that the men appointed to that council will require to be men of considerable knowledge, and

men who have studied the various social problems which confront us to-day. They will also require to be men who have an earnest desire to see that the intentions of the Bill are properly carried out. Objection has been taken to the representation on that council, and it has been urged particularly that the local authorities who come into the measure to a large extent in the methods for dealing with unemployment, should have some say in it. The Opposition have asked that the local authorities have direct representation on the unemployed council. Everyone knows that the local authorities in many places, and almost invariably throughout Queensland, are members of the Employers' Federation. You know, Mr. Speaker, and I know, that in the North of Queensland there is an organisation known as the North Queensland Employers' Federation, a body which at various times have done very foolish things. I have been able to show, in the past, how they have attempted on certain occasions to do certain things not in the interests of the general community. The point I want to make is this, that the local authorities, town councils, shire councils, harbour boards, and so on, in many cases in the north, are already members of the Employers' Federation. All their interests to a large extent and all their policy has been directed in the interests of the policy of the Employers' Federation, so that they will have representation on the unemployment council through their membership of the Employers' Federation. To ask that they should be given direct representation on the unemployment council is asking that the Employers' Federation should have two nominees. We know that the local authorities as at present constituted are largely conservative bodies. That being so, we can naturally expect and assume that they would appoint someone who would meet with their approval as a member of the Employers' Federation. So I consider nothing would be gained by giving the local authorities additional representation. It would not benefit the local authorities, and it would have the effect of giving the Employers' Federation double representation. Another point that is of interest in this Bill is in connection with the employment of casual labour. I am one of those who have always believed that, in proportion to the extent we are able to decasualise labour our problem will become lessened. We know that at the present time the leading industries in the State only provide employment of a casual nature. For example, the sugar industry, pastoral industry, and meat industry give employment only during a certain period of the year. If we could so organise our system of employment, create work during the slack season of the year, that is to say when those industries are not operating, then we will be doing a very good thing towards finding employment for the worker. This is where the local authorities will come into the scheme. The Bill waives certain conditions in the Local Authorities Act with regard to local authorities. The local authorities will be asked to go on with works, and the money will be provided to carry out those works, and where a loss is sustained by the local authorities provision is made under the Bill for them being reimbursed to the extent of the loss. Another important point in that section is for provision to be made through the local authorities for all their loan work to be carried out during the slack period of the year. We know, for example, in my

own district that work is proceeding at the present time by one local authority which intends to spend a considerable sum of money on river improvements. That work is proceeding at the present time although the sugar industry is carrying on at top pressure. Under this measure, when it becomes law, the unemployment council will ask the local authority to postpone certain work like that I have mentioned until the end of the sugar crushing, so that the men who are relieved from the sugar-mills and the sugar-fields can be put to work by the local authority, and so kept off the unemployed labour market. We know that if the local authority really desires to see the population within their boundaries kept fully employed, and money circulated as it would be when men are fully employed, they should assist the unemployment council by providing work during the slack periods of the year, and thus keep men in employment. By so doing they will not only benefit themselves, but as the men will be kept in employment, it will be a direct benefit to the general community. We know that in times of unemployment, while the greatest suffering falls upon the unemployed man, it also results in distress in the general community. If a man is kept fully employed at decent rates of remuneration, his spending power is maintained, and, as a result, there is more trade in

[5.30 p.m.] the community, more money in circulation, and the prosperity of the State is generally enhanced. In dull periods, when a large number of men are thrown on the industrial scrap heap and compelled to submit to the ravages of unemployment, it is a direct loss to the general community. In that connection the Labour Exchanges Act, which was passed by this House some sessions ago, will be of considerable advantage. I am one of those who contend that the employment of casual labour should be done through labour exchanges. The labour exchange and the Director of Labour occupy important positions under this measure, and it will be of paramount importance that the existing machinery of labour exchanges be utilised to the fullest possible extent so that the unemployment council will be able to deal with the problem.

Clause 7 of this Bill has been referred to by members of the Opposition. This clause places upon employers the responsibility, under certain circumstances, to find employment for a specific number of men. Failing that, they will have the alternative, if they so desire, of investing money in Government debentures, which will enable the Government to provide employment. That has been objected to by hon. members opposite, but we know that the unemployment council will act on the dictates of common sense. They are not likely to impose any particular hardships on any one individual. I consider that is a very important provision. When unemployment was at its worst during the slack season, the Treasurer endeavoured, to a large extent, to cope with unemployment. In the course of his speech he quoted figures showing the number of unemployed that had been absorbed in railway construction work. In addition to that, various local authorities were asked to go on with certain works which they had previously proposed. We know it is the fashion, when the local authorities' conference is being held, for delegates to wait upon the Treasurer and ask for loans for carrying out certain developmental works within the municipalities or different shire

Mr. Smith.]

areas. On some occasions those loans are refused. But when unemployment was at its worst the Treasurer wrote to the various local authorities offering to make sums available which they had asked for previously for certain local authority works. In other cases they were offered further sums of money, if they so desired, to go on with work which would relieve unemployment, and I regret to say that on that occasion the local authorities did not rise to the opportunity in the way in which one would have expected. Under this measure, where certain work is required to be done—if it is decided to embark upon a water scheme, drainage, or some other scheme—the unemployment council will have the authority to demand that that work be proceeded with. From the reports of geologists of the Mines Department, we know that there are certain resources which should be developed. I say that no one has a right to withhold natural resources or natural wealth from use. If they are not prepared to utilise them themselves, they should make room for somebody who would be prepared to do so. In that respect we see that much could be done under this clause to deal with unemployment. Where developmental work is being deliberately held up, thereby creating unemployment, it is a great power for the unemployment council to be able to call upon those people to put a certain number of men into employment. We know that the question of unemployment is one that cannot be dealt with fully and effectively unless we delve deep down into the social system itself. As Mr. Hughes, the leader of the anti-Labour party of Australia, rightly pointed out in his book entitled "The Case for Labour," the unemployed man is the deliberate creation of the present system of society—the capitalistic system. We know that at all times they desire to have a large body of men to call upon for the purpose of keeping down wages. If you have a large body of unemployed existing in any part of the State, or any part of the world, we know that the wage then is based, not so much upon the value of a man's labour, but largely upon what the unemployed man outside the factory gate will come in and take the job for. That being so, the Bill is proceeding along right lines in making the unemployed man a charge upon the industry in which he is engaged.

Another very important point, and one which, perhaps, would to a very large extent do away with unemployment, is in the direction of giving men easier access to natural resources—making it easier for men to go on the land and produce natural wealth. There is something wrong with the social system where you have on the one hand natural resources undeveloped, and on the other hand unemployment. That means that you are losing the potential wealth, and it is a thing that should be remedied. Under the present system of society, you have the startling paradox that when everything is most plentiful, when the warehouses are full of boots, shoes, clothing, and everything that is necessary to maintain human wellbeing, men are thrown out of employment, and are therefore unable through poverty, to purchase the goods which labour has produced. Therefore, this Bill deals honestly and sincerely with that problem. It will, to a large extent, mitigate the evils of unemployment, and give the men of this State a form of security which does not exist at present, and which will enable them to be free from that awful dread of

[*Mr. Smith.*

unemployment which is the spectre which haunts every workman in the State to-day—the fear of his being thrown out of employment and seeing his wife and children in want. This Bill will do away with all that, and by so doing will help to bring within this State a hardy race of men and women, who will be able to deal with the many problems which confront humanity, and thus this State will go ahead and prosper, and we will be able to develop a system of society better than in any country in the world to-day.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. SIZER: This debate is possibly the most important which has taken place since I have been a member of this Chamber. No seriously-thinking man could deny the fact that the solution of a problem of unemployment should not be taken lightly. To my mind, the Treasurer made an excellent speech, and I believe from that speech—although, when I read the Bill, I can hardly believe it—that he was quite serious at the time. Speeches such as have been delivered by the hon. gentleman who has just resumed his seat are not going to help us one iota in discussing the question or solving the problem. I look at the causes of unemployment from a different standpoint to those which have been mentioned. There are some gentlemen opposite who quite believe that there is only one solution, and that is the overthrow of everything. I do not agree with that. Certainly, there are many causes for unemployment which will have to be removed sooner or later before we can effectively deal with the problem. One of the first, to my mind, is that the unions of to-day have mistaken their functions. The unions of the old days were formed for the protection of the workers—certainly against the employer when he was wrong—but also in the interests of their own members in other directions other than just mere weapons of warfare. Many of the English constitutions of unions provided for unemployment sustenance. That was a step in the right direction, because they themselves realised that a certain amount of responsibility rested upon that. I consider that they have not received the consideration that they should have done from the Governments in the past. The unions of to-day practically take up the attitude that they intend to fight the employer on every occasion. If they cannot find a legitimate cause they will make a fight. As long as they can get fight, that is all they want. That is having a very bad effect. We know very well that a fight took place, just for a fight's sake, at the meatworks in Townsville. The result was that there were months and months of idleness. A large number of men were out of employment through being on strike, and in addition a large number of men were out of employment through being unable to find work on account of the action of those union delegates who defied the Arbitration Court. Another reason why we will always have unemployment in our midst, unless we mend our ways, is that we have no proper system of apprenticeship. The hon. member who has just resumed his seat referred to the report of the commission in Great Britain. That report also states that unless they adopt a system of industrial education, they are only recruiting men for the ranks of the unemployed. The ranks of the unemployed contain a majority of unskilled labourers and every day we are adding to the number of unskilled men by

depriving the youth of our State of an adequate opportunity of enjoying a full apprenticeship so that they may get out of the ruck and become skilled artisans. We know very well that that is true. I have read as much as I could on the solution of the unemployment problem, and in every country that has been realised. Switzerland has realised that the unemployed ranks are filled with unskilled labourers, and that unless they do something to rectify the matter they will be unable to cope with unemployment. The result is that they have established a system of industrial education. They treat the unemployed in two ways. If men will not work, they treat them as criminals and, on the other hand, they certainly do assist the genuine unemployed. Before we start to deal with unemployment we want to go further into the question of apprenticeship. Let us get to some of the causes of unemployment, and then brush them away. Let us establish an adequate system of apprenticeship and industrial education. Let the employers, the unions, and the individual, realise that they are part and parcel of the community, and that each and all should share the responsibility. One section cannot arrogate to themselves the right to govern the whole in defiance of all equity and justice. I agree with the hon. member for Oxley when he says that we must remove that class hatred, that class consciousness, which hon. members opposite insist upon no matter what Bill they bring in. The whole system is undermined, and any effort they may make, or any honest man may make, is futile as long as dishonest men can go amongst the people and stir up strife possibly for their own particular ends, or if not, for some reason which I am unable to state. Unless that is done, it is no use us attempting to solve the unemployment problem. We have heard that this Bill is a Bill to establish the principle of the right to work. Hon. members opposite are able to do the sentimental side of the business very well, and to my mind there is nothing more demoralising than for a man to be honestly unemployed and unable to find employment. There is nothing more demoralising to the community, but when we come to the question of the right to work, we come to a very debatable point; a point that is likely to lead us in other directions. I do not know what is exactly meant by the Secretary for Public Works when he says that a man has "the right to work." Does he mean that if a man cannot find work he has the right to go to the State and receive work? Possibly that is what he does mean. That is not sound policy. It simply means that unemployment, from whatever cause, is going to be used as a passport into the public service, and everyone will realise that we have developed in this country, and in every other country, the Government stroke, and the more we advocate people entering State employ through this means, the more likely we are to develop the Government stroke. We cannot tolerate any system—call it the right to work or anything you like—by which unemployment will give the right to join the public service. You could not possibly teach a worse lesson.

Mr. COLLINS: I thought you said all the unemployed were unskilled workers.

Mr. SIZER: There is provision in this Bill for relief works. Relief works have been held up by the Secretary for Public Works as one of the principles of this Bill,

and he has done so in the face of universal opinion and cultivated thought. The whole of cultivated thought is against the system of relief works, and I defy any hon. member to say it is otherwise. In every democratic country which has given thought to this question they universally condemn relief works.

Mr. COLLINS: Tell us what you would do with the unemployed.

Mr. SIZER: I hope to quote one or two authorities in that regard. I oppose most strongly the establishment of relief works, and I do so because in the past they have proved unsatisfactory. I wish now to quote from "The Rights of the Individual," by W. Jethro Brown, who says—

"A Local Government Board inspector, speaking in 1905, of the effect of the establishment of relief works in the West Riding of Yorkshire, said—

There is every likelihood of a stereotyped class of men being evolved who will be content to live on three days' work a week.

"Another inspector declared—

Irregular relief work has such charms that numerous instances have been noted of men throwing up regular wages at 18s. and 19s. a week to earn from 5s. to 7s. in a stoneyard.

" 'Relief works,' remarked Mr. John Burns, in 1911, are like opiates; the more one takes, the more one wants."

I do not think anyone will call Mr. Burns a Conservative. Mr. W. Jethro Brown goes on to say—

"Truly, we are reminded of Fuller's caustic reference to the ancient monastery; 'These abbeyes did not maintain the poor which they made.'"

Further on he says—

"The net cost of relief in London," writes Mr. Beveridge, 'has been three times the allowance which the best organised trade unions think necessary for their unemployed members.'

"Road work under the control of the Norwich Town Council cost six times what it ought to have done. An experiment in rural colonies showed that it would have been as cheap to the central (unemployed) body to have paid the men £1 5s. a week for doing nothing in London. The finance committee of the Paddington Borough Council, in discussing relief works, reported, 'It would really be cheaper to the ratepayers, who have to find the money in any case, if relief were given to the men themselves direct.'"

Those are one or two authorities who agree that relief works were unsatisfactory. Then, relief works, as laid down in this Bill, are financially unsound, and will bring a burden which in the course of time we will be unable to carry. Let us, for instance, assume that relief work is established, and it is work of a reproductive nature. We know full well, because of the interrupted nature of the work, that the cost will be that great that it will be years and years before it will pay for itself, or ever make a success. On the other hand, if it is non-productive work, it will absorb much of the taxpayers' money, due to the fact that it is of a relief nature, which could be better spent in providing means of production, and which would

Mr. Sizer.]

give much more work in other directions, and more efficient work. If the Government insist upon their policy of relief works, it will mean taking money from people who are in a position to extend industries and using that money in some direction which must be financially unsound. It will mean that there will be a general tightening up of the purse-strings, and will, in all probability, have the opposite effect to that which we are attempting to arrive at by this Bill. I do not view this Bill so much from a party point of view. I will conscientiously endeavour to do something to relieve this problem and assist the Government.

Mr. COLLINS: You are not following the "Courier," then.

Mr. SIZER: I have read what the "Courier" said, and the hon. member will notice, if he compares the ideas of individual members with ideas expressed outside, that there is the greatest amount of freedom amongst hon. members on this side on this point. The question of relief works is one which we should go very warily into in this State, as they have not been a success anywhere else, and I do not think they are likely to be a success in this State. I am going to give some idea of the schemes of unemployed insurance which have been put into operation in other parts of the world, and which have met with more or less success, and which might well be put into operation here with reasonable hope of success.

(Sitting suspended from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.)

Mr. SIZER (continuing): I realise that the time is ripe when some provision should be made for workers if they get into the unfortunate position of being unable to find employment. For that reason we, as a House, should consider the matter apart from party, and evolve a scheme which would be practicable. I do not think the Bill will solve the question with which we are attempting to deal. I am more inclined to think it will aggravate it. That is not to say I am opposed to the principle of insurance. Let us look at some of the schemes which have been in operation in other parts of the world, the majority of which have achieved a certain amount of success, while some of them have been failures. As the Treasurer has said, we should benefit considerably by the experience of the past. In Denmark, a scheme exists which has proved more or less adequate. There the workers contribute a portion themselves. I know that possibly that may not appeal to hon. members opposite. I am going to deal with it, not from the point of view that it would take something out of the workers' pocket, but as an essential principle in making this scheme a success. In Denmark, the workers, the local authorities, and the Central Government contribute equal shares. I have come across very few instances where the employers pay anything at all. In many cases the trade union leaders are totally opposed to employers participating in the scheme. I do not agree with that, because I realise that the employers have a duty and should be made to contribute. I will give some details regarding the scheme in Denmark. In 1910 there were affiliated forty-eight associations, having a membership of 95,289. During that year they paid unemployed benefits to the extent of £81,881. They had a reserve of £36,835, which had been contributed by the three bodies I mentioned. On top of that reserve they had to collect at the end of that year

£37,868 from the different authorities which subsidised them. They therefore had at the end of that year a reserve fund of £74,703. In addition to that, one-sixth of the total amount of subsidy had to be received from the local authority. The governments, local and State, subsidised contributions. Another successful scheme has been that in Ghent—Belgium—where the Government subsidises to the full extent of 100 per cent. the benefits paid. That means, if £10,000 is spent by the organisations, a further amount of £10,000 is granted by the Government. At Roubaix—France—is one of the only scheme to which the employers contribute. Now, let me deal with the significance of that. I think it would be possible in this State to bring about an equitable system of unemployed insurance. For that reason I think there should be co-operation among all sections of the community, including the trade unions—which, to my mind, are an integral part of the system of unemployed insurance and a very effective check upon men who would endeavour to act parasitically upon such a scheme. Unfortunately, we know there are such men who will take advantage of the scheme. The employers and the Government are also an integral part. If we were to arrange a system on an equitable basis we would achieve much.

Mr. MULLAN: What would you call "an equitable basis"?

Mr. SIZER: I am not going to say the workers should pay all. I think they should pay one-third, and I am going to point out that it would be a very small amount. We know very well that those who are unemployed do not want charity. I am inclined to think the majority of honest workers would look upon this scheme more or less as a charitable institution. For that reason there would be a certain class who would take up the attitude that they were out for all they could get. The Right Hon. John Burns referred to that class as "the man who gets up at midday to look for work, and prays to God he will never find it." On the other hand, there is the intelligent, the honest, worker, who does not like charity. There are a large number of returned men who will not go to the Sustenance Department, saying it is a charitable institution. The majority of genuine workers would look at it in that way, and sooner than go down to the labour exchange in the hope of getting a few shillings sustenance they would prefer to seek for work and use their own initiative. For that reason I think it would be advantageous to have a system whereby they contributed a small portion. The workers pay large sums to the trade unions, and the majority of that money is wasted in useless organisation, which is only a weapon for fighting industry and employers. If they used one-third of that money, and were subsidised to the amount of two-thirds, we would have an adequate insurance fund. Would it not be possible to run this in conjunction with the State Insurance Department? Another advantage of this scheme is that it puts a certain amount of responsibility upon the worker, and he must be the best check upon exploiters of the scheme, because he would realise that such men were taking something out of his pocket. I think we could go much further than we are, and together with a vigorous policy of increased production it would create work. With such a system, efficiently managed and controlled,

[Mr. Sizer.]

we would be in the position that, when an unfortunate worker met with adverse circumstances, he would have a scheme to which he could fall back which would not be a charitable scheme. We could decentralise by working in conjunction with the labour bureaux throughout the State, or having centres in the Central, Northern, and Southern districts, each separately controlled. Much could then be done to relieve and overcome distress. I realise that there are three dark possibilities always liable to loom up in a man's life. The first is sickness, the next is unemployment, and when he gets towards his old age he has nothing upon which to rely unless he has been fortunate in the early part of his life and has made provision for himself. It is surprising to me that we have not gone into the question of providing some national insurance against sickness, unemployment, and superannuation. That would be a measure which, I think, would appeal to all members of the community. We could evolve a scheme whereby we would be able to provide on friendly society lines for sickness, on the lines I propose for unemployment, and extend the scheme so as to provide a national superannuation fund to which the men, the State, and the employers could contribute. When a man came to his old age he would be able to derive from that fund something which would provide for him. That is not a new scheme at all, because many trade unions of the olden days, and also of to-day, provide for schemes such as this. The Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners provide unemployed benefits and superannuation over a certain age. If that can be done with one organisation, then, with the State taking it over and using its powers judiciously and apportioning the burden equitably, I am quite convinced that a scheme could be evolved where we could bring about that laudable object, and it would be one which would help to make the lot of the worker much happier than it is to-day. I think the Treasurer might well consider the remarks made from this side of the House. Speaking personally, and I think I express the opinions of members on this side, we are anxious that something should be done in connection with this question. I suggest that this Bill will not accomplish much. The Treasurer himself admitted that it was a Bill which was not perfect. I suggest that he withdraw the Bill, and he will then be able to prove that his intentions are good. If he withdraws the Bill, and has a consultation in conference with the trade unions, and the employers' organisations, and other organisations in the State who might be interested in this matter, they might be able to introduce some measure which will solve this problem. If such a conference is held, something will evolve which will be a credit to the Government and to the State as a whole. I do not intend to take up any further time by dealing with the clauses in sequence, because we will be able to do that when the Bill gets into Committee. I do not think the Bill is acceptable as it is. There was a meeting held in Western Queensland yesterday by a section of the unemployed, and the Bill was not acceptable to them. It is not acceptable to the Labour Press in Central Queensland.

Mr. HARTLEY: What Press is that?

Mr. SIZER: To the Labour paper in Rockhampton. I do not think that this Bill solves anything, and it has not any hope of

successfully solving the unemployed problem at all. The Bill does not in any way encourage the self reliance of the workers. It does not encourage the workers to have confidence or to increase their incentive. To my mind, it establishes a charitable organisation which will have a bad effect on a certain number of the workers. It does not in any way effectively attempt to stop the causes of unemployment. It is essential to establish an adequate system of apprenticeship to deal with this question. The relief works provisions in the Bill are, to my mind, both economically and financially unsound. They do not attempt to make any satisfactory impression upon the social system referred to by the hon. member for Mackay. The powers of the Bill, in many cases, are too drastic, and the whole thing is practically a tax on one certain class of industry. That class is not the best class of industry to be able to stand a special tax. The Bill will have the effect of stunting enterprise and industry. It will stunt the initiative of many workers, and at the same time, it is liable to be an encouragement to a certain class of the community—that class which looks for work and hopes they will never find it. The Bill will not be an encouragement to the honest working man. I am sure that the Bill will not be of any assistance to the genuine unemployed, but will act more in the opposite direction.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*), who was received with Government "Hear, hears!" said: In rising to speak on the second reading of this important measure known as the Unemployed Workers Bill, one naturally feels to some extent ashamed that in this twentieth century, with all its glories and all its boasts, we should have to introduce a Bill under the title I have just quoted. Nevertheless, we have to deal with things as they are, and with society as it is at the present moment. I want, for a few moments, to review portion of the speech delivered by the hon. member for Oxley, in which he pointed out that it was owing to the persistent antagonism to the employers that helped to bring about the present position of things in regard to unemployment in the State of Queensland. It never seemed to strike that hon. gentleman that it might be owing to the antagonism of the employers to the employed that helped to bring about that state of things. Reference has been made during this debate to the trouble at Townsville. Surely, no one imagines for one moment that all the trouble in Townsville has to be laid at the door of the workers! What about the representative of the American meat trust? Why do they not show a little more common sense? (Hear, hear!)

Mr. WHITFORD: What about the shipping combine?

Mr. COLLINS: One of the causes of unemployment around Townsville is owing to the lack of common sense on the part of the employers. Then, the hon. gentleman said that it was owing to the perpetual unrest. Does he think he is going to stop unrest? Why, unrest is the cause of all human progress. I take it that it was owing to the savage being dissatisfied with his methods of government that existed amongst the savage races that he evolved the system we have got to-day, and I am not too sure that this is the last word in the government of mankind. Then, again, the hon. member for Oxley went on to say that one of the causes is owing to the extra taxation. Where is the extra.

Mr. Collins.]

taxation? I will deal with taxation as I deal with my speech. I am tired of listening to this talk about extra taxation which we have placed on the few wealthy that we have in this State. As I said in my opening remarks, it is regrettable that we have to introduce a Bill such as this. It used to be said at one time, when I was a lot younger, that so long as there was free land there would be no unemployed. I have lived to see that idea thrown on one side, as it were. I remember, too, when I was a young man preaching the gospel that the same economic law operated in Australia as already existed in the older countries of the world. It took a long time to convince the people of that great truth; but owing to the development of the capitalistic system in Australia and in our own State, we are now face to face with the unemployed problem which has been brought about by that capitalistic system. There is no get away from that. So long as one man is allowed to make a profit out of another man, and so long as men are able to make huge fortunes, so long will you have an unemployed problem. The hon. gentleman referred to class consciousness. Is class consciousness confined to the worker? Has the hon. gentleman never visited the Queensland Club over the road and seen the class consciousness that exists there? Has he been on the western plains and seen where they live in their mansions while the workers who produce the wealth live in their hovels? It is of no use the hon. gentleman pretending that class consciousness applies only to the workers. It is not so. I would to God that the workers were as class-conscious as the capitalists of Australia. If they were they would soon change the whole of the social system, and there would be no need for the introduction of a Bill such as this. Then, one of the causes of unemployment is owing to the machine age in which we live. This is the age of machinery—machinery not controlled by the wealth producer but controlled by the few people who own the machines. Owing to the evolution in industry there is no getting away from this truth that, owing to the introduction of machinery, men have been divorced from the tools of production, with the result that to-day they have to walk around cities and throughout the country begging leave to toil. That is the position to-day. We are not responsible for the position that exists to-day. Hon. members opposite are not responsible for the position to-day. It is the result of the growth of capitalism on the one hand, of the introduction of machinery providing a surplus of labour not required in connection with production on the other hand. What the workers will have to do if they are going to solve the unemployment question is to own the means of production, which are now owned by the capitalist. What is capital when it is all summed up? I have here a definition of "capital," given by a German Jew, named Karl Marx. Marx at one time said—

"Capital is dead labour, that, vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks."

That is quite true. That is how it lives to-day. The more labour it sucks the more it lives, with the result that we have the unemployed problem, and men are going to and fro in a country such as this, with its great sources of wealth, looking for work. With

[*Mr. Collins.*

our present population of Queensland, we could not consume the wool grown in one year on the backs of the sheep in Queensland in a generation, yet we find men out of work. We find men practically saying, "I am out of work. I am unemployed. I want work." Furthermore, they say, "I demand work." Quite right, too. Why should they not demand work? It is their natural right. The child is born into the world with two hands and only one mouth to feed. Under modern conditions he is denied the right to work, and the right to add to the wealth of the nation. This Bill only goes part of the way. It is only a step in the right direction towards the real solution. The real solution would be straight out socialism. We can only go one step at a time, so that people can grasp it. This Bill does not go as far as I would desire. It is the capitalistic method of production that has brought about our unemployment problems. It is owing to the fact that the control of the means of production and the control of the machinery of production, is in the hands of the capitalist that men are unemployed to-day. The Treasurer deserves credit for introducing this Bill, but no one imagines that this Bill is perfect. We can only advance step by step, and this is a step forward. At any rate, it is an honest attempt to deal with the unemployed problem. Reference has been made to the proposal in the Bill to raise money to enable the unemployed to be found work. What is the position in Queensland? Let us examine it for a moment. Let us take the figures for 1917, and see if there are not some people in Queensland in a position, not merely to raise £100,000 or £200,000, but a far larger amount. What do we find was the position of Queensland in 1917? The total wealth produced in the State in that year was £37,367,413. According to the income tax returns for the same year we find that 28,498 income taxpayers and 986 companies paid income tax on £22,097,571, leaving only £15,269,942 for all the rest of the people of Queensland.

These are the official figures which [7.30 p.m.] I got yesterday morning, and which I intend to read, as they have a bearing upon the proposal to tax employers of labour—that is, all those who employ over and above five persons. This is a letter from the Registrar-General—

"Sir.—In reference to your telephonic communication this morning, re the estimate of wealth production of Queensland for 1917-18, I beg to inform you as follows:—

1917. £37,367,413.
1918. £37,281,000.

"Yours obediently,

"N. J. Macleod,

"Registrar-General and Government,
"Statistician."

That is the cause of your unemployed in Queensland. Think of it! Twenty-eight thousand taxpayers and 986 companies paying income tax on £22,000,000, leaving only a little over £15,000,000 to be divided amongst the remainder of the population. Let the hon. member for Warwick ponder over those figures and ponder long.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: How many individuals in each company? What does a company represent?

Mr. COLLINS: I do not know, but I imagine they represent the most of those 28,000. You cannot get away from those

facts. That is the cause of unemployment, not only in Queensland or the Commonwealth, but throughout the civilised world. These few people are taking a huge share of the wealth of the people. So you can expect unemployment. I am letting the people of Queensland know the true position.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: You are not giving it truly, though.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member can get up and reply to those figures when I sit down.

Mr. VOWLES: How many shareholders are there in each company?

Mr. COLLINS: How many shareholders? I know something about companies—maybe there are only half a dozen in some companies. What is wrong with assessing these large companies and employers of labour to contribute their share towards finding employment? They have taken away, as it were, from the wealth producer a large proportion of that wealth which he has produced, with the result that, while he is on the poverty line—while many of them are out of work through no fault of their own but through the fault of the system of society we have at the present time—it enables a few to hold the means of production. I say again and again that the only remedy for unemployment, not only in Australia, but throughout the civilised world, is for the workers to own the means of production. Hon. gentlemen opposite will want to get up after I sit down and prove that my statements are wrong. In Queensland to-day, in connection with the pastoral, sugar, mining, and other industries, we have casual employment, which means that the worker has to be there when the crushing season starts in connection with the sugar industry, and when the shearing season starts to take the wool off the sheep's backs. For the benefit of whom? For the benefit of the people who own the means of production, and the people who are making huge fortunes out of the State. Why should not these people contribute to the fund? What would be wrong in taking £1,000,000 of that £22,000,000? The rest of the population has to subsist on £15,000,000 while these few people take over half the wealth produced here in Queensland. Then people get up and say what a wealthy State it is. Yes! wealthy for the few. That is quite true, and in this measure it is proposed that all employers of labour employing over and above five persons will have to be taxed.

The hon. member for Oxley made reference to the primary producer and spoke in that dignified manner as if he knew all about it. But there are very few primary producers in this State who employ five men all the year round. Does the hon. member for Murrumba employ five men all the year round, or does he know of many in his electorate who do so? No; neither does anyone in any farming electorate know of many persons who employ five men all the year round. I am prepared to say the hon. member for Murilla does not employ five men all the year round, and he would be exempt from the tax. To try to make out that this is another tax on the primary producer is all moonshine. What would be wrong in making pastoralists contribute towards the unemployment fund when they are getting 4s. or 5s. per lb. for their wool over the water? (Hear, hear!) The right to live is

a natural right, and it is the duty of all Governments to see that their people are employed.

Mr. MORGAN: Will you answer me one question?

Mr. COLLINS: Yes, provided it is a sensible one.

Mr. MORGAN: If a man employs ten men for six months and for the rest of the year employs no one, will he be taxable under this Bill?

Mr. COLLINS: Ask the Treasurer. I am not in charge of the Bill. But I should say if he employed ten men for six months it would be equal to employing five for twelve months. That is common sense. There are very few primary producers who employ five men all the year round or even for six months.

There is mention made in this Bill of farms. If we are going in for farms we want to go in for them on a big scale, and then we might be able to cheapen the cost of production because, after all, machinery, if applied by the people who own the machine, to any industry, is profitable to the worker. When it is owned by someone else, as a rule it is not profitable to the worker. I have here a quotation about machinery which I wish to read. It contains a great deal for thought. It is as follows:—

“Machinery, considered alone, shortens the hours of labour; under capital, lengthens them. Machinery, considered alone, lightens labour; under capital, intensifies it. Machinery, considered alone, is a victory of man over nature; under capital, is the enslavement of man to nature. Machinery, considered alone, increases the wealth of the producers; under capital, makes them paupers.”

Notice the quotation I have given you. “Considered alone,” as a machine—

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Who is the author?

Mr. COLLINS: Dr. Aveling, son-in-law of Karl Marx. You would be better informed if you read such works.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COLLINS: I am just pointing out that one of the objects of the Bill is to find work on farms for the unemployed. In this connection I wish to quote from “Stead's Review” of 23rd August, 1919—

“Probably the record wheat area under the control of one individual was the 200,000 acres in Montana, farmed by Thomas D. Campbell. This man conceived the idea of utilising the waste lands in the Indian reservation in Montana to grow wheat. He approached the Government in the matter, and after many disappointments, finally secured the ear of Secretary Lane. The Minister listened to his story, and at once decided to give him every encouragement. A credit of £1,000,000 was opened for him, and he got to work. Last autumn the ground was broken, fifty monster tractors starting in on the work. They ploughed an average of an acre a minute for the working time. The record was made one day of 1,880 acres turned and ploughed. There is not a horse on the place. Seeding, harvesting, threshing,

Mr. Collins.]

are all done by tractors. Mr. Campbell, who is only 36 years of age, is one of the dollar-a-year men who came forward to help the Government during the war."

I take it that they increased production under that method by applying modern machinery to production. If we can so utilise our unemployed—and we have large tracts of land here in Queensland which the Crown still own—if we can so organise the men on these farms that we will be able to produce wheat or other crops on the same scale as they were produced during the war, we would cheapen the cost of production, thus lessening the cost of living. I think the provision in the Bill is a good one. At any rate, this is a problem that we cannot shirk. It is right throughout the Commonwealth—right throughout the world—and it is going to remain so long as we have the capitalist mode of production, and it will become intensified as time goes on. Therefore, any Government that attempts to grapple with it deserves credit for so doing.

Mr. VOWLES: How will that apply to the normally unemployable?

Mr. COLLINS: I quite believe a percentage of the capitalistic class are unemployable. Some of them have never done a useful day's work in their life. (Hear, hear!) I have been amongst working men all my life, and I can count on the fingers of one hand the men who would not work. But when I look around society, I see a lot of men who do no work, and who are well fed and well groomed, and wearing the best of clothes. I generally class them as unemployable. I do not know whether those are the men the hon. member for Dalby referred to about going on these farms. There are not very many unemployable. If they are unemployable, who has made them so? Society, as a rule, has done it. Everyone who has gone through the mill, and been out of work week after week and month after month, knows that it has not a tendency to elevate one. It has the opposite effect, the effect of making one become degenerate. I have known what it is to walk from morn till night begging leave to toil, and to be told by the managers of the various mines over and over again "Full up; your services are not required"—willing to produce the wealth here in the State of Queensland, and denied that right. Is that right? Should that be so?

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: Why didn't you apply to the Railway Department?

Mr. COLLINS: I didn't go to the Government officials to find me work. I managed to "paddle my own canoe." At any rate, I do not know that the unemployed are not quite within their rights in demanding that the State shall find them work. Surely, hon. members opposite will not say that there is no work to be done in Queensland! Why, we have not developed Queensland as we ought to develop it. And getting back to these pastoralists, what have they done? Go out into any portion of the State, and what do we find they have done? They have run a wire fence round their holdings, and Nature has had to do the rest. It is quite true they have put down a few bores here and there, but they have done very little to assist Nature to produce wealth from the soil. That is all the pastoralists have had to do, and they can well afford to contribute towards the funds proposed under this

[*Mr. Collins.*]

Bill. It is the duty of the Government, and the duty of society in general, to see that every man who is willing to work is given work. Work should be found for every human being who is willing to work. We talk about increased wealth production, but you can only increase wealth by human labour, and here is the human labour going to waste. As I said a few moments ago, the fact of being out of work has a very demoralising effect upon any man. I can sympathise with any man who is out of work in having to go round to the people who own the means of production, and practically say to them, "Please give me work so that I can make you wealthy." The hon. member for Cunningham knows that that is true. Hon. members opposite know full well that they could not have accumulated the wealth they possess unless they made profits out of those they employed. They did not build up their fortunes by their own labour. They built them up out of other people's labour, and if the workers now say to them, "Return, you employers of labour, a little of that which you have robbed us of; a little of that money exploited from us; return it into a fund to assist the man who is out of work," what is there wrong about it? There is nothing wrong in it at all. It is no use asking the man who is out of work to find the means to find him work. If he had the means he would not be looking for work. And he is in the unfortunate position of being out of work owing to society as it exists to-day, not only in Queensland, but right throughout the world. That condition of things has to be changed. I am one of those who believe that this system of exploiting man by man is bound to be changed.

Mr. MORGAN: You once said you believed in Bolshevism in Russia.

Mr. COLLINS: I did not say that, and don't you damn well try to put words into my mouth. (Loud laughter.) You know very little about Bolshevism in Russia. I am prepared, at any rate, to express what I believe to be right at all times, regardless of the consequences, but I am not going to allow the hon. member for Murilla to put words into my mouth.

Mr. MORGAN: Do you believe in the remarks made by the Minister for Railways?

Mr. COLLINS: The Minister for Railways has a fairly good brain pan, and it would be a good thing for the hon. member for Murilla if he had a similar one. I want to quote now the words of one of the world's greatest thinkers, when he said—

"All human interests, combined human endeavours, and social growths in this world have, at a certain stage of their development, required organising; and work, the grandest of human interests, does now require it."

That is Thomas Carlyle, one of the world's greatest thinkers. I endorse that sentiment, that "Work the grandest of human interests, does now require it." This Bill is an attempt to organise those who are out of work, and by organising make them self-supporting, and at the same time add to the wealth of this State. (Hear, hear!)

HON. J. G. APPEL (*Albert*): In the first instance, I have to compliment the Minister for the very clear manner in which he explained the measure from his standpoint. I have never heard a finer piece of special pleading in this House since I have been a

member. There is no doubt that there are certain portions of the Bill that members of the Opposition desired a certain amount of enlightenment upon, and the hon. gentleman was very clever in evading the point. There never was a more eloquent statement which might be illustrated by that homely old story of the invitation of the spider to the fly to enter into his parlour. I must confess that the Minister made this measure appear apparently innocuous, and one which would not alone be to the benefit of those whom it was intended to benefit, but would be of still greater benefit to those who would have to pay the taxation involved. The only blemish, to my mind, was that reiterated assertion, which is now practically threadbare, that it was only an Administration such as the Administration of which the hon. member is a member—the heaven-born Administration or the heaven-descended Administration—which could have been guilty of presenting such a measure to the House. I can only hope that if it is a heaven-descended Administration, that it has descended from above, and is not Lucifer-descended, and that it will not work on the people of the State the same amount of ignominy that Lucifer works on the people. There is another question I wish to ask, and I hope the Minister will not object to it. It is this: Has this measure received the approval of the caucus sitting in Turbot street? (Opposition laughter.) If we have that information, it will put the whole measure on a different footing. We know that it has been decided by the Executive that all measures which are submitted to this Chamber by the present Administration, for approval or otherwise, must first be submitted to the caucus sitting in camera, and marked with their approval for submission to the House, and I think it is a pertinent question when I ask the Minister, has this measure been so approved? There are many matters to be considered in connection with this question so far as criticism is concerned. One might approach it with absolute hostility. One might approach it with a feeling that such a measure, whatever its contents, must be opposed. But I do not approach it from that standpoint. If it were possible, on an equitable basis, for a measure to be framed whereby the unemployed might be provided for, then it should receive the approval of every member of this House. The Minister has admitted that no similar legislation exists anywhere, and the only question, to my mind, is that while we must not overlook the claims of those who are in distress, while we must do what we can to make provision for that distress, in attempting to remedy the one evil, we must not inflict on another section of the community a greater evil. I venture to say that in a State such as Queensland, there should be no unemployment. This Bill, to my mind, is only a palliative; it does not aim at the root of the evil.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You want something more revolutionary?

HON. J. G. APPEL: The Minister may call the means of affording employment to all who are living in this State revolutionary, but I do not regard it from that standpoint. What is the cause of unemployment at the present time?

Mr. FOLEY: The member for Bowen told you just now.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I listened with considerable attention to what fell from the hon. member for Bowen, and I am sorry to say that to-night he was not as convincing as he usually is; whether it was the result of interjections aimed at him from this side of the House or not, I do not know. I am perfectly willing at all times to take lessons from a man with the experience of the hon. member for Bowen, and the only trouble in connection with the theories of the hon. member for Bowen is that, in many instances, they have never been put into practice, and they could not be put into practice. We hear hon. members saying, "Here is the wealth, here is the labour; why should they be divorced?" "What is the [8 p.m.] necessity for capitalist intervening between the wealth which lies in the soil and the labour which is employed on the soil?" Why should hon. members say that capital is not necessary?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: No, we say the capitalists are not necessary.

HON. J. G. APPEL: We have it admitted by hon. members sitting on that side of the House that the capital is contained in the soil, and the labour is there. Cannot hon. gentlemen sitting on the Treasury bench evolve some method by which they may be united, and Labour may exploit for its own use and to its full benefit the wealth which lies in and on the soil? That is a practical method I would like to see evolved by hon. members who are so frequently dealing with abstract theories. If the wealth is there and the labour is there why should there be unemployment? We all know that one cause of unemployment is the large aggregation of population in our capitals. What is the cause of that aggregation? Why should they flock into the cities? Many of us know the cause is that the conditions in our country districts have not been made sufficiently attractive.

Mr. HARTLEY: No, there is no work in the country half the time.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I venture to differ from that hon. member. It is simply because the conditions have not been made sufficiently attractive. Every member of the present Administration knows he has to submit his particular theory to his colleagues, and the whole matter has to be submitted to the party. If the party approves of it, it has to be submitted to the caucus sitting in camera—an irresponsible body outside. I simply mention this to show how impossible it is for any Administration, for any individual Minister, to carry into practice any theory which he might desire to see put into effect. The present Administration, and the members who are supporting them, tell the electors of the State, "We are the only party who have your welfare at heart."

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They believe it, too.

HON. J. G. APPEL: They so believe it that they think it has been absolutely carried into effect, whereas nothing has been done, and the condition is worse than it originally was. Hence we find the population is drifting into our larger centres from our country districts. In the city of Brisbane there is a population estimated to be from 180,000 to 190,000 people, out of a total population in the whole State of a little over 600,000 people.

Hon. J. G. Appel.]

Then we have another matter which is a fertile cause of unemployment, although I regret to say it. In all the States of the Commonwealth we have established the policy of the Arbitration Court, whereby the question of a living wage and conditions of work shall be decided, so that the worker shall at least receive some adequate reward for the capital—his labour—which he gives to those who employ him. We find that, despite the fact that all this machinery exists, direct action is still resorted to. We find the foremost leaders of labour in Great Britain deploring the effect of direct action. We find that even in revolutionary Russia direct action is now deplored. It was direct action there—your back against the wall, and a bullet through your head. They find now that direct action is not the proper method. We thought we had solved the whole difficulty, and what do we find? One union strikes, and another union is called out. On account of supplies not being forthcoming, the work of members of other unions practically ceases, hence unemployment. This Bill does not deal with the great cause of unemployment, the direct action whereby men are compelled to leave their employment, and to step into the ranks of the unemployed. I dare say hon. members like myself often hear scraps of conversation. I heard one the other day in which one worker said, "Well, they made me join a union and pay for it before I was to be allowed to work. I was no sooner in work when they called me out on strike, and here I am." Does the Bill deal with that?

Mr. HARTLEY: Of course it does.

HON. J. G. APPEL: It does not deal with it; it only deals with the after effects. It does not strike at the root of unemployment, which is, that men will not obey the awards of the Arbitration Court. What is the cause of the aggregation of large numbers of people in our big centres, which brings about unemployment by the fact that the labour markets are overstocked, just as, in connection with money capital, there is supply and demand, and the supply may overcome the demand—hence unemployment. We have not made the condition of affairs sufficiently attractive in our country districts. We invite people to settle upon the land, and how do we deal with them when they are on the land? How have the present Administration dealt with the people on the land? They have imposed burden upon burden of taxation upon them. In fact, they have placed upon the people who are settled in our country districts such conditions that they are unable to employ labour. The hon. member for Bowen mentioned the wonderful strides made by the Province of Alberta, in the Dominion of Canada. What do we find there? The hon. gentleman forgot to mention that in Alberta free homesteads by the thousand are given to those who desire to settle in that State. No Administration, and particularly the present, has carried out such a policy as far as our country lands are concerned as will induce people to settle upon them. Their policy has not been one for the settlement of the country lands, but has tended rather to drive people into the cities, where we find State butchers' shops and State fish shops. We hear people in the tram saying, "They said they were going to give us cheaper food. They got us into the large centres of population, they got our entrance fee into their unions, they got our regular contributions, and then

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

they make a strike. They say they are going to give us cheap food. They establish State butchers' shops where the meat is dearer than ever it was before. (Government dissent.) They establish State fish shops, where fish is dearer than ever it was before. (Government dissent.) Where are we to get employment?"

The whole policy of the present Administration has been to endeavour to induce, by these means, the population of the State to congregate in our large centres of population. The freights upon our railways were increased as far as our country districts were concerned, but there were no increases as far as suburban traffic was concerned. It was only the settler upon the land who was affected. If the hon. gentleman who has charge of this Bill, and the members of his party had really intended that this should not be a palliative but an absolute remedy for the unemployment, which we all deplore, they would have taken such action as would have enabled people, by being duly assisted, to go upon the land and settle the country, obtaining the wealth which is beneath the soil and which hon. members are so fond of theorising upon, rather than to convert the State into a workhouse or a benevolent institution. I want to see these theories put into practice. I want to see something done. This measure does not effect the object which has been preached by hon. members who sit on that side of the House, but who I admit, take an honest interest in the matter. (Hear, hear!) I appeal to them to urge the Treasurer to so recast this measure that it will make provision to deal with actual unemployment and to deal with matters so that unemployment may cease to exist in this fertile and prosperous State of ours. In place of converting persons into practically indigents, we should make them men of independence, men of independent spirit, but that spirit will be sapped if this measure becomes law. The Treasurer has stated that the whole success of the measure depends upon the council which is to be appointed. That being so, we have to criticise the composition of the council. I know one candidate who will be nominated. He will be elected in Turbot street. He will be appointed by the secret junta. He will be the man elected by the party caucus. (Government laughter.) Hon. members may laugh but it is a fact that all appointments are made in that way. (Government laughter.) Hon. gentlemen may deceive the public, but they cannot deceive members of this House who know the method which is adopted for every appointment which is made. It is done by the same method as every measure presented to this House. It must first receive the seal of the secret caucus. Hon. members may deceive the public for a time, and may lead them to think they are the only Administration and the only party who have the welfare of the people at heart, but members opposite have repeated those statements so often that they have become threadbare and the public are becoming used to them. In this House members opposite show a poverty of argument in support of this measure. Regarding the composition of the council, we find that those who are to be poll taxed have just the same representation as those who are not asked to pay one farthing towards the fund.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Would you not give representation to the workers?

HON. J. G. APPEL: I would not, unless they bore a measure of taxation.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Shame! and interruption.

HON. J. G. APPEL: Why should there be representation without taxation? Is not that a fundamental of democracy? Why should not every member of the community bear a share of the taxation of the community? I say this—and I said it on a public platform before—that if a man is not prepared to bear a proportion of the taxation of the State, however small or large it may be, then he has no claim to be represented. That is a fundamental of democracy. We hear hon. members opposite declaim about their democracy. Yet under this Bill those who are to be poll taxed are to have equal representation with the men who provide not one iota of the taxation, but who get all the benefits. A perfectly reasonable method of dealing with this matter would be to deal with it on the same lines as the unemployed insurance. Why do men insure their lives? If that method is a correct one, it should be adopted here. Why should any employer insure the lives of the workers whether he employs them or not?

MR. HARTLEY: There is no analogy.

HON. J. G. APPEL: There is considerable analogy. The man who employs the largest number of workers, and who bears the greatest share in obviating unemployment, is the man who is to be most heavily poll taxed under this Bill. That is the most singular proposition I have ever heard of. The men who do the most in the development of the State, who do the most in providing work, are the men who are to be the most penalised. That is the most wonderful proposition I have ever heard propounded by any men who call themselves sensible men.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It is quite evident you do not understand the provisions of the Bill.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I am only going by the explanation given by the hon. gentleman, that the employers are the men who are to be poll taxed. If the hon. gentleman brought down a proposition whereby the State, which is the largest employer of labour in the State, should contribute a share the same as the other employers, and if the employees also contributed a share, then I could understand the proposition, and it would have been carried into workable effect. Under this Bill everything is put on to the willing worker. If hon. members on the other side are taxed at all, they cry out and say "Tax the other fellow. Put further burdens on him. He is not paying enough. But don't tax me." They do not want to participate in the taxation themselves, but want to put it on to "the other fellow."

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Don't you want to tax "the other fellow"?

HON. J. G. APPEL: No. I think every member of the community should bear a share of the taxation of the State with the means which he possesses. I do not think that any member of the community, whether it is called a poll tax or not, should be relieved of contributing some portion of the taxation, especially when it safeguards him and provides him with employment, and makes other provision for his welfare.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Take it out of the unfortunate worker.

HON. J. G. APPEL: A suggestion was made that the worker should contribute a portion of the taxation, but the Minister interjected that it would be too irritating.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I said that of the system operating in England—too irritating.

HON. J. G. APPEL: If it is too irritating to the worker, then why is it not too irritating to compel an employer to pay for providing work? We have heard a lot about the theory of the right to work. Why should not a man be compelled to pay for the right to work? When the whole machinery is provided by the State, and the payment and conditions are settled by law, the worker should pay his share for the right to work. We know quite well that before he can go to work he has to pay the entrance fee to his union, and he has to pay it to irresponsibles who never publish a balance-sheet. (Government laughter.) Why should it be irritating for him to make a payment under this Bill? There should be obligations on his part to pay, especially when he receives a benefit. The contributions suggested by the Minister do not enter into the question at all. Whether they are greater or smaller, so long as all concerned pay their proportion, it does not matter. We all know what will happen when this is put in the hands of the benevolent Government who at the present time occupy the Treasury benches. Hon. members opposite say that this measure does not create any hardship, that no hardship will be inflicted on anyone. The Government say that it is not likely with the perfect provisions of this enactment that an injustice will be done to anyone. They say that justice will be observed, and every method adopted whereby nobody is hurt. If we heard that for the first time we might be led to believe it, but we have heard that cry so often repeated; and when we realise how the provisions of the Sugar Acquisition Act were made use of, when we realise the methods which have been adopted, the humane, kind, and considerate methods which have been adopted by the present Administration when they had the power in their hands. I think we, and the electors of the State, and those who are to be poll taxed under the provisions of this Bill will realise that but a scant amount of mercy will be accorded to them if we place the power asked for in the hands of the Administration and the members who support them.

THE PREMIER: What had we to do with the Sugar Acquisition Act?

HON. J. G. APPEL: To my mind the provisions of this Bill are absolutely inequitable. They are absolutely inequitable and unjust. While we are quite prepared to support a method which is fair and equitable and will allot the taxation equitably, I must say that I cannot see my way to support a measure which will place the whole burden of obligation upon one section to the extent proposed by the measure before the House at the present time.

THE SPEAKER: Order! The hon. gentleman has exhausted the time allowed him under the Standing Orders.

MR. KIRWAN: I have listened to the speeches delivered by hon. gentlemen opposite—as I am sure every member of this House has—with a considerable amount of amusement. If any illustrations were wanted that the attitude of the Opposition to all

measures is similar on all occasions, and at all times, we have it illustrated in this particular Bill. They contend [8.30 p.m.] that it is inequitable and unfair, and, generally speaking, the Bill meets with all-round condemnation. I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that if the Bill is fortunate enough to pass both Houses of Parliament, and the Opposition are appealing to the electors in ten or fifteen years' time, you will find on their pamphlets that they are the authors of the "Right to Work Bill."

Hon. J. G. APPEL: The same as you said you were the authors of the "Workers' Dwellings Bill."

Mr. KIRWAN: After having opposed the Old Age Pensions Bill for ten years, they had the audacity, in season and out of season, to declare that they were the people who were generally responsible for and passed that measure. As a matter of fact, they did not pass that measure. They made the same claim with regard to adult suffrage. They start by opposing a Bill, and then, when it passes both Houses and is found to be a workable measure, they claim that they are chiefly responsible for placing it on the statute-book. Hon. gentlemen opposite have made the chief basis of their condemnation of this Bill the fact that it is necessary in Queensland when there is a Labour Government in power. One would imagine that unemployment was never heard of in the history of the world before—that there were no workless workers in Queensland until the Labour Government assumed the reins of power. No one knows better than hon. gentlemen opposite—unless they wish to give a public declaration of their want of knowledge—that in all countries of the world, under all systems of government and all forms of administration where the capitalistic system exists, you have the unemployment problem. (Hear, hear!) It is the necessary and inevitable corollary of the capitalistic system. When there is production more than is required, and the capitalist finds there is no profitable investment for his capital, he closes up his factory and dispenses with his hands. Hon. gentlemen opposite endeavour to make the public believe—as the hon. member for Albert did just recently in the course of his address—that the average capitalist is a benevolent gentleman; that he spends a large amount of capital in erecting buildings and starting industries, for the particular pleasure that it gives him to go to the bank, draw a large cheque, and pay out the wages to his employees.

I regard the basis of this Bill as more or less correct. The hon. member for Albert has denounced them. After all, who produces all wealth? Study political economy, and I challenge hon. gentlemen opposite to find one political economist who will fall in with the ideas that they put forward as far as the workers are concerned, and as far as production, capital, and wages are concerned. As a matter of fact, the worker not only produces sufficient to enable him to live on the breadline, but he produces, over and above that, sufficient to enable those who control the particular industry to make fortunes out of it. During the war there were men who started with very little and made fortunes. At the inquiry in Melbourne the other day in connection with the price of commodities, a boot manufacturer admitted that he started with £50, and is now worth £40,000. Who

[*Mr. Kirwan.*]

did he make it out of? Did he make it— as the hon. member for Bowen said—by his own muscles or the strength of his brain power, or by the fact that he employed a large number of workers who produced £6 or £7 worth a week per worker, and he paid £3 and pocketed the balance? It seems rather extraordinary in a society such as ours, where we claim to have reached such a state of civilisation, that it is necessary to deal with the question of unemployment. Why is it that this particular problem is only to be found in civilised societies—that only in civilised societies men die of starvation? It cannot be attributed to a defect in the plan of Providence, because, if we look at the birds of the air and the fishes of the sea, we find that "they toil not, neither do they spin." Yet they have sufficient. If we go to "the heathen in his blindness," in no matter what part of the globe we may visit, we find even amongst them there is no such thing as starvation, penury, or want, and we have the extraordinary spectacle of thousands and thousands of people being able to live without doing work. Yet, in our highly civilised society, in the older countries of the world, children are turned from school at the tender age of seven or eight and put into vast factories where they work long hours, ceaselessly and continually, and in the vast majority of cases those families live on the breadline, and it requires only one week out of work for them to be in absolute starvation. It shows there is something wrong in the system. This Government has recognised a defect in the system of society as we see it to-day, and they are trying to rectify that defect by doing something to provide for unemployment. (Hear, hear!) From the speeches of some hon. gentlemen opposite, one would imagine that if the workers were a little more thrifty, the question of unemployment would not be such a serious menace in this particular State or Commonwealth. If we look into the position, we will find that the average worker here in Australia to-day does not receive sufficient to enable him to live in decency and comfort. I have some figures here which are rather startling, and as they are taken from the "The Private Wealth of Australia and its Growth," and it is compiled by "Knibbs," I think they may be regarded as authentic. From this we get the following:—

"Over 1,250,000 persons in Australia over eighteen years of age have incomes less than £2 per week."

What can these people pay to the unemployment scheme or the insurance fund?

Mr. VOWLES: What do they pay towards the unions?

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. gentleman says, "What do they pay towards the unions?" What they pay towards the unions, in my humble judgment, is the best investment the worker has ever made.

Mr. SIZER: It keeps a lot of them out of work.

Mr. VOWLES: It provides your party with political fighting funds.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. gentleman says it provides this party with political fighting funds. If it does, he has no reason to complain. The trouble, I think, is that the workers are becoming class conscious enough to recognise that if they want their interests to be looked after in this House they must have their own representatives—men who

have been through the mill like themselves, and can discuss a Bill like this in a sympathetic manner.

Mr. SIZER: Instead of wasting their funds—

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. gentleman has an opportunity of going out and preaching to the workers if he thinks they are wrong, and correcting them. According to this book by "Knibbs," there are less than 20,000 persons who receive incomes amounting to £28,000 a year; about 250,000 who own no property; another 500,000 who have property less than £100 per head; 1,263 persons living in Australia own £160,000,000 of property, and 168 absentees who own property worth £5,500,000. This is a fair sample that even in a young country like Australia, under this particular system, which is responsible wholly and entirely for the unemployed problem, you have wealth mounting up. You have the spectacle that you have in the older countries of the world, that as luxury increases on the one side, want, misery, and penury increase on the other.

Mr. MORGAN: Do those figures include women and children?

Mr. KIRWAN: The figures I have read include all over eighteen years of age. Now, take a country where there is no Labour Government such as we have in Australia, and where the unions do not spend all their earnings on the system to which the hon. member for Nundah takes strong exception, and where a capitalistic Government runs the show. I am now referring to America, where there is no political Labour party, such as we have in Australia. This is taken from the "Fortnightly Review," which says—

"In America there are from 15,000,000 to 20,000,000 people who are always underfed and badly housed, and of these 4,000,000 are public paupers. Little children to the number of 1,700,000, and about 5,000,000 women are wage-earners. One person in every ten who dies in New York has a pauper funeral, and at the present ratio of deaths from tuberculosis 10,000,000 will succumb to that disease, which is largely due to insufficiency of food, light, and air.

"In Great Britain, 95 per cent. of its total wealth, £11,500,000,000, is owned by one-ninth of the population; 43 per cent. of that population, however hard they may work, however thrifty they may be, are unable to command an income sufficient to provide for a standard of workhouse existence. There are always over 1,000,000 unemployed and 1,000,000 paupers."

That is the condition which exists in two of the greatest countries of the world, where there is no Labour party of any political strength, and where the workers carry out the principles that, no doubt, the Opposition would like to see carried out in Queensland.

Mr. MORGAN: One of those countries is a republic.

Mr. KIRWAN: What is the difference between a republic or a monarchy if capitalism rules in the halls of legislature? What is the difference to the workers so long as a great mass of them are robbed, as they are in England and America to-day, by the profiteering class.

Mr. MORGAN: Some people think a republic is the cure for all evils.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member may think that, but, as I pointed out clearly and distinctly, it does not matter whether it is a republic or a monarchy or any other form of government, so long as capitalism controls the legislation of the country.

Mr. MORGAN: Does the Government control here?

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member for Burnett says it does, the hon. member for Albert says the Trades Hall controls the Government, and the hon. member for Nundah says somebody else controls it. I would suggest that the Opposition hold a caucus meeting, and come to some unanimous opinion as to who does control the Government. There is just one other matter with regard to the right to work. If it is considered to be the duty of all men to work, and I think it is generally accepted by all men, irrespective of their political views—if it is their duty to work, why has not some method been established to provide the right to work? This question is not only agitating the mind of the Secretary for Public Works and those who sit behind him, but we find the leading writers in different parts of the world are discussing this particular question. A writer in the "New Statement," for June, 1919, deals with the question in this way—

"But the point we wish to emphasise is that the rich man has the power to be idle, and that the politics of the privileged classes have, in the past, been concerned to a far greater extent with defending the rich man's right to be idle than with establishing the poor man's right to work. The poor man's right to work has never been admitted by society; the rich man's right to be idle has. The only excuse for the continued recurrence of periods of unemployment is that no solution could be found that did not interfere with private enterprise, and private enterprise simply means competition for the right to be idle. The State, it was supposed, could do nothing except at the expense of the leisure of the leisured classes. And this the leisured classes declared to be the ruin of society. As nobody wants to ruin society, we have thought it better to do nothing at all."

That is really the attitude taken up by the Opposition. Simply because this proposal is going to ask the moneyed class of this State to contribute something to provide the necessary funds for the successful carrying out of a scheme to deal with the unemployment question hon. members opposite oppose it.

Mr. SIZER: Will this Bill solve the unemployment problem?

Mr. KIRWAN: I am not in a position to give that information. All I know is that I hope it will go in the direction of solving that problem. I am going to admit, as the Secretary for Public Works has admitted, and as every hon. member on this side of the House admits, that it is an attempt to solve this problem. We might find when we put it into operation that it has defects, but if we do not attempt to do something, then we will do nothing at all in the direction of solving this problem.

Mr. SIZER: Don't you think it is reasonable to object to the Bill because it will not solve the problem?

Mr. KIRWAN: That is the attitude always taken up by the Opposition to anything

Mr. Kirwan.]

introduced by a Labour Government. When the Labour party in the Commonwealth Parliament introduced the Commonwealth Bank scheme, all the leading financiers of Australia and the editors of all the financial papers in Australia predicted that the scheme would be an absolute failure. They did not take the trouble to examine the Bill, and they took less trouble to examine the scheme that was the fundamental basis of the Bill, but simply because it was introduced by a Labour party, it was the correct thing to criticise it and attempt to damn it. Would any member of the Opposition dare to get up on a public platform to-day and say that the Commonwealth Bank of Australia is not a success; that it has not been of invaluable assistance to the Government during the war? and yet if we listened to all the wise-aces and to all the intellectual giants on the Opposition side, the Prime Minister at that time would have dropped his Bill, and there would have been no Commonwealth Bank in existence to-day. The writer I have already quoted in the "New Statesman," proceeding to deal with the question further says—

"The universal right to leisure is being reluctantly conceded by the ruling classes. Strange to say, the right to work is by no means so generally admitted. The poor man is supposed to have a duty to work, but he is not supposed to have a right to work. Capitalist society has given us the ludicrous contradiction of a world in which a man has not the right to do his duty. The refusal of this right is more likely than anything else to produce revolutionary discontent among the workers. The spectacle of a world in which an infinite number of things require to be done, and a vast number of men are kept from doing them, suggests that we have not yet called in the aid of reason in reconstructing society. And this mad spectacle will continue to repeat itself until we admit that it is one of the proper functions of the State to secure the equal right to work as well as to leisure of every adult citizen. The State found itself compelled to take up the duties of national organiser in time of war for the safety of the Commonwealth. The State must, for similar reasons, take upon itself the duties of national organiser in time of peace."

We all know that if some of the schemes that were found necessary to be put into operation by the Government of the various countries concerned in the war were advocated from a public platform in a time of peace, the persons who advocated them would be put into a lunatic asylum without a doctor's certificate. And yet we find that the whole basis on which private enterprise was constructed was swept away immediately the war started. And the State found it absolutely necessary to take up the whole scheme of organisation in order to carry out effectively the purpose for which the country was launched into the war. And if it is necessary to organise for war, if it is necessary to organise huge bodies of workmen and women for the purpose of providing up-to-date means of destruction and sending people to eternity in the quickest possible time, surely no man can object to the Governments taking up the position that it is advisable in times of peace to set about organising society so that every man who wishes to employ himself usefully for his own

benefit and for the benefit of his wife and family, and above all for the benefit of the State, shall have that opportunity and that right. So those old notions that have ruled the world in the past had to be dropped, and now, when we have to reconstruct society—at least we have been told by some of the leading men that it is necessary to do so—then in my humble judgment it will be necessary to reconstruct it on a basis entirely different from that which we found existing when the war broke out. This is an attempt on the part of this Government to reconstruct society so far as the unemployment problem is concerned. No less a person than President Wilson has said—

"Society is looking itself over, in our day, from top to bottom; is making fresh and critical analysis of its very elements; is questioning its oldest practice as freely as its newest, scrutinising every arrangement and motive of its life; and it stands to attempt nothing less than a radical reconstruction, which only frank and honest counsels and the forces of generous co-operation can hold back from becoming a revolution. We are in a temper to reconstruct economic society, as we were once in a temper to reconstruct political society, and political society may itself undergo a radical modification in the process."

The whole position, as it appeals to me, is, that this is an age in which new things are to be attempted, and simply because no other Government has brought in a Bill to deal with unemployment is no reason why this Government should sit idly by whilst this problem demands intelligent consideration, and a faithful and honest attempt to solve it. The essential fact that I have already referred to as most noticeable in our civilised society is that notwithstanding the march of invention, notwithstanding the huge material increase in production, due largely to invention and the perfection of machinery and improved methods, we are still faced with the fact—as the hon. member for Bowen pointed out in reading a quotation from Carlyle—that those inventions and those advanced methods of production, instead of being for the benefit of the workers are, as a matter of fact, against their best interests. We all remember reading of the old guild system that existed before the factory system in England, under which every man was practically his own employer, and there was very little poverty. Immediately it was knocked out and the great masses were made dependent on the factories that were started with the invention of machinery, those people became absolute slaves. I remember reading that when the advocates of the abolition of slavery came from America to Great Britain, and spoke in the leading manufacturing towns of England about the awful conditions of the slaves in America, the factory operatives said, "Well, at any rate, they are a great deal better off than we are." It was to the interest of their employers to feed and clothe decently the slaves in America, in order to get the necessary labour out of them. So far as the factory owners were concerned, if one piece of human machinery became useless, they threw it on the industrial scrap heap—there were plenty more, including women and children of tender years, to go into those factories and add to the output. That position has simply been intensified with the progress of the world, and, as the hon. mem-

[*Mr. Kerwan.*]

ber for Bowen clearly demonstrated to-night, so long as we have a capitalistic system we are going to have unemployment, and if this Government cannot abolish that by a stroke of the pen, or by a Bill, they are making an attempt to mitigate some of the attendant evils that have ever and always followed that system in all parts of the world. Hon. members opposite say that the workers should be asked to contribute, that it would be most unfair to ask the employers to be the only contributors. Where do they get their amassed wealth? Is it from something they have done themselves? If an employer sat down to-morrow morning in a factory with nobody working in it, but with a banking book showing a credit of £50,000 before him, and sat there for twelve months, how much additional money do hon. members think he would have in the bank as a result? Every hon. member knows that if on the average a worker produces £7 or £8 worth of work a week, and the employer pays him half and keeps the balance, he is enabled by that method to make a profit. I say that if there are to be any contributions, they should come from the industry, and, after all, if they do come from the employer, if he is compelled to put into the fund a cheque for £100 in respect of 50 workers, or for £1,000 in respect of 500 workers, he is only putting into that fund a certain small percentage of the money produced by the people who work for him. If, as hon. members opposite contend, he does not get it out of the workers, let him try the experiment I have suggested. Sit down in his factory with all the machinery silent and the doors closed, and his banking account on his desk for £50,000, and see what the result would be.

Mr. MORGAN: Do you believe that the masses pay all taxation?

Mr. KIRWAN: I believe that the working classes pay everything.

Mr. MORGAN: Then why increase taxation and add to their burdens as the Government have done during the last four years?

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member puts that poser to me. I say that so far as land taxation is concerned, they do not—(laughter)—but that is the only exception. So far as customs taxation is concerned, so far as income taxation is concerned they do pay it. What do we find regarding those persons who went to the war—and 90 per cent. of them were workers? The pensions paid to those who have come back maimed, or to the relatives of those who have laid down their lives amount to £3,000,000, whereas the amount paid to the rich men who lent their money is £13,000,000. Those figures represent the respective sacrifices of those classes in regard to the war, and that is the principle that hon. members want to be applied in connection with this Bill. Hon. members want a somewhat similar contribution. They want the workers to foot the Bill for the unemployment scheme as they did for the war. They gave their lives; the friends of members opposite lent their money at 5 per cent. Mr. Fisher said to them, "I want you to assist us with your money." They said, "We are loyal and patriotic. The rate of interest is $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., but we are so loyal and patriotic that we want 5 per cent., and we want it free of State and Federal income tax. We know that men in Australia are leaving their jobs and going away for 5s. a day, and are

prepared to give their lives. That is their sacrifice, but our sacrifice is a demand for the highest rate of interest ever paid in Australia."

I trust if the Opposition have any concrete amendments which will help to make the Bill more effective they will let [9 p.m.] us have them. We have had quite enough of what might be called destructive criticism. Hon. gentlemen opposite are always priding themselves upon their constructive ability. If ever there were an opportunity in which they might display that constructive ability, it is in connection with this particular Bill. I am sure the Treasurer, in moving the second reading of the Bill, did not contend that it was perfect or that it was the final word in connection with this very important problem. If hon. gentlemen opposite have any sympathy for the workers, as they generally contend they have, we will have an opportunity of seeing whether that sympathy is of a practical nature. I trust the Bill will be placed upon the statute-book as an illustration that the Queensland Government were the first who had the courage, capacity, and ability to tackle this all-important problem and make an honest attempt at its solution.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. PETERSON (*Normanby*): I regret I have to give as my opinion that the Opposition, as far as they have gone in their criticism in this very important measure, seem to have failed to give any logical reason why the Bill should be opposed. The hon. member for Albert, in criticising the Bill, made particular reference to the fact that this Government had done absolutely nothing towards increasing land settlement. He was trying to infer—and in this I cordially agree with him—that all economists agree that all wealth springs from the land. He charged the Government with being lacking in its duty in regard to assisting settlement in this vast State. I do not know how the hon. member for Albert can say that. Speaking for the Central district, I can conscientiously say we cannot get the land opened fast enough. As far as my own electorate is concerned, on the Dawson Valley from 1915 up to the present time we have had record settlement. My quarrel with the Government is, not that we cannot get people to take up the land, but that we cannot get the Lands Department to throw it open fast enough. When the hon. member charges the Government with doing nothing for land settlement, I feel convinced he has not made himself conversant with the true position of affairs. While we have had effective land settlement put into operation by this Government as far as it has gone, we still find there has been a large amount of unemployment. I admit the people of Queensland were led to believe that once the Labour Government were placed in power unemployment would vanish. When the Government are confronted with war and drought combined, it is unfair to expect them to be able to solve the unemployment problem by means of legislation. Under this Bill I notice the Government will have power to bring about work for the unemployed. In reply to the hon. member for Albert, I wish to point out that under that provision it is possible for the Government to absorb the unemployed in such a way that they will be able to increase the settlement of this State. On the Upper Burnett, and in many parts of my own electorate, there

Mr. Peterson.]

are vast areas of rich scrub land which have not yet been selected, but which are still standing as virgin scrub. Under this Bill provision can be made whereby suitable unemployed can be sent out into these districts to prepare these lands and make them suitable for settlement. I took the trouble to write to an experienced farmer in my district and put these questions to him—

“1. What do you consider is the value of the scrub as it stands to-day?”

“2. What do you consider would be the added value of the land after the scrub has been felled and burnt, and sown with Rhodes grass?”

In answer to the first question he said the virgin scrub is practically worthless. The second answer was that the value would be increased up to £6 per acre, and the cost would be £1 10s. to £2 per acre. Consequently the Government, in placing unemployed on clearing areas of this description, would be reaping a rich financial harvest. In other words, they would be able to make a good business deal out of it and would be able to prepare the land for settlement, when it will be readily taken up by people who are now clamouring for it.

Mr. MORGAN: Have you had any experience of the cost of work done by unemployed?

Mr. PETERSON: I have had experience. I have employed more men in my time than the hon. member has in his. I have known what it is to be out of work, and I do not want to be out of work again. My whole pity and sympathy go out to the unfortunate married man who has to tramp round the country trying to get a crust to feed his “kiddies.” The party which says the Government should make no attempt to deal with problems like this do not deserve to sit upon those benches. I do not say this Bill is perfect. I do not think a Bill has ever been presented to Parliament which has been perfect. As the Treasurer said, it is an experiment, and as other things have to be experimented on so have great questions like these. If it can be shown that by a measure of this kind we will be able to alleviate genuine distress in unemployment, I am sure the Government will earn the commendation, not only of the workers interested, but of the community of Queensland: because, after all, every man who is out of work is a waste to the State. “Knibbs” has shown that the value of a worker to the State, when fully employed, is at least £300 per annum. Consequently it is an economic waste for a Government to sit idly by and allow the unemployed to increase. I hope the Government will succeed in this measure—that it will turn out to be what we hope and what the Treasurer expects. I might also mention that collateral with this measure is one of which notice has already been given, under which we propose to give settlers who go on the land a certain amount to enable them to secure dairy cattle, pigs, silos, &c. If the Government send the unemployed out to open up the scrub lands, many of them will stop there and become thrifty, prosperous farmers. Any measure that is going to do that will have my most hearty support. It seems to me that the bone of contention lies in the fact that the employers are to be rated for this. That seems to me to be “the fly in the ointment.” I do not look upon it that the

[*Mr. Peterson.*

employers have to pay it at all. I simply look upon it that the workers concerned are going to receive an increase in their wages of a little over 9d. a week extra, and this 9d. a week will be collected by the employer. They really collect £2 a year, and this will be paid into the unemployment insurance fund. That is the whole thing in a nutshell. The hon. member for Murilla knows that that is true, and I quite agree with his interjection that the workers pay the whole cost of the taxation in this State. This is not a tax upon the worker. It is practically compelling the employer to pay a small increase per week to the employees, but to collect the increase himself, and pay it into the fund. It is not my intention to weary the House at any greater length. My sole desire in speaking was to reply to the contention of the hon. member for Albert, who said that the Government have been lacking in their efforts to open land for settlement. I consider the present Government have done more than any previous Government in that direction. I hope when the Bill gets into Committee that the Opposition will realise that this is an experiment to deal with the unemployed problem, and that we, as a Parliament, have been sent here to solve this problem. I hope when the Bill is returned from another Chamber that it will be returned in such a way that we will be able to show the people of Queensland that the Government are doing their utmost to give the employees the right to live, and the right to work.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I would like to say a word or two on the second reading of this Bill. It is quite refreshing and pleasing to hear remarks like those which fell from the hon. member who just resumed his seat, and likewise the admission of the hon. member for Brisbane that the masses of the workers generally do pay all the taxation. That is to say that this Government, during the period they have occupied the Treasury benches, have increased the taxation by leaps and bounds though the workers and the masses of the people generally are contributing those taxes at the present moment owing to the extravagance of the present Administration. We know now that hon. members opposite admit that the workers themselves are paying the enormous taxation imposed by the Government, which is much greater than ever they paid under a Liberal Administration. The hon. member for Normanby did not catch my interjection exactly. I asked him if he had any experience of work done by unemployed engaged by the Government. The hon. member for Normanby suggested that a number of unemployed would be sent by the Government to his electorate for the purpose of clearing the scrub lands if this Bill is passed.

Mr. PETERSON: I said that they could do it under this Bill.

Mr. MORGAN: The hon. gentleman advocated that, and he said that the Bill would be the means of sending unemployed to his electorate to clear the scrub lands. The hon. member also gave us figures. He said that a practical man in his particular district said that the land at the present moment is valueless, because it contains a great amount of scrub, but if an expenditure of £2 an acre was incurred the land would become worth £6 an acre. The hon. member must know that if an expenditure of £2 an acre in felling scrub has the effect of making land worth £6 an acre, well, the

unimproved value of that land must be £4 an acre at the present time. The land must, therefore, be worth £4 an acre now, so the hon. member's figures are not reliable at all.

Mr. PETERSON: Will you admit that with Rhodes grass a man can produce something on land where he cannot produce anything if it is only growing scrub?

Mr. MORGAN: That is quite true, but if £2 an acre spent on land makes it worth £6 an acre, then it must be worth £4 an acre now. That is plain enough to anyone. It would be quite profitable for any worker to spend £2 an acre on land to make it worth £6 an acre. It is all very well for the hon. member to try and get away from the subject by talking about Rhodes grass and other things. Hon. members must see that, so far as the hon. member for Normanby's contention is concerned, that it does not want a Bill of this description to carry out what he has advocated. If members opposite knew that by an expenditure of £2 an acre they could get land worth £6 an acre, there would be a general rush into the Normanby district. So far as that particular argument is concerned, it falls to the ground. I have had some experience in my own electorate, where the Government spent money in giving the unemployed work to do. When we first came to this country we noticed that gangs of unemployed were sent to different localities to clear the tracks through the scrub so that the settlers could occupy their particular blocks. Under ordinary circumstances that land could be cleared for £8 or £9 a mile. That is the amount that it could be cleared for under the contract system, but under the Government's system they paid something like £14 a mile.

Mr. PETERSON: Don't you think that it would be better to get the unemployed clearing land in the country, because they might stop there altogether.

Mr. MORGAN: I am satisfied that when you provide relief works for the unemployed it will cost double the amount it would cost if practical men were engaged in the clearing. In my electorate, under the Government's system with unemployed clearing the land it cost £14 to £16 a mile, whereas experienced contractors can make money out of it at £8 and £9 a mile.

Mr. STOPFORD: What hours did they work?

Mr. MORGAN: The ordinary working hours. In a batch of unemployed you will get men who have previously worked as clerks or drapers' assistants.

Mr. PETERSON: Very often they make good settlers.

Mr. MORGAN: When these men are put at work clearing the scrub, it takes them some time to get their hands used to the work, and they cannot do half the work in a day that an experienced man can do.

Mr. PETERSON: They are all right when they get used to it.

Mr. MORGAN: It does not matter whether a Labour Government or a Liberal Government provides work for the unemployed for relief purposes, the cost is always much greater than if the work is done by experienced men. Regarding this Bill, I would like to read the opinion of a meeting of unemployed, held at Charleville—

“At a meeting of the unemployed, held

here on Monday night, it was decided to wire to the member for the district with a view to stopping the Repatriation Department from sending any more returned soldiers here. Motions were carried pointing out that there are at present 150 unemployed in Charleville: that the Unemployed Workers Bill now before the Legislative Assembly was only a sop for election purposes, and if carried, would only retard the workers, not benefit them; and that unless the Ryan Government took immediate steps to relieve necessary and deserving cases, a public meeting would be held to express want of confidence in the Ryan Government.”

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What are you quoting from?

Mr. MORGAN: I am quoting from a telegraph report of a meeting held in Charleville on the 9th September. It was sent down by the correspondent of the “Brisbane Courier.” The Minister for Lands is in the House, and probably he can tell us whether he received a telegram or not, giving that information. This telegram shows that so far as this particular Bill is concerned, it is not going to benefit the country worker. In my opinion, this Bill will have the effect of driving the country workers into the cities and towns. It will not send the workers away from the cities into the country. A matter we have to take into consideration at the present time is the crowded areas in the cities and towns. The whole trouble throughout Australia to-day is that people are flocking into the towns. They prefer to live in large centres of population. Not only is that noticeable as far as the ordinary working man is concerned, but it is also noticeable as far as the sons and daughters of those who have spent many years in the country are concerned, and that is because the inducements to flock into cities and towns are so great. This Bill will emphasise that condition of things, and it will not in any shape or form benefit the country. We should hold out inducements to people in the country to become settlers themselves eventually. It is said that a man who does not possess any money cannot go on the land. But, I would point out that we have an Agricultural Bank Act, under which a man can get an advance of pound for pound for any work he does on the land. Personally, I think there are a number of men among the unemployed who would make exceptionally good farmers, and the best way to get a man to produce to the fullest capacity of his land, and also to take an interest in his work, is to allow him to produce for himself, and not for an employer.

Mr. PETERSON: Don't you believe in ready made farms?

Mr. MORGAN: No, I do not. Throughout the whole world ready made farms have not proved a success. I hold that a man who is capable of going on the land and of making a success of the venture, should be able to get from the Government all the assistance he requires to make improvements, and naturally improvements can be effected more cheaply in that way than under any system the Government can devise. Under the old system of improving the land, the cost of the work was so great that it placed a burden on the farmer which rendered him

Mr. Morgan.]

unable to meet his payments. We have at the present moment on the statute-book an Act which, if properly administered, will enable any farmer to improve and stock his farm. If settlers got sufficient assistance in that direction, they would be able to give employment to hundreds and hundreds of men.

With respect to this particular Bill, there is no doubt that the personnel of the council is not a matter that the Treasurer can be congratulated upon. The Bill proposes that one member of the council shall be the Minister, another a representative of the labour bureau, and another a representative of employees, and a council so constituted must be dominated by the Government party. Should a Liberal Government come into power, the public officials will no doubt be sympathetic towards that Government, so that the dominating power in that case will be Liberal, instead of Labour. That is a condition of things which should not be permitted. When we find that Ministers who are holding high positions, and drawing big salaries, are looking for another hole, we can read the writing on the wall.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Looking for another "hole"?

Mr. MORGAN: I suppose hon. members have read of soldiers in the war looking for another hole, or another shelter. Perhaps "shelter" would be the better word to use in this case. What members of the Government are trying to do is to find another shelter.

With regard to the £2 for each worker to be contributed by the employer, it appears to me that that provision is in need of alteration, and can be improved in many respects. The clause which deals with this matter—clause 5—provides for a rebate. The rebate is not fixed by the Minister, but he mentioned that it would most likely be £1 for each worker employed throughout the year. It may be only 1s., and I feel sure that the Minister was drawing on his imagination when he mentioned £1. Another point in connection with this matter is that the rebate will only be paid to employers who have employed workers for the whole year. How will this apply to seasonal workmen such as those employed at meatworks? A meatworks may employ 200 men for nine months in the year, and in that case they would not be entitled to a rebate because they have not employed the men continuously for twelve months. In seasonal occupations men are paid higher wages than in other occupations.

The PREMIER: What do you call "seasonal" occupations?

Mr. MORGAN: Occupations like that of shearing, and the work done at meatworks. In Queensland there are certain seasons of the year in which certain work can be performed.

Mr. RIORDAN: What would be a cane-cutter's income for the year?

Mr. MORGAN: I cannot say exactly what a cane-cutter would earn in a year. The point I am making now is that, if a factory like a meatworks employed 200 men, that factory would be taxed to the extent of £400 for the first year. What the taxation might be the following year nobody knows. It

[*Mr. Morgan.*]

might be £3 or £4 per man. But, although those men are employed continuously for nine months in the year, the employer would have to pay £2 per man by way of taxation, and would not be entitled to any rebates, because he has not employed them continuously for twelve months. There is no doubt about that. There is some altera-

[9.30 p.m.] tion wanted there. In connection with that matter, the Treasurer will surely admit that there is room for improvement. Under clause 6 we find the Minister has power which is altogether too great. It may be possible, and perhaps the time will come when the power may be abused by a Minister for political purposes. This Bill is a dangerous weapon to place in the hands of any Minister who desires to use it for political purposes, whether he be a Liberal or Labour Minister. To go further, it may be a dangerous power to place in the hands of any Cabinet, because a Minister will consult his Cabinet, which will decide as to what is to be done. The council practically only makes recommendations, which the Minister can either accept or reject. The Bill practically enables a Minister or Government to use the power given to blackmail political opponents. If certain employers offended the Government in some way—say, the Brisbane Tramways Company, or any other large employers of labour—the Government could compel them to spend money whether they desired to do so or not. On the other hand, if a large employer of labour subsidised the fighting funds of the Government in power, he could not be interfered with at all, if the Minister so desired. In fact, the Bill could be used by political parties for the purpose of blackmailing employers of labour who did not see eye to eye with the Government of to-day. The effect of the Bill in the direction I have indicated can, of course, only be seen after it has been in operation for some time. Then, again, the Bill penalises the man who gives employment to labour. The man who has brains to establish an industry which will give employment to, say, from 200 up to 1,000 men, is a public benefactor, no matter what the hon. member for Bowen or the hon. member for Brisbane may say to the contrary. He is a far better man than the individual who only works for wages, because that individual is only able, by the assistance which another has given him, to find employment for himself. Nature has endowed certain individuals with ability to become great organisers of industry, and to give employment to hundreds of workmen, and, in my opinion, those people should be encouraged to come and remain in Queensland. I know from experience that any legislation which will tend to drive capital out of the State, or prevent it from coming in, is going to have a very detrimental effect upon the State. We want money to develop the resources of Queensland. There is no State which has greater possibilities, and which it is more necessary to develop. Queensland is capable of absorbing millions of capital as well as thousands of workmen, and the only way in which we are likely to get our resources developed is by inducing capital to come to the State for developmental purposes. Anything which is done to prevent capital coming here is an injury to the workmen and the people generally. We should be passing legislation to give assistance, and in many instances bonuses, to those

who would come and spend their capital in the State.

Mr. HARTLEY: You would give more money to the shipping companies, although they have got less ships.

Mr. MORGAN: Although the shipping companies, and other organisations, may benefit by the expenditure of capital in Queensland, the whole of the people will benefit similarly.

Mr. HARTLEY: No, they do not employ any more labour; they are running fewer ships and earning bigger profits, which they are locking up in war loans.

Mr. MORGAN: We want to produce from the soil products which will be shipped from Queensland to other parts of the world.

Mr. HARTLEY: In what ships?

Mr. MORGAN: In ships that will carry that produce at a reasonable rate, whether they belong to a combine or company or to the Government. We should give people every encouragement to send ships to this State. I am one of those who believe that our first duty is to develop our natural resources. We have heard a good deal about the development of the secondary industries, but my opinion is that the secondary industries will eventually come. It is the primary industries, first of all, which must be placed on a solid foundation.

The very moment we produce enormous quantities of raw material, our secondary industries will become established. If a great deal of our raw material has to go out of Queensland, as it does at the present time, provided we had good markets for that material in other parts of the world, as well as the home market, then our industries will be prosperous, and the people will engage in the secondary industries. Suppose, for instance, a practical man puts 640 acres of land under agriculture, and eventually he becomes rich; supposing the cultivation of the soil was the best work a man could undertake from a monetary point of view, what would be the result? We would have people flowing out West. The cry would be "Go West, young man," while the cry to-day is "Come East." If you want to denude your cities of the unemployed, then you want to make primary production so profitable that even members of Parliament will give up their positions and will become producers from the soil.

Mr. HARTLEY: Didn't you leave your farm to come to Parliament?

Mr. MORGAN: I did not leave my farm to come to Parliament. My farm is still being carried on, and during the period Parliament is not sitting, I am engaged on my farm.

Mr. HARTLEY: You take your parliamentary "screw," and then work on your farm?

Mr. MORGAN: I am one of those who believe that a man should not draw enough in three or four months to keep him for the rest of the year. As far as my parliamentary salary is concerned, I admit, as members opposite admit, that £300 a year is not sufficient, but during the time Parliament is not sitting I earn money by working on my farm; and if every member of the Labour party would go back to his occupation—for instance, if the hon. member for

Mundingburra would go back to wharf lumping when he is not occupied in this House—

Mr. STOFFORD: And draw their parliamentary "screws," as you do?

Mr. MORGAN: Exactly. Evidently his parliamentary "screw" is not sufficient for the hon. member, and he has it increased by some hundreds of pounds through being connected with the Public Works Commission. He goes away for a holiday every week-end, and draws hundreds of pounds per annum while he is on those holidays.

Mr. STOFFORD: You admit that you go back to your farm and do someone else out of a job, and then draw your parliamentary "screw."

Mr. MORGAN: I certainly admit I go back, and I admit it is my duty to go back to my farm. It is because I go back and keep in touch with my work, and keep in touch with my constituents, that they continually re-elect me to this House.

Mr. FOLEY: You don't believe in one-man-one-job.

Mr. MORGAN: If the principle of one-man-one-job was adopted by hon. members opposite, would we have the Premier here as Premier to-day? We have many instances of members of the Government party, who say they believe in one-man-one-job, filling numerous occupations. We have just appointed to the position of Agent-General of this State a man who owns ten or twelve businesses, and still he has signed the platform which provides for one-man-one-job. We should all be employed for the twelve months. We should not expect to earn sufficient in three months to keep us for the rest of the year, as otherwise, to use the argument of the hon. member for Bowen, for nine months of the year we would be amongst the rich and unemployable, and for three months of the year we would be members of Parliament. The Minister told us that these labour farms are not likely to be self-supporting. That is a right admission to make, because I feel sure, under the conditions that these farms are to be worked, they are not likely to be self-supporting, and that they will be a tax upon the fund. The men who will be sent to work on these farms will certainly not be experienced men, but it will be necessary to pay them the ruling rate of wage, although they may not be able to earn the ruling rate of wage.

Then, again, in connection with the disqualification of strikers, we find that the Bill is by no means definite. If a number of men go on strike, they will not obtain relief under this Bill for the time being, but we also discover that, if the Minister so desires, he can remove the disqualification. What is the good of that?

Mr. HARTLEY: No, he cannot.

Mr. MORGAN: The hon. member evidently has not read the Bill. The clause says—

"If at any time any strike occurs, no person who goes out on strike shall, during such strike, be entitled to receive any such allowance. If at any time any strike occurs in contravention of or without compliance with the provisions of the Industrial Arbitration Act of 1916, no person who went out on strike shall for a period of six months after the

Mr. Morgan.]

cessation thereof, be entitled to receive any such allowance: Provided that the council shall have the right to review the disqualification under either of the provisions of this paragraph, and if they think fit, remove such disqualification."

Mr. HARTLEY: That is the council; not the Minister.

Mr. MORGAN: I said council; but, after all is said and done, if this Bill is carried out as it is proposed to be carried out, it really means that the whole thing is under the control of the Minister. If a number of men go out on strike, according to this Bill they are disqualified unless the disqualification is removed, and if an election is about to take place, it is quite probable that the Government, as they did in the case of certain men up North who refused to do their duty on the railways, for political purposes, will have the disqualification removed. There is no getting away from the fact that that may occur, no matter what Government may be in power. Right from beginning to end of this Bill, the Minister has too much power. The council is not properly constituted, because one of the principal bodies concerned—the local authorities—have no representation whatever. Further than that, the non-unionist is not recognised, and has no representation. It is like every Bill that this Government introduce. The non-unionist, although he may be just as good a worker, is considered a person who is not fit to live.

Mr. FOLEY: There must be organisation.

Mr. MORGAN: And yet we have been told that the whole system of organisation that did away with the old system of "one man one business" and created trusts and corporations and monopolies has been detrimental to the world generally, that it has established the capitalistic system and been detrimental to the worker. I agree that if a means could be devised of having every man his own employer it would be much better than to have large concerns employing thousands of men and owned by a few individuals.

Mr. MULLAN: How would you give non-unionists representation on the board?

Mr. MORGAN: The non-unionists might be combined in some manner. (Government laughter.)

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed to him by the Standing Orders.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): We have to deal with the introduction of this Bill in consequence of the fact that the Government have failed to do their duty to the people of Queensland. We know that in 1914, when there were a few unemployed, attention was drawn to it by the then Opposition, and it was said to be owing to the war. There is no war at the present time, and the Government has had four years in which to make preparation for the expenditure of the huge sum of money they have accumulated, so as to counteract any unemployment that might exist at the present juncture. The Premier on that occasion, when addressing the House, referred to the fact that there were hundreds of workers who, on account of the war, were unemployed. We find that to-day there are thousands of unemployed in Queensland.

Mr. FOLEY: On account of the war.

[*Mr. Morgan.*

Mr. CORSER: Not on account of the war. That argument has not been raised, even by the Treasurer. That state of things exists even after the Government has spent thousands and hundreds of thousands of pounds in relief work in order to keep down unemployment. We know that gangs have been put on from Maryborough and other centres to absorb the unemployed, that every effort has been made, according to the Treasurer, to keep down the numbers. We know that Labour representatives from industrial centres—Maryborough, Brisbane, and other places—repeatedly interviewed the Treasurer during the recess so as to deal with the state of the unemployed market. Great amounts of money were spent and are being spent to-day, and yet the Government are faced with such a position that they propose—camouflaged under this Bill—to recognise a continuous state of unemployment that is not a credit to the Government and that has not been known in Queensland since it has been a separate State. The Government has got to please the people and pretend that they are going to do something. They bring in this Bill, not with the intention of carrying it. I really think that in their hearts hon. members opposite do not believe that this Bill is going to go through. I think that they have made it drastic enough to make it obnoxious to a certain section of the people and unfair in principle.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Who is going to throw it out?

Mr. CORSER: I have not said that anyone is going to throw it out, but I think the Government are satisfied in their own minds that it is not going to become law. If an honest attempt is to be made to deal with the unemployed problem, take a leaf out of the Imperial Parliament's book, bring in a Bill that provides something which is just, under which the Government will shoulder their proportion of the burden and the employers and employees will contribute their share towards providing work throughout the country. In Queensland, on the contrary, we find that we are still spending our millions, our loan money, our trust funds, everything we can get hold of—millions of the taxpayers' money more than the late Government, who, nevertheless, did not have the unemployed problem that we have to-day. What is the position which has been created by a Government which has been taxing one section of the community in order to satisfy another section? In Queensland, a State that used to be fairly free from individual taxation and prosperous, a State where there were cheap living and good conditions, we find that the direct taxpayer is paying twice as much proportionately as the taxpayer of New South Wales—and we know that they used to pay fairly heavily. In the face of that we have a state of unemployment for which the Government claim they are endeavouring to provide.

Mr. H. J. RYAN: Is there any unemployment in your electorate?

Mr. CORSER: The Public Works Commission has just returned from there. They were the only unemployed there. (Laughter.) The position has been brought about by the enactments and administration of the Government, which have killed industry and thrift, and have frightened capital from the shores of the State and caused loss to the man who was hoping to bring about

increased business and the development of the country.

Mr. KIRWAN: You might quote the bank balances to prove your statement.

Mr. CORSER: Well, there are other balances we have never had. These gentlemen must know that their State enterprises have in no way provided for an increase in the labour market. They have not provided for any increase in the matter of finding work,

nor in the possibilities of better conditions. Can anybody say it is not the Labour Government's State monopoly in the fish industry that has thrown a lot of fishermen and others on the market? Can they say that their policy of buying stations, and paying with the credit of the State for those stations to people who might be spending it in other parts of the world, is doing something to bring about a spending of foreign capital to provide work for our people here? Can they say that their entering into the timber industry, with their State sawmills in Brisbane, and their handling of State forests have done anything to increase the possibilities of people finding work and receiving good wages? They have increased the royalty on timber from 2s. 6d. to 9s. per 100 feet, making impossible the cutting of an amount of forest which would have provided employment for carriers and teamsters. They have prevented the carpenter from receiving the work he should have in all our cities; they are keeping the people from developing the country and spending their capital to provide work. Through their State Savings Bank settlement, conditions are stagnant, by reason of the fact that the Commissioner has not the sympathy of the Government, which should compel him to have to loosen his grip on the purse strings to enable the people to develop our country districts. Even in our soldier settlement districts you will find that the strong and unsympathetic hold of the Commissioner on the money that should be available to those people has made it impossible for our settlers to receive the remuneration which would make possible an amount of work for the unemployed. The whole policy of the Government, as has been pointed out by the Opposition since this Government came into power, is to kill thrift, to kill industry, to discourage the man who has money, or who hopes, by his energy, to make money, and to enable him to get any remuneration from wages rather than start "on his own." If the Government will alter their tactics—if they will give confidence to the employers of Queensland, and the individual who wants to become an employer—they would do away with the necessity for this Unemployment Bill. At present unemployment is rife, and there should be some means of providing for it until the Government mend their ways and do away with the necessity for it. Some provision might be necessary, but no one is going to say that this one-sided, lopsided, poll-tax system is going to provide the means of doing away with unemployment in an honest manner. So far as I can see, this Bill is only going to propagate unemployment and encourage the worst sentiments in a number of our people who do not want to work. It is going to associate with those people men who might, unfortunately, not be able to find work. We have two sections of unemployed. There is the unemployed industrial worker, who probably might be engaged in some seasonal

employment and be thrown out when the season's sugar crushing or the shearing clip is through. We also have the unemployed gentlemen whom most members of Parliament know, even though they do not know their names.

Mr. COLLINS: The man with the big stomach, you mean? (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: Yes, that is the man I mean. He will try to get sixpence from you all day long, and will take as many pints of beer as members of Parliament like to "shout" him. (Renewed laughter.)

Mr. COLLINS: You ought to refer to him as the man who lives upon the labour of others.

Mr. CORSER: I do not want to be personal. I do not want to refer to the Premier. (Opposition laughter.) I do not want to make any personal attack on the gentleman who is going home to the old country to represent us there as our Agent-General. I am not going to make any personal attack about the man who lives on another in that way. I am speaking directly on the Bill, as to the unemployed and unemployable, and I say we are pushing them all into this one Bill, under cover of the one Act, so as to deal with them all in the one manner. I say that is not altogether a fair thing. I do not think registration is a fair thing. I think it would be far better if, as in the past, the Government could have spent their loan moneys and their revenue in such a way as to provide fair and honest work, and enable those people to come along, not being registered under the Unemployed Workers Act, but as free men. The hon. member for Brisbane claims that the workers of Australia do not receive sufficient for them to live in comfort. If the workers of Australia—and of Queensland in particular—are not receiving sufficient for them to live in comfort, who is to blame? Is it the Opposition, or is it the Government who are holding the Treasury benches for the fifth year?

Mr. HARTLEY: The Federal Government, for allowing the profiteer to fix the prices.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. member says it is the Federal Government, for allowing the profiteer to fix prices. We know perfectly well that, long before this session started, the Federal Government withdrew the control they had.

Mr. HARTLEY: That is not true. The Commonwealth prices obtain now.

Mr. CORSER: I say they did. The State Government profited by it. They sold 4,000 hides to one exporter from their own State cattle, and sent them away to receive the higher price. Whether the Federal Government have or have not withdrawn control, it does not prevent our State Government coming along and introducing a Profiteers' Bill, so as to safeguard the people of Queensland, whom they should safeguard. Why have we been so long sitting in this Parliament without the Bill coming along? Why have we heard so much about the "remorseless profiteer," and yet had nothing introduced to safeguard the people against him if he is in our midst? We have had all sorts of things flung up, but we have not, during the whole session, seen anything except a promise that such and such is going to be introduced.

Mr. HARTLEY: You will convince yourself that you are in earnest if you are not careful.

Mr. Corser.]

Mr. CORSER: I am deadily in earnest in anything that pertains to the welfare of the general community of Queensland. Coming back to the unemployed, the hon. member for Brisbane also stated, I think, that there were so many of our people who did not hold any land, and it might be impossible for them to be other than unemployed during a great part of the year. What about our unfortunate people who might be on the land during these times of trouble? The fact that they hold land does not say they get a profitable remuneration for their work, but they have to plug on. They cannot hold their funds back in the bank, they cannot act on the suggestion of the hon. member for Maryborough, and not expend the funds they might have saved, but take it from the ground when they are out of work. They have to use it, and toil all they can. They have to ask a Government that shows no sympathy with them at all. There is nothing to stop the Government supporters, and Government irresponsibles in the cities, from taking up land at the present time if they wish to do so. We have a Labour Government in office, and if they wish to give their supporters land to take up, they can easily do so if they wish to. They can give their supporters the same facilities that others have got who take up land in Queensland. It is no good holding up the unfortunate selector as a profiteer, or as a man who holds a better position in the State than the unemployed, just because he happens to hold a piece of land. Just because he is plucky enough to go out and take up land; that is no reason why he should be held up as occupying a better position than the unemployed. Why not offer the unemployed the same conditions to take up land, or offer them the same conditions as are being offered to our soldiers. It would not cost much, as it would be offered under perpetual lease conditions, which is about all the soldier is getting from this Government. They could also get the advantage of the Savings Bank Act, which provides for loans up to £1,200, although the Administration does not carry it out that way. When an hon. member was speaking, someone interjected about the shipping companies making big profits, and said this was a cause of unemployment. When we talk about shipping companies, we must remember that we live in glass houses, and we should not throw stones. The State has increased the cost of transport on the railways just in the same way as the shipping companies did. We have increased the rates on the railways twice, but we were not fortunate enough to show a profit, like the shipping companies. We should say good luck to the other fellow who can show a profit, even although we cannot do it ourselves. I do not agree with the provisions in the Bill relating to the formation of the unemployment council. I do not think that that is a fair condition at all. Under this proposal the employer might as well not be represented at all.

Mr. HARTLEY: What would be a fair condition, according to your view?

Mr. CORSER: My idea would be equal representation from the employers and employees, and they should distribute funds equitably from these two sources, plus one-third from the State. I think that that would be a fair thing.

Mr. HARTLEY: What would be a fair council according to you?

[*Mr. Corser.*

Mr. CORSER: It is not a fair thing to have three to one against the employer, when he has to contribute all the funds.

Mr. HARTLEY: How do you make out three to one?

Mr. CORSER: That is what amounts to. There will be the Minister, the judge, who will be appointed by the present Government, the Director of Labour, and the employees' representative.

Mr. HARTLEY: How do you reckon it is three to one?

Mr. CORSER: It might be possibly four to one against the employer. Under this Bill I do not think anyone can hold that the employer will get a fair "go." Considering that the employer is the man who has to find the whole of the money to carry out the scheme, it is not fair to him at all. It is quite possible that, proportionately, the employers throughout Queensland are doing more for employment than the Government themselves, yet the Government has no responsibility in this matter at all. When the Babinda Mill is finished crushing or the work on the State stations is done, the Government do not have to find any further employment like other employers are asked to do.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you expect the crushing at Babinda should go on all the year round?

Mr. CORSER: No. I am pointing out that it is a seasonal industry, yet the Government will not have to find further employment like they expect the small cane farmer or millowner to provide for. The State's own Babinda Mill and its own State stations will only employ men during the season, and there is no further responsibility on them, so far as this Bill is concerned. I notice that a lot of hands have been dismissed in connection with the State butcheries, and they will have to be employed by other employers if they are unemployed. It is not fair to make other employers find employment for unemployed men in that way. Under this Bill you are going to penalise the employer who is doing his utmost, and compel him to employ men right throughout the year. The Government should shoulder its share of the responsibility in connection with seasonable work, just the same as the other employers.

The proposed labour farm is a good idea. Many good ideas come from an impracticable source, but I cannot see how they will be practicable under this Bill. I am confident that the Minister for Agriculture is not going to stake his reputation as a farmer on the success of this labour farm proposal. Whilst the unemployed might find a good home on the labour farm, I would like to know where the money is going to come from in the event of a loss on the farm. The Bill is not clear on that point. If it were legal, I would bet that the farm will be a loss, and we must make some provision for financing it in the event of a loss. Is the loss going to fall on the employers? Many of the unemployed will find their way on to the labour farms. I hope the Government will be reasonable in this matter. The caucus has decided that the Bill must go through this House, but there is still a hope that the Bill will not be on the statute-book, as it has to pass another place, so that we will not have to further tantalise and deter the possibilities of further employers from coming along and giving us

a hand. It is not my intention to delay the House any further on the Bill. I am sure members will agree that the Opposition have endeavoured to deal with this Bill in as broad a manner as possible, without allowing party to stand in the way. We have endeavoured, to the best of our ability, to show that we want to provide for the unemployed. Whilst we are not going to suggest any amendment that should take its place, we know that something better could be done for the unemployed than is proposed in this Bill.

Mr. MULLAN: What do you think should be done?

Mr. CORSER: The thing that should be done is the honest thing, but, unfortunately, that is not what we are going to get. We know that if we are honest, we should deal with the striker, and not allow him to take advantage of the provisions of this Bill. An illegal striker is not supposed to be permitted to take advantage of the provisions of this measure, but he is to be encouraged in his strike, and supported in his action by those who retain their jobs, and these men are not to be interfered with. Why do the Government not deal with the men who contribute funds to encourage an illegal strike? Labour members can make an appeal in the interest of strikers, and ask for contributions to their funds, but it is considered wrong by Labour members to ask men who are in work to contribute to a fund to provide against unemployment. Employees can contribute to a strike fund, but from a Labour point of view it is considered a sin to ask them to contribute to a fund to provide against unemployment, though a poll tax is proposed to be levied on employers to establish such a fund. Considering that employers are paying what is supposed to be a fair and just amount for the work they receive, why should not something fall on the employee in this matter?

Mr. HARTLEY: Supposing the worker was not there, what would the employer do?

Mr. CORSER: Supposing the employer was not there, what would the employee do? What are we going to get when all our enterprises are all State undertakings, and the Government have no employers upon whom they can levy this £2 per head? When the whole of the means of production, distribution, and exchange are in the hands of the Government, when this Government become a socialistic Government, as its backers claim it will be, what are we going to do then?

Mr. HARTLEY: There will be no unemployed then.

Mr. CORSER: There will be no unemployed then? Where are the profits in our State industrial enterprises now? If we are to judge by our present experience, there will be no financial profit in connection with those undertakings. If we had not the employers to-day, how would the Government provide funds to give employment to the unemployed? What suggestion can they offer to provide for insurance against unemployment in such a case? Up to the present time Government jobs have produced more unemployment than any jobs found by other portions of the community. The sooner we get back to a state of affairs which will encourage employers to borrow money and spend it, and which will encourage

people in other countries to bring their money and spend it and create work, and the sooner we get away from this system of pampering State industries, and creating unemployment, the better it will be for the State. If people on the other side of the world knew what the Government are proposing in this Bill in order to provide for their citizens, we should find that this measure was Queensland's greatest advertisement. It ought to drive the Premier to shame. The hon. gentleman did not tell the people in Britain or Amsterdam what he was going to do when he returned to Queensland. He told them what a glorious paradise he had created here by his Labour legislation, and immediately he returns, he has to introduce this Workers' Unemployed Bill to prevent the people from starving, and to put the whole burden of maintaining them on the unfortunate employers. This measure puts the whole burden on that section of the community whom the hon. gentleman and his Government have been endeavouring to kill. What an advertisement this is for Queensland!

Mr. HARTLEY: What about the Workmen's Insurance Bill in England?

Mr. CORSER: That is a trade union measure, and the trade unionists in Britain are assisting to provide the funds necessary to carry out the provisions of that measure, and that is in a country which has been developed, but which has been robbed of its industries by the war. The conditions there are altogether different from our conditions, where we have a huge territory with a population of only 600,000 people. We have a great undeveloped State, we are spending large sums of money on reproductive works, we have to provide a sum of money to keep the people employed, and now we are asked to provide something for permanent unemployment in a State where the Labour party hold the reins of Government.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I should like to make a few remarks on this Bill. I am disappointed with the measure, though I am as keenly interested in the worker as any member on the other side of the House. Members opposite have no special right to look after the working class. In fact, I am sure that there are members on this side of the House who are as keenly interested in the worker and his betterment as members opposite are. I should like to see hon. members on the other side bring in a measure which would relieve the unemployed, not a measure to insure men against unemployment. When we talk about the unemployed at the present time, we talk about thousands of men who have fought and bled to protect our country. I am very thankful to see that there is a revival of feeling on the part of hon. members opposite, and that they are keenly interested in the soldiers at the present time.

The PREMIER: We always have been.

Mr. WARREN: Not so much before as at the present time, and I hope that the help you give will be very real. I congratulate the hon. member for Bowen on the genuine speech he made. No doubt, he [10.30 p.m.] was out to benefit the men he represents, and if every other member was as keenly interested and as anxious to help men as the hon. member for Bowen, we would be able to evolve a Bill

Mr. Warren.]

which would reduce unemployment. I do not agree with the hon. member for Bowen in one thing. I think it is a great pity that there are not a greater number of farmers employing many more men. I believe that there are many farmers in this State employing over five workers each at the present time, and it is a pity that there are not tens of thousands more of such farmers, as there would then not be the dearth of employment which we have now. There is room for settlement on the land, and I go with the Government all the time, and all the way, when they try to settle people on the land. I do not say that they are successful every time. I do not agree with the hon. member for Normanby that settlement is going on as much as he says it is. There are certain spots with scrub land which men will run after, but there are many cases of people going off the land; and that is a shame. The people are flocking from the country to the cities, and that is taking place all over the State. It should be the other way about. If we had farms on which men could be trained to become farmers, there would be more employment. When the Bill gets into Committee, I will do my best to make it a better measure, so that it will do some good to the worker; not only insure him against unemployment—which would be a good thing if it was carried out in a proper spirit—but do something to reduce the unemployment which exists.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): I think it is to be exceedingly regretted that we are found to-night debating a measure such as this. Not that one is unmindful that a vast degree of unemployment exists, but one regrets that it does exist. This Bill is certainly the sorriest advertisement that Queensland has received at the hands of any Government. It seems almost incredible that the Chief Secretary, who was a few months ago urging emigration in Great Britain, is now fathering such a Bill as this. Speaking just before he left England, he made this statement—

“Queensland offered great agricultural development, and would welcome no immigrants more than those from the United Kingdom.”

We have to send a cable home, now that Queensland is so full of unemployed, that we've had to bring in an Unemployment Bill.

Mr. FOLEY: We do not say that.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: We not only say that, but we say that we are making provision for the unemployed. Hon. members opposite have made pitiable references as to the conditions of unemployment, and stated that although at times we have employment for our people, yet the employment is only of a seasonal nature, and for about three or four months of the year. This information will go home to immigrants who are asked to come to Queensland—that their only opportunity will be to obtain employment for some three months in the year, and then they must go into the unemployed camp or find themselves somewhere else to be cared for by the State. I think it is doing the State an immense injury to bring in such a Bill as this. If the Government are not ashamed of it already, they ought to be ashamed. Unfortunately, we have unemployed in our midst; but it is a scandal to us that we should have so many unemployed.

[*Mr. Warren.*]

There is no need for such a vast number of unemployed as we have in Queensland to-day.

Mr. FOLEY: They are everywhere, according to your own statement.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: They are everywhere, but why should their numbers be greater in Queensland than elsewhere? The fact is that a sympathetic Government has encouraged men to engage in strikes and other things, and following on that the number of unemployed has very largely increased.

Mr. FOLEY: Do you really believe that the Government encouraged men to go on strike?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Perhaps not in their own land, but I do say unhesitatingly that there have been occasions when strikes have occurred elsewhere when they have distinctly shown their sympathy with the men who have been on strike, and this Government positively aided the strikers in New South Wales. As a matter of fact, the men on strike in New South Wales eventually found their way to Queensland and are now in positions in some instances in Queensland, and have practically increased the number of our public servants, and perhaps made it more difficult for our own people to obtain employment that they otherwise would have obtained. There is no getting away from solid facts like that, and one naturally asks: How is it that in Queensland we have nearly double the unemployed that they have in Victoria; and as far as New South Wales is concerned, we have nearly three times the number of unemployed in proportion to our population; and that so far as South Australia is concerned, we have practically five times the number of unemployed.

Mr. HARTLEY: Where did you get those figures from?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The figures are taken from “Knibbs,” and they appeared in the papers here on the 7th of last month. How is it that such is the case and that we now find ourselves face to face with legislation in order to provide for the unemployed in our land? What troubles most people to-day is this: If the barometer is high to-day, in the event of such a Bill as the one now before the House being passed, or in anticipation of it being passed, you may depend that the barometer will rise. As it has been rising for months past, so it will continue to rise, because the unemployed in other places will say, “Queensland is the place for me,” and they will gradually find their way here in order to receive the benefits that will accrue under this Bill. The Secretary for Public Works, in introducing the Bill, said: “I desire to place before the House a full explanation of the principles of the Bill, because those principles are somewhat novel.” He further said: “It was the first practical attempt made anywhere to deal with the question in an adequate manner.” Further: “I am aware that much criticism might be directed against the scheme on the ground that the powers sought in the Bill might be arbitrarily or unwisely exercised or more drastically applied than is necessary.” Many times over the hon. gentleman admitted that the provisions of the Bill were drastic, and, indeed, there is no question but that the framers of the Bill had this idea in their

minds: that lest the Bill should not be sufficiently drastic, power was sought and obtained which would enable them, by proclamation, to put the screw on still more firmly and more tightly. Whilst I admit that there are some conditions in the Bill that are highly desirable where there are unemployed, should those conditions be followed in all cases the men would lose all regard for self-respect. I agree with the statements made by some hon. members on this side—that where relief is given, that relief should be contributory. It may be compulsory, but it certainly should be of a contributory nature. The worker, the employer, and the State should combine to provide against the days of unemployment, and if a Bill based on those conditions were introduced I feel sure every hon. member on this side of the House would give it his most hearty approval. If help was then found necessary by an individual, that individual would feel that he was simply receiving his own, and he would not feel that he was having doled out to him help in the form of charity, but that it was his inherent right, and, as was pointed out the other day, such a measure should be a national one. Any scheme of insurance to provide against unemployment should be a national scheme, and it should be contributory and it should be compulsory. There are certain things in connection with this Bill that have not so far been discussed. The Secretary for Public Works said very little regarding the financial side of the measure. All we know is that there is to be a levy of some £2 per employee on the employers who employ over five persons. As the Secretary for Public Works is not present, will the Premier be good enough to intimate the number of employers there are in the State who employ over five persons? Will he also state how many works there are in the State? I imagine that the Secretary for Public Works has not come down to the House with a measure of this kind without giving some attention to the financial side of it, and we should be advised before the debate closes just as to how the Bill is going to work out from a financial standpoint. One of the Southern papers, in criticising the Bill, had some very pertinent remarks to make regarding it. The "Bulletin" says—

"As all the mass of little people who run shops and farms and workshops and small jobs of their own—those who are at once employer and employee—will be exempt, the amount collected may not be so large as it looks; but it should be a matter of big finance all the same. The average proportion of unionists reported as unemployed all over Australia was 12 per cent. during the first quarter of 1915. Since then, though it has gone to 11 per cent. in Queensland, it has averaged a shade over 7 per cent. On a 7 per cent. basis, and assuming that the average unemployed pay is 25s. per week, it will take a subscription of £4 11s. per employee to keep the fund solvent, and the proposed £2 subscription will go bankrupt before it is well started. It may require more than £4 11s., for these calculations generally go wrong, and go wrong the wrong way. For one thing, unemployment is likely to increase. Any man of resource can be unemployed without striking, and with-

out too obviously avoiding work, and any restless married man with 35s. a week to supplement his savings or his credit can remain unemployed a good while in a pleasant northern climate. The new idea will thus make production dearer in the North, rendering it more difficult to keep ahead of southern competition, and it will make employers economise in the number of 'hands'—two more matters which are likely, to add to the unemployed and further assist to make hay of Ryan's calculations. But the proposal goes far beyond the mere collection and disbursement of money. The Governor in Council (Council being Ryan) 'may order and direct that employers shall do such things and take such measures as in his opinion shall be effective for temporarily or permanently reducing or eliminating unemployment within the State or any part of it.' 'Such things' reads like a blank cheque to be filled in at Ryan's discretion. The employer may possibly be ordered to take on twice as many men as he has work for, and pay them full wages, and furnish the unemployment levy for each of them; and the unemployment levy, after the first year, may apparently be anything. As no employer will know his liabilities in a land where 'such things' as he never heard of before may come upon him at any moment, it looks as if the Bill would make a finish of the job of being an employer up North."

There is a criticism that is not very nice for us in this State coming from another State. I have read it purposely, because there has been an almost entire absence of any statement from the Treasurer as to how the Bill is to be financed. Are we going to face bankruptcy regarding it, or are the employers who are to find this contribution of £2 per employee going to be asked in a short time to dub up another £2 per employee, and perhaps a very much greater sum? It is distinctly to the discredit of the Treasurer and of the Government generally that they should bring in such a measure without disclosing how it is going to pan out, and how they are going to balance it in the end. It is not fair to this House that it should be kept in the dark in the matter. This House has a right to be told, either in Committee, or now, what the end of it will be from the financial point of view. The unfairness of the constitution of the council has been referred to by more than one hon. member this evening. It seems monstrous that the money to be exacted from a certain section of the community should be expended under the direction of the council as proposed. Why should the men who should be the most sought after, namely, the men who will employ men and increase the number of their employees to obviate the necessity for such a Bill as this, be singled out in this way? Had there been more employers in the land, or had the employers had a free hand in carrying out their industries, in developing their businesses, there would have been very little unemployment to-day. We can very safely lay it at the door of the Government that there are so many unemployed in Queensland to-day. Had the Government given encouragement, had they established confidence, as they might have done, and as it was their duty to do, to my own knowledge there are

Mr. G. P. Barnes.]

many instances in which men would have been now in the enjoyment of good positions, and certainly of high wages. But what are we to expect when, added to the fact that the Government have increased the taxation by 200 per cent., they now come down with another tax which is going to press heavily upon the very individuals who pay the bulk of the other taxes? It is also stated that, in the event of unemployment being rife, the Government can order certain individuals and certain local authorities to undertake certain work. Has it not struck you, Mr. Speaker, that, on the whole, the same section of the community will again have to bear the burden? Who are the people who pay the bulk of the rates? The employers in the various towns and cities. And in addition to the £2 per head of employees, the employers of labour will again have to find the money to pay interest on the advances made by the Government to enable the unemployed to be provided with work. It will, therefore, be seen that the Government are out simply to lay an obligation upon one section of the community, and the very section that it should be their earnest endeavour to encourage.

Mr. COLLINS: What do you suggest in place of it?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I suggest, in the first place, that they should establish confidence.

The PREMIER: You had better move an amendment to that effect. (Government laughter.)

[11 p.m.]

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Once you establish confidence, there will be employment. There is no question about that, and the reason why there is so much unemployed is that those who have no confidence have no desire to develop their industries in any direction whatever. They do this, that, or the other thing, but nothing in comparison with what they would have done had they confidence. Why I object to this Bill is that it is going to undermine our manhood. It is a distinct bribe to the thriftless, to the ne'er-do-well, a bribe to those who look for work and do not want it in many instances, a bribe to those who are dissatisfied with their position in life and their work. They are not all alike, but so much has been done in telling them that they are not getting their rights from their employers that they really believe that they are not getting their rights.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Look at the profits out of industry and compare them with the wages.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The wage-earner has the opportunity of going to the Arbitration Court.

Mr. MULLAN: You know that the profiteer takes away the advantages granted by the court.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I do not think there are many profiteers in Queensland. The margin of profit is exceedingly small. On the Downs we have just passed through three years of extreme hardship, in two years of which the wheat crop was damaged on account of too much rain, and in the other year on account of drought. And yet business people are met with a condition of things like this. This is an inopportune

[*Mr. G. P. Barnes.*

moment to bring in such a measure. If we could do away with the idea that Bills of this kind have to be brought in to meet the demand of our State life, I believe you would soon find that employment would again be offering. I do not say that we will always be able to do away with unemployment. No land can do away with it. There will always be a number of unemployed floating about, but there is no reason why we should have the percentage who are at present in our midst.

The composition of the council surely cannot be considered fair. The Minister can scarcely be considered a free or unprejudiced man. The Director of Labour is scarcely likely to be unbiassed, if we are to think of the position in the light of the speech of the hon. member for Warrego the other evening, or the speech made by the hon. member for Toowoomba in Toowoomba the other night. Then there is the union representative, who will simply dance to the tune of the people who provide his position. The people who provide the funds are supposed to have one representative. They might as well have none at all. Such an individual would be powerless and he would be outvoted at every turn. It is just about as pure a bit of unfairness as is imaginable, to think that a council should be constituted like that to spend the money of a section which has only one vote. Then, it is not altogether acceptable from the local authorities' point of view, if they are to be called upon to carry out certain behests of the council or the Government of the day, which it really is, and they should have some representation. The idea of labour farms is perhaps not bad. I am inclined to think that the very best course which can be followed with individuals who are unemployed or unemployable is to give them work of that kind. The unfortunate aspect of the thing is that the Treasurer does not anticipate that it will pay. After all, the fact that unemployed are diverted to a farm may have some salutary effect, and no doubt the Government think that the scheme will save them some expense in respect of Dunwich, especially for men who are getting on in life. Instead of having to pay money directly out of consolidated revenue, it will be paid by a section of the community to whom I have referred. Still, I think the House should know from the Treasurer what the financial prospects are. He did not convey even a bare idea of it, and there should be a revelation of his mind in regard to that question at a very early date.

He surely cannot have thought of coming down to this House with a Bill which means the imposition upon a certain section of the community of a large sum of money, and the disbursement of a large amount for unemployed relief, without having figured it out. It is due to this House that he should lay before it at the earliest possible moment the figures he has at his hand.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Queenton*): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

The continuation of the debate was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at ten minutes past 11 o'clock p.m.