

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Council**

**WEDNESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 1919**

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

WEDNESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER, 1919.

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

### DEATH OF HON. W. H. CAMPBELL.

#### REPLY TO LETTER OF SYMPATHY.

The PRESIDENT: I have to announce that I have received from Mrs. W. H. Campbell a letter conveying her thanks for the message of sympathy on the death of her late husband, passed by the Council on 5th August last.

### THE LAND ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

#### INTRODUCTION.

HON. P. J. LEAHY moved—

“That leave be given to introduce a Bill to amend the Land Act of 1910 and the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act of 1917 in certain particulars.”

Question put and passed.

#### FIRST READING.

HON. P. J. LEAHY presented the Bill, and moved that it be read a first time.

Question put and passed.

The second reading was made an Order of the Day for Wednesday, 17th instant.

### NECESSITY FOR INCREASED PRODUCTION AND ADJUSTMENT OF STATE FINANCES.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES, in moving—

“That for the following reasons, namely:—

(a) The intricate post-war problems now facing all citizens and the heavy Federal taxation necessary to cover past and future expenditure for defence purposes and repatriation;

(b) The announced reduction of the annual per capita payments by the Commonwealth to the States;

(c) The necessity for making early provision for the higher interest and cost of conversion of loan money falling due in the near future;

(d) The alarming deficits suffered by the State from year to year in spite of the greatly increased revenue received largely as the result of excessive taxation;

(e) The increased cost of living in Queensland during the past four years;

(f) The present spreading unemployment affecting so many homes whose bread-winners seek remunerative work and not Government doles;

(g) The unrest, difficulty, distress, and loss of wages and products caused by the severity and frequency of recent strikes—

this Council is of opinion that the Government of this State should vigorously

foster every sound means to increase production without injury to the producer, and should so adjust expenditure of administration as to avoid further deficits and make the State finances balance without increasing the already intolerable burdens of the whole community."

said: I take it for granted at the commencement of what few brief remarks I have to make that every hon. member in this Chamber will be actuated during the discussion by one motive only, and that is the good of the country in which we live—Queensland. At the beginning I put forward a plea, which I know will not be disregarded by any hon. gentleman, that a motion such as this should be allowed the freest field for an independent expression of opinion, so that this Council may contribute in some measure towards the general thought of the community and help towards putting Queensland in the forefront of the States of the Commonwealth. The motion is a long one, and I propose to deal very briefly with its various subdivisions. I would invite the attention of hon. members to the first paragraph, which refers to the intricate post-war problems now facing the whole world, the influence of which must be felt in the remotest outposts of civilisation, and is already felt keenly in our own State.

Hon. R. SUMNER: Where is it felt?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: No citizen who gives any thought to the subject can look out upon our world to-day without experiencing some anxiety. The world is now at the cross roads. The war has thrown up into the light of day a number of forces in all countries, and nations can no longer live in water-tight compartments as they have lived for many centuries past. It may come to this: that society may be divided horizontally instead of vertically, and that the divisions between nations in the shape of mountains and oceans will be blotted out, and the world will become one vast whispering gallery, where everything done in every country can be heard next morning in every other country, and the bonds of humanity will be drawn tighter and tighter every day. No man present can live any longer in the last century.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Some of them would live two centuries back.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: We need to-day not so much destructive criticism for a war-distracted world as the finest optimism and the best constructive brains.

Hon. R. SUMNER: What for?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: For the repairing of the waste places in this old war-distracted earth, and for doing more than that. If I may be allowed to give a keynote of what my few remarks will be based upon, it is national development. In order that I may condense my own thoughts on the matter and save the time of hon. members, I propose to state principles and then to give one or two indubitable facts in support of them. One writer says—

"We knew that one by one the sombre horsemen of the apocalypse must ride forth over the world; famine and food shortage, blood-stained revolution, pestilence, and death. We are realising these things now. Both in Australia and in the world at large it is difficult to forecast the future. Financially, the world

is shaking like a quagmire; politically and socially the fog of bewilderment is blinding all parties alike, and while we are all conscious that mighty changes are afoot, none of us know whither they are leading us or what the final upshot will be."

I take it for granted that all hon. members read the daily Press and are conversant with the finest of thought as it appears in the magazines of to-day. That being so, they can only come to one conclusion, and that is, that the speed of movement for the whole world, whether for progress or in the other direction, has become tremendously accelerated in the last ten years. What are the cross roads at which the world and our own State of Queensland stand to-day? With regard to government, we may as well face the question at once—it is to be order versus disorder. We have to decide whether the pivot of government shall be removed from Parliament to some body outside of Parliament. We have to decide questions such as this—whether Parliament will be a registering body, a deliberative body, or merely a consultative body. We have to decide whether we shall evolve an improved social order by means of the ballot-box, or whether we shall evolve a changed social order by more direct means. One solution of the whole problem is Bolshevism.

Hon. R. SUMNER: What is wrong with it?

Hon. H. TURNER: What is right with it?

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Do you approve of it?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: I may be allowed to speak temperately on this matter, and I am sure that hon. members will preserve quite an open mind and a very tender conscience, and will ascribe the best of motives even to interjectors. We have just seen the position of Russia since it was handed over to Bolshevism.

Hon. W. R. CRAMPTON: We have not seen it at all.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: I know that the news which we receive from the other side of the world is very meagre, and perhaps, in a number of directions, it cannot be relied upon; but we do know that certain momentous changes are going on in that empire of eleven languages and 150,000,000 people.

Hon. R. SUMNER: And here, too.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: We have read of the utter downfall of Bolshevism in Hungary. I quote here from the Milan correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" referring to the downfall of the Bolshevik Premier of Hungary, which occurred with almost dramatic suddenness—

"After fighting for power for weeks the leaders of the Bolsheviks in the country now are flying from it in order to escape the reprisals they justly fear."

Without going further into this matter, I may say that that bloodstricken country is to-day an object lesson of the folly of extremism in any department of life. I know you must have flamboyant scouts in any movement, holding up their colours and shouting wildly, but for the leaders of the people there must be no picturesque folly such as that. We need solid, statesmanlike ability in order to lead the people on the high road. Bolshevism, as a matter of fact, is being

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exposed in all its naked helplessness at the present time. Let me, however, add this qualification—that the people of Russia, if we can read what is before us in the Parliamentary Library, have suffered enormous burdens during past centuries, and it may be said with some reason that there is that justification for the mass of the people there rising as one man and throwing off whatever yokes they can. It does not matter whether they kill 1,000 or 10,000 persons on the way—such is their antagonism at the treatment they have received century after century, and that may be pleaded in their justification. Let us give the fullest measure of weight to an argument like that; but what is happening to that poor country? It is a country strewn with corpses, a country where development is absolutely arrested, where the farmer is afraid to bring his grain to the market, and where the population is dwindling away by thousands. Those poor people in Russia are like the migratory birds that fly across the Atlantic, and then dash themselves against the huge torch on the statue of liberty in New York Harbour—against that excessive light—and fall dead. So the people of Russia in their desperate efforts to secure social freedom are dashing themselves against the excess of light in the huge torch of the statue of liberty.

HON. W. DEMAINE: What has that got to do with your motion?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is one solution that is proposed for the unrest which has spread over all countries of the world to-day. The people in Russia are like sheep without a shepherd.

HON. L. McDONALD: It was the "dago" yesterday, it is the Russian to-day.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I hope it will not be a case of a "night-go." We might ask, who are the leaders of the people in Russia to-day? We find that the very leaders of the people are running away from the tremendous disorders which they themselves have created.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: And they are held up as a model in Queensland.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The message against lawlessness is written in letters of blood across Russia to-day, which is under a temporary rule of terror from the White Sea to the Black Sea. I do not know whether it is a right policy for Great Britain to intervene in that country—we are not discussing that question to-day—but if she does intervene it will only be with a sense, probably, of helping in some way to mitigate the horrors of the revolution which has spread like a prairie fire over that immense territory. Here is a statement with regard to Bolshevism in Russia—

"The Russian Bolshevik leader (M. Lenin) has ordered the Minister for Railways to prepare for an understanding with the Menshevists (those who favour orderly government), and has issued a proclamation sharply reprimanding the workmen who are continuously demanding higher wages, and do not desire to work. The Government recently sought to suppress strikes, and executed 150 strike leaders, but in spite of this the strikes continue to spread. The peasants obstinately refuse to send grain to the towns."

HON. W. R. CRAMPTON: Where do you get that information from?

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HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: From a recent cablegram from Copenhagen, the Stockholm correspondent of the "Morning Post," which is one of the reputable daily Press gives some further information.

HON. W. DEMAINE: What channel do you get your information through?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Stockholm correspondent of that journal says that—

"The Russian Bolshevik Government is making serious efforts to secure reconciliation with the bourgeoisie and intellectuals of Russia. Technical experts are now receiving much higher salaries than the communists. The Bolsheviks are also ready to make important concessions to any country willing to open up trade connections with Russia."

HON. L. McDONALD: There is nothing about Bolsheviks in your motion.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That matter comes under the intricate post-war problems now facing every honest citizen. It is a question whether that wave of lawlessness has managed to reach the shores of Queensland to-day, and whether we as live citizens ought not to have our eyes open to the dangers which threaten Australia.

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: Like causes like effects.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I will answer that interjection at once. There is no reason at all why there should be unemployment in Queensland. There is no reason why a single man, or even a married man, should be unemployed.

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: Yes, there is—capitalism.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Queensland is the paradise of the world for any man who likes to work for his living.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You admit that there is less unemployment here than in the other States?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I shall give figures on that point, so that hon. gentlemen may be in a position to form their own conclusions. This is a cablegram from Geneva dated 24th August—

"A traveller from Moscow reports that he interviewed M. Lenin, who, he said, is convinced of the impossibility of carrying out the Bolshevik ideals, and is consulting Russian business men with a view to ending the country's desperate situation. M. Lenin told him that he was willing to denationalise industries, convoke a National Assembly, and personally retire. It was reported that M. Lenin was negotiating with anti-Bolshevik parties for the formation of a coalition Government."

We all know what that great leader Lenin—I call him a great leader, whether he is a good or bad leader—said the other day. He said that out of 100 followers, one was a true disciple, thirty were parasites, and sixty-nine were fools. That was his own private estimate of the character of every 100 of his followers.

HON. W. R. CRAMPTON: How is it that he has been holding power for two years.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: He has been holding power under the bonds of blood.

HON. W. R. CRAMPTON: The Russian people have been held under tribute for 500 years.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Vladimir Boursieff, the "Historian of Revolution," says, speaking of Bolsheviks—

"They always shrieked against capital punishment, but afterwards they themselves introduced it as a system, and preached lynch law high and low—nearly every one of their decrees ends with a threat to shoot somebody. They have covered all Russia with corpses. They stood for the freedom of the Press, but they have proved themselves such censors and repressors of the Press as Russia has never known before."

I do not say that that is any worse than what was done under the police espionage system ten years ago in Russia. The writer continues—

"They were against prisons, but they changed into passionate lovers of the prisons and became brutal gaolers, to imprison people by hundreds without trial or examination. They spoke of peace, but gave us war over the length and breadth of Russia. They spoke of bread, but gave the people a stone."

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: You imprisoned men here without trial, too.

HON. T. M. HALL: And we let them out without reason, too.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: All these excesses are to be deprecated. The Pope, in a letter to certain bishops assembled to discuss the question of democracy, according to a cablegram of the 4th September, 1919, is reported to have said—

"The Pope, in a letter to the French bishops, discussing the growing tendency towards democracy among various nations as a result of the war, deprecates industrial excesses, which, he says, will be finally detrimental to the workers themselves. The Church had always befriended those in distress; hence the bishops should favour the claims of the proletariat, but within the limits of justice and honesty. Catholics were exhorted to unite among themselves and with the citizens of goodwill."

Then we have the opinions of Messrs. Renaudel and Albert Thomas. They are Labour leaders in the French Parliament, whose names stand fairly well all over Europe.

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: They stand like "Billy" Hughes stands here.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: At any rate, they were addressing a socialist conference.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Was that the Amsterdam conference?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No; it was a socialists' conference. They—

"denounced extremist Bolshevik tendencies, and urged the workers to close up their ranks. They said that they would prefer to withdraw from the conference rather than lead in an atmosphere of doubt and disorder."

A circular dated the 23rd February, 1915, was sent out from the director of the Press in Berlin, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and it was sent out to the whole world. I quote from Mr. Dillon's "Eclipse of Russia," a volume which is authentic from cover to cover. At page 292, there is a copy of the letter accompanying that circular, and I quote from it because it is most

apposite to this portion of my argument. The letter was sent out to all ambassadors, Ministers, plenipotentiaries, and others—

"for the purpose of creating social movements accompanied by strikes, revolutionary outbursts, separationists' movements, and civil war, as well as agitation in favour of disarmament, and the cessation of this sanguinary war."

Does not that letter describe conditions in Australia during the last two years? There is the same propaganda going on as has been denounced as absolute treason by Mr. Gompers and other leaders in America.

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: Gompers is another beautiful specimen.

HON. T. M. HALL: He is too big for you.

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: Give us any other "Judas" you can name.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Mr. Gompers happens to be president of the American Federation of Labour.

HON. W. R. CRAMPTON: That is all.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: And a very great authority amongst Labour men.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am not against anyone in this matter. The letter from which I have quoted is an absolute copy of a letter cited by one of the greatest writers on Germany and Russia to-day—a writer of undisputed authority.

[4 p.m.] Those are the absolute orders sent out after being hatched in a certain centre in Europe on 23rd February, 1915, to all the belligerent allies of the entente. Could the conditions in Australia fit in better with anything?

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: Never a letter of that sort came to Australia, and you know it very well.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I refer hon. members, if they wish further information on this most interesting subject, to the last issue of the New York "Forum," containing a most powerful appeal by Mr. Samuel Gompers, and giving most astounding facts with regard to certain propaganda in America. Mr. John Bruce Mitchell in the same issue warns the people of America against the self-same propaganda—it is an article which might make all serious citizens think and see just where the tendency is leading to. I know that hon. members think that they can always start a motor-car and pull it up at any moment. They think that they can start a bush fire and put it out with a pail of water. They think they can start a train on a down grade and stop it when they like. You cannot always do these things. I think it should be said most plainly that we, the loyal and honest citizens of Queensland, have no room whatever for any spreaders of poison in this community, that we have no room whatever for any secret misleaders of the people, and that we have no room whatever for world-spoilers here, and that the choice before every man in the world to-day is whether he is going to be a builder or a destroyer.

HON. R. SUMNER: You will have to destroy the freemasons to start.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The hon. member may know more about that than I do. At any rate, everyone must be one or the other, his sympathies must be in one direction or the other—and they must not be secret; it is time to state whether we intend

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to build or to destroy. A child can set fire to a building; it takes an architect and brains to replace it, and builders, too.

Now, I refer most briefly to some of the post-war problems before us to-day. First of all—and it refers to Queensland—we have the feeding of starving Europe. We have the reopening of the choked channels of trade. Everyone knows what happened in connection with the strike in Australia, and we have the result and its loss of £3,000,000 worth of wages. Then we have the recreating of the freedom of the seas. We have the problem of the child nations of the world. Do not hon. members hear the 320,000,000 of Indians? Can they not see China with its 400,000,000 just awakening?

HON. R. BEDFORD: When she awakens it will give Japan such a sight as she has not expected.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am glad the hon. member is interested, and I hope he will take a wider horizon than some in authority in the world to-day. Who would dare to give the full franchise to India to-day?

HON. R. BEDFORD: They have as much right to govern themselves as any of the small nations.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: If you put a razor in a child's hands, what happens?

HON. R. BEDFORD: They are older in civilisation than the British themselves.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The real reason, as the hon. member knows, is that if people cannot read or write they become an easy prey to demagogues. I welcome a sober and educated democracy, the only hope of the world to-day. But how can you give the franchise to India with a thin film of British officialdom over a whole country, with over 300,000,000 hardly knowing their right hand from their left? It must be a limited franchise and there must be education. However, that is a side track, and I do not propose to be side-tracked. There is also the question of racial bars, an ugly question which came up before the Peace Conference and must be faced by Australia, and by Queensland more than any other State in Australia.

HON. W. R. CRAMPTON: The factory system is breaking down the castes in India rapidly.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It has taken countless centuries to build up the caste system, and I do not think it is going to be broken down in a day.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Why should a few British govern 320,000,000 Indians?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I do not intend to refer to that. I may be allowed to refer the hon. member to the last address of Lord Chelmsford to the Indian Parliament as appearing in the magazines. Then we have the revolution caused by the airships, which will soon blot out geographical boundaries. We are not awake to it yet. We do not know that as a matter of fact our railways may be scrapped in a few years so far as passenger traffic is concerned.

In five years' time I have no doubt that half this Chamber will take an airship trip to London. The hon. member must keep his eyes open. He must know that there are regular post services between London and

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Paris to-day, and between Washington, Chicago, and New York, that a Frenchman is already flying on his way to Australia, that it will be no matter of seven days to Perth before two years are over. If he does not know these facts he will be like a standing tree while the train of civilisation go whizzing past. Then, there is the problem of the shifting of the world's financial pivot. All last century it was London; before that it was on the bourses of Europe. To-day it is just a question whether it is New York, and I do not blame the Government for going across the Pacific instead of across the Atlantic to see if they can raise loan money. I do not know whether they got any, but the pivot is just hovering between New York and London to-day.

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: Can you shift it?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We have to consider this question: If New York is to be the place, or if we have to get our money from New York via London, we have to be very careful. Then, there is the question of the domestic government of the British Empire. That is a large question.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Which has nothing whatever to do with us.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Has the hon. member seen the papers this week?

HON. R. BEDFORD: I would be quite prepared to govern this place properly, and leave the others to look after themselves.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am not going to go out of my way to reply to the hon. member. If he will look at the "Weekly Notes" of this week, he will see a certain decision given by the Privy Council on 3rd July. He will find out that we are an integral part of the British Empire still.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Who says we are not? Does that give us any right to govern a large portion of the population of the British Empire?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We are not governing anything but our own half-million.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: We are not even governing them.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: These are problems before the world to-day. I do not refer to any of the smaller problems. As a matter of fact, there are just sixty-two complex questions of boundaries before the Peace Conference, which will be considering its decisions for the next five or six months, but Australia has her own special problems, and Queensland in turn has her own special problems, and probably we can do best by minding our own business and not interfering with the problems that lie across the water.

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: Exactly.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: But we would be very foolish indeed if, having a tower on our own allotment, we got up there and shut our eyes to what was going on around us. A wise man is he who can hear the thunderstorm coming. Now, with regard to the war and questions of repatriation, I see from the latest figures I can get, those up to 26th August, that the total casualties of the Australian forces in the war were 313,903, including 58,974 deaths. In the matter of repatriation and dealing with our soldiers—

HON. R. BEDFORD: What are soldiers compared with fish?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I would ask that all hon. members—I am sure the majority will—give the most sympathetic and sincerely sympathetic consideration to the matter of repatriation.

HON. R. BEDFORD: This State has done more than any other State.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: No.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Yes, it has—given them the fairest deal of any.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: You could not make a correct statement if you tried.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The number of wounded is 166,812, of sick 87,881, whilst 218 represent casualties unspecified.

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: The same man counted over and over again.

HON. R. SUMNER: What has this to do with that motion?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: These are facts that ought to command the sympathetic hearing of everybody in the community. If the hon. member had been where I was this morning he would speak a little more tenderly on subjects such as this.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Do not say that any man is not speaking tenderly about them.

The PRESIDENT: I must ask hon. members on my right to observe order, and cease interjections. They will have the opportunity of getting up and addressing the Council after the Hon. Mr. Fowles has sat down. The hon. member is in possession of the floor, and is entitled to be heard.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: This is a matter that affects both State and Federal Parliaments, and it would be a matter for regret that it should be made a football for party politics. I am sure that this House will not consent to its being made a mere football. We do not know how deep are the feelings of the community on this subject. I know of one case where a boy came home after being four years away. Three years ago a funeral service was held for him, because he was reported dead, and I attended it. He came home to flags and electric light, but his brother who went to meet him, fell dead of heart disease before he could shake his hand, and the house that was to be a house of jubilation is a house of drawn blinds to-day. All that is happening in Australia, and it would be the sheerest stony unconcern and the most utter callousness on the part of anybody not to give sympathetic consideration to it, and not to curse anybody who wished to degrade it into being the football of party politics.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Who is trying to do that but yourself? You contradict everything good that the Government do for the soldier.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I have here a statement with reference to the New Zealand Government—and I do not want any comparison to be drawn from this. The New Zealand Government have taken into their ranks Major Coates, M.C., Kaipara, and two other returned soldiers, and it is giving absolute satisfaction over there.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Would you suggest that the Hon. Mr. Cuffe Jones should go in here?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: With regard to the repatriation of the troops, a large amount of censure has been directed at the Federal Government, but on 17th July, out of 300,000 men only 7,189 Australians were left in England, so that they are being repatriated with the utmost expedition. I have all the figures here in reference to repatriation from the beginning of the year.

HON. L. McDONALD: Is this a defence of the Commonwealth Government policy in regard to repatriation?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am just pleading for sympathetic treatment of the soldiers when they come back.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Is that not here already?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We come to the post-war problems with regard to money, and we ask what has the cost of the war been? We cannot consider our cost in regard to the war without considering the cost of war to other nations from whom we borrow money. This is the thing that has to be faced, as far as the borrowing of money is concerned, or else we shall find we have got to put up a notice, "To let," and let somebody else take charge. As a matter of fact, the war debt of the nations to 1st January, 1919—and I shall speak here in millions, because we cannot deal with the question on any other basis—the war debts of Great Britain up to 1st January, 1919, were £8,000,000,000, France £6,000,000,000, Russia £5,400,000,000, Italy £2,400,000,000, and United States £4,200,000,000. The entente nations' war debts totalled £26,000,000,000, the German Empire £8,000,000,000, Austria-Hungary £4,800,000,000. The Teutonic nations' war debts totalled £12,800,000,000, and the gross debt under which the nations of the world—the immediately belligerent nations—are staggering to-day—

HON. W. H. DEMAINE: Are we responsible for that?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No, we are not; but, unfortunately, we cannot live upon a little island all by ourselves. The gross war debt totals £38,000,000,000. That does not include the debts of the dominions or smaller nations. Most of that £38,000,000,000 was shot into the air, and it must be replaced from the soil. That is a bedrock fact—that everyone—worker with hand or brain—has to be seized of; that £38,000,000,000 of wealth of the world has been thrown overboard into the sea, and has got to be replaced from the land. The cost of the war has been nearly £40,000,000,000 to date! What is Australia's war bill? These figures will come with a shock to those who have not been following the enormous leaps made in national expenditure. Australia's war bill is £350,000,000. Of this sum, £235,000,000 will have been spent in Australia by the time the last account is settled, and £115,000,000 abroad. The money spent abroad relates to the equipping and training of the Australian force, and the £235,000,000 spent in the Commonwealth was for feeding, clothing, and equipping the men before they went abroad, and in disbursing the allotment money to soldiers' dependents. Now we come to the point with regard to that £350,000,000 of expenditure. The annual payment for interest and sinking funds on that war expenditure will be no less than £13,031,000—an annual increased burden upon the people of Australia. The war pensions will be not less than £5,000,000. The total increased burdens, as far as finances

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are concerned, on a population of between 5,000,000 and 6,000,000 will be annually £18,031,000, due as a result of the war. If that does not make any statesman pause, I do not know what facts would, unless he is riding for a fall. I might give that total of £18,031,000 as an increased burden upon the present obligations of the citizens of the Commonwealth. I omit what has been spent already in repatriation, but I come to another subject now that may well demand attention on the part of anyone who is considering the financial burdens which will have to be borne by every citizen of the Commonwealth. Now we come to the way that financial burden will hit every citizen of Queensland. It may be a question for doubt whether we are taxed up to the breaking point to-day, or whether we are not—I will leave that question on one side—but it is absolutely sure that the taxation in Queensland inevitably will be enormously increased as a result of the war. It will be no less than £3 per head for every man, woman, and child in Queensland, and an annual impost as a result of the war. We come to another point that has probably escaped the notice of most hon. gentlemen, because it is hidden away in the report of the conference of Treasurers and Premiers and the Prime Minister early this year, which report is not long ago to hand, and that is the reduction of the per capita payments under the new Federal Bill. As everybody knows, we are receiving at the present time from the Federal exchequer £1 5s. per head per year, and that is a very tidy income, and helps us over some very hard places. But the Bill before the Federal Parliament this week is loaded to this extent: that that per capita payment on which Queensland had depended ever since federation has to be cut down 2s. 6d. every year; so that the £1 5s. has only to be £1 2s. 6d. next year, and by a gradual process spread over six years, in six years from to-day we shall be receiving from the Commonwealth Government only 10s. per head of our population; that is to say, instead of getting an amount approximate to £1,000,000 every year as we do from the Federal Government, we shall be receiving less than a quarter of a million—our revenue will be gradually shrinking year by year. As a matter of fact, in Queensland the recent revenue from all State sources was £10 10s. 10d., the revenue from the Commonwealth per individual was £1 4s. 6d., and the total revenue per head £11 15s. 4d.; but that revenue from the Commonwealth will gradually go down until it is a mere 10s. a head. There is no escape from that. The Bill for the reduction for the per capita payments to the States is before the Federal Parliament at the present time, and will, doubtless, become law at the end of this week or next.

HON. R. SUMNER: What has that to do with this motion? You are bringing everything in.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It means that our revenue will be cut short. I refer briefly to the public debts in Australia to-day, and I find, with a very little arithmetical calculation Australia's debt is no less than £137 per head of the population—a staggering amount. The debt per head of the population in the United Kingdom is £160, in New Zealand £170, in South Africa £120, and in India £1 10s.—but, of course, we cannot consider that, because they have

320,000,000 people there, and they are out of it for the purpose of comparison. In Canada, the total debt, with its 9,000,000 of population, is £240,000,000. Canada has a war debt of £400,000,000, while we have £350,000,000.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Before you can get any analogy from those figures you must state the productivity of each country. This is the richest country in the world per head.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Potentially, it may be. Our returns have been declining for a large number of years. I hold that Queensland will probably be the richest of the States.

HON. R. BEDFORD: That is so.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The post-war taxation will come as a thunderclap upon the people of Australia, and will fall like a bombshell on the people of our own State. I direct the attention of hon. gentlemen to another by-path, which is most interesting. I have here the latest reports for 1919 of the Public Debt Reduction Fund of Queensland, the Loans Act Sinking Fund of Queensland, and of the creation and inscription of stock of Queensland, and I find that some millions of money will require to be raised or converted next year—before the end of 1920. There is not the slightest doubt that the Premier on his visit to London did his very best to make arrangements for the conversion of these loans next year. It goes without saying that he would make the most judicious inquiries with regard to that, and that he would try his best to make some arrangement for the conversion of those millions of money which are maturing next year. Victoria has already seen that deluge coming, and has floated a loan. The Victoria loan of £4,000,000 has been fully subscribed. The applications for the loan totalled £2,400,000, and the cash subscribed, £1,029,000. Victoria was first in the field in June last, and secured £4,000,000 at 5½ per cent, or 5 5/8 per cent.—I think it was 5½ per cent.

HON. R. BEDFORD: It should want money less than any State, because it has comparatively a large population with a small area.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: They are very advantageous terms. I quote from the Agent-General for Victoria, Mr. Norris, who returned from England on 21st July. His opinion is that, as far as the Empire money market is concerned, Australia will have to look to her own market for cheap money. That is the opinion of a man who has come from the financial centres of the world, and he says we have to help ourselves out of our own pocket. I quote from our next door neighbour, Mr. Holman, who said his Government was again considering the question of going on the London market for a loan. They had just ended the financial year with a surplus of £215,000, the fourth annual surplus which they have had in New South Wales. The only year in which they went back was in that of the big strike. Mr. Holman, of course, was opposed to the Commonwealth proposal to reduce the per capita payment to the States. His alternative system would be discussed at the National Convention now sitting. They have a surplus, and although they have huge loan money to be converted very soon, nevertheless they can see their way to tide over the next three years in New South Wales. I do

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not know exactly what our loan prospects are in London or America.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Give Australia a high tariff, and the foreign moneylender can go back.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Premier was somewhat cryptic in his replies, and I do not suppose anybody knows whether his mission was successful or not with regard to loan money in London or America. We might point out that the British Government, as stated in the "Bulletin," will probably issue a stupendous loan to repay the war debts. What will happen? When their loan is on the market we pick up the crumbs. They are only crumbs compared with the big amount lent out, but our chances of getting loans in the London market will become less and less. One London banker tells the "Bulletin" that the nominal interest on the next money borrowed would be  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., but with bonuses and other concessions the real interest will be £5 1s.—3 per cent. or more—and that the repayment will happen about fifty-seven years hence. The rate looks high, but the amount of short-dated loans which begin to fall due from the dominions in 1920 is appalling; taking one thing with another the  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. loan on which the real interest is about £5.4 or £5.5 per cent. is quite feasible. This leads us to inescapable conclusion that the interest rate on our Australian debt will come up to £5.10 per cent. That is the point I am making—that the conversion of the loan in 1920 which we got twenty-five years ago at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. will shoot up to £5.10. This will raise the interest on State debts by about £6,000,000 a year interest alone, with no provision for sinking fund, quite apart from the interest on expensive Federal liabilities of £18,000,000 a year, with a slender population less than that of London. If John Bull, who used to finance everyone else can be held up like this on a renewal operation, Australia will have to do some hard thinking and cease getting into debt.

HON. R. BEDFORD: If we cannot pay, the foreign moneylender will have to withdraw their troops from Russia and send them here.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I do not know what will happen. We ought to be careful about seeming to adopt a policy of repudiation.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I am not saying that; but suppose we could not pay?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: What are we doing with regard to the payment of our loans in England and our war expenditure?

The financial year in Great Britain ends on 31st March, and they reckon that they will have to raise £25 per head in taxes and sundries, and £6 per head in loans. For Australia it is reckoned that we shall have to raise £7 or £8 per head in taxation and sundries, and £15 or £16 per head by way of loan.

HON. R. BEDFORD: The soldiers' money is still creating false prosperity in trading circles. As soon as that ceases, the trouble will start.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is not for the adult population alone; but for every man, woman, and child there will be taxation to the extent of from £22 to £24 per annum,

and no provision made for a sinking fund. I now propose to deal with paragraph (d)—

"The alarming deficits suffered by the State from year to year in spite of the greatly increased revenue received largely as the result of excessive taxation."

I propose to deal with that with the utmost brevity. I have a large number of facts and figures that have been published since this Parliament reassembled. In Federal finance to-day there is a surplus of £4,000,000.

HON. R. SUMNER: What have we to do with that here?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The customs and postal revenue are buoyant. In New South Wales they had a surplus of £215,000, and there is to be no extra taxation.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: A surplus of £4,000,000 and £400,000,000 debt is not much to boast about.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am only giving the facts, I do not say whether the Commonwealth is well run or badly run. The surplus in Victorian finance is no less than £330,000; the revenue for the financial year was better than the Budget estimate by £681,000. That was on 5th August. The revenue returns show that for August the position has been maintained. The Victoria finances seem to be particularly buoyant at the present time. On the other hand, in Western Australia the finances are in a hopeless quagmire. According to a telegram from Perth, dated 28th August, the accumulated deficit, from the days of the Scaddan Ministry up to the present time, is £1,374,253. Even little Papua, across Torres Strait, showed a surplus for last year of £9,742.

HON. R. SUMNER: What conclusions do you come to—whether a deficit or a surplus is better for the country?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The conclusion is obvious to all the rest of us that in Queensland we must try to square the ledger by some means or other, because we are fastening a burden of debt and interest upon everyone in the community. I merely refer to the succession of deficits from which this State has unfortunately suffered during the past four or five years.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: We are living in abnormal times.

HON. R. BEDFORD: And we have to face the conversion of loans which were floated in the bad old times.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I know that the times call for the very best statesmanship and for a cessation, as far as possible, of all party bickerings. I know that we are living in abnormal times—that we have had the war, an epidemic, and shipping troubles, to contend with. But New South Wales has had all these things to face, and yet she has had four years of surpluses. Victoria has had the same difficulties to contend with, and triumphs in a surplus. Little Tasmania is proud of her surplus. Papua is proud of its surplus. The only two States that seem to be in a financial quagmire are Queensland and Western Australia.

HON. R. BEDFORD: The two biggest States of the lot, where the cost of Government per head must be necessarily higher than in the more densely populated States.

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HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am not blaming anyone, but merely stating facts. The last deficit announced in this State was £171,988, according to the Treasury returns to the end of June. Since then the Government show an increasing expenditure and a slightly falling revenue. We had a slight explanation with regard to that, but the explanation does not alter the fact that we have a declining revenue, an increasing expenditure, and an increasing deficit. I have here most of the facts about the State enterprises, and that kind of thing from all over Australia.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Increased production will soon pull up the revenue when things become normal again.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I will come to that immediately. The question is whether we cannot, to some extent at all events, stop the leak in the railways. I know how it can be done, but I do not know any Government that would be resolute and courageous enough to take the obvious method of doing it. I may be allowed here to quote a few sentences from a leading article in the "Daily Standard," of 2nd July last, dealing with this question—

"There is a limit to all things. The consolidated revenue is not a bottomless well. If there was no standard of receipts and expenditure to work by in the Government departments this State and the remains of its consolidated revenue would fall into the bottomless pit. That might be many years after the present generation had its 'good time' of easy come, easy go, public administration. But the end of bankruptcy, of starvation even, is there for all to see. Money—silver, gold, notes, cheques—is only representative of wealth. The real wealth is in the goods, the consumable and usable articles of production. That is a good freetrade maxim amongst several bad ones. But if we spend too much money our title to a fair share in Queensland's production of consumable goods will have gone so far that starvation will arrive, unless the Jews of London are kind.

"A policy of making the railways meet expenditure must be kept. There are too many other things on consolidated revenue at present. Of course, it would be not entirely novel to propose that the railways and trams should be free like roads and bridges. But let there be a policy. And let it be adhered to. For our part we leave it to the political parties to grasp the nettle."

Another part of the article is in absolute capitals—"THE RAILWAYS MUST PAY."

HON. R. BEDFORD: There is nothing wrong with that.

HON. R. SUMNER: Are you going to back it up?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We do not happen to be the Government at the present time. The question is: Are the Government going to back it up? That is the policy propounded by the "Daily Standard," but apparently the Government are not following that policy.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is a sound policy.

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HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is a sound policy, but we should make something more of it than mere sound. We must translate it into absolute fact. I do not suppose there is a Government in Australia at the present time that would be prepared resolutely to face the position and embark on a policy that would make the railways pay.

HON. R. BEDFORD: And that is said by a man who represents the worst kind of drifters we have ever had in politics.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Well, I endeavour not to misrepresent anyone. Everyone knows that the railways were paying up to a certain date, and that they are not paying at the present time. However, I leave that to be dealt with by hon. members who are experts in railway matters, and who will probably have a lot of difficulty in proving to Queenslanders that the railways are paying. As a matter of fact, there is likely to be a tremendous increased burden in the way of taxation upon everyone in this country in consequence of the position of the railways.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: There are two ways of making the railways pay—by increasing fares and freights, or by retrenchment.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Fares and freights have already been increased—freights by 20 per cent.

HON. R. BEDFORD: They are still as low as anything in Australia.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I do not intend to be led off the track into what might be an interesting discussion. I just point to the inescapable fact that the railways will return during the current year about 10s. 6d. per cent.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Would it not be unwise to increase freights on an industry that could not possibly bear the increased rates? For instance, I do not think copper would stand any heavier freight.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I do not know; it would all depend on the output. If you can carry copper at 3d. per ton per mile from Cloncurry to the coast, it is pretty good. I quite see that we need a network of railways running through desert places to link up our vast territory. Then, the cost of living has increased greatly during the past four years, or, rather, during recent years. That is a matter to which special attention ought to be given by the present Government. There is not the slightest doubt that there have been large increases—up to 100 per cent. almost in some cases—in the cost of a number of articles in ordinary everyday use during the past four years. We cannot question the statement made on the subject by the Commonwealth Statistician with reference to the variation in the prices of food and groceries for forty-six commodities in the month of July in the Commonwealth. We find that the increased cost of living in that month since the outbreak of war has been greatest in Queensland—62.3 per cent., being followed in the order named by New South Wales, 53 per cent.; Victoria, 43.8 per cent.; Tasmania, 42.2 per cent.; Western Australia, 37.5 per cent.; South Australia—the lowest—36 per cent. So that Queensland has the unenviable notoriety of having increased her cost of living by almost double the increase in South Australia. Taking the month of May, as compared

with the month of April, I find that the greatest increase occurred in Western Australia—22.8 per cent.—being followed in the order named by Queensland, 16.2 per cent.; New South Wales, 13.5 per cent.; Victoria, 5 per cent.; South Australia, 4.9 per cent.; and Tasmania, 2.8 per cent. I do not know what was responsible for the increase in Tasmania being so little—whether it was that they could not ship their apples to England or something of that kind. At all events, the cost of living has soared highest in Queensland.

HON. R. SUMNER: Those figures are not worth anything.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am glad to know that the policy of the Government is receiving a little enlightenment at the present time. Their policy was absolutely "cheap food." That was their policy when they came into office. Now, one of the Cabinet Ministers, the Hon. W. N. Gillies, is reported to have said—

"In the course of his remarks at the opening ceremony, Mr. Gillies pointed out that agriculture was the premier industry and deserved fostering. He expressed the hope that as time went on greater stability would be given to the sugar industry in the form of increased production. It must be admitted that sugar was one of their cheapest products, and was one of their cheapest articles of food. He was not one to clamour for cheap food."

That statement was made by a member of the Ministry at the Gin Gin show about three weeks ago, and he said that "He was not one to clamour for cheap food."

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He may have been misreported in the newspapers.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No; the statement fits in with the whole of his argument. He further said—

"With the high wages offering, it was only reasonable to expect that the primary producers should get a fair price for their product."

And that means high prices for food. That fact stares us in the face at the present time.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: A Liberal member said he hoped that the price of meat would go up to 1s. per lb.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I may point out that Australia is getting her sugar at the present time cheaper than the price realised by Natal sugar in the world's markets to-day. As far as sugar is concerned, we ought to be satisfied—well, I will not say satisfied, with the protective tariff which is in operation to-day, but I would say that there should be no growling because our protective tariff is so high.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Why should not sugar produced here be supplied at a reasonable price to the Australian consumer?

HON. P. J. LEAHY: You want to make a coolie of the farmer here.

HON. R. BEDFORD: No; I say he should get the biggest possible price for his commodities after the price is fixed for the consumers in Australia.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Government of this State should give the most serious attention to this matter. The Victorian Government has led the way; on 12th

August last they appointed a Commission to inquire into the cost of living, and that Commission is sitting at the present time and is getting most interesting information. It is an impartial Royal Commission, and they have gone to the fullest extent into the question of supply and demand and the question of the price of commodities, and one of their first decisions is a decision in which they condemn price-fixing.

HON. R. SUMNER: You might condemn wage-fixing on the same principle.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That may be so, but the fact is that this Commission has condemned price-fixing. I notice that in Western Australia they have introduced a Prices Regulation Bill, under which—

"The Government will fix the prices of necessaries on the Commissioner's report, and will proclaim prices' areas in different parts of the State. No fixed rates of profit will be declared, but a fair and reasonable profit will be allowed. The maximum penalty for selling at over the fixed prices will be a fine of £200 and twelve months' imprisonment. It will be an offence to refuse to sell at the fixed maximum, unless he can show a reasonable cause for refusal."

They do not propose to fix the prices of commodities, but they propose to fix what is a reasonable profit. What do we find to be the reason for high prices? Obviously the first reason is a shortage of supplies, and the second reason is that during the war we have been living largely on borrowed money which was circulated in Australia but without productive results. Looking at the matter from an economic standpoint, those are the reasons for the high cost of living. Professor Atkinson, in dealing with this question in Melbourne on the 3rd of the present month, expressed the following opinion:—

"The reason of the prevailing high prices, said Professor Meredith Atkinson to-day to the members of the Housewives' Association, was not to be found only in Australia. It was a world-wide problem, and it was probable that Australia was finding it less difficult than the nations which were in the vortex of war. The fundamental causes of the trouble were, in the first place, the shortage of supplies, and, secondly, that we were living on borrowed money, which was circulating without productive results. Professor Atkinson expressed the opinion that what was needed most in Australian cities was the establishment of well-regulated public markets. Another great benefit to weekly wage-earners would be the organisation of their own co-operative stores. In both these points Australia was the most backward country in the world. The Australian wage-earner concentrated on politics to the detriment of his own comfort and economy."

The name of Professor Atkinson is one which is held in the highest esteem by the workers of Queensland.

HON. T. L. JONES: He does not say that the worker should abandon politics?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No. The inference from his remarks is, not that the

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worker should abandon politics, but that he should give less attention to politics, and more attention to the bread and butter on his breakfast table. Professor Atkinson thinks it would be best for the workers, in their own interests—in the interests of their households, and in the interests of their pockets—to leave politics alone. The question of the increased cost of living is, of course, bound up with the question of a living wage. Would it not be better, in order to stimulate the production that is so much needed in the world, to give a living wage on a small scale, and so much extra for production? As long as you have a living wage that will keep a man in comfort, what incentive is there to do anything more for him? We are faced with a tremendous shortage in production in the world to-day; half of Europe is starving.

HON. A. SKIRVING: What do you call a living wage?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: £3 7s. a week has been given by the Industrial Arbitration Court award as a living wage.

HON. A. SKIRVING: I ask what do you call a living wage?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Oliver Wendall Holmes said—

“I only ask that fortune send  
A little more than I can spend.”

However, the latest Arbitration Court award fixes a living wage at £3 7s. per week.

HON. A. SKIRVING: They take an ordinary family—a man, his wife, and four children.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No—two children, and there is an attempt being made to bring it up to three children. It might not be a bad thing to give a family vote in these days when there is such child wastage, and when the best national asset must be our own children. I would throw this point out for the consideration of hon. gentlemen, that those who work most with their brains will combine, will strike, and will get a higher rate of wages for themselves. That will be the next move in the body politic. That has already taken place in Western Australia, where the teachers, at their annual conference, carried a motion to the effect that a deputation should wait upon the Premier and ask that all salaries below £150 per annum should be raised 40 per cent.; above £150 and over, 30 per cent.; £200 and over, 20 per cent.; £250 and over, 15 per cent.; £300 and over, 10 per cent.; £350 and over, 7½ per cent.; and salaries of £400 and over, 5 per cent. And the Government's answer was requested to be given by the following afternoon. That is what the brain workers are beginning to do in the world. What was the result of the deputation? The demand was made on the 26th August, and on the 29th August practically all the teachers' demands were conceded, and up went the salaries of the whole of the teachers in Western Australia. I sympathise with them, and bless them. As a matter of fact, that is only the beginning of professional clamour, and a well justified clamour for extra wages. It will go through all parts of society in exactly the same way as it has done in other directions. I pass over entirely, although with some degree of reluctance, the question of profiteering. I pass that over because I believe that other

gentlemen will deal with it most thoroughly. As a matter of fact, efforts have been made in different parts of the world, even in Italy at the present time, and by mayors in England, to stem this evil of profiteering, and they have gone so far as to impose a fine of £500. Absolutely the latest law on the subject was introduced the week before last in the French Chamber of Deputies. This law deals with profiteering, and at the end there is a provision imposing capital punishment for the profiteer.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: That is a bit drastic.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: A man could be hanged for profiteering.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That was during the period of the war?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No, that measure was introduced only the week before last, and it is most interesting to know that it is founded upon an old Roman law passed in the year B.C. 45. That old Roman law provided capital punishment for profiteering, but nobody was murdered, because they found that such a law could not be put into operation. It was an illustration of the folly of passing a law inflicting capital punishment for an offence which that law created. Supposing iron bolts were sold at 1½d. each before the war, and supposing you tried to buy them in Brisbane to-day and were charged 1s. 6d. each for them, would hon. gentlemen call that profiteering?

HON. R. BEDFORD: Yes.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Does the hon. gentleman know that the cost of replacing those bolts on the market to-day would be 1s. 9d. each wholesale?

HON. R. BEDFORD: What does that matter if the seller acquired his stock before the war?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Does the hon. gentleman know that in order to replace that stock the wholesaler would have to pay 1s. 9d. each for those bolts? I mention these facts in order to show the difficulties surrounding the situation. But I am not pleading in the slightest for profiteers. If we are honest with ourselves—  
[5 p.m.] and I am sure we are, or ought to be—we will admit that every man is more or less a profiteer. If the hon. member opposite bought a house for £850 and was offered next day £1,000 on his bargain, what would he do?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is different from profiteering in foodstuffs.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I have a lot of facts with reference to that. We know that Europe is being starved to-day. We know that every country is under-producing, and we know that the people must be dying like flies for want of sustenance. That is the result of war and of under-production; that is the result of taking 18,000,000 of producers out of the producing fields, and shooting at them on the fields of battle. That is the result of the insane policy let loose by bloody and deceitful men.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Not republics.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The republics of South America are in a perpetual ferment. A man wakes up President of a republic there in the morning and does not

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know whether his job will last all day. The man who is elected there is the man who can hit the third button on your waistcoat 2 miles away. However, we are faced with the fact that there are 4,000 unemployed in Queensland to-day—I put it very low, indeed.

HON. R. SUMNER: Are there any unemployed in Russia?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Yes, and a large number misemployed in Russia. In Australia on 10th July there were nearly 80,000 persons unemployed. That was because of the shipping strike, of course. I find that the Premier of West Australia admits on 1st August that a Government official sent to Kalgoorlie issued orders to miners with families for stores equal to £5, and to bachelors equal to £3 10s. Bachelors there were getting £3 10s. for nothing.

HON. A. SKIRVING: Yet, according to you, that is a living wage for a man with a wife and three children.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Not according to me. I quoted a higher authority of which I thought the hon. member would take notice, Mr. Justice Higgins. I have here "Knibbs's" figures showing that in regard to unemployment Queensland compares unfavourably with the other States—

	1st Qtr.	2nd Qtr.	3rd Qtr.	4th Qtr.
Queensland ...	8.0	10.4	7.0	11.6
Victoria ...	6.1	7.3	6.4	6.2
New South Wales	5.0	4.9	6.5	3.6
West Australia ...	5.0	5.4	5.3	4.2
Tasmania ...	3.4	2.0	2.6	1.7
South Australia	2.8	2.9	2.7	2.2

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Queensland heads the list.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Yes, for every quarter last year.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Were they taken over certain strike months?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No, for the whole quarter.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: How many more unemployed do you think there are since this Government came into power?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Here is a telegram from Maryborough on 11th June—

"There is at present a deal of unemployment and distress in Maryborough. It was learned to-day that about ninety applicants, including many families, are receiving rations from the police. About 50 per cent. of the number are swagmen, of whom there is quite a colony at Croydon Junction, about 2 miles from town, and the majority of the other 50 per cent. are men who are unable to obtain work. It is estimated that the Government is paying away over £100 per month in Maryborough in relief, and the number of applications is said to be increasing."

At Chillagoe the people were living for a considerable time on damper and biscuits. That in Queensland!

HON. R. BEDFORD: I have just come from the North, and I know that there is no "starving North"; it is another "Courier" lie.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The hon. member looks as if he lived on something more than damper and biscuits.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: There is not an unemployed man in Chillagoe to-day.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: There are 130 unemployed in Gympie. Since the Gympie Scottish closed down, the Government have made calls at the Labour Exchange for 300 men, but in nearly every case they declined to go away from Gympie. Employment at Charleville is scarce, we are told, and a good many persons have gathered in the town with little hope of finding work. That is a picture of Charleville on 25th July. I suppose that hon. members read the report of the Charleville unemployed meeting in the Press this morning. Now I quote from the Hon. Mr. Theodore, the Treasurer, who may be credited with giving correct replies. He said that the number of persons who received Government relief in Brisbane in May last was 4,561. That is where I get my 4,000 from.

HON. R. BEDFORD: You said there "are" 4,000 in Brisbane.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: In Townsville in that month the number was 1,123, and the cost was £2,464 1s. in Brisbane, and £814 in Townsville. In June, the numbers were 3,424 in Brisbane, and 834 in Townsville, and cost was £1,882 in Brisbane, and £572 in Townsville. I have here the warnings with regard to unemployed from the trade unions. The secretary of the general federation of trade unions in England, Mr. Appleton, where they have the same problems as the result of demobilisation, and also as a result of discontent, putting a large number of industries out of action so that men are simply thrown on to the unemployed market, has issued a warning in regard to the position. What is largely at the bottom of the question of unemployment is a disorganised industry, and a disorganised industry arises from strikes. The cost of American strikes is a little over £100,000,000 per day. There are over a million and a-half workers in the United States demanding increased wages. I do not say that that is against America. There are strikes in Japan too, in Tokio, Yokohama, Osaka, and Nagoya. In Melbourne from 1913 to 1918 there were 2,153 strikes, involving 7,697 establishments and workers numbering 9,156,589. The loss in wages amounted to £5,073,346 during one year. These are facts that may well strike hon. members and may well make them curse that agitator that hangs like a parasite on the tree of labour. In 1918, there were 298 strikes in Melbourne, one for nearly every one of the 302 working days.

HON. R. BEDFORD: And possibly every married couple had a squabble on every day of the year.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is about time the housewives started a strike.

HON. T. L. JONES: Does it not show that the cause is an economic one?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Largely.

HON. T. L. JONES: And that the remedy must be an economic one.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: If you take the breath of conscience out of politics, you are building on a rotten foundation and

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you will tumble over the precipice as Germany did. Those strikes involved 1,154 establishments and 56,459 workers, and the loss in that one year—

Hon. R. BEDFORD interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I must ask the Hon. Mr. Bedford to cease this running fire of interjections. He will have an opportunity later.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am only giving facts to hon. members, and I make no comment on them at all. I simply deplore the fact that so many months should be wasted in unavailing endeavours to come to a settlement with regard to disputes. Personally, I do not mind expressing my opinion that the delays of Arbitration Courts are sometimes so excessive and so tantalising, that I should be very much tempted to join a direct strike, simply because matters are hung up for so long before the court until the workers can get a fair hearing. I am also prepared to say that those who have the settlement of strikes in Arbitration Courts and the dealing with intricate problems of labour and wages, should be men who know absolutely where the shoe pinches on both sides. It is absolutely impossible to take a man out of a departmental arm-chair and put him at the head of industries that mean the lives and livings of thousands of employees.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It is a matter of evidence. He gets evidence.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: But the man should know to some extent. The weakness of the system of having one Australian Court is apparent from beginning to end. How can one man have in his head the intricate dealings of all the industries in the country?

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: If you could get the right man he might.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We are probably interested in our own State more than others. The Treasurer said a few days ago that the number of strikes and industrial disputes in Queensland during the two years ended 30th June last recorded by his department was three strikes and eighty-four other industrial disputes. His figures did not show the numbers in the two years ended 30th June, 1914, but we can see that disputes have gone on here to the extent of eighty-seven during the last two years. In a series of tables just issued to 11th August, Mr. Knibbs, the Commonwealth Government Statistician, gives the loss of wages in the various States from industrial disputes. New South Wales, in one year, lost that large amount in wages which will never be made up to the men.

Hon. R. SUMNER: Don't worry about it. They can only get three meals a day.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I do not reply to the hon. gentleman. I know that, under other conditions, his heart would beat in sympathy with the workers, but at the present time the thing is swinging into a farcical condition, and the result is that industries are going out of action.

Hon. R. SUMNER: You are making a farce of it.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The loss in 1918 in New South Wales was £112,894, and

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in Victoria £993,246, in that year. In Queensland the loss in wages during 1918 was £131,142.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: With a much smaller population.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: In South Australia, the loss in wages during the same year was only £10,515; in Western Australia, only £17,792; and in Tasmania, only £250.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: What proportion does that bear to the total capabilities of all these communities?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Or a total for the Commonwealth of £372,354. It shows that with a population less than half that in New South Wales, and much less than half that of Victoria, the number of strikes and loss in wages consequent thereupon was higher in Queensland than in those two States. The loss in South Australia is a mere £10,515. In six years, according to Mr. Knibbs, the workers of Australia lost £2,738,746 in wages, and this year's loss is already estimated to be over £1,000,000.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They would have lost something in that time by being unemployed.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: There is no reason why a single man on God's earth should be unemployed. I have refrained from giving the history of a large number of strikes. I have here the history of strikes. I have the record for the last sewerage strike in Brisbane, where 150 men ceased work for a mere trifle and went' back next day. It was a result of a mistake which could have been cleared away by a little clear headedness in half an hour. Fortunately, Labour leaders the world over are awakening to the folly of strikes. Strikes are simply a "left-over" in the shape of the old duelling system, and show that the people have not got to the law of reason—of finding out a decent scheme as between man and man. They are a relic of the old duelling business which has passed away and are almost criminal. Men do not settle disputes by blowing one another's brains out. The worst you can do to a man is to kill him.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: There always will be strikes while you have the wage system.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Port Sunlight—Lever Brothers' soap factory—is conducted without strikes; so also are Cadburys' works, and Henry Ford's factory has been going, and its wheels have been whizzing round year after year, with never a strike. They are three cases which come to my mind immediately which furnish overwhelming proof.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: You are only proving that strikes result from bad conditions, and that where the conditions are good, men do not strike.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We only point out the disease, the mad folly, of striking, and the evil results to the workers. Surely, there must be some method of reasoning a thing out and coming to a plain decision with regard to it!

Hon. R. BEDFORD: Get to the root—the bad conditions.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Then remove the conditions. I do not know whether the

non. gentleman thinks that the pig makes the sty, or the sty makes the pig.

HON. R. BEDFORD: The pig certainly does not make the sty. The pig is not the dirty animal he is alleged to be. (Laughter.)

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is not a question of environment altogether. If you pick up a sovereign in the mud, it is a sovereign still, and a snake in the drawing-room is a snake still. However, with regard to strikes there is no doubt that the best informed Labour leaders in the world are against strikes and direct action. One of them says that strikes are now becoming a discredited Labour weapon. Look at the folly of the thing; it has such a boomerang effect.

HON. W. R. CRAMPTON: You are quoting Samuel Gompers. Would you be surprised to know that he has conducted more strikes than any other single individual in the world?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: He may have done that; but they had no minimum wage in the United States. A man there is paid according to his brains and his output.

HON. R. BEDFORD: No, because the men there have not had the sense to get control of the political machine.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is the richest country in the world. I would take the case of the railway employees in the United States of America. The railway employees on the Pacific Coast were on strike, and they were ordered to return to work by the leaders of the union, who threatened to take sides with the Government and break the strike. The number of workers thrown idle by that strike was 300,000. The men returned to their work, and there was order and contentment. Direct action has been condemned by Mr. Arthur Henderson, the British Labour leader. In the "Labour Leader" newspaper of 14th July, he condemns the policy of direct action, which he says results in the abnegation of parliamentary authority and establishes a dictatorship by the minority.

HON. R. BEDFORD: The minority still rule in England, and, to a certain extent, direct action there is right.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Strikes are really a crime upon the body politic, and the time will come when men will recognise it. They will recognise that it is the duty of every man to increase the products of his own hands and brains. They will find out, under a new revised social system, that the more a man produces the more he will be able to earn. Why is it that a miner sticks out for piecework?

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Why should he not get the lot?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: He should get the full fruits of his labour.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: The question is, can you legislate against strikes?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: There are ways of doing that.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Government have tried to do it by arbitration.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I have referred to the unrest, difficulty, distress, and loss of wages and products caused by the severity

and frequency of recent strikes. The best way, of course, to end strikes is to never begin them.

HON. T. L. JONES: You had better remove the cause.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Yes, that is the best way. It may come to the appointment of what may be called a liaison officer—that is, a special officer, whose work it is to act as a go-between in different departments of an industry.

HON. R. BEDFORD: You are very far behind. I saw two of them acting in two disputes in the North recently.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is only one of a number of methods which have been suggested.

HON. R. BEDFORD: We have already got it in operation, and it is working excellently.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is a good suggestion. These facts, startling and convincing from every quarter of the universe, and bearing closely upon the destinies of our own State, lead us to the conclusion that the Government should vigorously foster every sound means to increase production, without injury to the producer. I suppose there are no words more often used in Parliaments to-day than "increased production," and it is unnecessary to labour them. Everybody knows that a great deal of the wealth of the world has been shot away and must be replaced, and that the only way to get it is from the land. If the world is not to be starved and pushed on to the edge of a precipice, and over into oblivion, then this old world must be made once more to blossom like the rose, and to bring forth as much produce as possible in every possible direction. It is for the millions to till the soil, to come back to the earth once more and get our wealth from the soil; and here, as in any other war that the world has ever known, the farmer comes out as being the only independent person in the whole community.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Hear, hear!—the only indispensable man.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: He is the indispensable man. He can go upon his farm and live, and can snap his fingers at the rest of the universe.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Some day he will strike if they don't treat him better.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: At Cripple Creek and Milwaukee, in the United States of America, when too many taxes were put on their shoulders, they took pistols and stood at the front door, and said, "Come and collect the taxes." There can be no doubt that the gap between the various constituent parts in the producing interests—namely, capital, employer, and employee, and management expenses, must be bridged, and the country must produce a greater amount at less price. I have a number of interesting points which may be referred to later on, and figures with regard to the decreased production in Australia and Queensland to-day, and the necessity for increasing production by every possible means. Why should we go on in the same old style as we have been going for the last twenty years? Why not find out new methods and new industries? Why choke them off with a tremendous load of debt and with heavy

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imposts in every direction at the beginning? Why not seek, with our half million inhabitants, to establish new industries? A great cry has been made with regard to establishment of secondary industries. Unless we take the initiative in some direction, Victoria and New South Wales will become the manufacturing States of the Commonwealth and control the secondary industries. We might take a leaf out of the book of our neighbour, New Zealand. They are already establishing a rapid line of steamers between Wellington and Los Angeles, and catering for the American trade. The shuttles of commerce will be spinning rapidly over the Pacific, but they will not be coming to Brisbane, Gladstone, or Cairns. They will be going to Auckland, [5.30 p.m.] Wellington, Sydney, and Melbourne. It is time that we looked to a wider horizon and saw what is ahead of us.

HON. R. BEDFORD: You object to any State enterprises at all being started.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Not at all. I point to the fact that we have an empty Australia—at least the "Daily Standard" of 10th June last called it an empty Australia—a continent with a population of only 5,000,000 spread over a tremendous territory. Have we done anything to increase the population by bringing people from other British Dominions to Queensland?

HON. R. SUMNER: What have you done?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: What have the Government done? Nothing. Just one fact to show what little Japan is doing in this matter—I quote from a cablegram from Tokio—

"A Japanese syndicate has purchased 800,000 acres of land in the upper reaches of the Amazon suitable for sugar, cotton, and coffee cultivation. Other big Japanese colonisation schemes are to be undertaken in Peru."

So that Japan, with her population of 60,000,000, is already looking to South America for splendid fields for industry. What are we doing to attract immigrants—to attract even British ex-soldiers to this country?

HON. R. SUMNER: Talking—the same as you are doing all the afternoon—talk, talk, talk!

HON. P. J. LEAHY: We are taxing them. That is all we are doing.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Perhaps the Hon. Mr. Sumner would be glad to hear what his friend, Sir Robert Horne, the present Minister for Labour in England, said in the course of an interview—

"The country's wealth had been depleted, and the industrial outlook was grave. People were indulging in every form of selfishness; the manufacturers were profiteering, and the workers striking and paralysing trade. Unless there was a great awakening the nation would go down to disaster. Production had reached a dangerously low level. Work was the sole corrective."

We have undoubted evidence from Great Britain, from Italy, from France, from all the war-worn countries of Europe, that the people of the world must give up waste, luxury, and under-production.

HON. R. BEDFORD: And interest and excessive profits.

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HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Exactly. I do not believe in 100 per cent. interest. But we are not discussing that at all. If I could get 5½ per cent. interest on war loan stock and had money to put into the investment, I would be quite satisfied. Perhaps the hon. gentleman would like to hear a quotation from Mr. Hughes.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Yes.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: However, I pass over that, as the hon. gentleman may have an opportunity of hearing Mr. Hughes in the near future. I have here the socialist platforms from Western Australia, New South Wales, and other places. There are some excellent suggestions in them, but nothing really dealing with the hard problems that face us to-day. Just in closing, I might suggest a policy of fourteen points, which should commend themselves to every hon. member, if we are to give effect to a policy of national development—

"1. Loyalty to King and Empire, and the development of the links that bind us to the Empire, the maintenance of constitutional government, and care of the soldiers.

"2. Increased production.

"3. Social reforms and child welfare.

"4. Increased population."

What are we doing to hold this open continent? Nothing! If we wake up some morning and find a foreign nation in arms in our midst, it will be like a stone coming through the glass of a conservatory—

"5. Extension of the functions of local authorities.

"6. Airship construction.

We would have been mad if fifty years ago we had not commenced to build railways in Queensland. We are equally foolish now if we do not undertake airship construction, and open our eyes to swiftly coming events, and to the fact that the air will soon become the highway of the nations—

"7. The establishment of trade bureaux."

We have illimitable markets at our doors. There are not six people in Queensland who can speak Dutch or Japanese, and how can we expect to compete with Germans, who can speak four or five languages, and who, for years past, have been making special endeavours to establish trade relations with these Eastern countries?

HON. R. BEDFORD: Do you think we want Japanese goods in Australia?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We want to sell our products to Japan, but we do not take the trouble to become acquainted with our neighbours—

"8. Removal of friction and the prevention of the overlapping of Federal and State departments."

There should be no overlapping in connection with such matters as divorce, quarantine, insolvency, income tax, and land tax. The duplication of functions is only a source of friction.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Unification will stop that.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: At any rate, in all the matters I have mentioned there is overlapping—

"9. Sane unionism, built on post-war conditions."



The hardest criticism that can be levelled against the policy of the Labour party at the present time is that they hang on in sheer blindness to a programme that was made twenty or twenty-five years ago; and they have not opened their eyes to the tremendous changes that have been made in the world in the last five years by the war—

“10. University reform”

“11. Sober finance”

It may come to local loans. It may come to the adoption of business methods in State enterprises, and to the utter abandonment of the “brother-in-law” industry—

“12. Public service reform”

There ought to be equal pay for equal work, promotion by proficiency, the cutting out of red tape, and the prevention of waste effort—

“13. Franchise reform.”

Why should there be 32,000 deadheads on the electoral rolls? Why should there be—I am not quite sure of the exact figures—one elector with 2,000 electors and another with 12,000? We should have one vote one value as a corollary to adult suffrage—

“14. A revision of the departments of State.”

We have gone for the last twenty-five years practically without revising a single department of State. There ought to be a Ministry of Labour. Industrialism, and industrial and economic questions, bulk very largely in this country, and it is sheer folly not to have a department dealing with all such questions. Then there ought to be a Ministry of Health. Health is one of the very vital things in our State to-day. I just mention the fact that there are 55,000 people in Australia to-day in a certain condition. There ought to be a Ministry of Health, to deal with the tremendously important questions that affect the health of the community. Why should there be idiots and imbeciles in our midst? Why should there be deformed people in this State? Why should it be possible for us to read, as we did in the papers this morning, of a man choking while in delirium tremens? In a country like this, where we ought to have the most splendidly developed bodies and brains in the whole world, a Ministry for Health should certainly find a place.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: You are omitting one plank—liquor reform.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That comes under the heading of “Social Reform and Child Welfare.” These are important questions that should arrest the attention of every thinking man. Instead of the Government proceeding in the same old way and not taking note of what is going on in the world around them, they should move forward. They should have an Intelligence Department, if necessary, to keep them in touch with the movements of the world, and to keep them au fait with the great questions that will be forced upon them by the war, and by the peace. Although it is a peace only in name. Big battles are still going on; there is still fighting in the world: still problems to be solved. I feel sure that the motion will be treated in a non-party spirit entirely. I have not criticised the Government as a Government. I have simply mentioned facts gathered from the four corners of the globe; and I feel sure that hon. members will discuss the question in an

impartial spirit, and will contribute to the wealth of information that will go forth to the country, I hope, through a sympathetic Press. I hope that the debate will show that this House is alive to the tremendous changes that are taking place, not only in other parts of the world, but in our own State of Queensland.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. W. R. CRAMPTON: I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

The resumption of the debate was made an Order of the Day for Wednesday, 24th September.

#### COPARTNERSHIP AND CO-OPERATION BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES.

##### RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

On the Order of the Day being called for the resumption of the adjourned debate on Hon. W. F. Taylor's motion—

“That, in the opinion of this Council, copartnership between employers and employees, wherever practicable, and co-operation between workers, should be encouraged, because they promote an equitable distribution of the profits arising therefrom among all those engaged in industrial enterprises,”

HON. R. BEDFORD said: I think Dr. Taylor deserves credit for bringing this motion before the House, because anything that can be done in the direction of promoting greater harmony among the various sections of the people is to be commended. But mere pious aspirations will in no way alter the conditions which have their basic reasons in something too serious to be altered by saying, “Lord! Lord!” or by trying to put a Christian conscience into a form of business which is really based upon greed. The Hon. Mr. Brentnall gave outside what to some of the unthinking might seem good advice, but which was merely a pious aspiration. The hon. gentleman thought that Labour troubles would be put right to a large extent if men left the Trades Hall and went to church. It is a fact that during the most religious period in the history of the world, during the many centuries when men prayed like saints and acted towards each other like devils, the working classes in the world were in the most shocking condition of despondency and starvation that the world has ever known. Carrying out the general maxim that God does, or would, help the men who help themselves, it became necessary to make a crude application of the strike, and, unfortunately, it is still necessary in some cases, because of the crude mentality of some employers. In this connection I cite the case of a strike which is imminent, unless men get better justice. Those men seek for a reduction in hours from fifty-three to forty-eight hours per week, and a living wage of £3 7s. per week. Any man who says that that is a greedy demand simply has no sense of proportion. I am alluding now to the threatened carters' strike. The employers show not the slightest disposition to concede the just and equitable demands of the men. Right through the most religious times of the world, we find that simply because men were indulging in mere jabber and had the shibboleth of Christianity in

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their mouths, they never had justice to others in their hearts or in their minds. We find that in those most professedly religious times not even a man's life was safe, if he had neither money nor position, and that in the shadow of every church was the gallows, and petty lords with the giving of life or death and the justice of the high, the middle, and the low. So at last Labour made the first crude application of the strike, which is unanswerable, because no man can be made to work without the lash.

But after a time the workers began to use their political associations, because they saw that nothing which was hurriedly gained would be permanent, and that nothing which was not constitutionally won could be consolidated into a real and lasting victory. By and by they got further away from the shibboleth of Christianity, and made a Labour platform which enunciates the spirit of Christianity, seeing that it enunciates the spirit of justice. One of the real reasons why there is no possible chance of the spirit of the Hon. Dr. Taylor's motion being crystallised into fact is because of the attitude of the Press. The German Press jabbered that the Germans were invulnerable, and that, being the stronger nation, they could be cruel; and the British Press were satisfied that it was only a matter of singing "Twas in Trafalgar's Bay," and the enemy would run away. It was the jabbering of the Press in those countries which brought about the war; and the trouble between the employing and employed sections of the community is caused by newspapers only. I read of the effects of the shipping strike in North Queensland first in a Melbourne paper, where it was reported that everything in the North was in chaos, and that people were actually killed in the streets. Then I came through Sydney, and by the newspapers there I might have believed that a woman had even killed and eaten her own child. Then I came to Brisbane, and I found that the newspapers here reported that the Government were standing behind the strikers, and that there was actual starvation in the North. In the North I had to take a little launch called the "Magneto," of about twenty-five tons, to go up to Innisfail, and found that from Brisbane to Chillagoe the starving North was well fed and flourishing. At Innisfail it was stated that a certain brand of cigarette could not be obtained in the place, and at Cairns it was said that certain kinds of bottled beer were not in evidence. The local papers made up these lies, and they sent them to the "Courier" to run through another perjury mill there, then to Sydney, and then to Melbourne, by which time the lies were 96.8 per cent. pure. These stories about the starvation of the people originated in places which are surrounded by some of the richest districts in the world. The "starving North" was stuffed with sugar, butter, meat, and maize—and on maize alone some of the best men in Australia ever bred—Hawkesbury natives—were raised. That kind of misrepresentation is only one illustration of the way in which the perjury of newspapers reacts against anything in the way of harmony between the employees and the employing classes. The Hon. Mr. Fowles mentioned in an earlier speech certain industries—the Cadburys' and the Sunlight Company's businesses—which had never known a strike. The reply to that is that the conditions in those industries have been so much ameliorated

that strikes are not necessary, or at least that there is no particular incitement to strike, as there is in some cases in which not to strike would be an absolute crime against the workers. It would be a crime against manhood if those carters to whom I have alluded did not take any action to force the grant of their demand for a 48-hour week and a miserable pittance of £3 7s. a week. I know of two particular instances in Australia where the conditions have been so much bettered that there is no likelihood of a strike, unless it is a strike in sympathy with other craft unions who strike for ordinary reasons. One is the Broken Hill Associated Smelters Company, and the other the Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Company.

Quite a lot of people do not understand the worker's point of view, and most of the troubles of the world are owing to incomplete knowledge on the part of one section of the people of other sections of the people. If they meet in mobs they naturally do not understand each other. When they meet as individuals they discover a tremendous amount of reasonableness in each other which they had not previously suspected, and it is surely a widespread error to believe that the working people of the world, and of Australia, particularly—I talk about them because I know them most—are actuated only by some money-lender's desire to pile up wages to any possible extent without relation to their purchasing ability. But, after all, the increase in wages is only another attempt on the part of the man to realise the whole duty of man, which is the pursuit of happiness, and if he can get that by better conditions in kind rather than by wages, which are also affected by the continually skying prices of commodities, then so much the better for the employer and the employee.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Is happiness the whole duty of man?

HON. R. BEDFORD: What else? Should it be the pursuit of misery?

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Something more than that, surely!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: What is happiness?

HON. R. BEDFORD: I do not know. At least, I do not know what the hon. member's idea of it is—possibly worrying about some injustice done to fishmongers. (Laughter.) My idea, possibly, would conflict with that of the hon. member. His idea might be to make the whole world go dry.

HON. T. M. HALL: Or a bottle of ginger beer!

HON. R. BEDFORD: With 9.6 per cent. alcohol as against a 2½ per cent. lager. The worker is also seeking social and individual liberty. He is seeking with the most laudable desire that a father can have better conditions for children that follow him. He is trying to escape from the slums, the result of bad landlordism. He is trying to get a greater share of the luxuries of the civilised world. I do not mean only bodily luxuries, but the pursuit of learning, the enjoyment of art, the discovery of music in himself. And therefore, when we find any company doing anything in the direction of ameliorating the conditions of employees in that desirable way, then we wish them that greater industrial peace which they have—a greater industrial peace than the mere

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greedy employer of labour trying to get the last drop of blood out of his people can ever hope to expect. The Mount Lyell Company, having to sell its copper at a lower price than the world's price—because during the war Australia got about £125 for electrolytic copper whilst America was getting £165, and so not only had to compete in the world's market, but suffer a handicap of £38 a ton—found it impossible to increase its wages. So it did a little of that work which the Hon. Mr. McCormack, when a miner at Chillagoe and a union representative, got the Chillagoe Company to do for the betterment of the conditions of the men there—simply by putting in an ice works, by laying on electric light at a slight cost, and charging the bare cost to the men. The Chillagoe workers, as a result, were much more contented than the men at Mount Cuthbert or Mount Elliott, where the conditions are not attended to as they should be. The Mount Lyell Company electrically lighted the houses of their men—gave them better housing—and got more than the cost in the better output of the men, because such treatment of labour is not payable only from a sentimental point of view; it is tremendously payable from the economic standpoint. They got better results, and still, in their attempt to better conditions, they opened a kind of State butcher's shop for the employees, cutting the price of beef from 1s. 4d. to 8d. They also opened a store and sold goods at about 15 per cent. over wholesale prices. Then the Broken Hill Associated Smelters at Port Pirie has done even a finer thing. I propose to read shortly from a review of a book called "The Humanising of Commerce and Industry," by Gerald Mussen, who was engaged by the Hon. W. L. Baillieu, a very big employer and a very rare employer—a man of warm heart and good brain, who is genuinely anxious to palliate so far as possible the continuous disputes between labour and capital. Of course, we recognise that these are only palliatives, but all the betterment that these admirable people can do in that direction is so much further on the road to the one solution which we know is possible—that is, the total change of the system, eliminating its waste, because the waste of a competitive system is in itself a bigger dividend than the dividends now earned.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: What would be the main incentive to work under the condition of the elimination of competition altogether?

HON. R. BEDFORD: The main incentive would be the general fact that man must work to keep healthy. Everyone knows that the inborn loafer is one of the rarest things in the community. Man, in the first place, has been forced to work by necessity, but in the second place he has also had the joy of labour when the labour was congenial. Most men are miserable without work. I go out with the best of intentions to loaf for three days, and at the end of a day and a-half I am unhappy and come back to the collar again.

HON. T. J. LEAHY: And then you come to the Council.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I come to the Council for pleasure and amusement, and get it—not for instruction. I certainly would not get that.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: We would not get it from you.

HON. R. BEDFORD: You are an old gramophone. If hon. members opposite can get their minds away from such phosphorescent things as State fish for a minute, we will get back to this more important thing. This review says—

"The smelter employees at Port Pirie can claim the distinction of never having lost one hour in production during the war. The major portion of the supply of lead for Great Britain and her allies went from Port Pirie, and night and day throughout the war lead was poured from the smelters. No strike stopped the continuous stream. The staff and employees worked seven days a week until victory was secured.

"It would be an insult to the intelligence of the poorest manual worker not to believe that he will respond to efforts seriously made to improve his conditions. Man in nine cases out of ten will respond to his environment. It is one of our troubles, and it ought to be equally one of our bright hopes, that he does so respond.

"Of every 100 tons of lead produced at Port Pirie 95 tons have to be sold across the sea in competition with producers of lead in other countries. Australian lead has no special merit above any other pig lead. The buyer does not bother about the country of origin; he buys at the lowest price. Consequently the smelters in Australia have no say in deciding the selling price. It is therefore impossible to pass on an increase in the cost of production caused by increased wages."

Increased wages are only of value in so far as they increase the comfort—which is the happiness—of the man; and so these people, instead of railing generally at the fact that a man wants a fair return from his labour, instead of roaring that high wages could not be paid, gave him something in kind. They were faced with facts related to the fact that at the Tata works in India pigiron could be produced at £1 5s. per ton, because the men work there for 4d. per day. Nevertheless, because it requires highly skilled white labour to produce steel, they cannot produce steel there any more cheaply than we can in Australia, and probably the State iron and steel works in Queensland, owing to the fact that the whole process of steel production has been revolutionised during the war and since, will be able to produce steel more cheaply than the works at Tata. It being impossible for the Associated Smelters Company to pass on an increase of wages, they said, "We will better the conditions. If we cannot give in cash we will give in kind," and kind is better, because there is no profiteering attached to it—

"At Port Pirie there is a highly trained staff of metallurgists, superintendents, and experts. These men have had a training from their early years in this particular business; if they had to commence to learn at their time of life they would find it impossible to acquire the required knowledge. If a committee of workmen owned the smelters and ran them, and, say, twenty experts were withdrawn, the production of lead would probably total not more than 10,000 tons a year."

But just because things have been put in their true position, just because the workman

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has been defined, not as a beast of burden less valuable than a horse—to whom the majority of people give better treatment than to their employees—but because he has been regarded as being a really valuable human being, in this small way at Port Pirie the small expenditure has been more than returned to the company in the way of absence of labour trouble. This is what they do—

“And there is waste in the exchange of wages for the necessaries and comforts of life. The welfare-worker can do more than advise here. In Port Pirie, finding that 35 to 50 per cent. was added to the wholesale cost to cover the retailer's costs, a store was established to act simply as the agent of the employees. The goods, purchased on the most favourable terms, are retailed at an average of only 15 per cent. on wholesale cost. Concurrently, largely through the co-operative efforts of the workpeople, parks and children's playgrounds have been provided; a seaside resort has been established by the company for the benefit of its employees, who are granted periodical holidays there as a bonus for regular work; there is a provident fund whose trustees are charged with the duty of lending to any member in distress (the condition was made that no interest should be charged, as it was felt that any person in distress should be helped and not burdened with interest); an accident and sickness fund is in operation; and, among other things, housing is having attention, and a start has been made in that most important matter.”

Here is a case where the object is to a large extent secured, but it does not go far enough. Mr. Baillieu, to whom we give all credit for this, wrote a letter to the Melbourne “Herald” on the publication of the recommendations by the International Labour Conference to the Peace Conference. Those recommendations were—

“1. In right and fact, the labour of a human being should not be treated as merchandise or an article of commerce.

“2. Employers and workers should be allowed the right of association for all lawful purposes.

“3. No child should be permitted to be employed in industry or commerce before the age of fourteen. In order that every child may secure reasonable opportunities for mental and physical education, young persons of either sex between the ages of fourteen and eighteen may only be employed at work which is not harmful to their physical development, and on condition that the continuation of their technical and general education is ensured.”

A large number of these claims only show the shocking condition of things in Europe, because the concessions for which they ask are already part of our general machine. For instance, in Japanese factories children practically work sixteen hours a day, and on the conclusion of the time of one shift, that shift turns into the beds which the previous shift of girls has just vacated. Their life in those factories is practically three years, and everyone can see the tremendous immorality of throwing open Australian labour and manufactories to the competition of goods made under those conditions.

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The recommendations proceed—

“4. Every worker has the right to a wage adequate to maintain a reasonable standard of life, having regard to the civilisation of his time and country.”

We already have that principle here. The only thing we have not secured is a scientific application of it. Equal pay [7.30 p.m.] should be given to men and women for work of equal value. Practically, they are copying a rather old platform of the Australian Labour Party—

“6. A weekly rest, including Sunday, or its equivalent, for all workers.”

This will show that European Labour is attempting to emancipate itself, although it has to claim, as though it were not an inherent right, its right to a six-days' working week—

“7. The hours of work should be limited on the basis of an eight-hours' day, or a forty-eight-hour week, subject to exceptions where climatic conditions or imperfect development of industrial organisation or special circumstances, render the workers' efficiency substantially different.”

“8. In all matters concerning their status as workers and social position, the foreign workmen lawfully admitted to a country, and their families, should be insured the same treatment as the nationals of that country.”

“9. All States should institute a system of inspection in which women should partake, in order to ensure the enforcement of the laws and regulations for the workers' protection.”

That will show you the state of your Europe to-day, with its 100,000,000 people more than the productivity of the various countries there can feed. There are something like 20,000,000 Europeans living on an unemployment dole. These things make Australia look like a workmen's paradise; but there are seven heavens, and, if we are only in the first one, we are determined to reach them all. Mr. Baillieu's aspirations are excellent. They are further helped by the fact that he has some genuine work to his credit as a proof of his sincerity. He has this betterment business at Port Pirie, and to that extent his views have a right to be respected. This is his letter to the Melbourne “Herald” —

“Sir,—During the war, pledges were given by all leading men throughout the world—from Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George down—that peace would bring to Labour a new world.

“While Labour will be, and is, impatient to realise the new conditions, Governments must be prompt to give practical expression to such pledges, failing which they play into the hands of extremists, whose policy, openly declared, is to drive the workers into revolution, destroy society as now constituted, and tear down the industrial citadel. Labour in the mass wants higher wages, shorter hours, better conditions; this is the new world of its dreams, and, in the main, the new world that was promised. These problems call for as much consideration as the urgent issues of the war itself.

“We saw in England during the war inquiries into labour unrest. Truces were

patched up from time to time with workmen who continued to work faithfully under the greatest strain. The Whitley report, which has been so widely accepted in Great Britain, recommends that district councils representative of trades unions and employers and employers' associations be created in each industry, and that works committees representing the employers and the workers be instituted in particular work, with the object of settling the principles and conditions of employment, and securing to the workmen a share in the responsibility for the observance of the conditions of work, preventing and adjusting differences, and ensuring the greatest possible security of earnings and employment. Mr. Lloyd George, at the time of the British elections, absolutely pledged the Government to comprehensive reforms ameliorating the workmen's conditions, attacking the evil of overwork, under-pay, strain, and housing—in short, guaranteeing a better life. The strikes in Britain represent an impatience to bring this about, and, apparently, by the resumption of work, the masses of Labour have determined not to be the prey of irresponsible agitators, but to have their demands made and decided in a deliberate way.

"The Imperial Government is pledged to hold an important conference this week, which, it is to be hoped, will lead to an agreement between the parties, and thus allow the great and important industries of the country to continue."

They have not continued: strikes are rampant in England—

"On the Clyde the demand made for a shorter day was supported on the grounds that it would distribute work and allow the employment of men returning from the front. Here, I regret to say, the question has been somewhat airily dismissed with the assumption that shorter hours necessarily means lessened production."

Here is a matter in which Mr. Baillieu, one of the largest employers of labour in Australia, contradicts the people who say that, in order to get a fair day's productivity out of a man, he must work eight or ten hours a day or more—

"This is a somewhat hasty conclusion, and would not be borne out by universal experience. Certainly production in the great industries has greatly increased since the period when hours were long and wages low. When one finds great captains of industry like Lord Pirrie conceding forty-seven hours without reduction of pay, and equally successful manufacturers like Lord Leverhulme—"

who said that the war debt should be paid by taxes on incomes down to 30s. a week—

"preaching the doctrine of the six-hour day as consistent with efficiency, one feels that the subject cannot be airily dismissed. The Whitley report has influenced to a marked extent the industrial world in Great Britain, and many industrial councils and works committees have been formed in accordance with its recommendations. These appear to be working so well that it is now proposed to extend the system and give the workmen a

voice in the management of all Government workshops. Conditions vary in different countries, but, whatever means may be adopted, the goal for all is co-operation and conference, removing difficulties, and securing conditions and wages that will enable the workman to do his day's work without over-strain, to have opportunities for rest and recreation, and live in comfort. No labour reform or uplift for workers is possible in a state of class animosity where a go-slow policy is pursued, and no honest attempt made to give value for the pay received.

"Co-operation between labour and capital is essential to progress. The revolutionary spirit drives the parties further apart and makes against efficiency, prevents enterprise being successful, and lessens the possibility of a bigger share of the output to the workmen. We may have to get a lead from Great Britain, where opportunity and outlook have compelled the big employer to face the position. The next six months will be critical for the future of British industry, and possibly for Australia. Two great events are occurring. One is the industrial conference to be called by the Government at the end of this month. The other is the arresting fact that the Peace Conference has appointed a committee to consider labour from an international aspect. This, of course, is only a beginning, as it is reasonable to suppose that not much more will be done than to indicate very general principles for consideration, and yet, if a shorter working day is to be gained as the result of the war, it can only be brought about by agreement between all countries trading or who contemplate trading with each other."

That is impossible, because the standard of Australian labour is better than the standard of any other labour in the world, and, for that reason, we could have no trading arrangements with any of them that did not concede protection to the Australian employee, as against the cheap wage employee of the whole world. To reach an industrial law agreement with most other countries—an agreement up to existing Australian standards—would mean Australia stopping on its march for the other to develop to its existing position.

"It would be particularly appropriate for Australia, the most advanced democracy in the world, to submit this fundamental democratic programme to the consideration of the Peace Conference. With respect, I offer the suggestion that the Commonwealth Government consider this suggestion, and, if it approve, instruct Mr. Hughes to introduce it in the Peace Conference. No man living is better qualified, nor would any carry out the task with greater skill and enthusiasm.

"Australia is vitally interested. We are a high wage community, formerly protected by freight, distance, and to some extent by tariff. Every increase in efficiency, both in production and transport, in America and Europe, lowers the protection that any tariff could afford us. At all events, both in the interests of industry and labour, including that of returned soldiers, the majority of whom must live by wages, this should

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be put on an effective basis. Australia is the pioneer in short hours and relatively high wages, and the new outlook caused by the war, practically insists on the universal extension of a higher rate of wage. Given mutual consideration, a spirit of co-operation and effective management, with such conditions as will secure the hearty and honest energy of the workman in his appointed task, the gloomy prediction of industrial decay, consequent upon the new demands of labour, may be as effectively falsified in the future as it has been in the past."

There spoke a big man. But, if there were all big men with warm hearts at the head of the employing class, then, to a large extent, things would settle themselves. But we find a case pending at our own doors, where a strike is imminent and where the opposites to Baillieu's are in charge. For instance, the Hon. Mr. Lawson, who is secretary of the Federated Carters and Drivers' Industrial Union of Australia, in a letter which he wrote, said—

"Our log of wages and demands was served on the employers during September and October of last year, 1918, and our plaint was filed in the Federal Court of Conciliation and Arbitration on 12th January, 1919. A compulsory conference was convened by His Honour Justice Power, for 20th March, 1919, at which I, as general secretary of the Queensland branch representing the organisation, was subpoenaed to attend, in order that a satisfactory settlement of our claim should be arrived at."

The plaint was filed on the 12th January, and an award was given to-day, seven months later, simply because the employers, by technical legal objections, prevented the declaration of the award before. The wages asked for were £3 7s. a week and a 48-hour week. While men like the Hon. Dr. Taylor and the Hon. W. L. Baillieu are in earnest in trying by these means to get a better understanding between employer and employee, all their good work must fall to the ground in the case of a bad employer, who can destroy the work of a dozen decent ones. So far as the high wages are concerned, it is not possible for the high wages to be used as a stalking-horse against Labour in Australia, because all the world now has high wages. The trouble is that products have increased in price at the same time, so that the world is even more low-waged in certain places, except on paper, than it was before. The war gave people new habits and wants, and many people who had not food regularly before got the right of being fed. The men in England have refused to go back to pre-war conditions. When we make a comparison between European pre-war conditions and ours, we make a mistake in thinking that there can be any analogy between the natural conditions of the two countries. For instance, England is in danger of dwindling to a third-rate Power so far as trade volume is concerned. Her iron is nearly all done; nearly all that is left is between coal measures.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: She gets it from Sweden.

Hon. R. BEDFORD: I know, and from Spain; but all these prices must go up. The English, with iron and coal mines, were enabled, in England, by reason of 200

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years of the most grinding protection the world ever knew, to build up a great trade, and to start industries, and among other things, with £500,000,000 of loot from India, to establish a fighting fund for commerce. That enabled them to get through the debauch of free trade, until the war found free trade out. But the coal and iron age gave their trade a tremendous impetus. When the best of the iron had been dug out, the first symptoms of national decay set in when they had to drag in raw material and manufacture it. That all meant money going out of the country. With the two evils of free trade and the importation of raw materials—iron ore of a higher grade than they had in their own country, because they were so scientifically slipshod that they could not bring better methods to bear on their lower-grade ores—that meant that the inevitable must come. To a large extent, all this trade glory of England was founded on rottenly low wages and shocking conditions and half starvation for the tremendous mass of the people. The war has taught the coalminers to strike, and, now that they are getting something like decent conditions, the price of coal has gone up in England in consequence. The coal trade is controlled by princely royalties paid to the ancient families who hold the overland—and the price of coal has so much increased, because better conditions have been given to the men, that it is now proposed to import coal. Sooner or later Japan will become a high-waged country.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They can use electric power in England.

HON. R. BEDFORD: There is not a great deal of water power in England to be harnessed. There is some in Scotland, but not much in England. A well-known engineer, who does not sound as if his address were Goodna, is putting forward a proposition now that they should sink a shaft 15 or 20 miles into the earth to get some of the unconsumed heat of the world as power.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: There is plenty of water power in Ireland; why not go there?

HON. R. BEDFORD: I think the hon. gentleman is like the Jews. He doesn't want to see Ireland get Home Rule, or he might have to go back there.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: I did not "leave my country for my country's good," like other people.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. R. BEDFORD: This is my country. Some foreigners don't understand that. I am quite sure the hon. gentleman no more wants to go back to Ireland than the Jews want to go back to Jerusalem; they are too happy on the racecourses and stock exchanges of the world.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You should not compare an Irishman and a Jew, although they are both high class, all the same.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. R. BEDFORD: The Hon. Dr. Taylor asked for closer harmony and for closer relationship between employers and employed. The Hon. Mr. Fowles, in his speech earlier in the day, regretted that there was no intermediary between the two classes, and suggested a species of liaison officer. As a matter of fact, such an officer

already exists. This much-belaboured Queensland Government has already made its police magistrates industrial magistrates. I was up at two inquiries at Babinda and Tarzali. At Tarzali there was a case where a ganger had punched a navy on the nose, and the other navvies struck, although the man who was struck first said it was quite a fair fight, and that he did not have any hard feelings. They struck; that brought all the men on the railway construction work out on strike for three days. The engineer in charge of the construction work got the men together, and asked them to return to work on the condition that he should immediately ask the industrial magistrate from Cairns to hold an inquiry. The men agreed. The industrial magistrate—Mr. Ferry—a very excellent man for tact and patience—held an inquiry, and simply shifted the ganger to another gang at his own request; and the strike—which started in a stupid way, and might have gone on in a stupid way for months—was quickly finished in three days owing to a tactful man getting up there quickly. Similarly, at Babinda the Babinda cane-cutters had a grievance.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: In those cases there were industrial magistrates—not paid agitators.

HON. R. BEDFORD: The hon. gentleman always makes a suggestion about five years after the event. I am simply showing that his suggestion is already in operation in this State. At Babinda, the cane-cutters had a certain genuine grievance. Owing to the intervention of the same industrial magistrate, a strike which might have lasted four months, was fixed up after lasting four days. In most instances all these grievances could be settled in the same expeditious manner. I know of a case where the employer was so stupid that he hired a man who was personally insulting to the men who were working under him, who were as ignorant as my hon. friend opposite in not knowing that this form of conciliation was open to them. Arbitration, to a large extent, has lost its force with the working men, because it is too slow in its action; it wants speeding up. Here are the carters who have been asking for certain things since 12th January last, and the award is only put through to-day. If it had not gone through to-day, there would have been a strike to-morrow; and there may be one yet.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: You are hopeful.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I am not like you. I hope for the best—not the worst—"Mr. Gloom."

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. R. BEDFORD: All of these pious aspirations for the rearrangement of the relations between labour and capital are very fine, very honest, very sincere; but the fact remains that you cannot alter wrong conditions and wasteful conditions by merely hoping for their improvement. The whole scheme of the present system must go, even if it is only by reason of its wastefulness. At Mount Lyell, for instance, since they have brought under one head the whole of the feeding of the employees, comparatively one tradesman's cart does the work of five. All that waste has been cut. All the profits that private individuals made previously have been cut, without injury to anyone.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: They are adopting that principle under the competitive system.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I say they are adopting that under the competitive system, which only proves that our proposed full instalment of reform is good. By adopting reforms such as this we are helping to bring about the downfall of the present system which we are out to fight. The alteration of the present system goes right down to the system of State ownership, which is attacked by almost everyone on the other side of the Chamber. We are asked to believe, for instance, that the railways are not paying. I believe hon. members opposite have one way of making them pay. That is, by grinding the skull of the employee on the doorstep; by retrenching him out of existence—a measure absolutely fatal to the general tenor of this resolution. Another way by which the railways could be made to pay is by raising freights and fares. But then the question arises as to how far we are justified in doing that, when we have such a tremendous amount of unalienated public estate, which those very railways are making available. Of course, we might force the railways ahead of settlement, so that our timber would be sold instead of being cleared and destroyed to make way for settlement. To the bookkeeping minds of hon. members opposite that would lead the way, apparently, to absolute insolvency, although, as a matter of fact, it would open the way to a bigger, completer, and more solid national prosperity than the old wasteful system has done. To hear hon. members opposite talk about the loss on the State sawmill, one would think that there never had been any loss on private enterprises. Well, I remember a few of such losses. I am not referring to the loss of money put into "wild cats," but the loss of money put into good, solid things, and then smashed by over-capitalisation and rotten management—which you can get just as much in connection with private enterprise as in connection with State enterprises. Take the case of the Commonwealth Oil Corporation that was formed to put up retorts and develop a big area of oil country at Walgett. It was a newspaper venture. Sir George Newnes, Limited, put £100,000 into it, and then was fool enough not to take it out when the shares rose from £1 to £3. Hammsworth had 250,000 shares, and he promptly sold them out at £2 10s. to £3 10s. while carefully booming the proposition in the "Daily Mail" and other newspapers—which incidentally largely discounts all that gentleman's statesmanship for me. They built a railway down into a gorge, which was very fine from the scenic point of view, but it ended by butting up against a rocky wall 2,000 feet high. On the side of the hill 6 miles away they developed a bed of shale 4 feet 6 inches thick, going 80 to 100 gallons to the ton. They laughed at the Australian's way of retorting this in mere kettles made of sheet steel and bricks and banded together with railway iron. They sent out Pump Herston retorts, which are used in Scotland, where shale runs 18 gallons to the ton. Soon after they lit the fires, these £64,000 retorts were destroyed, and all the Scotch gentlemen who came out to work them ran for their lives. In this way £2,000,000 was thrown away by bad management.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I have been listening for a long time to see if the hon. gentleman would come back to the motion. He is away from it altogether, and I would

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ask him now to stick closer to the question before the House.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I was about to connect up what I am saying with the motion, but I will merely mention the names of some further failures in connection with private enterprise without giving particulars. The Northern Territory Gold Mining Company is one. The North Lyell Company, which built an unnecessary railway, and left it and costly machinery to rust to pieces, just saved its own life by amalgamation with Mount Lyell. All over Australia there are the wrecks of private enterprise. Leaving railways out of consideration—although in this State they have more to commend them than in any other part of Australia, because we have one of the biggest and most sparsely populated States to be served by those railways—I hold that the betterment system as between the employer and the employed, or the betterment of the people which will come from the wreckage of the competitive system, cannot be brought about if State enterprise gets all the “duds” and private enterprise takes all the prizes. For instance, State enterprise did not take the Brisbane tramways, but it is asked to take on any old wreckage that comes along.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Who asked that?

HON. R. BEDFORD: Plenty of those interested in private enterprises. A coal mine was offered to the Government for £35,000, and when the Government turned it down it was sold to private people for £10,000. Babinda is an instance of the success that can attend State enterprise. Babinda offers a solution of the liquor problem. As good meals are sold at Babinda for £1 2s. 6d. per week as are sold in the Parliamentary Refreshment-room.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: The bar pays for that.

HON. R. BEDFORD: The bar pays for the meals of teetotallers in this House. Possibly the hon. member is getting his meals at my expense half the time. At Babinda I found the perfection of buildings. I found that for 10s. 6d. they provided in the coffee-room at Babinda as good meals as can be got for 16s. a day anywhere else. I found drinks there 25 per cent. cheaper and 75 per cent. purer than in other places. They have already voluntarily reduced the hours for the sale of liquor from 6 a.m. till 11 p.m. to 8 a.m. till 10.30 p.m. At 10.30 p.m. the place is as quiet as the bush. If a man has too much to drink on Monday—and they watch him closely even on the Monday—he does not get anything on Tuesday—he is under the Dog Act. If he loses a shift at the mill, he is under the Dog Act. Not opening until 8 o'clock is one of the finest and one of the most necessary liquor reforms that has ever been made, because morning drinking is bad. And, seeing that night is the best time in the twenty-four hours in Australia, I believe the hours should be altered from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. There we have an instance where men earning the best wages are lodged and boarded in the best possible way for £1 7s. 6d. per week; and I am quite sure that, just as soon as Australia finds the benefits of a place like Babinda, the liquor problem will be solved by a demand from every constituency in Australia to have such State hotels provided for them. The idea of getting rid of the liquor business by simply saying “prohibition” is ridiculous.

[8 p.m.]

HON. P. J. LEAHY: America has done it.

[*Hon. W. Hamilton.*]

HON. R. BEDFORD: America has not done it. The Babinda hotel has closed twenty-five grog shops. Is not that something? We want an ingrained habit—not abolished, which is impossible—modified if possible—but in any case given its proper length of rein under decent conditions. It pays the miners of wolfram to pass a privately-owned mill and carry wolfram and molybdenite to the State mill at Bamford at an extra cost of £6 a ton for packing; and yet, such is the efficiency of the State mill, that the men get £5 a ton more in net profit. With regard to co-operation, everybody knows that co-operation of the kind proposed is no good, because, if it pays one of the co-operators to break his allegiance to the society, he will break it. Our experience in connection with State enterprise in insurance and State enterprise in meat is surely a proof that, when the people get hold of the control of the means of production, distribution, and exchange, and the present rotten system is put out of business, success may be achieved. As part of that scheme, it will be necessary to begin at the root of all wellbeing, and that is finance. The State must control finance. Interest and profit will have to be cut down. Hon. gentlemen who are continually asking whether a certain industry is paying in a book way must get out of that habit, because these are things which are not run for profit. The Glasgow trams started running a certain distance at a penny a time; then they found they could run the distance for a halfpenny, and they ran it for a halfpenny, and then, still making a profit, they ran free trams for the most crowded hours of morning and evening.

HON. T. M. HALL: Is that what the State sawmills are doing?

HON. R. BEDFORD: The State sawmills have been making some little losses.

HON. T. M. HALL: They charge the same prices as private enterprise.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Would you like them to charge less?

HON. T. M. HALL: No.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: The State fish shops are losing money.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I must call the attention of the hon. member to the fact that this is not a discussion on State enterprises, and I must ask him to connect his remarks with the question before the House.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Very good. The proposals made at the International State Conference are no criterion for us, for the reason that we are fifty years ahead of that position. With the best of intentions to correct these things by the methods they propose, they will fail, because at the root of the matter is the rotten system under which we live. Under that system finance is in wrong hands, and it is possible for the Queensland National Bank, working on a capital of £400,000, to handle ten millions of public money.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Can you limit interest?

HON. R. BEDFORD: Yes.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: How would you propose to limit the interest charged on money?

HON. R. BEDFORD: By regulations, under an Act of Parliament. The fixation of



prices is a necessary corollary to the fixation of wages.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That theory was exploded a hundred years ago.

HON. R. BEDFORD: People of caveman intelligence said that the fixation of wages was impossible a little time ago, but it is now recognised as a reasonable thing. Wages have been fixed by a properly constituted tribunal, and the next thing is to fix the prices of the commodities which those wages will buy.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: How would you do that?

HON. R. BEDFORD: I have already been called to order twice by the President owing to the interjections of my hon. friend, the genial babbler here, and I do not propose to be drawn away from the question again. Having said that which I wished to say on this subject, I congratulate the Hon. Dr. Taylor on having brought this motion forward. It allows hon. members to express the view that, while the hon. gentleman is sincere enough in his ideas as to how the necessary alterations should be made in our economic system, he does not go far enough. The Hon. Dr. Taylor and those who agree with him are sincere enough in their desires, but there are not sufficient of them to affect the position as it now stands between the employers and the employed. The solution is to be found in the Labour party's platform—the destruction of the present system, and the introduction of the nationalisation of the means of production, distribution, and exchange. (Hear, hear!)

HON. T. L. JONES: I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

The resumption of the debate was made an Order of the Day for Wednesday next.

#### SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I move—That the Council, at its rising, do adjourn until Tuesday next.

Question put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I move—That the Council do now adjourn. The first business on Tuesday next will be the Brisbane Tramway Purchase Bill to be considered in Committee, and the second reading of the Brisbane Tramway Fares Bill.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: With regard to the questions of which I have given notice, I should like to be allowed to emphasise the fact that the questions are not put with any intention of hostile criticism, but rather with the sincere motive of getting information on the subjects alluded to. There is no attempt at criticism in the slightest, but there is a desire that we should see where the money is drifting in those directions. I hope the Minister will give sympathetic attention to the questions, and afford us the information that is desired.

Question put and passed.

The Council adjourned at ten minutes past 8 o'clock p.m.