

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 1919

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

WEDNESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER, 1919.

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

QUESTIONS.

COMPENSATION PAID BY RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“What compensation has been paid in respect to claims for—(a) pillaged goods, (b) stolen goods, (c) lost goods for the year ended 30th July, 1919?”

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

“Records of pillaged, stolen, and lost goods are not kept separately. For the year ended 30th June, 1919, £3,146 18s. 5d. was paid out by the department for goods lost and damaged. The net expenditure was £1,823 4s. 3d. for goods stolen, damaged, or lost.”

LOCOMOTIVES IN RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“How many locomotives are there at present—

1. Out of commission and undergoing repair at Ipswich workshops?

2. At the other State railway workshops?

3. What is the total number of locomotives possessed by the Railway Department?

4. How many of these are road-worthy?”

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

“1. 88 (including 7 obsolete).

“2. 41.

“3. 667.

“4. 538.”

REPORTS OF MINISTER AND COMMISSIONER FOR RAILWAYS.

Mr. SIZER (*Nundah*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“Are the reports of the Minister and Commissioner for Railways on the result of the investigation and inquiry in America and Europe, respectively, ready; and, if so, when will same be laid on the table of the House?”

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

“The Commissioner’s report on American affairs will appear in his annual report. It is not customary for Ministers to make reports.”

EXCESS NAMES ON ELECTORAL ROLLS AND CARD INDEX SYSTEM.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*) asked the Assistant Minister for Justice—

“1. At the last State elections how many names appeared on the electoral rolls in excess of the adult population of Queensland?”

“2. Is it a fact that a card system was introduced into the State Electoral Office with the object of eliminating duplication of enrolment; if so, when?”

“3. If the answer to No. 2 is in the affirmative, will he state if the system is now complete and effective; if not, when does he expect it to be so?”

Hon. J. LARCOMBE (*Keppel*) replied—

“1, 2, and 3. The number of names on the State rolls at the general election on 16th March, 1918, was 424,416. The estimated electoral population of the State on that date was, approximately, 375,000. The difference between this total and the enrolment on the State rolls at the date of the election is explained as follows:—

On roll at date of election	424,416
Estimated electoral population	375,000

Difference	49,416
------------	--------

Of this 49,416, it is estimated that 40,000 names appearing on the annual and supplemental rolls and special soldiers’ rolls were names of soldier electors, and in basing the electoral population the statistician would not include this number in his calculation. Therefore, these 40,000 soldiers would have to be added to the electoral population. The balance of 9,416 names thus left in excess of the electoral population would be made up of duplicate enrolments on the rolls, dead persons, and persons who had left the State. The great majority of the 9,416 names would be duplicate enrolments, and 8,000 of these names have since been dealt with and removed from the rolls now that the card index has been brought up to date.”

OVERCROWDING IN METROPOLITAN AREA.

Mr. KIRWAN (*Brisbane*) asked the Home Secretary—

“1. Has his attention been called to the disclosures recently made regarding the existence of slums and overcrowding in dwellings within the metropolitan area?”

“2. Will he have inquiries made with a view of ascertaining the practicability of certain proposals made by Alderman Barry to deal with this question by compelling municipal councils to resume slum areas with a view of erecting model municipal dwellings for occupation at a reasonable rent?”

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

“1. Yes.

“2. Yes.”

PAPER.

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

Return showing all moneys advanced under the Mining Machinery Advances Act of 1906 during the financial year ended 30th June, 1919.

BREAKFAST CREEK NUISANCE.

On the motion of Mr. LLOYD (*Enoggera*), it was formally resolved—

“That there be laid on the table of the House copies of all letters, reports, and other papers concerning the investigation by the Health Department into the Breakfast Creek nuisance brought under the Home Secretary’s notice by a deputation introduced by the member for Enoggera on 20th July last.”

PROPOSED ADJOURNMENT OF HOUSE.

The SPEAKER: I have to announce that I have received the following letter from the hon. member for Windsor, Mr. Taylor:—

“Brisbane,
“17th September, 1919.

“The Hon. the Speaker,
“Legislative Assembly,
“Queensland.

“Dear Sir,—I beg to give notice that it is my intention, at the meeting of the House this day, to move that this House do now adjourn for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance—viz., the menace to the public health caused by the pollution of Breakfast Creek.

“Yours faithfully,
“CHARLES TAYLOR.”

I have given this matter some thought, particularly in view of the resolution just carried on the motion of the hon. member for Enoggera, which has for its object the obtaining of information which will, no doubt, satisfy all hon. members of what the Government's intentions are in regard to the matter. I have had regard also to the fact that the keeping clean of waterways, drains, and other things is essentially a local authority matter, and not desiring to encourage the tabling of motions for the adjournment of the House—which is a serious thing to do—unless the question to be discussed is really one of great public importance, and is also urgent and definite, and is in connection with a matter of recent occurrence, I must rule this motion out of order. The subject proposed to be discussed is not of recent occurrence. It has been going on for very many months, and many discussions have taken place in various local authorities regarding it, and for these reasons, if the hon. member for Windsor were allowed to move the adjournment of the House to discuss a matter of that kind, the hon. member for Toowoomba, the hon. member for Charters Towers, and hon. members from all over the country, if there was any nuisance in their electorates, would also be moving the adjournment of the House. I am very reluctant to prevent members moving the adjournment of the House if the circumstances warrant it; but, in view of what I have said, I have to rule that the hon. member cannot be allowed to move his motion.

UNEMPLOYED WORKERS BILL.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Bertram, Marce, in the chair.)

On clause 7—“Power to direct employers to take steps to remedy unemployment”—

Mr. MACARTNEY (Toowong): I trust the Minister will not press clause 7. I think it is one of the most drastic provisions in the Bill. It is not made by any means clear, and it gives the Government a blank cheque that ought to be given to no Government. It empowers the Government, by Order in Council, to—

“order and direct that employers shall do such things, and take such measures as, in his opinion, will be effective for temporarily or permanently reducing or eliminating unemployment within the State or any part thereof. Any such

order may be limited to any class of employers or individual employers or employer.

“Every such order shall be complied with either forthwith or within such time as is stated in such order.”

I defy the hon. member to find within the covers of the statute-books of Queensland any power given to the Government as great as the power contained in this clause. It is a power to impose an unlimited tax upon employers or even an individual employer; it can be utilised for persecution. It may be used for the destruction of enterprise. I think the Minister should be ashamed to stand behind such a proposal. There is no limit of any kind to the power, and we know by experience that the Government in power to-day do not hesitate to do things whether they bring about injustice or not, whether they bring about the destruction of enterprise, State interests or not. I say that this is a power that the House is not prepared to give the Government. If the hon. member is prepared to give the chamber a statement of how it might be used in some instances, the matter might be open to something like reasonable discussion, but in its present form, and with the knowledge that the House has, it is a most extraordinary and unacceptable provision.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I referred particularly to clause 7 on the second reading. I mentioned that it was a kind of dragnet power, and dragnet powers are necessary in regard to legislation of this kind. Unless we are prepared to give drastic powers to an authority such as the council and the Government to cope with unemployment, there is little hope of success. That is the justification of wider powers than usual. I think it is pretty obvious that they could not be operated in the way the hon. member suggests, in a way which would mean disaster to a business or industry. The penalty is mild—double assessment. The council in the course of their investigations may devise means of regularising employment in some industries or callings, and may cope with the unemployment position in a certain district by enforcing rules relating to such a scheme. I imagine that the problem can to a large extent be coped with by measures of that kind without resort either to the issue of Orders in Council to private employers to create employment or by the payment of sustenance, if the unemployment council will utilise its powers under this clause for the purpose of regularising employment, and asking employers to do such things as will to a large extent mitigate the evil. It is very difficult without any experience of the working of such a scheme to say exactly how the power will operate, but, as I have mentioned before, the success of the scheme depends upon the wisdom of the council, and we must have confidence that they will operate their powers only in good faith, without any desire to be unjust or act in any way that would create hardship for any employer or anybody else. It must also be remembered that on this council there will be an employers' representative.

Mr. VOWLES: One against four.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: At all events he is there, and if that interjection discloses the spirit in which the scheme is being received by hon. members opposite—that a Minister on the council, and a judge on the council, and the Director of

Hon. E. G. Theodore.]

Labour are going to be there to crush the employer—it simply connotes a lack of confidence in the scheme altogether. Why does not the hon. member be sincere, and say that the scheme cannot possibly be operated, and that no scheme can be operated by any Government because they cannot possibly be fair? That kind of thing is a condemnation of any Government. It is tantamount to saying that we would not sincerely and honestly attempt to operate the scheme.

Mr. SIZER: Do you think that your attitude to-day is likely to lead members to think the Government would do so?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: To what does the hon. member refer?

Mr. SIZER: Closing down the hon. member for Windsor this afternoon.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The Speaker exercised his judgment in ruling the matter out; I had nothing to do with it. No scheme calculated to deal with unemployment can be satisfactory unless it takes extended powers, and any scheme to be satisfactory must be operated under a power that may appear to be at the outset at any rate, too sweeping in its nature, and if it is to be condemned because it might be operated in a way that might not be wise then no scheme would be approved, because the same argument could be used against any scheme capable of dealing with the unemployed situation. If I might take the reasoning further, I might point out that that argument might be used against almost any kind of social or economic reform. It might have been used against the Workers' Compensation Act. There are powers in that Act which it might have been alleged would be operated at the outset to the detriment of industry. The Government has certain responsibilities, and any Government if it is worth its salt knows what follows an unwise use of its power, and no Government could be more careful in seeing that such power is carefully exercised than this Government.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It is rather too late in the day for the hon. gentleman to claim that the Government are not likely to take any advantage of this provision to do anything which is unjust, especially after the statement made by the Premier in regard to making pastoralists squeal and making employers squeal.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He denied that.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The attitude of the Premier, and of many gentlemen on the front bench, as well as other members sitting behind the Government, towards employers in this State justifies us in coming to the conclusion that unjust action may at any time be taken in connection with the powers sought to be conferred upon the Government by this provision. I am prepared to admit that the Minister is a common-sense man, and probably one of the most reasonable men on the other side of the House, but we know that there are other members on that side, some of whom are creeping up to the Ministry, who might not even be so careful as the hon. gentleman. There are some members who are getting out of the wet as fast as they can after having brought Queensland to the verge of financial ruin and disruption. With regard to the statement of the Secretary for Public Works, as to the possibility of these powers being unwisely administered, I say if the Government want definite powers in this direction, let them say what those

definite powers are that they require, and put reasonable limits upon them. But this clause is wider in its character than anything I have seen. Under such a provision it will be open to the Government to call on the banks to build new banking premises, and say that is likely to eliminate the unemployed. That may be rather an extreme example.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It is.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It serves the purpose of showing how drastic the provision is, and the Government can go to any class of employers and call upon them to do this, that, and the other thing, and if they do not do it them may impose a double assessment upon them. They can ask the pastoralists in Queensland to sink a bore 3,000 feet on their runs in order to provide work for the rural workers, or they may call upon cane-growers or farmers to make improvements similarly. We ought not to be called upon to give to the Government power to do anything that is unreasonable. If the hon. gentleman asks for reasonable powers—and surely he can make a reasonable proposition—the Committee can discuss it and fix that reasonable limit on the power which ought to be fixed.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: What do you suggest?

Mr. MACARTNEY: I am not called upon to make any suggestion in the matter. I trust that the clause will be fully discussed, and that it will go to a division.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): There is no doubt that we have listened to the voice of the leader of the Opposition, but behind that voice there is the Employers' Federation of Queensland, if not of Australia. Hon. members opposite may say "Bah," but it is quite true. The hon. member made the statement that members on this side had said we would make the pastoralists squeal. He went out of his way to flatter the Secretary for Public Works, and then looked at this corner of the House. I have said, and I shall repeat it as long as there is breath in my body, that there are 23,000 income tax payers, that 986 companies last year paid income tax on £22,000,000, and that the total wealth production of the State is £37,000,000. The hon. gentleman cannot deny that. What is wrong with this clause? What is wrong with putting on an extra assessment if it is required? The hon. gentleman has not given a single reason why members should vote against the clause. Those people have got the wealth of the country, and are, therefore, in a position to find work for the people of the country until such time as we can bring about a change in existing conditions. I want to hear some hon. member opposite put up some argument why this clause should be deleted from the Bill.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The Secretary for Public Works, in answer to the leader of the Opposition, made certain statements which need some further comment. The main reason that we have for opposing this clause is the constitution of the council. We endeavoured to remedy that matter when the clause was under consideration, but were not successful. The only amendment we succeeded in getting accepted was one of one or two inconsequential words, and that amendment was moved by the leader of the Opposition. When the Bill was introduced, the Minister promised that he would listen to any suggestions that were offered, and would embody in the Bill such suggestions

[*Hon. E. G. Theodore.*]

as were worthy of consideration. The council is a one-sided body. With the Minister, the Director of Labour, and a union representative on that council—three votes amongst five—it is obvious that the council must be one-sided in its opinion. I just want to quote a recent instance that has come under our notice—an instance which confirms our opinion that the Government are directly under the dictates of organisations outside this House. In a leading article in the last issue of "The Militant," dated the 1st September, 1919, the paper which is the official organ of the Queensland Railway Union, there appeared this statement—

"The Premier, in a rather feeble attempt to justify the tyrannical attitude of his Government in its handling of the Townsville trouble, attempts to sidestep the issue by the assertion that 'the Government must govern.' Brother Ryan plunged headlong into the disturbance prepared to back up a soured member of his Cabinet, whilst knowing all the time in his heart of hearts that his position, from a working-class point of view, is absolutely untenable. Certainly the Government must govern, but that Government must receive its instructions how to govern from those responsible for its creation. No matter what the future holds, no matter what action the Government may take that will justify confidence reposed in it by many, the stain of its betrayal of Northern men will never be eradicated. The blot will besmear its escutcheon for all time."

Could there be any stronger condemnation of the Government and their supposed desire to play fair in this game than that utterance? It clearly shows, as we have all along contended, that the Government are absolutely under the domination of organisations outside the House. The point now at issue is that the Government are asking for the most extreme powers to impose upon employers certain obligations. If the council were so constituted as to be fair and reasonable in its control of the position, we should not object so strongly to this particular clause. So long as the Minister refuses to

so amend the constitution of that [4 p.m.] council as to make it reasonable and such an one as will carry the confidence of the people, so long must we object to these drastic powers. I again repeat, there is a Minister as chairman of that council, there is the Director of Labour—who, according to the hon. member for Burke, is going to be called upon to sign the Labour platform—there is an employees' representative. Therefore three out of five—a majority of that council—can victimise the employers as much as they wish. The hon. member for Bowen has claimed that we plead the cause of the employer continually on this side of the House.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: So you do.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I want to tell him and all other hon. members opposite that we have absolutely no connection, directly or indirectly, with any employers' organisations.

Mr. COLLINS: No one believes you.

* Mr. ELPHINSTONE: There was a time when the organisations behind this particular party did represent employers' organisations; but appreciating, some time ago, the

fact that they were a detriment rather than an advantage to any organisation which is desirous of taking a middle course, they have been eradicated from all political organisations that are behind this party. I believe in speaking straight out in this matter, and I repeat once more that the employers' organisations have no control, directly or indirectly, over this party. I only wish I could say the same thing of the party opposite. If we could be sure the Government were not influenced at all by these outside organisations, we would sing a different tune; but when, every day, we see brought prominently under our notice assertions by these political organisations that they control the Government, can anyone wonder at our being sceptical in the matter? The Minister has referred to the operations of the Workers' Compensation Act. I want to point out that the assessments made under that Act are arrived at statistically, and if any charges are made in excess of the risk, the usual process is to make a rebate of premium or give an extension of the benefits. Insurance cannot be compared with this scheme under any circumstances, as it is arrived at on a statistical basis. Therefore, to find shelter behind that is simply burking the question. I repeat, to give a council so constituted such sweeping powers as are asked under this particular clause, is a crime, in my judgment, and it will have that effect which we on this side of the House have foreshadowed—it will rather create unemployment than assist in wiping it out.

Mr. VOWLES: I would like to point out that the Governor in Council has this power, not the unemployment council. The function of the unemployment council is purely to make inquiries and consider what are the most effective measures to be taken for temporarily or permanently reducing or eliminating unemployment. That is specifically set out in clause 4, which says the council "may" do those things. But they may not make those inquiries, and they may not make those recommendations, because there is no actual provision compelling them to do so. The power lies in the hands of the Governor in Council to at any time compel any individual or class of individuals to expend their capital, whether it is in the interests of their business or otherwise.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It is also the duty of the unemployment council to "consider what are the most effective measures to be taken for temporarily or permanently reducing or eliminating unemployment." This is the power to carry that out.

Mr. VOWLES: It says they "may" do those things. We are only assuming that this order will be made as the result of their deliberations. That is only part of the question. What I want to point out is that it will be the Governor in Council who will decide on the issuing of that order—in other words, the Treasury benches.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No Order in Council under this will be issued except by the Governor in Council.

Mr. VOWLES: Exactly. The position is, we can only gauge the real intention of clauses such as this by the remarks that are made by gentlemen sitting behind the Government. The Minister tells us, in a general way, what the effect of the clause will be, but we find a follower of his like the hon. member for Bowen getting up and

Mr. Vowles.]

telling us that at the bottom of it is the spirit of confiscation. He said a certain number of companies—I think, it was 946—according to the income tax returns received some twenty millions of money in a year. When the hon. gentleman is talking about those 900 associations he religiously gets away from this point: How many shareholders are represented by those associations? He gives the public to understand that they are 900 individuals. Every schoolboy knows that, for a start, there must be seven members in order to form a company. In many cases there are hundreds of members.

Mr. HARTLEY: And how many shareholders are there in five or six companies?

Mr. VOWLES: There must be at least seven, and in many cases there are hundreds. When the hon. member deals with these figures on that basis, he is not dealing with them fairly. It can be imagined what could happen with power such as is given here. Take the case of a pastoral lessee who would come within the clause. His company having made over 15 per cent. on its capital, the Governor in Council is entitled to bring them under that clause. When you are dealing with income tax returns you can obtain a fictitious income, because on stock transactions the Commissioner charges as income the turnover on the stock in one year. If a man is in the position that he has sold the whole of his herd in December with a view to purchasing a similar number or expending the same amount of capital in January, it would show on the income tax return for that year that he derived as income the whole of the proceeds of that stock. That is a fictitious income. In many instances men have had to pay dual income tax merely because they had the sale in one year, and did not buy until the next. Take the case of any pastoral tenant. They are the people whom the Government and their followers say they are out to make squeal, and whom they love to hear squeal. It is possible that in the last years of a lease the Government could come along and make the company expend huge sums of money in works which would not be regarded as an improvement when the lease expired—compel them to clear huge areas of prickly-pear, to put down water—that would be regarded as an improvement—to do all those things out of their own capital, and spend that money in such a way that it is not going to be reproductive. It is an interference with the liberty of the individual that the Government should have the power such as they are seeking here. We can only assume that, if the Government are not prepared to let us know exactly the lines on which they are going, there is something behind it which they do not wish to let us know. I always object to dragnet clauses. I say we should be taken into the confidence of the Government, and given opportunity to criticise. The public should know exactly what they are asked to face, so that when legislation gets on to our statute-book it will be defined, and everybody will know what his obligations and responsibilities are. As I said last night, we are put in the position that the Government, by regulations made under a skeleton Bill, possess such powers as are altogether unnecessary for the purpose of carrying out such a measure as this. We may be able to trust the individuals who are in charge of the Government at present, but we have to look to the future and see what the effect is

[*Mr. Vowles.*

going to be. If we are going to have a revolutionary Government—a Government which is going to be spurred on by outside sources, by the Trades Hall, and by organisations such as the Railway Union just referred to by the hon. member for Oxley—legislators are only human, and if the retention of their seats in Parliament depends upon their carrying out the orders of outside organisations, we can only expect that they will do it, because we know that they are doing it to-day.

Mr. COLLINS: Be careful. We'll give you something from the Employers' Federation later on.

Mr. VOWLES: That is the spirit which is behind the whole thing—confiscation, interference, and jealousy because in many instances private enterprises are doing better than State enterprises. We know the class of individual we have to deal with in politics; he does not belong to the old school which acted according to conscience, but he acts according to instructions, and that is the unfortunate part of our representation to-day. For these reasons, I hope that the Minister will withdraw the clause, as suggested by the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. SMITH: Vain hope.

Mr. VOWLES: The Minister has given no good reason for it; he has not taken us into his confidence to show that it is desirable. We have the Labour Bureau, with branches all over the country, which is supposed to regularise work, and to be thoroughly in touch with the wants of every district, and in view of that it seems to me that it is futile to have this unemployment council. We are told that the local authorities will be asked to postpone work, so that unemployed workers can go into those districts. I think that the duty of a local authority is not to worry about casual workers, but to try and find work for those in their own locality. I have been a member of a local authority, and that is the principle we are working on. Naturally, you are going to give the work in your own local authority to your own ratepayers.

Mr. FOLEY: But the local authorities do not do any work.

Mr. VOWLES: The trouble is that we have not been permitted to do the work we want to do, because, under the Labour party's policy, we are not allowed to get the money. They have not got the money to enable us to carry out the electric light scheme which we have been wanting to do for the last five years. We know that in twenty different directions there are local authorities anxious to get the benefit of electric light, and the Government tell us there is unemployment in the country. What is more, this clause is not definite. We are not going to be a party to legislation unless it is definite; we are not going to give a vote in the dark. It is the duty of the Government to tell the Opposition what their intentions are, so that we shall know what we are doing.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The hon. member for Mundingburra said that shire councils were not doing any work, but after four or five years of drought, and with the increased taxes which the Government have imposed, the people in the country districts have more than they can carry without a new imposition of this sort. The hon. member for Bowen said that the Employers'

Federation was behind this party. Everybody believes that one big employers' association is behind the Government benches, and that is the Licensed Victuallers' Association. (Government laughter.) Hon. members opposite acknowledge it, as their expenses were paid at the last election by that body.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. POLLOCK: Who acknowledged that?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The Minister's assurance with regard to the administration of the clause is practically worth nothing, because Ministers come and go. We want a definite statement in the Bill—nothing else is any good. The policy of the party opposite is the destruction of private enterprise, and the setting up of a co-operative commonwealth.

Mr. KIRWAN: Look at the party platform; it is there for everybody to read.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Hon. members opposite cannot deny that their policy is the destruction of private enterprise.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in order in his remarks.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: This clause is in furtherance of that policy, and is intended to bring it about.

Mr. HARTLEY: That is all right.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Here is an instrument to bring about the abolition of private ownership, and the setting up of a socialistic system.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to obey my call to order.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The idea is not to assist the unemployed. I shall oppose the clause.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): If confirmatory evidence was required—I do not say that it is required—to prove the utter incompetency and impotency of the present Administration, it is found in this and clauses of a similar nature. It is almost impossible to believe that we are in a British community. Our freedom is gradually being usurped, and it is unthinkable that the council should be able to rule things as they like. No council, however good it may be, is competent to direct one employer or another as to what he should or should not do. That is his own business.

Mr. COLLINS: They said that when they passed the Factory Act.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The Government know that they have failed to encourage enterprise, and that no development is going on.

Mr. COLLINS: That is not true.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: They are now going to fence themselves round with a power which will force people, willingly or unwillingly, to do what they require. They have discouraged enterprise to such an extent, and taken the very soul out of our community, that they have now to resort to force in order to carry out the purposes they have in view. I say that this presents to us with the clearest possible proof that they have been successful, not in encouraging enterprise, but in discouraging enterprise, in order to make good the follies of the past. They now require to have the

authority of an Act of Parliament in order to force employers to carry out work according to their own conception.

Mr. HARTLEY: What would you do to encourage employment? How would you help the unemployed worker?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The unemployed worker would not have been in the position he is to-day if a Liberal Government had been on that side. (Government laughter.) Hon. members opposite cannot point to any one thing where men have been encouraged to enter on any handicraft. On the other hand, they have always discouraged anything of the kind.

Mr. COLLINS: They have been reading your speeches.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The present Administration cannot move without confiscating someone's property.

Mr. COLLINS: Mention one estate we confiscated.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I assert that it is un-English to come down with a clause like this to affect the employers of this State—

"7. (1.) The Governor in Council may from time to time by Order in Council order and direct that employers shall do such things and take such measures as in his opinion will be effective for temporarily or permanently reducing or eliminating unemployment within the State or any part thereof. Any such order may be limited to any class of employers or individual employers or employer.

"Every such order shall be complied with either forthwith or within such time as is stated in such order."

I say unhesitatingly that that clause, and a drastic measure of this kind, is unworthy to emanate even from a Labour Government, and it has no right to appear on our statute-book. I hope that the Minister for Works will see his way clear to wipe it out completely. It is a decided discouragement, because what we are now doing will travel far and wide, and instead of bringing people here that we want with capital to do the work we require to be done, it will do just the opposite. A clause of this kind is distinctly against our best interests, and we should turn round and do what we can to encourage people to do things in a legitimate way.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (*Kennedy*): I really think that this is the best clause in the Bill, because it insists that employers shall have sufficient men in their employ to carry on production. The leader of the Opposition criticised the composition of the unemployment council and said it was not trustworthy because the Crown would be represented. There are three gentlemen on the Land Court and the hon. gentleman might just as well say that because they are employees of the Crown that they are not going to look after the interests of the tenants as well as the Crown. That is a libel on constituted authority. It is about time that the workers had some consideration given to them, especially when we see the profits that are made out of the wages bill. To-day the profits exceed the wages bill. The profits in the secondary industries to-day represent 19.36 per cent. and the wages only represent 15.16 per cent. Industries which can pay such

Mr. O'Sullivan.]

high profits as that should be compelled to look after the unemployed.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Why don't they own the industries?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: In a short time they will own them. That is the way things are going now.

Mr. COLLINS: Hear, hear! That is correct.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It is no use hon. gentlemen opposite going back to the stone age for their ideas. We are now going to do something to benefit the workers, and we will see that society does its duty in this matter to the worker. The hon. member for Warwick used the same old arguments that have always been used against every other progressive legislation that has been put on the statute-book. The same arguments were used about the Mines Regulation Bill when it was first brought in. Members of the party opposite asked what right the Government had to interfere and send an inspector down the mines to see that the works in the mine were conducted to the wellbeing of the workers so that there could be no accidents to the workers. It was said that the inspectors had no more right to do that than they had to go into a man's private house. All these arguments are dished up again in a different dress. I hope the Minister will insist on the clause. Without this clause the Bill would be very weak, and we would have no chance whatever in bringing about the relief to the unemployed we desire. With regard to the remarks of the deputy leader of the Opposition, I can remind him that if the local authorities carry on their work and engage sufficient men to do their work, then they will be able to employ all the unemployed in their own district and there will be no need to force them to do the work.

Mr. ROBERTS: This clause says more than that. It says "or other part of the State."

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: We want to make the Bill as good as we possibly can. I believe it will be a model Bill for the rest of the States of Australia to follow, and I am sure it will be followed. We want to be original, and this Bill is original, and that is why hon. gentlemen opposite do not like it. They would like us to copy some very—I was going to use the term "something of an illegitimate nature"—that it being done in the old country. They want us to copy the old country system. But this Government want something original and not to copy the old country legislation just because it has got an insurance fund. This will prevent the unemployed from coming on to the labour market, and it will also give employment to what is termed to-day the unemployable, who are really a product of the present system of society.

Mr. COLLINS: Hear, hear! There are a few of them on the opposite benches.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): We will find, if this Bill becomes law, that party nominees will be made to the various industries, so that they can carry out a certain policy. We know that these appointments are made now whenever the Government get the opportunity. If that policy is going to be carried out under this Bill,

[4.30 p.m.] it is certainly not going to help employment. Men are not likely to enter into business with the disadvantages we see in this Bill. I have in my mind's eye certain industries which the Government have entered into, and men are thrown

[*Mr. O'Sullivan.*]

out of employment by the very fact of them becoming State enterprises, and under this Bill private employers will be asked to find work for those men or else pay the penalty. I know there is a demand for a State butcher's shop in Toowoomba, and certain places have been indicated as to where the butcher's shop will be established. What will happen if that butcher's shop is established in Toowoomba? The very fact of the State taking control of that shop will cause men to be put out of employment, because the State do not undertake the distribution of meat the same as is done by private employers. Why should other employers in Toowoomba or Brisbane be called upon to find work for those men? State enterprise is more likely to cause men to be thrown out of employment than private enterprise. I pointed out by interjection that this clause goes very much further. It does not only deal with unemployment so far as local authorities are concerned. A local authority may deal with the unemployed in their own district, but if men are thrown out of employment in another area because of certain circumstances operating, the Government are going to call upon other local authorities to find employment, because the clause says "within the State or any part of the State." There is every reason why this clause should be deleted if the Minister only desires to encourage people to find employment.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I also object to this clause.

Mr. COLLINS: Quite naturally.

Mr. MOORE: It is quite natural that any fair-minded man would object to a drastic clause such as this.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: You object to anything that is progressive.

Mr. MOORE: This clause gives the Governor in Council power to discriminate between individual employers or class of employers. It is all very fine for the Minister to say that the Governor in Council is not going to abuse that power, but in the past we have seen that their powers have been abused.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It is not likely that this Government would, but some Governments might.

Mr. MOORE: This Government is the one I am referring to. I remember coal being carried all the way to Maryborough at an extra cost of 12s. a ton from Brisbane when they could have got it at Howard, and it was stated by an hon. member on the other side that the reason for that was because non-unionists were working in the Howard mine. Then, under the Sugar Acquisition Act, we know that many farmers were practically ruined through having a stock embargo put on. A great injustice was inflicted on a number of people who in no way benefited. The embargo was supposed to be put on for a particular purpose, but it was really a stock tax.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: A stock tax could not be imposed constitutionally.

Mr. MOORE: I asked the Minister in charge of that fund whether it was a fact that a man who was taking stock over the border refused to sign a document undertaking to bring them back again, and he was told to pay the tax and he could take the stock across the border. On three separate occasions I asked Mr. Hunter to give a definite reply to that question, and he never gave it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must keep to the question.

Mr. MOORE: The Minister said there was no discrimination, and that the Government would not abuse their powers, and I say we have had instances where those powers were abused. I am not prepared to support any clause which allows of discrimination between individuals and between employers. We know that party feeling often runs very high, and we know outside influence may be brought to bear on the Government to find employment in certain districts, and perhaps the employer most objected to by the unionists will be the one chosen and forced to carry out the work.

Mr. COLLINS: What a narrow-spirited way of looking at it!

Mr. MOORE: I know it is a narrow-spirited way of looking at it, but that is the spirit in which it will be carried out. We know that during the sugar trouble the railways refused to carry the farmers' cane. Are we going to have the employers victimised for the sake of political gain? The power contained in the clause is too wide. The Government should be prepared to state definitely the extent to which any individual or class of employers is likely to be called upon, but there is no limit in the clause.

Mr. COLLINS: Is your Local Authorities' Association a member of the Employers' Federation?

Mr. MOORE: Why should they not be?

Mr. COLLINS: That gives the lie direct to the hon. member for Oxley.

Mr. MOORE: This Bill says the employers must organise in order to have a voice in selecting their representative on the council, so what is the use of finding fault with us for organising?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: We do not find fault with you for doing it, but because you repudiate doing it.

Mr. MOORE: There is no question of repudiation about it. It has absolutely nothing to do with any political organisation. If the Industrial Council makes a suggestion to the Governor in Council, the Governor in Council must accept it, but the clause does not say that the Governor in Council must act only on the recommendation of the Industrial Council. The Governor in Council or the Cabinet may think that a certain class of employers should find more work than they are doing at any time, or they may think one individual should find more work than he is finding, and order him to carry it out, and such a power is too wide to place in the hands of any Government. If the Government think they are likely to gain votes by doing a certain thing in any district they are likely to use the power given under this clause to further their own ends. That has been done in the past, and it is likely to be done again. I think the Minister would be wise to limit the clause, as otherwise there is certainly an opening for grave injustice being done. No doubt at the present time the Minister thinks that these powers will not be used unjustly, but circumstances may arise later on and pressure brought to bear on him which he is unable to resist. Is it likely that anybody is going to enter into any industry with a clause like this hanging over them? No man in his senses, when the same conditions do not exist in other States, would come to Queensland. I ask the

Minister himself, if he were going to start an enterprise, would he select a country where the greatest restriction was put on enterprise? Would he rather not go to the country where he had the most freedom?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The same thing was said in 1915 when the Industrial Arbitration Act was passed.

Mr. MOORE: Has the result not proved what we said?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The wealth production of Queensland last year was greater than ever it was.

Mr. MOORE: The fact that we have this Bill before us now proves what we said, and this Bill is going to increase it rather than diminish it. I think the Minister will be well advised to consider, especially at a time when Queensland requires enterprise, whether it is wise to impose a risk upon an employer who is coming to this State with capital which is wanted to develop it. Should he not try to encourage such persons rather than hinder them by bringing in a Bill with a clause such as this? Whether it is going to be operated on or not, it will certainly deter such a man from coming here.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Pessimism.

Mr. MOORE: It is not pessimism; it is ordinary business common sense. A man who has money to spend will go where he is welcome.

Mr. COLLINS: Where do you think he will go—to what country?

Mr. MOORE: He will go across the border to New South Wales, perhaps.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They are coming from New South Wales here.

Mr. VOWLES: All the unemployed.

Mr. MOORE: I can quite understand that a certain class will come after such a Bill as this is carried, but the class we want will not come. I do not suppose that the Minister has looked this side of the question in the face, because he has brought this Bill in under pressure. (Government laughter.)

Mr. KIRWAN: Your side are always under pressure. The "Courier" gave you your instructions the other day.

Mr. MOORE: The Trades Hall gave the Premier instructions the other day, and he obeyed them inside ten minutes. The only instructions we have received are those from our electors, to secure fair play for everybody, and under this Bill that is not going to be given if the powers in it are used unwisely.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: It should be pointed out that the employers of labour are the class who are going to be penalised under the Bill for the upkeep of the unemployed, and, in addition to that, they are going to be called upon to use their capital in the direction of creating further employment. If the Minister is bent upon carrying out such a scheme as this, surely he might distribute the provisions of the Bill, and make them apply in other directions! If there is a man who should be let alone it is the man who is already employing labour; he should not be directed to do things that will spoil his business. It is the man whose money is lying idle in the bank, who is doing nothing to help any man, who should

Mr. G. P. Barnes.]

be touched at a time when drastic measures are being taken. The banking records indicate frequently that large sums are not earning more than ordinary interest. The business man who is working at the highest tension, trying to do the best for himself and others should be encouraged, instead of being surrounded by drastic restrictions. If he is encouraged he will do what the State wishes without the dictation of the council.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): The bogey behind a good deal of what has been said by hon. members on the other side seems to be the fear of undue discrimination under this clause. If they will read the clause, they will see that full right is reserved to the employer to appeal to an industrial magistrate—

“Provided that any such employer shall have the right to appeal to an industrial magistrate against any such assessment, on the ground that he has not made such default as alleged, or that such default arose through circumstances wholly beyond such employer’s control, and on no other ground.”

“Surely hon. members are not going to traduce the name of the Queensland magistrates for fairness! I think they stand high in the esteem of all sections of the community, and there is not the slightest doubt that proper justice will be done and regard had to all the circumstances. The Opposition say, “Do anything you like with unemployment, but do not ask us to pay.” The people they represent get the greatest bulk of the value produced by the labour they employ, and they refuse to pay anything towards helping the workers in a time of undue stress.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: You can lead the business man, but you cannot drive him.

Mr. HARTLEY: The hon. member spoke just now about unfairness to the employer, and penalising him, but if an amendment of his had gone through the other night, he would have penalised the worker to the extent of 25 per cent. more than the employer. He would have had to pay a poll tax of £1 6s., as against the contribution of £1 by the employer.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: You have got to multiply his contribution by the number he employs. What are you talking about?

Mr. HARTLEY: From that it will be seen where the sympathy of hon. members lies when men are out of work. I take it that this clause is inserted to prevent undue restriction of the labour market. It is well known to any man who studies the industrial position that at certain times of the year and under certain circumstances, evidently by a prearrangement among companies, work is made scarce. (Opposition dissent.) The meatworks and the shipping ring work together so as to hold back the season for the meatworks, in order that a big amount of labour may be released from other avenues, and they will have a big labour market available to choose from, so that they may intimidate the workers from asking for increased wages. The same thing occurs in the sugar fields, when mills are deliberately closed down, and sometimes kept closed down for a long period, in order to dragoon the canegrowers into accepting a lower price for their cane. I take it that it is to meet cases like that that this clause is

framed, and I do not see that any undue penalty or hardship can come upon any employer under it.

Mr. GRAYSON (*Cunningham*): There is one question which arises under this clause which has not been touched upon yet. In Warwick a few days ago I had a conversation with a manufacturer, who informed me that it would cost him £3,000 a year for the hands he employs.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: He must have 1,500 hands.

Mr. GRAYSON: It was suggested to him that the only thing to do was to pass it on by putting up the price of his manufactures. He said, “That cannot be done,” and he pointed out to me how it could not be done. He said that if we raised the cost of manufacturing the articles he produced the New South Wales and Victorian manufacturers would send their travellers to Queensland and undersell the local men, with the result that many employees would be discharged because we could not compete with the Southern manufacturers.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: What does he manufacture?

Mr. GRAYSON: Clothing, hats, and things of that sort. He is one of the largest manufacturers in Brisbane, and I think his statement shows that if this Bill is passed it will be the means of creating unemployment. Personally, I am in favour of trying to create employment for the unemployed, but I say it should be done on a fair and reasonable basis. I contend that the Government should subsidise £1 for £1 the amount contributed by employers, and that will not create any poll tax. I am, and always have been, opposed to a poll tax, but I think the Government should subsidise the contributions to the insurance fund, to the extent of £1 for £1.

Mr. COLLINS: Where will the State get the £1—from increased income taxes?

Mr. GRAYSON: There is one class of people who have large banking accounts, who have money lying dormant in the bank, and all they do is to draw their interest yearly, and I say those people should find the funds for subsidising the contributions of employers. As the Bill now stands, those persons will be exempt from its provisions. The gentleman to whom I was speaking in connection with this matter voted Labour at the last two elections. I know that for a fact, as he made no secret of it. With such a provision as this clause in the Bill, the passing of the measure may double the amount of unemployment in Queensland, and I trust the Minister will take into consideration the sound and courteous arguments advanced by members on this side of the House, and see his way to modify the clause.

Mr. TAYLOR: When one reads this particular clause and then reads the title of the Bill, one would reasonably come to the conclusion that instead of the title of the Bill being “A Bill to make provision for unemployed workers,” it should be “A Bill to make provision for unemployment.” If there is any clause in the Bill which will have a tendency to create unemployment, it is this particular clause. As several speakers have pointed out, the clause will impose penalties and restrictions upon those persons who are at present providing employment for workers. We have not nearly as many

[*Mr. G. P. Barnes.*]

secondary industries in the State as we should like to see in operation, and those which are in operation are probably not working up to their full capacity, as they might do if conditions were different from what they are. And in this clause the Government propose to give the Governor in Council power to order and direct that employers shall do certain things. I do not know any employer who will let his business suffer or go down through his not employing more men if it is to his interest to do so and he can get a market for his articles when they are manufactured. Yet, according to this provision, the council are to take evidence, and on that evidence they may honestly think that they are justified in doing certain things. But I take it that a man who is directing a factory or a business is the best judge as to whether it is reasonable or rational for him to put on more employees and extend his operations. Every sane and prudent man endeavours to carry on his business, not for this year or next year only, but in such a way that he may continue his operations for a lifetime possibly. Every prudent man looks ahead, and will take every possible care by the judicious use of his capital that if a bad time comes along he will be able to tide over the bad time and remain solvent. Are we going to encourage employers or people who have money in the other States to come here and engage in industries by passing a measure with such a provision as that which is contained in this clause? The drastic powers conferred by the clause may be used arbitrarily, and yet used with the best intention by those who constitute the council. They may act with the most honest intent, and yet be absolutely wrong in their deductions. Yet they may by their action force a man into the Insolvency Court. There should not be any measure on the statute-book which will enable any body of men to force a man into that position. With regard to the penalties proposed to be imposed, there are only two grounds on which an employer may appeal, and those two grounds are the two things which the employer is ordered to do by the Governor in Council. He cannot bring any evidence outside that which bears on those two things. He has to abide by that. That is the only thing

he can go before the magistrate
 [5 p.m.] on. I do not think he should be limited to that, in any defence he wishes to make and in the things he wishes to place before the Industrial Magistrate. I think he should be allowed to bring any evidence he likes in order to show that the position which he has taken up is a sound one, and that the order which has been issued to him is not practicable and not in the best interests of his business. If we continue to bring in legislation such as is contained in this clause, instead of enlarging our State as we wish it to be enlarged, and instead of its being the splendid State it ought to be, with employment from one end of it to the other, we are simply going to create an instrument that is going to destroy employment and retard industry on all sides.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I am perfectly satisfied, from the last few speeches we have heard from the other side of the House, that this clause is really a very good clause. I am more than ever convinced that a little study of industrial history will prove to hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House

that the objections they are raising are the same old objections which have been raised whenever an attempt has been made to improve industrial conditions. The argument that you must not interfere with a man's business, that he is the best person to direct that business, that in any case it is his business and must not be interfered with by outside people, was used in the days when legislation was sought to be introduced against the employment of children in factories and mines. "It is my business. Surely, if I want to employ children I am at liberty to do so!" We had the same thing with reference to the introduction of all factory legislation. "It is my factory, let me conduct my business in my own way." We repeatedly hear the same cry from gentlemen on the opposite side, week after week: "Leave us alone. Let us conduct our own business in our own way." We had it in reference to the limitation of hours. "Why should the State interfere and say how long a man is going to keep his shop open? Could not he keep it open from daylight to dark, and from dark to daylight, if he desired?" That was the old argument. "Why interfere with me? Why cannot I manage it in my own way?" Then came accident insurance, and there was the same cry: "Why should I be interfered with? Why cannot I make my own arrangements with my own employees in this matter?" The employers, and those who represent the employers in this Chamber and in other similar chambers, fail to appreciate that the time has arrived when employers must recognise that they have a duty to the State, that they are part and parcel of the State, that they exist by permission of the State—

Mr. COLLINS: Hear, hear!

Mr. F. A. COOPER: That being so, they must conform to the community in which they live. They everlastingly want to adopt the attitude that they must have all the freedom possible, that they must not be interfered with, but must be allowed to live their own sweet lives in their own sweet way, irrespective of anybody else. The time has come for those who hold the opposite opinion to assert themselves. The people who create the wealth, the people who work, are surely entitled to some consideration. They are on this earth for what particular purpose—to make wealth for those who employ them or to live their own lives? If they have to live their own lives, surely some provision should be made for them in those stages of their existence when there is no work for them to do. This side does not plead for the man who will not work; this side does not plead for the man who dodges work, but it earnestly pleads for those men who desire to work and for whom there is no work. Why should they be vassals, kicked about from pillar to post, with nothing staring them in the face but disillusion and want and misery as their portion whenever the employer likes to say, "There is no work to-morrow"? Cannot the other side see that they owe some duty to the community? The hon. member for Cunningham mentioned an unfortunate employer in this city who employs 1,500 hands in the clothing trade. I am going to look at that factory to-morrow. Fifteen hundred employees in one factory in Brisbane! That is in this poor, wretched State, in this little community of less than 600,000 people. One factory alone with 1,500 employees! How

Mr. F. A. Cooper.]

does it strike you Mr. Bertram? Does not it strike you that it is a wonderfully wealthy State?

Mr. GRAYSON: He is a merchant and manufacturer.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I do not care what he is, he is in a splendid position. We have only 600,000 souls all told, and one man can employ 1,500. It is a magnificent, it is a grand State, and it can only be that because the people in it have made it such. The black-fellows did not make it what it is. A State possessing such potentialities can surely do something for those who have made the State what it is. The hon. member for Cunningham mentioned that this gentleman is a clothing manufacturer. I take him at his word. There are 1,500 employees. On the average, a tailoress sitting at her machine day in and day out makes something like forty pairs of trousers in a week. You run this over twelve months, and you will see the miserable amount he will have to add to a pair of pants to make it a paying concern. It is something like two-fifths of a penny. The hon. member ought to run his figures right out to their ultimate conclusion before he brings them into this House, and trots them out in argument. Nothing has fallen from the other side in this debate whereby it can be proved that an employer should not provide employment, if his circumstances permit, for those who have helped him in his hour of need. He needs workers to get along with his industry, with his factory, to create his wealth, and the time has arrived that, when they need him he should come to their assistance. There is a little industry in the district I have the honour to represent—the Queensland Woollen Company. For many years that has gone along without paying a dividend. Last year, on the wages sheet of £14,000, it made a net profit of £22,000, due to what? Due to the money that people have had to pay for their product, and the labour of their employees. Surely in an instance such as that, although that company have not paid for many years, and have had big struggles—as I know—I say even in a case like that, where there is a wages sheet of £14,000 distributed among 200 hands—£70 a year is their average wage—when they make a profit of £22,000 that council might be entitled to come along and say “Well now, out of £22,000 perhaps you can set aside £4,000 for additional work in your factory for some of your employees, who helped to make that profit, when they are cut of work. That would be a very logical and reasonable thing to do. I am sure the Minister will be justified in sticking to this clause, because it is the very spinal marrow of this very fine Bill.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FRY: I have been waiting very patiently to try and arrive at some concrete reason for bringing in this Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must deal with the clause.

Mr. FRY: I am going to deal particularly with that part of the clause which states—

“The Governor in Council may, from time to time, by Order in Council, order and direct that employers shall do such things, and take such measures as, in his opinion, will be effective for temporarily or permanently reducing or eliminating unemployment within the State or any part thereof.”

[*Mr. F. A. Cooper.*

I may say I have supported and asked for a Bill of this kind for a considerable time. I think it was last year when quite a number of soldiers considered this question, and I think the Secretary for Public Works will bear me out in saying that a deputation waited upon him asking that a Bill of this description should be introduced.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not dealing with the clause.

Mr. COLLINS: Clause 7—have a look at it.

Mr. FRY: I know what clause 7 is. The speakers on this clause have directed their arguments in one direction, and have been allowed to go on—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. FRY: We have been told that the profits in a certain case have exceeded the wages-sheet. There must be some cause for it. We have also been told that in the Queensland Woollen Company, on a small wages-sheet, excess profits have been made. While the clause states that the Governor in Council may do certain things, we have been told by the hon. member for Fitzroy that the objective of the party is to abolish private enterprise, and set up in its stead the nationalisation of industry.

Mr. HARTLEY: To establish a co-operative commonwealth—that was the objective.

Mr. FRY: I think they are practically the same.

Mr. HARTLEY: Oh, no!

Mr. FRY: In what way does a co-operative commonwealth differ from the nationalisation of industry? To my mind, they are one and the same. The question of the nationalisation of industry—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must confine his remarks to the clause.

Mr. FRY: Whilst I think that every member on this side is in favour of a Bill to provide for the unemployed workers, we want to get down to something concrete. All the arguments used this afternoon have been, to my mind, in favour of co-operation. It is a question of how this £2 per head is to be used.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must confine his remarks to the clause.

Mr. FRY: The penalty is upon the employer, and that is what I want to arrive at. The Bill is wrong in principle.

Mr. HARTLEY: This is not a second reading debate.

Mr. FRY: I am speaking on the clause. The hon. member knows that he is forbidden to advocate co-operation; but I am here to advocate co-operation, because it gives to the employee an equal distribution of profits and eliminates unemployment. Men are thereby encouraged to put their money into industry and send out their enterprise in other directions.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must confine his remarks to the clause. If he does not do so, I shall have to ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. FRY: The Governor in Council is set up as a board of governing directors, and any board of governing directors—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in order.

Mr. FRY: It gives the Governor in Council power to make levies, which is certainly the power of a board of directors, which can make levies upon shareholders.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member will see that the clause gives power to direct employers to take steps to remedy unemployment and to levy a penalty assessment.

Mr. FRY: I want to get to the point that, if any money derived from this penalty assessment is going to be used for the encouragement of industry, I shall be prepared to further consider the matter. There is a lot of opposition to this measure. The only sane means of creating industry is to encourage people to put their money into industry.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. MACARTNEY: I would like to point out that the clause is not in sequence, following upon any report from the council constituted under the Bill. It is simply a general dragnet clause, put in apparently to give the Government any power which might by any chance be overlooked. Looking at the following clause, under the heading of "Relief Works" it will be seen that, after a report is obtained from the council constituted under the Bill, certain steps can be taken by the Governor in Council on the report of the Minister. There is quite a fair provision that the Government shall find such work as, in the opinion of the Governor in Council, will tend to afford the greatest relief. Then there is power to direct the local authorities—whether that is a wise power or not is a matter which can be discussed when we arrive at that stage—but the power is there to direct local authorities to do certain things. There is a further power that persons making a certain rate of profit on their investment, and a certain total profit in the year, can be called upon to do certain things to relieve unemployment. There are other powers in the clause which are consequent upon the report of a council specially constituted to go into all these questions and make recommendations; so that the clause we are now discussing is entirely apart from the general system of the Bill. It is very extreme; it is no use trying to indicate further how extreme it is, it is generally admitted.

Mr. HARTLEY: Almost revolutionary.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. member who has interjected pointed out that it was a perfectly fair clause, because there was an appeal to an industrial magistrate. The hon. member did not realise that there is no appeal whatever from the direction of the Order in Council. The Order in Council is absolutely final; but if it so happened that the employer did not carry out the Order in Council, there is power to refer to the industrial magistrate the point as to whether the default arose through circumstances fully beyond such employer's control, and on no other ground.

Mr. HARTLEY: And, therefore, he should pay the penalty.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It is simply a limited appeal, and the employer is deprived of any other ground of appeal which he would ordinarily have as a matter of law by way of defence. There is a restriction of defence, and that is the intention of the clause. That shows you that hon. members opposite do not really understand what is in the Bill, and it is their duty to consider that. If the hon. gentleman does not

understand what is in the Bill then it would be very much better if the hon. gentleman would leave it alone. The hon. member for Bremer gave an instance where the Ipswich Woollen Company might be called upon to pay £4,000 out of its profits. I do not know anything of the Ipswich Woollen Company, and I do not know the amount of capital invested in the undertaking, or whether the profits were made on the actual work of the employees or on the material and turnover of the goods they handle. But the suggestion of the hon. member shows how the cost of living can be added to by the nostrums that the Government in power are giving to the people from time to time, and of which this is a sample. If you take £4,000 out of the profits, then it has to be passed on in order to enable that company to continue its business. However, that is only a bagatelle. We will have other clauses in the Bill to discuss as we come to them. I have only this word to say: I feel positive that this clause has been put in here in its present form with a desire to induce the Upper House to reject it so that hon. members opposite can make political capital out of it against the Upper House in their campaign against that branch of the Legislature.

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

* Mr. SIZER: I can see if we pass this clause as it is that there is a great possibility of it being abused. I am not going to say that the present Minister for Works would abuse it, but he might not always be in that position.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Then you had better keep me here. (Laughter.)

Mr. SIZER: You may not always be in power. We know that the militant section of the Labour party are fighting more and more to get full control of the Treasury benches, and whether hon. members are members of the Labour party or not we know that there is a movement afoot to make the party more extreme than it is to-day.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. SIZER: The Treasurer may not always be there. A more extreme man may be in that position.

Mr. STOFFORD: You made a different statement to that last session.

Mr. COLLINS: You ought to read "Stead's Review" on the administration of the War Precautions Act.

Mr. SIZER: It is quite possible that the Minister of that time may take a drastic view of things, and it will be in his power to practically cripple a particular industry. I admit that there may be justification for somewhat drastic clauses in some measures, as suggested by the hon. member for Bowen, but surely he would not contend that the circumstances are analogous! No unemployment council will be better able to conduct a man's business than the man who has been successfully running it for years himself. It is impossible for an unemployment council to know the difficulties of advanced buying, or the fluctuations of the money market. The council might come along and ask the employer to spend £10,000 or £15,000 on buildings in some direction when the employer may be making provision to spend a similar sum, or perhaps a larger sum, in another direction, which would provide more employment than the council might want.

Mr. Sizer.]

I do not think it is a wise or practical suggestion, because it will mean that inexperienced men can interfere with an experienced man's business. It is not a good thing to attempt to dictate to an employer how to run his own business. It is not practical. It is of a revolutionary nature, and it may hurry about that change which the hon. member for Bowen has so often talked about in this Chamber.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member for Bowen is generally pretty correct.

Question—That clause 7 stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 28.

Mr. Butler	Mr. McCormack
„ Collins	„ McLachlan
„ Cooper, F. A.	„ Mullan
„ Cooper, W.	„ O'Sullivan
„ Coyne	„ Payne
„ Dunstan	„ Pollock
„ Fihelly	„ Riordan
„ Foley	„ Smith
„ Gilday	„ Stopford
„ Gillies	„ Theodore
„ Hartley	„ Thompson
„ Kirwan	„ Whitford
„ Land	„ Wilson
„ Larcombe	„ Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Butler and Mr. Kirwan.

NOES, 16.

Mr. Barnes, G. P.	Mr. Moore
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Morgan
„ Bayley	„ Roberts
„ Bebbington	„ Sizer
„ Bell	„ Swayne
„ Elphinstone	„ Taylor
„ Grayson	„ Vowles
„ Macartney	„ Warren

Tellers: Mr. Bell and Mr. Elphinstone.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 8—“*Relief works to reduce unemployment*”—

Mr. MOORE: I move the omission of paragraph (ii.) of subclause (2) reading—

“By Order in Council direct local authorities or other local governing bodies in the said localities to commence and carry out such works as are stated in the order for the relief of unemployment therein, and all such authorities and other bodies shall conform with such order.”

The only possible way of making the clause just is to delete it. The Local Authorities Act is the charter under which local governing bodies of Queensland work, and they have certain responsibilities and certain duties, and the ratepayers have a certain protection, and certain rights and privileges, but under this Bill the whole of the Local Authorities Act is to be wiped out so far as protection to the ratepayers is concerned. This clause will give the Government power at any time to tell local authorities to carry out certain work. The clause says the local governing bodies are to carry out works in the said locality, the said locality being where unemployment exists. Would that not be very rough on the local authorities in districts where employment is only seasonal? If these works must be carried out in the locality where there is unemployment it means that one section of the local authorities all the time is going to be called upon to find the money to create employment. The Minister said the idea was to transfer men from one locality to another where work could be found for them, but there is to be no question of transferring if the

[*Mr. Sizer.*

work is to be found in the locality where there is unemployment. At the beginning of the year each local authority brings in a programme of work, and decides how much money will be required to carry out necessary works during the year, and then strikes a rate accordingly, but how on earth are they going to do that if the Minister can come along at any time and say to a local authority, “You have to carry out certain work for the benefit of the unemployed in your district?” A Government is pretty well known by the way they carry out their financial obligations, but what sort of a position would the Treasurer be in if an outside authority could go to him and say, “You must expend a considerable amount more money than you have made provision for?”

A. GOVERNMENT MEMBER: The money will be advanced to the local authorities.

Mr. MOORE: They must take into consideration the question of paying it back, and paying interest, and also whether the work to be carried out is justified. There is also the consideration that the ratepayers' property is going to have a first mortgage put on it, and they are not to have any say as to whether that mortgage should be put on or not. I would also point out that continued bad seasons and legislation recently passed has depreciated the value of property to a considerable extent, and a number of farmers are not in a position to make a living off their farms, and it has been the practice of shire councils to give out work to those farmers in necessitous circumstances who are ratepayers.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is part of the object of this Bill—to give work to unemployed farmers.

Mr. MOORE: They are not workers within the definition in this Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: This year no fewer than 100 farmers in one district applied for work on railway construction, and they were given work.

Mr. MOORE: They do not come under the definition of “worker” in this Bill. The position is a serious one and if shire councils are to be called upon to give work to outside unemployed it will be still more serious. If the local authorities are to be called upon to find work for the unemployed in their own district, the position of the councils in the sugar districts will be a very unenviable one.

Mr. COLLINS: Why mention the sugar districts? Stick to the Darling Downs, and you won't go far astray.

Mr. MOORE: I mentioned the sugar districts because the work is seasonal in that industry, and it is in those districts that the councils are going to have the worst time. I cannot see how the local authorities are going to carry on with any degree of efficiency if an outside authority can come in and compel them to do certain work.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Is that not done now?

Mr. MOORE: When the Local Authorities Act was passed it was unthinkable that the Minister would so abuse his position as to abuse the power of veto, but this Government has inaugurated that position.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It was not this Government that gave the local authorities power, under the Health Act, to do certain things.

Mr. MOORE: When that power was given, the Government had to take the responsibility of collecting the money and levying the rate required, but under this Bill they do not. If the Minister has power to say what work shall be done, and whether certain work shall be held up, I do not see how the local authorities can carry on successfully. The councils will be in the position of not knowing what their obligations are likely to be, and will not know what rate to strike. It is most unreasonable to think that a council may be instructed to carry out work that perhaps is not the most beneficial to the ratepayers or the most economical, but work that will give the greatest amount of employment to the largest number of men. We know that very often the work that is doing the greatest amount of good provides employment for only a very small number of men, by reason of the use of labour-saving machinery or for other reasons, such as providing water. There may be only two or three men employed. All these things have to be looked at from a local authority point of view, and I cannot understand the Minister's bringing in a clause which is practically going to do away with local government. We have a maximum rate at the present time, and if the special expenditure does not come out of the special rate, it must be made up out of the general fund. The ratepayers will have to pay twice—as an employer and then as a ratepayer. Surely, that is an unfair system on which to base relief from unemployment? Nor is there any limit on the amount of work which a council may be required to carry out. In the Local Authorities Act there is a limitation on the amount of temporary accommodation a local authority may get in proportion to its rates, but the only limitation in this clause is that, if the unemployment ceases, the council may tell the local authority to stop, probably leaving the work in a position in which it will not be a benefit to the shire, consequently the credit of the shire is jeopardised. Surely the financial position of the shire should be taken into account, and it should be definitely laid down that only a certain proportion of the rateable value should be so used or only a certain amount should be expended. To tell local authorities to carry out work without limit, especially in districts where the occupations are always seasonal, is going to place them in such a position that they will not be able to carry on. We know that the Government have thrust on to local authorities health and many other matters which take the revenue which ought to go towards road-making and divert it into other channels. If there is to be placed upon them an additional imposition without limit, so that they will not be able to prepare at the beginning of the year a financial statement which will be of any value, the Minister must realise that it places them in an unjustifiable and most difficult position. The local authorities are compelled to look after the health of the community. They are not absolutely compelled to make roads, but they are supposed to do the very best they can in that direction with the funds at their disposal, and now we have an outside authority coming in and telling them that they have to take no notice of the needs of the municipality or the welfare of their ratepayers, but must do something else to relieve the pressure that the Government have brought about by their own maladministration. Surely the position is an untenable one for any Government to

take up! If we are going to have local government, the Minister should consider the advisableness of making it local government, in fact, without outside interference, or else wipe it out and do the work out of State revenue. It is impossible to work satisfactorily under divided control.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I can only arrive at the conclusion that the Opposition have adopted the tactics of categorically and systematically trying to destroy the Bill. By attempting to remove one vital feature after another, they are endeavouring to make it unworkable. If hon. members have made up their minds that they do not want any solution of the problem, it would have been more honest to vote against the second reading. By pretending to give a kind of support to an effort to solve it, and at the same time attempting to mutilate the scheme, is not honest. Where any study of this question has been made, it has been recognised that there is a fair opportunity of dealing with the situation by utilising the prospective work of local authorities as a means of reducing unemployment. I mentioned on the second reading, and I have statistics to back up the statement if it is questioned, that there is always a number of applications from local authorities for loans to carry out certain works. It is only a question of utilising our knowledge of what is proposed and making a careful selection and allotting it to certain periods of the year. A good deal has been done in that direction in the past, but a good deal that could have been done has been frustrated by a lack of sympathy on the part of local authorities. Within the last six months I have called upon local authorities to expedite their work, promising to advance the money immediately, and in two cases they have point blank refused to help the Government.

Mr. VOWLES: Why do you not order Dalby to do their work?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is a case where they have a loan granted for the establishment of an electric lighting scheme, but it cannot be put in hand directly, nor would it give much employment directly. There are certain classes of work that can be very well utilised for this purpose—drainage work, road formation, bridge building, waterworks, excavations of various kinds, and in the aggregate they amount to a very large quantity of work—work that the local authorities propose themselves. It is only a question of asking them to expedite the work, of conferring power on the Government to absolve them from certain obligations, so that the time which must usually elapse between the proposal of a work and the commencement of it may be reduced. The amendment would take away one of the vital means of dealing with the situation—one of the most useful means of providing employment. The employment council are not going to exercise their powers in a way that would result in great loss or difficulty to local authorities, nor would any sane body of men do what has been hinted at by members opposite—that is, simply out of caprice, call upon local authorities to do work that was not necessary or contemplated. Especially would they not call upon local authorities to do unnecessary work, seeing that all the time the Government have before them applications for loans for a large volume of work. There would be a discreet selection

Hon. E. G. Theodore.]

of the works, and the wishes of the local authorities would be consulted.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Your council are not practical men who would know what was necessary

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Surely the hon. member cannot make that suggestion! The judge—

Mr. BEBBINGTON: What does the judge know?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The judges of the Industrial Court are among the most practical of our business men.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Nonsense!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They are men who every day are brought face to face with the industrial conditions existing in the State, who have placed before them the views of the employers and employees and adjust the balance, who meet them at round-table conferences and compulsory conferences, and have brought before their notice the smallest detail. Such men are practical in these matters if you will find anybody practical.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: A judge never did a day's hard work in his life.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The hon. member does not know what he is talking about. The other members of the council are all thoroughly practical men. The Director of Labour is a thoroughly practical man, who is intimately in touch with the employers and the employees, and the employers' and employees' representatives will, no doubt, be responsible and practical men.

Mr. VOWLES: During the second reading of this Bill the Minister told us that the moneys which will be expended by the various local authorities will be moneys which have been asked for by local authorities for specific works. If a local authority has gone through the formalities required by the Local Government Act—has advertised their intention to apply for a loan, and has taken a poll of the ratepayers, thus giving those who will have to bear the burden an opportunity of objecting to the proposed loan—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: In some cases application for a loan is made before those preliminary conditions have been complied with.

Mr. VOWLES: I am sure that the Minister would insist upon those conditions being complied with.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I can assure you that a majority of the applications have been made before the conditions have been complied with.

Mr. VOWLES: No doubt, very often the Minister is asked for information as to whether he will supply the money before the local authority goes to the expense of consulting the ratepayers, but after that is done the ratepayers are given an opportunity of saying whether they agree or disagree with the proposal. But under this provision the Government may do away with those formalities, and may direct the local governing body to "carry out such works as are stated in the order for the relief of unemployment therein." Evidently the reference here is only to unemployment in that particular locality, so that the council cannot transfer people from other localities to the

area under the jurisdiction of the local authority.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: This is only one means of dealing with the matter.

Mr. VOWLES: I think the general feeling of the Committee is that the Government desire to get power to bring unemployed from one district to another, but this clause does not give them that power. As a member of a council and as a ratepayer, I strongly object to any body being placed in the position that they can compel a council to give employment to people outside their own district. I also object to the powers given to ratepayers by the Local Government Act with regard to loans being taken away from them. The hon. member for Aubigny has told us that such a provision will affect the credit of local authorities, and there is no doubt that it will affect their credit. If the work is going to be carried out by surplus labour from other places, if it is going to be carried out by the class of labour we get from the Labour Exchange and is to be done under the day labour system, then we are not going to get the return for our money that we get under present conditions. This provision will hamper local authorities in the very worst way, and it will create unemployment in their several districts. If you are going to tell local authorities what they must do with the money which is loaned to them and which they will have to repay, they will say, "We do not want to make application for a loan, we want to limit our loan obligations, so that the annual charge upon the ratepayers will be reasonable." I noticed quite recently that under the influenza regulations the Government have declared influenza not to be a notifiable disease, and placed upon local authorities the duty of providing for the treatment of the disease from a retrospective date. Thus an unexpected burden has been placed on the ratepayers. In view of that fact, and of what may happen under this clause, I strongly object on behalf of the people I represent to the rights they have got under the Local Authorities Act being taken away from them as far as the sanctioning of loans is concerned. The property-owners alone will be responsible for the repayment of any loan money advanced to the local authority, and by this provision their property is to be pledged as security for a loan for the benefit, not of the people in their own locality, but for the benefit of casual workers from other districts who are going to be placed in the shires and towns. In one month those people will "sop up" the whole of the work which would probably afford employment for local workers for twelve months. That is unfair to everybody concerned. The class of work which is undertaken by local authorities they want to do in a scientific manner, and they do not want their areas to be made the dumping ground for the unemployed from other districts who will be employed under the day-labour system. We know that the workers usually employed in country districts do more work in one day than the men we get from Brisbane do in a month. We must also realise that a large number of the men who go into the sugar districts are not Queensland residents. In many cases they are residents of the northern districts of New South Wales, and some of them come from Tasmania and New Zealand, just as shearers come over from New Zealand to Queensland to find work. We are asked in this measure

[Hon. E. G. Theodore.]

to make provision, not for our own unemployed, but for persons who come from other States to take advantage of seasonal employments in which they get a higher rate of wages than they can get in other places.

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

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I have much pleasure in supporting this amendment of the hon. member for Aubigny, because the clauses he proposes to omit take away practically the whole of the authority of the shire councils, and make the Minister the authority to overrule them in connection with any work which is to be carried on. It is not a question of what roads you must do up, but of keeping down the rates to a position which will enable the ratepayers to pay them. The Minister is to have power to bring men, we will say, from sugar districts, where they have been earning £6, £8, and £10 a week. We know that some men in meatworks and sugar fields do earn those amounts.

Mr. CARTER: Where?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If the hon. gentleman wants to know, I have been over the books of the Gladstone Meatworks, and the lowest average I saw for—I think it was—slaughtermen who worked at piece rates, was £6 a week, and the amounts went up to £8 or £9 a week. There is no question that many cancutters earn £6 or £8 a week.

Mr. GILDAY: Don't they earn it?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: They may earn it. Their daily wage is over £1 a day. We do not expect men to earn sufficient wages in three months to keep them the whole year. I cannot do it. I have to work 365 days. It is a wrong thing that the Minister should have the power to bring up those men, who have been earning £6 or £8 a week, or perhaps less, and who should be in the position to keep themselves until they got other work. In a place like Queensland there are any amount of contracts available in the bush. I have known shire councils advertise over and over again for people to do contract work, and the work has not been taken up. Yet in the cities there are hundreds of men looking for work, and they will not take that work. I believe in a man earning what he gets, and getting what he earns.

Mr. WHITFORD interjected.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: There is no reason why I should work to keep men like the hon. gentleman.

Mr. CARTER: You never have.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If he were not here, that might happen. I have always had to work. I could keep myself at any work, I do not care what it is.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the hon. member connect his remarks with the question?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The Minister will have the power to bring men who have been earning wages like those I have mentioned, and putting them in a shire council area, where the ratepayers are suffering from drought from one year to the other, and they will have to find the tax to keep these other men in employment. It is a wrong principle altogether, and I have very much pleasure in supporting the amendment for that reason. But there are other reasons. One would not mind so much if he were getting value for his money; but you might just as well put me to making clothes as to put on to shire council work a man

who might be a very excellent tradesman. The unemployed worker has to take what work is offered to him, not necessarily in his own calling. He will not be able to earn half what he will be paid. He would not be able to earn more than I could if you put me in a workshop in Brisbane. When the Cooyar line was being built, the Liberal Government at that time—I complained about it, so my remarks are not confined to one Government—sent unemployed men up there, and told the engineer not to be too hard on them—which was the correct thing to do. But what happened was this—those men made three fencing posts in a day's work. I am talking about the cost of the work which the Government is going to carry out.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman must confine his remarks to the local authorities.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The same thing would happen to the local authorities.

Mr. WHITFORD: That is a slander on the local authorities.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: An ordinary man can sink thirty post-holes in a day comfortably. Those are things which are going to come under this Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Well, Mr. Bertram, under these three clauses the same thing would apply, and it is a wrong thing that the farmers—who have to work very hard for their money—should be taxed in order to raise money and pay interest on the redemption of moneys used for that purpose. I do not say the Government should supply the money. These men have the right to earn their living, and they would, if you found them work of the character they are used to. Those are the men who probably would be sent up into the shire councils to do the work.

Mr. TAYLOR: During the discussion in connection with this matter the Treasurer stated the case of two local authorities who had not carried out his wishes with regard to the performance of certain work. I think there are, altogether, about 186 local authorities in Queensland, and less than 1 per cent., according to the Treasurer, failed to carry out their duties.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: No; 100 per cent. of those he asked failed to carry it out.

Mr. TAYLOR: I prefer to put it in the way I have done, which is the correct and truthful way of stating the case. The Secretary for Public Works distinctly said that two local authorities had failed to carry out their obligations in connection with certain works. The fact that there were only two out of 186 local authorities which failed in their obligations speaks volumes for the work which the local authorities are doing in Queensland to-day. Anyone who is acquainted with the subject knows that local authority work is practically confined within the four corners of the Local Authorities Act. So far as executive work is concerned, they have very limited powers; their work really is more of an administrative nature, and their work is specially defined for them in the Act. They cannot raise a loan, or even increase their overdraft at the bank to carry on the work, without the permission of the Home Secretary. It is now proposed

Mr. Taylor.]

in this clause to take away all power of carrying out work from the local authorities.

Mr. FOLEY: No; that is wrong.

Mr. TAYLOR: I will not say all work—probably it is not all work—but still it gives to the Minister the power to say what work a local authority shall carry out. My own experience of local authorities is that they are only too anxious and willing at all times to carry out necessary work in their own area. That is evidenced by the statement which the Minister made to-night about the number of local authorities who are continually applying to him for advances to carry out their works. This clause empowers the Minister, when a certain set of circumstances arise, to tell the local authorities, "You will have to do this or that particular work, no matter what the cost may be." I can speak with regard to one local authority, of which I know a little. An estimate is prepared of work proposed to be done during the year, and they are guided by the amount of the estimate in fixing what the rate shall be for the year. The clause confers power on the Minister to direct the local authority at any time to spend £2,000, £3,000, or £5,000. If there was a limit to the amount of expenditure there might be some justification for the clause, but there is no limit whatever. This clause, like other clauses of the Bill, is limitless, and can be stretched to any extent the Minister chooses. I contend that a local authority is the best judge as to the expenditure necessary in its own particular area. In country districts, the upkeep of roads is a very heavy item in the large areas of some of the local authorities. It is found necessary, in order to assist settlers, to give them a certain amount of work in the shire in order that they may pay their rates. That is a very fair thing, and the local authorities should be allowed to continue the practice; but I take it that, under this Bill, that class of worker, unless he registers as an unemployed worker, will have no chance of getting any of that work. I think it is only right that those who live in the local authority area should have the preference over outsiders; but under this Bill unemployed workers from any part of Queensland can be dumped down in any local authority area to do any work which the Minister may determine shall be done. I hope the Minister will agree to cut the clause right out. No one can deny the splendid work which the local authorities have done in the State during the last thirty or forty years, without pay. The only persons who get a little out of it are the mayor or chairman, as the case may be; otherwise, the work is of a voluntary nature, and carried out under the guidance of the Home Department. I think that the clause is unjust and unfair, and not in the best interests of the local authorities or of the unemployed.

Mr. FOLEY (*Mundingburra*): I hope the Minister will not be persuaded by the arguments put up by hon. members opposite to withdraw the clause, which is one of the most important in the Bill. I earnestly desired more than once that such a clause as this had been in force when the unemployed workers in Townsville were living on rations, or practically starving. Hon. members opposite know how the unemployed were gathered there. When I addressed them I told the leader that, in my opinion, he was being paid to come to Townsville to create a bad feeling in the minds of the people against

[*Mr. Taylor.*

the Government. It was very significant that, at that time, Mr. Gelston and Mr. Ernie Garbutt, members of the National Association, were forming committees in different parts of the district in order to defeat the Government at the next election. The mayor and aldermen of Townsville made application to the Treasurer twelve months last August when they were attending the Local Authorities' Conference here—the deputation being introduced by the hon. member for Townsville and myself—for a loan of £15,000 to construct a new reservoir higher up on Castle Hill, and also £15,000 to construct a new sanitary plant in Townsville. They also asked for £50,000 for the construction of an electric lighting and tramway system in Townsville. The Treasurer on that occasion told them that he was not in the position to promise all the loans they had asked for, because he had only got a limited supply of money to divide amongst the different local authorities of the State, but with regard to the reservoir he said he would endeavour to make the loan available as soon as possible. The Treasurer also said that they would have to wait for twelve months for the money for the new sanitary plant.

Mr. MACARTNEY: What has that got to do with the clause?

Mr. FOLEY: It was in August of last year that the Treasurer made the promise to lend the money for the new reservoir.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the hon. gentleman connect his remarks to the clause before the Committee?

Mr. FOLEY: I will connect the clause with my remarks.

Mr. STOFFORD: He can easily connect them. The local authorities refused to do the work.

Mr. FOLEY: This clause provides that the local authorities throughout the State shall carry out certain works when requested to do so. It says that the Governor in Council by Order in Council will direct the local authorities to carry out such works as stated in the order for the relief of the unemployed. In August last the Treasurer promised me that he would make the money available for the reservoir, and from that time till January they had the opportunity to get their plans and specifications ready to carry out that work, and make other necessary arrangements in compliance with the Local Authorities Act. The council did absolutely nothing in January when the unemployed were there.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Why didn't they return to the meatworks?

Mr. FOLEY: These are not the meatworks men that I am talking about. I communicated with the Treasurer, and asked him to make the money available for the reservoir, because there was a large number of men unemployed who would be available to do the work.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: What was the cause of the unemployment?

Mr. KIRWAN: The shutting down of the mines.

Mr. FOLEY: There was evidently a set made by the capitalists of the North to create unemployment, and the mineowners of Cloncurry and other places closed down their mines suddenly. The result was that a lot of men were thrown out of work suddenly, and it was only natural for them to flock down to the seaport towns. The Treasurer replied to me that he had facilitated the loan, and the money would be

available as soon as the Local Authorities Act had been complied with. I went to the mayor and asked him if he had his plans and specifications ready to go on with the work, as the Treasurer was in a position to advance £15,000 to carry out the work, and absorb a large number of unemployed. The mayor said to me "No, we are not ready." I asked him how long it would take to get ready, and the mayor said "It will take months to do it." A fortnight afterwards the Treasurer wired and said he would make £15,000 available for carrying out the work in connection with the sanitary plant. Here was £30,000 available to enable the Townsville Council to find work for 500 unemployed in the town, but not a move was made by the council.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman is not dealing with the clause.

Mr. FOLEY: Mr. Bertram, I claim that I am dealing with the clause.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Order! Order!

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman has not been dealing with the clause.

Mr. MORGAN: What is the number of the clause?

Mr. FOLEY: Subclause (2) of clause 8. It provides that the Minister shall have power by Order in Council to direct the local authorities to do certain work.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman will be in order in dealing with that.

Mr. FOLEY: That is what I am dealing with. I want to show that if this Bill had been in existence, and the council refused to do that work the Treasurer could have compelled them to carry out the work. That is the position. Nothing has been done since that time. The same gentlemen are coming to Brisbane to-morrow on a deputation to the Treasurer, and I will tell them that this money was available six months ago, and they did not touch it.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Now they are coming down to get it.

Mr. FOLEY: They are coming down to-morrow to ask the Treasurer for it.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: That shows they were not clear that it was available.

Mr. FOLEY: I know that the Townsville people for years have been wanting this reservoir constructed on Castle Hill, but the council would do nothing. I was for nine years on the local authority at Townsville myself, and I know something about local authorities. Every time I suggested doing something I was met with the cry "Where is the money coming from?" I said to increase the rates, and I was told that it did not matter much to me with my quarter-acre allotment, as a ½d. rate would only mean a few shillings to me, but it would mean pounds to the other aldermen. The result was that they would not increase the rates.

Mr. VOWLES: It is the same old thing—make the other fellow pay.

Mr. FOLEY: Every ratepayer would have to pay his share, and the small ratepayer would have to pay his share with the rest. The time has arrived when some power should be given to the Minister to compel local authorities to carry out these necessary works. I know the excuse will be that they did not have time to comply with the Local Authorities Act, but under this Bill the Minister can tell them to go to work straight

away as it provides that a poll of ratepayers need not be taken to see if they approve of the work being carried out or not. The council have held back hitherto because the ratepayers would have to pay a few shillings or pounds to improve the town out of which they have drawn big dividends. I am very pleased indeed to see such a [7.30 p.m.] clause in this Bill, and I hope the Minister will not be persuaded to withdraw it. I know that hon. members on the other side have been up on their legs protesting against this clause. The leader and deputy leader, and even the small fry of the party opposite have been on their legs opposing it, but I feel sure when hon. members sit down and consider the necessity of such a clause as this that they will support the Bill.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member who has just sat down has "let the cat out of the bag." There is no doubt that he has proved just what we thought—namely, that this particular clause has been put in the Bill so that the Government can come along, when they have some of these frequent industrial troubles that they have, and when unemployment is rife as a result of industrial troubles, and use the big political machine, and say to the local authorities "you have to do so and so." It is as plain as a pikestaff that that is what they are out for. Whilst the local authorities will be prepared to do the fair thing, and carry out their duties in the way that they ought to be carried out, the Government will say "We don't want that kind of thing; we want something that is squeezable, and in order to squeeze the community we have this different means of finding work for our supporters." It seems to me that here we have a clause put into this Bill which is striking at the very foundation of what has been such a great success in the past.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: At the foundation of society.

HON. W. H. BARNES: It is striking at the foundation of the local authorities, and it is a pity that such a thing should be done. The hon. gentleman has not risen to the occasion. He has not answered some of those very strong arguments that were used by the hon. member for Aubigny. When the hon. gentleman got up to speak on this clause, he very skilfully and very carefully diverted the discussion without touching those points that were dealt with by the hon. member for Aubigny and the hon. member for Windsor. The hon. gentleman may or may not be prepared to admit it, but the fact remains that the local authorities, at the commencement of each year, as has been pointed out again and again, form their worksheets for the year. They know what their rates should produce. Take, if you will, the city of Brisbane; or take, if you will, South Brisbane. As a matter of fact, it will be found that year in and year out they are working on a very tremendous overdraft, and they expend considerable sums of money. The hon. member for Mundingburra may not have told us all the truth in regard to the Townsville City Council. We do know, as a matter of fact, that local authorities spend right up to the hilt, and all that they can possibly spend. Like the hon. member for Windsor, I know something of local authority work, and I do know that it takes pretty well to the end of the year, as a rule, to gather in the rates, to

Hon. W. H. Barnes.]

meet liabilities that were contracted for early in the year, and yet it is proposed under this clause to cast upon the local authorities the responsibility of doing certain things, and instead of having the effect of finding employment, it will have just the opposite effect. Are not the local authorities very much more closely interested in the people who are unemployed in their districts than anyone else can be; and do not the members for the various divisions take some interest in the people living in their districts? And are they not being constantly approached by people who are in need of work? And do they not do their best to assist? But now the Government come along and say, "We are going to take this absolutely into our own hands." By the time they complete the business, if they stay there long enough, they are going to make chaos in the community. It may be that this clause is one of those clauses that is put in for the purpose of creating absolute chaos, and to bring about confusion in the community. It is idle for the Minister to try to disguise the fact that banking companies are indirectly very largely concerned in this clause.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Have they been circularising you?

HON. W. H. BARNES: They may have been circularising the Premier-elect. We know that the banking companies are not at all likely to allow local authorities to draw up to their full limit under the Local Authorities Act, as they do to-day. The hon. gentleman told us that they had no cause to fear what the Government would do. I think they have need to fear. What have the Government been doing in the past, and what is the principal asset of the Government to-day? The principal asset of the Government is the levying of additional taxation on the community. The hon. member for Bowen made the statement that the man who is engaged in sugar-growing did not feel the burden; that he was not one of those who was likely to be interfered with indirectly by this clause. I say that he is; that there are men engaged in the sugar industry in North Queensland who are providing super taxes and other taxes, and they find themselves squeezed to the very utmost. But what do this Government care? They only care to see if they can find some other means of squeezing additional taxation, and of finding work for men whom they think it necessary to find work for. This clause will put an indignity on the local authorities. What men are going to continue to undertake the honorary work in connection with local governing bodies if the Government has the power to, at any moment, tell them that they must do certain work, and it does not matter about their responsibility to the rate-payers! I can quite understand the political machine being used over the local authorities in some way to compel the local authorities to do some class of work that would be altogether unsuitable to the district, and levying upon the community resident in that district increased taxation to no possible, or very little, advantage.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is a fallacy.

HON. W. H. BARNES: At every turn when the hon. gentleman is assailed by an argument he tries to sidetrack it by saying it is a fallacy. Instead of that being a fallacy, it is one of the principles which

[*Hon. W. H. Barnes.*]

the Government live up to every day. Their policy in connection with this particular class is to rule with scorpions in order that they may carry out the desire of the Premier and squeeze, squeeze, squeeze, certain individuals in the community. The people who are concerned have no say whatever; no poll is taken. It is thrust down their throats and they have to carry it out whether it is right or not. Indirectly, what a vehicle it is for moving people here, there, and everywhere, it may be for political purposes? An election may be pending, for instance, in the Maranoa, and the Government may discover that it is necessary that the local authority should do certain work so that men may be employed there. The hon. member for Aubigny—and there is no man in this House who has a closer knowledge of local authority work than he—knows what he is talking about, and I hope that even at this late stage the Minister will see his way clear to admit that it is not a fair proposal and accept the amendment.

MR. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): I think it would be a great mistake to interfere with the Bill in this material respect. The statements made by members opposite that the local authorities should be excluded and should not be compelled to do necessary works, works which have been necessary for the last fifty years, is not a genuine argument. In Toowoomba very little has been done by the local authorities. We have no proper water system. We have no septic tank system; we have the old pan system of sanitation. We have no trams. We have practically no roadmaking, in spite of the fact that adjacent is a quarry which is the finest in the world and that geologists tell us that the metal around Toowoomba is the finest road metal to be found anywhere in Australia. Yet the roads are not such as they should be. I think that if this clause were passed money could be spent well in a city like Toowoomba. It is all very well for the Opposition to call this a *Loafers' Paradise Bill*. I think that the Opposition are all independent men, but if they had each a wife and six starving children, as some men have had in times gone by during the war, they would know what a *loafers' paradise* meant.

MR. BEBBINGTON: They have worked and supported their wives and six children.

MR. BRENNAN: The hon. member with the yodling accent knows as well as I do that there has been a good deal of unemployment in Toowoomba, and during the recent epidemic we found that children had actually to be covered with their father's coat, because they had no blankets. I myself have had to ring up and have blankets sent for workers' children. I say that at that time the local authorities in Toowoomba could have gone in for trams, for road making, or for a water system, in order to find work. I think that any member of Parliament, knowing the cases which come before him, should be ashamed of saying that men would rather get £1 5s. a week for doing nothing than earn £3 10s. by working. The idea is ridiculous. The Opposition, in raising the cry they have raised, are only making a stick with which to beat their own backs. You will find these same members going on the hustings at the Federal election and saying, "We were agreeable to this Bill, but we wanted it in a decent way."

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BRENNAN: The Opposition remind me of the incident in the Antarctic when they cut the tail off the animal which was starving and said to him, "We will eat the meat off the tail, and you can have the bone to chew and keep yourself alive so that we may get back to civilisation." The Opposition on the other side is very unfair indeed to the worker. Members opposite will go out and say that they were anxious to create work when they are not anxious to do so; they are against the worker all the time. I trust that the clause will remain, and that the local authorities will be forced to do the necessary work to give employment where necessary.

Mr. MORGAN: I think that the members for Mundingburra and Toowoomba have given the best possible illustrations why the local authorities should not be included. They have said that the towns of Toowoomba and Townsville would have been compelled to do work, whether the local authorities liked it or not. There were unemployed there probably because the men had gone out on strike and caused it.

Mr. BRENNAN: What strike do you mean?

Mr. MORGAN: The hon. member for Toowoomba ought to know perfectly well, because I understand he engineered it.

Mr. BRENNAN: What strike?

Mr. MORGAN: The foundry strike.

Mr. BRENNAN: That is seven years ago.

Mr. MORGAN: The effect of that strike is still being felt in Toowoomba. It closed up the works and where several hundreds were employed only a few are at work at the present moment. The effects of that strike were felt severely by the people of Toowoomba, and no doubt a great deal of the unemployment at Townsville that the hon. member for Mundingburra talks about was caused because the seamen and the men in the meatworks refused to do their work.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. MORGAN: I may be out of order, but the hon. members for Mundingburra and Toowoomba were allowed to deal with the question.

The CHAIRMAN: I have already allowed the hon. member the opportunity to reply to them.

Mr. MORGAN: I have not quite finished my reply. The fact remains that we have been told by these hon. members that if this measure were in operation the Government would have caused work to be procurable there, whether the local authorities liked it or not. They evidently count for naught. The fact that members of local authorities have been elected to those positions shows that the ratepayers have confidence in them, and it is not a fair thing that property-owners—the thrifty—should be taxed for the benefit of those who live as it were right up to the limit of their incomes.

The hon. member for Mundingburra was quite prepared, when he was a member of a local authority, to raise money for certain purposes, because he owned only a quarter of an acre of land, which would be taxed to the extent of only a few shillings, while he would get a certain amount of benefit from the expenditure of the loan money. The hon. member was looking at the matter from

a selfish point of view—from the point of view of the amount of money he could have made owing to the expenditure of that money giving a certain amount of employment. We have unemployment in our district due, not to the fact that people living in the locality have been unable to find work, but to the fact that nomads and others have congregated in the district for some purpose or other. A railway may be under construction in the district and give employment to 400 or 500 men. When the work is finished, those men become unemployed, and in that case the Government would, under this clause, compel the Taroom Shire Council to borrow money to provide work for those 400 or 500 men. The only work they could do in that locality would be clearing prickly-pear.

Mr. COLLINS: Why, I have been told they could not get a decent camp for prickly-pear!

Mr. MORGAN: We have heard the hon. member for Toowoomba say that Toowoomba is the prettiest town in Australia. But it is not a patch on Taroom. Any person who has seen Taroom will bear me out when I say that, if Toowoomba is the prettiest town in Australia, Taroom must be the prettiest town in the world. (Laughter.) Under this provision the local authority, even in a small locality, may be compelled to borrow money to provide work for the unemployed, whether they desire it or not, and thus bring about the bankruptcy of their local authority. The opposition to such a provision is founded on good grounds, as there is no reason why local authorities should be included in the Bill in the manner proposed.

* Mr. SIZER: Much has been said by hon. members on this side of the House which should be considered by the Government. In many respects, I agree with the contention of hon. members on this side, as I hold that local authorities should not be harassed and compelled to do a thing which is impossible or which may impose undue burdens on the ratepayers. I was really surprised to hear the hon. member for Mundingburra accuse those workers who are endeavouring to get employment of being traitors to their own cause and being in the pay of the Tories. I am surprised that any Labour leader should suggest such a thing. It is almost sacrilege, and I am sure that when the hon. member gets to Townsville the Labour leaders will quickly tell him that they are not in the pay of the Tories. The hon. member practically accused the rank and file of Labour as well as the Labour leaders of having been bought and sold because they endeavoured to get work. I feel sure that Labour supporters will resent such an imputation.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I wish to ask the Minister if it is the wish of local authorities that they should be brought under this provision?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I have received no objection from them.

Mr. WARREN: I agree with the Government in some things. I agree that they might do some things with regard to private enterprise, but this provision is a farce as far as local authorities are concerned. Local authorities are under the Home Secretary, and there is no sense or justice in putting this burden upon them. I should like to hear some responsible member of the Government party show that they have the support

Mr. Warren.]

of the local authorities in this proposal. We have the president of the Local Authorities' Association on this side of the House.

Mr. COLLINS: He is the biggest Tory in Queensland.

Mr. WARREN: The hon. member for Aubigny, who is the president of the Local Authorities' Association, is strenuously opposed to this provision, and there has not been one argument brought forward by the Government to show that it is a provision which should be placed in the Bill. The Minister advanced no reason in support of the clause, and I have heard no reason from any other member on that side of the House, unless it was the silly reason about the horse losing his tail advanced by the hon. member for Toowoomba. I think that hon. member sadly distorted the facts with regard to the work done by the local authority at Toowoomba, for I am sure the Toowoomba City Council have done a lot of good work; they have done a lot of splendid road-making and pioneering work. The members of local authorities are at work in season and out of season for the good of the district they represent, and they do not do that work for pay. We are paid for our services, and if we work well we are paid well, but those gentlemen do much more work than we do, and they do not get even the thanks of the community for their services. I contend that before a clause like this is passed those people should be consulted in some way in order to ascertain what are their wishes in the matter. I shall certainly oppose the clause, and I believe that I shall be doing what is absolutely right and working for the local authorities in opposing it. Though we have a majority against us as far as voting is concerned, I believe that the arguments in the debate have all been in favour of eliminating the clause from the Bill

[8 p.m.]

Question--That the words proposed to be omitted (*Mr. Moore's amendment*) stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided:—

	AYES, 30.	
Mr. Armfield		Mr. Land
„ Barber		„ Larcombe
„ Brennan		„ Lloyd
„ Butler		„ McLachlan
„ Carter		„ Mullan
„ Collins		„ O'Sullivan
„ Cooper, W.		„ Payne
„ Coyne		„ Pollock
„ Dunstan		„ Riordan
„ Fihelly		„ Stopford
„ Foley		„ Theodore
„ Gillies		„ Thompson
„ Hartley		„ Whitford
„ James		„ Wilson
„ Kirwan		„ Winstanley
Tellers: Mr. Brennan and Mr. Riordan.		

	NOES, 18.	
Mr. Barnes, G. P.		Mr. Moore
„ Barnes, W. H.		„ Morgan
„ Bayley		„ Roberts
„ Bebbington		„ Sizer
„ Elphinstone		„ Somerset
„ Fry		„ Swayne
„ Grayson		„ Taylor
„ Hodge		„ Vowles
„ Macartney		„ Warren
Tellers: Mr. Moore and Mr. Warren.		

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Smith. No—Mr. Appel.

Resolved in the affirmative.

[*Mr. Warren.*]

Mr. MOORE: I wish to move the deletion of subclause (2) (iii.) (a) and (b). I do this, not because I am not in sympathy with the idea that a person or company making a big income should provide a certain amount of employment. The question is, is it going to be to the advantage of Queensland to place such a tax as this on to the people who do provide the employment?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That would be a good argument against the Workers' Compensation Act.

Mr. MOORE: We know that money is exceedingly tight. The Government find a difficulty in securing money. People with money are welcomed with open arms practically all over Australia except in Queensland. In Queensland the perpetual cry is raised against capital. It must be admitted that the more money they put into developmental work, the more work there is going to be. It is a mistake, at a time like this, that restrictions should be placed on them in this way. After all, the largest incomes practically are made by companies, and companies, as a rule, have a large number of shareholders, and the individual amount accruing to them may be comparatively small. The principle of a forced loan is very objectionable. It does not state what interest is to be paid or whether it is to be the ruling rate, how much is to be asked for or commanded to be subscribed to the loans, or how long the loan is to be for. It may be a question of doing developmental work in a man's own business, or otherwise. He may possibly be told to do work outside his own business for the development of the State. Surely, it is a large order that a company which, in developing Queensland, happens to make a large income, should be penalised in this way indefinitely, having something hanging over their heads and having no conception of what it is going to be. It has such a wide scope, and leaves such an opening for abuse, and for a company or an individual being placed in a very awkward position. Very possibly a company or individual employing a large amount of labour may have ideas in view of installing a lot of machinery. Their industry may be jeopardised or not allowed to expand.

Mr. STOPFORD: The Bill provides for that. He can appeal to the council.

Mr. MOORE: There is no provision at all. It says further on—

“If the Governor in Council is satisfied that any company, person, or firm has made default in conforming with an order made under subsection (3) hereof, the Governor in Council may, by Order in Council, impose upon such company, person, or firm a fine of such amount as is fixed by the order.”

He has no appeal to the court. He has absolutely no way out of it. It says—

“A copy of the order imposing such fine may be filed in the office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court, and may thereupon be enforced in the same manner as if the same were a judgment of that court for the amount of such fine with costs.”

He has absolutely no chance. A company is at the mercy of the Treasurer. He tells an individual or company to subscribe so much, and if they do not do it an order is filed in the Supreme Court and has the effect

of a judgment. Surely, a man should have the right to appeal on such a question? It may be that a very amusing situation is going to be created, but it is not going to be for the benefit of the State at a time like this, when we know that every penny of capital is required for developmental works. Then, take the case of a pastoralist who perhaps does not sell his wool in the year that it is taken off, through the roads being impassable or through bad seasonal conditions, or industrial trouble. He gets a double wool clip in one year, or sells off his stock, and does not stock up till the next year, and that appears as income in his income tax return, although it may not be income at all, but because he appears to have a large income he may under this clause be compelled to subscribe a large forced loan. The operation of this clause is altogether too wide. Our object should be to encourage primary production, but a man who has money is hardly likely to come here when he sees such drastic conditions as these.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS interjected.

Mr. MOORE: I quite realise that something should be done, and that this seems a reasonable way. The only thing is whether people with money, when there are such openings for capital in other parts of the world, will invest here, and those who are here will not be inclined to contract rather than expand their business.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Where are they hunting for capital—in Europe?

Mr. MOORE: Capital is being hunted for all over the world. The Government must know that from the endeavours they have been making to get capital themselves. There is unlimited scope for all the capital that can be secured, and is it likely that Queensland is going to attract capital under such conditions as these? It is an unwise provision to put in the Bill in the present state of affairs.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The hon. member's argument seems to be that because this particular scheme proposing to deal with the unemployed situation must necessarily be drastic, and would thus perhaps cause some investor to hesitate before investing in Queensland, therefore we should not only drop this scheme, but relinquish all intention of dealing with the unemployed situation.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Oh, no.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What does it mean? The argument is against this because it is drastic, not because it is unfair, because the hon. member for Aubigny said that he recognised the requirement for employers to create employment was not unreasonable, but that he was afraid it might scare capitalists away, and, therefore, the unemployed difficulty must exist. That is a capitalistic argument.

Mr. MACARTNEY: How many businesses are there in which the taxable income exceeds 15 per cent. on the capital invested?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: If there are only a few there cannot be many affected by the operation of this clause. It must be conceded that the class of employer who should be called upon, whether

there is any preference or not, to create employment, and thus help to solve the difficulty, are those who have earned large profits, and that is the class which we confine the operation of the measure to. The whole argument of the Opposition on this seems to be that you must not touch the problem—you must not call in the aid of the capitalist to solve the unemployed difficulty. In fact, the further we go through the Bill, the argument, boiled down, seems to be that unemployment is necessary—that a large army of unemployed is necessary for the capitalist to draw upon, and any interference with that is interference with the capitalistic right to cheap labour. I was just reading the Nationalist argument against State intervention to cure unemployment, which pretty well sums up, as far as I have been able to judge this afternoon, the attitude adopted on the opposite side. This is what is said—

“It is a law of nature that some should fall out of the ranks in the struggle for existence. The State, therefore, should not attempt to deal with the problem, which lies in the nature of things, and which it can never solve.

“The problem of unemployment is not to do away with it (for a reserve of idle labour is an essential element in the industrial system), but to lessen it as far as possible, and to see that the unemployed workman does not deteriorate during the period of unemployment more than need be.

“If the State should intervene to supply work for the workless, until they could once more find a footing on the industrial ladder, it would tend to undermine those qualities of self-help upon which alone a healthy body politic can stand.”

Mr. FOWLES: What authority are you quoting?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The authority is John Bertram Askew, a recognised writer on political economy on behalf of the Nationalists of England.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: He is one of your foreign friends; he is not a Britisher. (Government laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The views we have heard expressed this afternoon by hon. members opposite have all been in the direction of discountenancing anything in the way of a State scheme to deal with the unemployed situation. If the amendments moved by hon. members opposite were carried, it would mean that the Bill would be mutilated, and could not be put into operation, because they do not offer anything in substitution. The hon. member who has just moved the deletion of this vital part of the Bill does it for the purpose of destruction. He offers nothing in its place, but leaves a blank. He not only moves the deletion of these subclauses, but the succeeding part of the clause right down to subclause (5), and then other alterations following. Altogether, the amendments which have been circulated by the Opposition would tend to utterly destroy the scheme, without putting anything in its place as a workable scheme. The attitude of the Opposition is perfectly clear, notwithstanding their protest earlier that they thought the problem should be dealt with, and that they sympathised with a reasonable attempt to cope

Hon. E. G. Theodore.]

with it. Their whole attitude in connection with the Bill has been one of destruction, and not of help—not co-operation with the Government to build up a scheme, but to destroy it. Apparently, they are simply carrying out their instructions.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: You refused to accept our amendments.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The only reasonable amendment was accepted. Hon. members opposite have talked of the domination which this Government is subjected to outside Parliament. I do not know anything about that domination. This Bill was initiated by the Government. It did not emanate from, or was submitted to, any outside source for approval. It is a Government measure, and part of the Government policy, and will be carried through if the Government has its way. On the other hand, as soon as the provisions of this Bill were made known, hon. members opposite started to receive their instructions. (Opposition laughter and dissent.) When it was thought, on the second reading, that some hon. members opposite were showing a tendency to accept the principles contained in this Bill, then they started to receive their instructions in a more specific manner, and yesterday morning the "Brisbane Courier," the leading organ of the Nationalist party, in a leading article, directed the forces of the Nationalists in Parliament to reject the Bill, and not to accept it at all.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: What about the "Rockhampton Record"?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: This morning, another Nationalist organ, the Brisbane "Daily Mail," made another intimation that this Bill had to be destroyed in Parliament as it could not be accepted. If that is not a direct instruction from a party outside this House to members in their places I do not know what it is. There is direct evidence of attempting to influence Parliament from outside Parliament so far as this Bill is concerned.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MACARTNEY: If anything were necessary to prove that this is a propaganda Bill, then the speech just delivered by the Minister for Public Works will prove it. I do not know of any measure which has been introduced in this House for some years past which has provoked such criticism from one end of Australia to the other as this Bill. Personally, I think that the extreme character of the Bill finds a place for the purpose of inviting opposition to it in order to found political propaganda for the benefit of members on the other side of the House. The hon. gentleman says that the Opposition have not offered anything in place of the Bill. Nearly the whole of yesterday we endeavoured to lay the foundation for a reasonable scheme to meet the actual needs of the situation, and it was one in which we asked the concurrence of the Government. We still believe in doing that now, in place of the scandalously excessive provisions which the Bill contains. If you look through the Bill you can find a duplication of the dragnet clauses and excessive provisions which you would not ordinarily find in a Bill, and I feel that they would not be there if it were not the desire of the Government that the Bill should get its deserts in another place.

Mr. STOPFORD: Is that a threat?

[*Hon. E. G. Theodore.*]

Mr. MACARTNEY: If the Government wished that the question of unemployment should be provided for in a reasonable way, the Opposition would meet them. Members opposite say that the Opposition are against the principle altogether, but that is not so. As a matter of fact, the clauses dealing with relief works in this Bill are with reasonable modification acceptable to the Opposition, but in regard to superseding local government authority and laws altogether the Bill is decidedly objectionable. The object of one of the amendments of the hon. member for Aubigny is to remove that objection. The next part of the clause deals with something that we have not had much information about. When I read this Bill through first I looked on this clause as something of a joke, because it struck me that there was probably not a company in Queensland getting 15 per cent. on their capital and making £10,000 a year. It struck me that there was not a private individual in Queensland who was getting 15 per cent. on his capital and making £5,000 a year, so why this provision was put into the Bill I could not quite follow. It has occurred to me that it will be a very nice cry to go to the country with to say that either the Opposition here or the Upper House objected to a company or an individual earning 15 per cent. on his capital and getting £10,000 or £5,000 a year coming within the provisions of the Bill, and we will be told that we resented a provision of that sort—in short, that it was put there with a political object.

Mr. MULLAN interjected.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I do not take any instructions from the hon. gentleman, and I do not propose to take any notice of the hon. gentleman at present. If the Minister would only give us some information about the companies or individuals who are earning 15 per cent. on their capital, or who are getting £10,000 or £5,000 a year against whom these provisions are directed, then the basis will be laid for an understanding on the subject. I object to the attitude taken up by the Minister on the subject, but it does not make any difference to him. The hon. gentleman will say it just the same when the time comes for discussing matters before the country.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What will I say?

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. gentleman will put his own construction on the attitude of the Opposition.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It speaks for itself. If we had accepted your amendments, what would have been left of the Bill?

Mr. MACARTNEY: If you had accepted our amendments, you would have had a complete scheme of insurance against unemployment.

Mr. COLLINS: With the workers paying 6d. a week.

Mr. MACARTNEY: You would have all the provisions for relief works, all the provisions for labour farms, and a reasonable arrangement in connection with local authority works to be carried out in a season which would be most suitable for the class of unemployed. That has been the practice for years past. It has been the practice for the past thirty years to my knowledge for

the local authorities to spend their money at a time when unemployment was greatest. That I know from the practice of the Treasury, and the hon. gentleman knows it himself. We have it mentioned in clause 9 of this Bill, which says—

“The Governor in Council may from time to time, upon the recommendation of the council, order that works to be carried out by any local authority or other local governing body shall be postponed until the slack season of the year, so that as far as practicable employment in the locality in question shall be constant throughout the year.”

That is a reasonable provision, embodying and securing the continuance perhaps in greater degree of the present practice. What hon. gentleman on the other side want is the power to take hold of any local authority and dominate that local authority for political purposes irrespective of the objects of the Bill. The hon. member for Mundingburra let the cat out of the bag, there is no doubt about it. It is quite clear what the Opposition is out for. It is quite clear what the duty of the Opposition is, and the Opposition are going to do their duty.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MACARTNEY: The Opposition are prepared to do their duty, and if they get the results of doing their duty in course of time, then they are going to be satisfied. (Hear, hear!) The Opposition are not going to try to get into office and stay in office at the cost of the country or at the expense and ruin of the country.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MACARTNEY: If you will only remove the iniquitous, harsh, and unreasonable provisions from the clause and leave the rest of the clause stand, there is no objection to it.

Mr. VOWLES: I desire to support the amendment. When the Minister spoke on the second reading of the Bill, a suggestion was made by the Opposition that the Minister was not bona fide in bringing it forward. I then came to the conclusion that the whole business was purely political propaganda. The hon. gentleman made an attack on the “Brisbane Courier” and “Daily Mail,” and said that we received instructions from those papers. The article appeared in the “Courier” yesterday, whereas the amendments of the Opposition were handed to the Government Printer last Friday, as the hon. gentleman can find out if he takes the trouble.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: When was the article written?

Mr. VOWLES: How do you know that? It is childish to talk that way. If the hon. gentleman were honest, he would tell us what company or what individual would come within the provision relating to the 15 per cent. and £15,000 a year taken over a number of years. If you are going to deal with a man's capital you must take an average of years. If a man makes 2 per cent. one year, then 5 per cent., and then 15 per cent. you must average them. It has been pointed out this afternoon in connection with the income tax that a man is often assessed on a false income. If a man has two wool clips coming in in the one year

simply from the fact that there may have been industrial trouble and he could not get his wool to market, when he sells that wool the whole of the proceeds will be regarded as

income. In that case he has to [8.30 p.m.] pay a huge income tax, which is a false income tax, and if he happens to earn 15 per cent. on his capital in that year the Government has the right to come in and ask him to do certain work outside his own business and which will not be reproductive. If we are going to sanction this sort of business is it likely that the people will invest money in Queensland where these conditions attach when they have the opportunity of investing it over the border in New South Wales where these conditions do not attach? Then, again, as rightly pointed out, what is the alternative if a man does not want to carry out the work he is asked to do? He has the right of investing that surplus over 15 per cent. in Government debentures, but what is he going to get in return? We have not been told the interest he is to get. He may be penalised in his interest. He may be given 1 per cent. It does not say that he is going to get an interest equal to the current price of money for the time being. It simply says—

“To invest in Government securities of the State of Queensland such amount as is mentioned and within such time and at such rate of interest and on such terms and conditions as are mentioned in the said order.”

It may be in perpetuity or it may be for fifty years and he may only get 1 per cent. interest. Why does not this clause fix the rate of interest a man is to get and the length of time his money is to be locked up?

Mr. COLLINS: I wonder you do not move an amendment in that direction.

Mr. VOWLES: It should not be necessary to move an amendment. It should be brought in in a perfect state. When new principles are being put on the people the people should know exactly what they are up against. I can quite understand that this Government would like to get large sums of money at their own interest. We know very well that they cannot get it for love nor money at a reasonable rate of interest.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Who told you that?

Mr. VOWLES: If they do get it it will only be from America, and at a huge rate of interest and on very short terms. This, probably, is some of their scientific high finance—compel men to commit breaches of an Act of Parliament and then penalise them by confiscating their capital; take it from them for the alleged purpose of doing away with unemployment; compel the clearing of prickly-pear and other works which may have no particular value to the individual and probably penalise a man in his business and take away the very capital with which he is going to extend his business, or as an alternative take the chance of accepting Treasury bonds at a rate of interest he knows nothing about.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You said it would not affect anybody.

Mr. VOWLES: It is the principle we are up against. The hon. gentleman suggests

Mr. Vowles.]

that there are plenty of people who are earning over 15 per cent. I say if they do exist it is only in cases where the incomes are fictitious, and if the Bill does apply it should only apply to the average for a number of years. Why should not the rate of interest be fixed in subclause (b)? Why not say it should be 4 per cent., or 5 per cent., or a rate of interest equivalent to the current rate of interest at the time?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: If we stated the minimum rate it would be said that that would be the maximum rate, and if we stated the maximum rate it would be said that that would be the minimum rate.

Mr. VOWLES: That difficulty could be got over by taking the stock exchange rate for the time being. I would like to see the rate fixed so that a person placed in that position would know what he is doing. If no rate is placed in at all, it is in the hands of the Government for the time being, and it is our duty to place our legislation in such a position that a man cannot be subject to victimisation.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I have much pleasure in supporting this amendment, because if these people do exist who are making over 15 per cent. on their capital, there are plenty of ways of getting at them. We can get at them through the income tax, as it is only right that they should contribute something towards the upkeep of the State. Probably after they have paid the Federal income tax and State income tax there would not be very much left. I want to call the Minister's attention to the fact that here are some men, even small farmers who, when making up their income tax returns, have put in their increase of stock. Many of those people did not sell their stock because they believed they were going to be higher in price, and that stock, on which they paid income tax, is dying to-day of starvation.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you say that this Bill will apply to them?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: No, but the same thing applies to graziers, and it is the principle that I object to. The hon. gentleman knows very well that the State stations to-day are hunting all over the country for grass for their cattle.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What poor farmer has an income of over 15 per cent.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If a farmer has 100 head of stock, and pays income tax on an increase of sixty head—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not dealing with the amendment.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I am referring to the man who is taxed through the income tax, and after paying income tax his stock dies, so really that income did not exist.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: During the second reading debate on this measure, the Secretary for Public Works interjected that the person who would be effected by the operation of this clause, would have the option of either investing his money or in creating employment, but in reading the clause through, I do not see that the individual has got any option.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Oh, yes!

[*Mr. Vowles.*]

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The option seems to rest with the Government either to do one of two things, whichever suits their purpose best.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The Order in Council is issued either to create employment or to invest in public securities.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The Government say which he has to do. Another point I want to consider is that raised by the deputy leader of the Opposition in regard to the question of interest to be allowed on these debentures. Cannot the hon. gentleman arrive at some means of assessing what is to be the rate of interest? He could take the price of securities as at the date the Order in Council is made. The position is entirely in the hands of the Government. The hon. gentleman seems to take exception to my pointing out to this Assembly the domination under which the Government is placed. I do not suggest, and I do not think it is a fact, that this measure has been introduced at the direction of the Trades Hall. I think it has not been so introduced, because from the opposition which it is receiving throughout the country it is obvious that the Trades Hall organisations are not in favour of it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Why did you say we took our instructions from there?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What I said was that it is with respect to the administration of this Bill that we have our doubts. As I pointed out by reading an extract from the "Militant" newspaper, the Government have to take their instructions regarding the administration of certain Acts from the Trades Hall. The Minister may laugh, but I know perfectly well that they take their instructions from the organisations for which the "Militant" newspaper speaks, and that being so, it makes us have grave doubts as to the administration of this measure. Had the Government shown some desire to meet us in respect to the constitution of this council, we would probably have taken up a very different attitude since, but if the Minister persists in a council which is lopsided and obviously biased, we have to try to make provision to see that the interests of affected persons are safeguarded. It is a pity, too, that the Minister has had to go to some national publication in England to find out what our ideas are. He could have gone with equal effect to a national organisation in Ireland or South Africa. With respect to the "Daily Mail" and the "Courier," I am sufficiently frank to say that if this party, its Press, its organisation, and members of Parliament worked in cohesion as they do on the other side we would probably work with greater effectiveness. It is because we have independence of judgment and are allowed to speak our minds without interference that we are in the position in which we find ourselves to-day.

Mr. FRY: The Secretary for Public Works made certain remarks in which he said that the Opposition were out for political advantage. I have here a copy of the Rockhampton "Record," which is the Premier's own paper.

Mr. HARTLEY: You make a statement which you cannot substantiate.

Mr. FRY: I will substantiate it at the right time. It says—

“In nine cases out of ten this paper sees eye to eye with the State Government, but the tenth case has arisen in the Unemployed Workers Bill.”

Then it goes on to say, with reference to this particular clause—

“As it stands, the Unemployed Workers Bill adjudges everyone employing five or more workers guilty of bringing about all the unemployment in this State.”

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not dealing with the amendment.

Mr. FRY: It states here that in bringing in this clause the Bill is making all employers of five or more employees responsible for all the unemployment.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the hon. member obey my ruling? We are now dealing with the amendment moved by the hon. member for Aubigny, and I ask him to confine himself to that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The hon. member for Oxley has expressed some doubt as to whether the clause as at present framed gives the option to the person, company, or firm to whom an Order in Council may be issued to create employment or invest in Government securities. The Parliamentary Draftsman informs me that it is possible to put upon it the construction the hon. member suggests.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What does the hon. member for Fitzroy say to that?

Mr. HARTLEY: I say that you and the other gentlemen want to study English grammar.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: In order to make it clear it might be as well to put in certain words, after “pounds,” in line 12—that is, “at the option of the person, company, or firm.” If the hon. member will kindly withdraw his amendment, leaving only the first portion of it, I will move an amendment to that effect.

Mr. MOORE: I am willing to withdraw.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn accordingly.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I move the insertion, after the word “pounds” in line 12, page 7, of the words “at the option of the person, company, or firm.”

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Has the Minister anything to say to us with reference to the other point I raised—that is, with regard to determining the rate of interest at the time the Order in Council is issued?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: This matter must be allowed to remain as it is. The rate of interest and the conditions of the loan are necessarily indefinite, because it would not be wise to fix a minimum rate, which might be regarded as a maximum, or to fix a maximum, which might be regarded as too high. If we attempted to fix both a minimum and a maximum, and there was a wide range between them, that would be unsatisfactory, but hon. members may rest assured that the Government will fix a reasonable term which will be acceptable to the investor.

Mr. MOORE: I move that subclauses (3), (4), and (5) be omitted. These provisions empower the Treasurer to force a loan upon

a local authority without the restrictions which are imposed by the Local Authorities Act. Under ordinary conditions, ratepayers have the option of taking a poll as to whether a mortgage shall be placed upon their properties for the purpose of obtaining a loan for certain works, but by this clause that restriction will be removed. That is hardly fair, as the propertyowners have to pay the interest on the loan, and they should be entitled to have a voice in deciding whether that loan should be obtained or not, and whether the work is in their interest or not. Under this clause the Treasurer will be able to force a loan on any local authority for certain purposes, and the ratepayers will be absolutely debarred from saying whether they want the money or not, or whether they are prepared to accept the responsibility of the loan. Surely hon. members opposite must recognise that that is a big burden to place upon the ratepayers and a most undemocratic provision. If the local authority do not meet their obligations—the obligations placed upon them by the Treasurer—the hon. gentleman can put in a receiver, or file an order in the Supreme Court, and that order will have the effect of a judgment of the court. If there is not sufficient money from the special rate to satisfy his demand, then he may take the ordinary rates. That is going to extremes. The local authorities who are going to be practically victimised under this provision are the few local authorities which are in districts where seasonal occupations occur, and I can quite understand that shire councils, like the Pioneer Shire Council and the Mackay Shire Council, may have a burden placed upon them which they will not be able to meet. The clause says that the Treasurer shall say that certain work is to be carried out for the relief of unemployment, but it does not say that such work shall be for the benefit of the ratepayers. What local authorities want is very often not considered by the Government. We have had the spectacle of the Government taking absolutely no notice of a nomination made by a local authority, and writing to a workers' political organisation for instructions as to who should be appointed, and we may have them writing to a workers' political organisation for advice in this matter as to what work the organisation would suggest. The rights and privileges of the ratepayers are being over-ridden by a piece of experimental legislation, which the Government do not know whether it will be successful or not. I say that the ratepayers should have the opportunity of voicing their objection to a loan by a poll, and they should have protection by provision for appeal against the decision of the Minister.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I second the amendment for the reason given by the hon. member for Aubigny, namely, that the clause gives a higher authority to the Treasurer than the whole of the shire council and the ratepayers put together possess. We talk about democracy, and giving the people votes, but under this clause the Government are taking away the right of the people to vote, and for that reason alone the provision should be deleted.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I support the amendment, because the clause practically means that the power which the residents of a district possess now to say whether a loan shall be obtained, and whether the

Hon. W. H. Barnes.

money shall be expended in a certain direction, will be removed, and that a poll on the subject will not be allowed. It is a most extraordinary thing that a Government which claims to be a democratic Government should move in this direction. It seems to me that the democratic part of their programme is explained in the issue of "The Worker" of the 5th February last. The particular clause we are now discussing was inserted, not by the good sense of the Minister, but because a pistol was held at his head, and he was told exactly what he was to do. This clause was born at the Trades Hall, and probably the Acting Premier was told that if he did not accept it, his position would slip away from him. The clause gives the Minister power to direct a local authority to do certain work, to find the money for that work, and to pay the interest on it—and all this in the days of so-called democracy. If this is a criterion of what is happening in the community, then a democracy is a most awful thing, seeing that it takes away the rights of the people.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You are against democracy.

HON. W. H. BARNES: It is democracy, of a kind. I want to ask the Secretary for Public Works if he himself does [9 p.m.] not think that the removing of the safeguard which at present exists in regard to—it may be—wilful waste of money by any local authorities, whereby the people have a say as to whether a particular work shall or shall not be undertaken—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you say local authorities wilfully waste money?

HON. W. H. BARNES: No; I say the Treasurer very often wastes money, but not the local authority. Here, when he wants to waste money even more wilfully than ever, he introduces a clause which practically gives him the right to say to any local authority, "Do this; you have to do it," without let or hindrance. What is this House coming to?

Mr. TAYLOR: I wish to support this amendment, because, as has been previously stated earlier in the evening with regard to local authorities, they are carrying out their onerous duties in Queensland, and instead of having a measure such as this forced upon them, it should have been the duty of the Government, if possible, to ease some of their work and responsibility. We have heard during the last few years a good deal about Kaiserism and autocracies. If you can imagine, Mr. Bertram, a more autocratic measure and one more likely to smash democracy, I would like to know where it can be found. We know perfectly well that in connection with local government work there are quite a number of safeguards instituted, which prevent the local authority wasting the people's money. They have to obtain the consent of the people before they undertake works of a certain nature and those which run into a certain amount.

At 9 o'clock p.m.,

Mr. FOLEY relieved Mr. Bertram in the chair.

Mr. TAYLOR: With one stroke of the pen, we are told, that is all set aside, and the Minister can order a local authority to carry out any particular work he desires to have carried out.

[Hon. W. H. Barnes.]

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The Liberal Government did the same thing with the Health Act.

Mr. TAYLOR: Is that to say it is a right thing? I thought the Liberal Government could do nothing right, and now the Minister is quoting an instance of righteousness. I contend this is a clause which should be deleted, and the Government should take more responsibility. We have heard a good deal in connection with various clauses in this Bill, about the tremendous amount of responsibility which the Government are going to carry on their shoulders in seeing that the provisions of this enactment are carried out. To me they seem to be trying to get rid of every bit of responsibility and shove it on to other people—on to the employer, the local authority, and everyone except themselves—when they should carry the major portion of the burden.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted (*Mr. Moore's amendment*) stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 27.

Mr. Bertram	Mr. Lloyd
" Brennan	" McCormack
" Butler	" McLachlan
" Carter	" Mullan
" Collins	" O'Sullivan
" Cooper, W.	" Payne
" Dunstan	" Riordan
" Fihelly	" Ryan, T. J.
" Gillics	" Stopford
" Hartley	" Theodore
" Hunter	" Thompson
" James	" Whitford
" Kirwan	" Winstanley
" Larcombe	

Tellers: Mr. Carter and Mr. Brennan.

NOES, 16.

Mr. Barnes, G. P.	Mr. Macartney
" Barnes, W. H.	" Moore
" Bayley	" Roberts
" Bebbington	" Somerset
" Bell	" Swayne
" Elphinstone	" Taylor
" Grayson	" Yowles
" Hodge	" Warren

Tellers: Mr. Bebbington and Mr. Bayley.

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Smith. No—Mr. Appel.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. MOORE: I have an amendment on lines 31 and 32 to delete the words "or by other evidence." This is a question of where a council has been told to do work and pay for it. Surely the council should be sufficiently well-informed to be able to say whether unemployment exists in the district without getting outside evidence! This other evidence may be the report of some political body which wants to keep a certain number of workers in the electorate for political purposes. The local authority has ample opportunity of knowing whether there are still any unemployed in their area, or whether it is sufficiently abated to allow the work to be stopped. Surely we do not want to have outside domination in regard to this! If the local authority can prove to the unemployment council that unemployment is abated so that the work need not be continued and the expense may be stopped, that should be sufficient.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I have pleasure in supporting the amendment. In the past we have had outside interference in shire councils, and men have been kept on work which is not required when they could have got

work in other places. It is difficult to get men to make a change when they have settled down in a locality. When the local authority can show that unemployment is abated, the evidence to that effect should be accepted.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause 8, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 9 and 10 put and passed.

On clause 11—"Railway passes"—

Mr. MOORE: I move the insertion, after the word "employment" on line 14, of the words—

"the cost of such ticket to be deducted from the wages of the worker by the employer and forwarded to the Railway Commissioner, or defrayed out of the fund."

That is the practice adopted at the present time, and I do not see that it is an unreasonable one. When a man travels from one place to another to take up work, the railway fare is deducted from his wages, and it is only reasonable that he should bear the cost of getting to suitable employment at an award rate of wages. Why should this charge be put on the fund, which will have more burdens than it will be able to bear? The railways are being run at a loss, and cannot be expected to stand the cost. The farmers have to pay for everything they require, no matter how hard up they are, and why should a distinction of this sort be made? Many men in the country are in a far worse position than many of the unemployed in Brisbane, but they are to be compelled to carry out work at the behest of the Crown and pay for everything and pay fares for men coming up to take work which they ought to get.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I think it would be undesirable for the hon. member to press this amendment. I explained on the second reading of the Bill that the object of the clause was to make it more mobile and render it easy to deal with the unemployed situation itself. There is no doubt that the carrying of labour about the State to make it available where there is employment is properly charged against the industry for which the labour will be engaged, and to that extent the cost of carrying the labour should be a charge against the fund. The full operation of this clause will be dealt with by regulations after the council has had some experience. If it can be shown that an unemployed situation in one locality is eased by giving facilities for travel of the excess labour to another locality, we should adopt this means.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The amendment of the hon. member for Aubigny seems to be more in conformity with the practice in vogue at the present time. This little amendment of the law, like a straw, just shows how the wind blows. It is an attempt to place the burdens on one class of the community only. The Government might very well contribute that much towards the unemployed problem, instead of endeavouring to place it on the shoulders of one class. It is one of those pinpricks which practically go to show what the object of the Bill is. The Minister said a little while ago that this was a Government Bill, and that it was not suggested by anybody; but I have a "Worker" of the 6th February last, from which it appears that the hon. gentleman was sent for to the Trades Hall. He made the best of a bad job and accepted the invitation. He made an explanation to the delegates

of the Australian Workers' Union present of the position with regard to unemployment throughout Queensland, and I must confess that that statement included a large number of slight terminological inexactitudes. The Government have handled a great deal more money than the Denham Government ever saw, but there are more unemployed in Queensland to-day, and when the hon. gentleman told his listeners that if he had handled as much money as the Denham Government there would be no man unemployed we can realise the general accuracy of the statements made by the hon. gentleman at the Trades Hall.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The Denham Government borrowed £11,000,000 in one year.

Mr. MACARTNEY: That is only the usual red herring. The hon. gentleman had much better have left unsaid what he said earlier in the evening, because, though no proposal was made by the hon. gentleman at that meeting about an Unemployed Workers Bill, after he had given his address, they decided that a Right to Work Bill should be drafted, and they appointed a commission to help the hon. gentleman to draft the Bill; so that we have now, through the medium of the "Worker" of 6th February, the whole history of the introduction of this measure.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What is wrong with that?

Mr. MACARTNEY: What is wrong with that is this—that the Government of this country are taking their instructions from outside, and that the hon. gentleman when he informed this Committee that the Bill is the Government's Bill, and not the result of instructions from outside, is attempting to mislead the Committee and the country. I think that the Government might at least contribute to the unemployment problem at the cost of the railway pass seeing that the railways are a public utility under the control of the Government. At no period in the history of Queensland have so many station to station passes been issued as have been issued by the present Government.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you mean the passes issued to returned soldiers?

Mr. MACARTNEY: Passes are given to individuals who come down here to attend certain conferences, while they are denied to members of local authorities. They are issued to wives of members and to supporters of the Government. The Government now are not prepared to go to the extent of giving a pass to an unfortunate unemployed man.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I wish to support the amendment. Government passes are given to union representatives, but they are being denied to unemployed men. I remember when the last conference was sitting in Brisbane, and I came from Gladstone to Brisbane. I had to book my sleeping berth about a week before, but a man came into the carriage at Bundaberg and asked the conductor to give him a berth. The conductor asked him if he had booked his berth. The conductor is one of the most civil men in the railway service, and he told the man he should have booked his berth. "I have got a railway union pass, and it is for you to run after me, and not me after you."

Mr. COLLINS: Did you hear him say that?

Mr. Bebbington.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Yes.

Mr. COLLINS: What did you say?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I told him that the day had not arrived when the conductors on the train were going to run after union representatives. The way that man carried on was a disgrace. If the Government can carry men free down to a conference they should give passes to the unemployed.

Mr. TAYLOR: I support the amendment. If there were other contributors to the fund, there might be some grounds for paying the amount out of the unemployment fund, but when the contributions are made by one section of the community only, it is not fair, nor equitable. I agree with what has been said about passes generally, and I think that one of the most shameless things done by the present Government was the issue of free passes on the railways to our wives.

Mr. COLLINS: Did your wife use her pass?

Mr. TAYLOR: Yes. My wife travelled over the railways on her pass, and will continue to travel on it.

Mr. COLLINS: What hypocrisy.

Mr. TAYLOR: The passes should never have been issued when the railways were not paying at all. There is no hardship, however, in issuing a pass to an unemployed man. The amendment gives the option, as if the man is in a position to pay, the council will see that he does pay.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I should like to know what has been found wrong with the present system, that the Minister wants to introduce this principle in connection with this Bill. If any of the labour exchanges at present find work for an unemployed man, they give him a railway pass, and the cost is deducted from his wages by his employer. That has a good effect on the worker, as he knows he will have to pay his fare if he leaves his work, and it makes him think twice before relinquishing his occupation. The system which prevails at the present time is much more desirable than that proposed in the Bill. I would like to know what is wrong with the present system.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Under the present system the reduced fare allowed to a man seeking work has to be paid by the employer out of the man's wages. Before a pass is issued the man has to give a satisfactory guarantee from his prospective employer that he has got work to go to, and the amount of the fare is refunded. There are very few defaulters, and the system has worked satisfactorily, but it is not elastic enough; there is not sufficient flexibility in the system. It might be necessary to move labour from one part of the State to another where employment is offering. There might be unemployed men in one locality with work offering 500 miles away, and there is not much inducement for a man to go that distance if he has to pay his railway fare, and the employment does not last very long. If that situation can be got over without loss to the individual worker it will relieve the situation. It will go a long way towards making labour more mobile throughout the State. The hon. member for Drayton gave one or two instances where men were advertised for on the Downs, and no response was forthcoming, although we know there are men out of employment in Brisbane. If men could be sent there and back without having

[*Mr. Bebbington.*

to pay their railway fares, it would be much more satisfactory, and would solve the problem.

HON. W. H. BARNES: There may be some danger to the bonâ fide man out of employment if we pass this clause. The Government say they are friendly to the farmers, and are desirous of helping them. Earlier in the day I made some reference to a famous interview which the Treasurer had in Sydney. Regarding the question of passes we find that these things would be detrimental to the man who desires work in his own district, where the work would be less costly. I draw the Treasurer's attention to a paragraph in connection with the issue of passes which occurred in that interview which he had. In that interview which the Treasurer very courteously gave that man at the Trades Hall in February, 1919, we find that he said in answer to Mr. Woods—

"Mr. Theodore stated that the Government intended to open up Chillagoe as soon as possible, but it was not yet in the position to do so. A manager would be appointed, and about 700 men employed when the work was started.

"Mr. Knudsen considered that the Government, in giving out employment, should see that the men most in need of it got it."

That means that passes should be given to the men wanting employment. Then he went on to say—

"On the Proston line there were a number of settlers employed—men who made a fair thing out of their land, and for whom the bonâ fide workers who did this class of work had to go by the board."

Apparently, some trouble has been occasioned in the minds of some workers because farmers had received work in their own district,

rather than passes being issued [9.30 p.m.] to men to come from a distance and do the work. I find that some of the supporters of the Government blame the man who has been the very backbone of the community, and they ask that men should be sent from a distance even though the work is required by men in the district. I notice another paragraph dealing incidentally with the same subject.

Mr. COLLINS: What paper are you quoting from?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am quoting from that very excellent paper the "Worker," and I am sure, from the standpoint of hon. members opposite, that the "Worker" never makes a mistake. I notice in connection with this question of the right to work—

"Mr. Campbell moved that a committee be appointed by delegate meeting to meet Mr. Theodore to draw up the Right to Work Bill."

Mr. HARTLEY: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in quoting an article in a paper dealing with the whole subject of this Bill on an amendment in connection with the issue of passes to workers?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Mr. Foley, you evidently do not believe in stopping free

speech, and I am very glad that you have protected me in that regard.

The PREMIER: What are you trying to prove?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am trying to prove that sometimes people may travel hundreds of miles into a district after obtaining railway passes when the work could be very much more satisfactorily performed by men in the district who are out of work. I was trying to show that this Committee that was appointed on the 5th February, 1919, evidently did not realise the exact position in regard to passes.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause 11, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 12—"Advertisements"—

Mr. MACARTNEY: Perhaps the Minister would be good enough to explain the object of clause 12?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I explained fully on the second reading of the Bill that it was necessary in order to prevent employers' advertising for more labour than they require.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I rise to ask whether it would be necessary for a particular brand of papers only to get advertisements?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Would you suggest an amendment?

Clause put and passed.

Clause 13—"Labour farms"—

Mr. BEBBINGTON: These labour farms will be very important, and I beg to move the omission, on lines 34 and 35, subclause (3), of the words "to enable him to improve such farm and make the same self-supporting," with the view of inserting the words "to the efficient and orderly conduct and management of such farm." Very often a capable farmer could not make his farm pay, and if these labour farms are to be kept for the purpose of giving employment it is not likely that they will be made to pay.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I accept that.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I move the insertion of the following new subclause, to follow subclause (3):—

"(3A.) For the purposes of this Act an industrial magistrate or judge of the Industrial Arbitration Court may grant a certificate declaring any person to be normally unemployable and incapable of supporting himself by work or otherwise."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I do not think it advisable to put this provision in. It would make the Bill too difficult to operate. We should have to have industrial magistrates or judges sitting in court to issue certificates before persons could be sent to the farms. It would be far better to leave it to the administration of the Minister, on the advice of the council. If it becomes necessary to carry out a scheme of sending to the farms offenders, such as incorrigible persons, we can consider the position later on, but at present the farms are only intended to be the means of redemption

really for those who through industrial inefficiency or from reasons over which they have no control, find themselves unable to get placed in ordinary industries. I think it would be better to leave the clause as it is. It would certainly be more workable than if each person had to get a certificate that he was unemployable.

Mr. ROBERTS: I would like to ask whether old-age pensioners would be eligible for admission to these farms?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I should not think so.

Mr. ROBERTS: We know that there are numbers of men who find it impossible to get employment and who cannot possibly live on 12s. 6d. a week.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The State has other institutions which would receive those old men.

Mr. ROBERTS: They are men who can do work. I had an instance in Toowoomba a few weeks ago. He was a man of about seventy years of age, and in full reasonable vigour and could do certain work, but under the award he was, unfortunately, unable to continue in his employment. Such men should get some employment. They do not all want to go to Dunwich. To me it was a pleasure to see this provision in the Bill for that reason.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: There are plenty of old men who cannot earn their own living, and I do not think they should practically be allowed to beg outside on the streets when there is a farm to which they can go and earn, at least, part of their living under fairly comfortable conditions. I am sure that under any Government a farm for people who could not help themselves would be one where the conditions were fairly comfortable.

Mr. HARTLEY: I think that if the hon. member looks at subclause (4) he will find it provides a better method of dealing with the man who is abnormal in an unemployable sense and is not able to earn his own living, whereas the hon. member's amendment is tantamount to declaring him to be a vagabond who is practically liable to arrest.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Oh, no!

Mr. HARTLEY: It says that a certificate may be granted declaring him to be—

"normally unemployable and incapable of supporting himself by work or otherwise."

A man with no lawful visible means of support is liable to be labelled a rogue and a vagabond. That would be the effect of the amendment, and I think the clause provides a better and more humane way of dealing with the man who is inclined to be unemployable or incapable of supporting himself. It provides that the Minister may admit any man who is normally unemployable to such benefits as are provided by the rules of the farm so long as he complies with the rules. I suggest to the hon. member that he withdraw the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I move the omission of the word "Minister," in line 3, page 10, with a view of inserting "council."

Mr. Bebbington.]

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I am afraid I cannot accept the amendment. Of course, the conduct of the farm is a Government responsibility—a Government charge—and I think matters of this kind should be controlled by the Minister and not by the council who are not asked to accept any responsibility in respect of the farm.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause 13, as amended, put and passed.

On clause 14—"Right to work"—

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I move that the words "without reasonable excuse," on line 38, be omitted, with the view of inserting in their place the words "unless by reason of illness of temporary incapacity certified to by a medical practitioner." The object of the amendment is to remove a nebulous qualification, and substitute for it a definite statement as to what are the reasons for which a man may refuse to accept work which is offered to him, and I think the Minister will be wise and reasonable in accepting the amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I think it would be unwise to accept the amendment. The hon. member will, I think, admit that there might be reasonable excuse on the part of a worker for refusing to accept the particular work offered to him other than the excuse of illness or temporary incapacity. For instance, a man who is a tailor might be offered work as a miner—it is not likely that such a man will be offered work of that kind, but if he were it would be a reasonable excuse that he was not capable of doing such work. Such a reason for refusal must be taken as one of the reasonable excuses which might be offered, and in the general run of things the unemployment council will be the judge in the matter. There is very little difficulty in regard to that matter at the present time, because the men in charge of the labour exchanges are men of considerable experience in such matters, and know what a man is capable of doing. It will be far better to leave the clause as it stands than to narrow down the reasons to illness or temporary incapacity.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I am satisfied with the explanation given by the Minister, and, with the permission of the Committee, I will withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. WARREN: I notice that the clause provides—

"But no sustenance allowance shall be payable or be paid to any such person whilst he is entitled to unemployment allowance from any Repatriation Department."

I should like to know if that provision will apply to soldiers who are in receipt of a small pension.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I think I answered that question on the second reading of the Bill. A man who is receiving a small pension will not necessarily be disqualified under that provision. Only those who are receiving unemployment sustenance allowance from the Repatriation Department will be debarred from receiving this sustenance allowance. I cannot say

[Hon. E. G. Theodore.

what allowance will be given to a man in receipt of a small pension. That will be a matter for the unemployment council. In subclause (d), which provides that a man who has been engaged in an illegal strike shall not be entitled to sustenance allowance for six months after the strike has ended, I think an amendment is needed. Six months is a period which might be considered too harsh a disqualification, and I move that the word "six" on line 12, page 12, be omitted, with the view of inserting the word "two."

HON. W. H. BARNES: I think it would be a pity to reduce the period as proposed by the Minister from six months to two months, as that is practically offering a premium to men to go out on strike. If men know that two months after they have deliberately gone out on strike they can get sustenance allowance, that will be an encouragement to go out on strike.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Sustenance cannot be paid while they are on strike.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am quite aware of that, but, under the amendment, after they have been on strike for two months they may get sustenance allowance.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No; two months after the strike is ended.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I ask, will that not encourage men to go out on strike? We know that men often go out on strike, not because they think it is a proper thing to do, but because they are absolutely afraid to refuse to do a certain thing. This amendment will be an encouragement to men who do not care what wreckage they may cause to industry by ceasing to work to go out on strike, because they will know that two months after the strike ceases they will be entitled to sustenance allowance. Are strikes in the interest of the worker? Are they good for the community?

Mr. HARTLEY: Of course, they are.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I think they are generally disastrous to all parties concerned, and, apparently, we are now going to have a provision inserted in an Act of Parliament which will make it easy for men to go out on strike, because a certain period after the strike they can get sustenance allowance. I think that will be a distinct disadvantage to the community. I would like to say here and now, from my [10 p.m.] position in this House, that if we are going to do anything which is going to have the effect of taking away the feeling in the minds of the workers generally that there is a duty resting upon them—as there is on the employer equally—to see that work is engaged in, and that it is found for them, you are going to do something which will be exceedingly disastrous. I am exceedingly sorry that some pressure has been brought to bear upon the Minister in charge of this Bill. I know he has no option; he has to obey the behests of those people. (Government laughter.)

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I had an amendment to move for the exclusion of lines 14 to 18, but in view of the fact that the Minister is now proposing to alter the six months' disqualification to two months, I do not propose to move that amendment,

because it seems to me to be a little unreasonable. For six months after the strike is finished, to deprive them of sustenance, is rather drastic, and the unemployment council should have the opportunity of altering that should occasion arise. Now that has been altered to two months. I would like to ask the Minister, if the two months is carried, would he agree to the exclusion of that qualification which is dealt with in lines 14 to 18?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: If we do not put in that provision enabling the council to review the disqualification, it might be that we will penalise not only the man but his wife and children. I think we ought to keep that right in view all the time, whether the penalty is six months or two months. The penalty is drastic, and one must not forget it is a penalty in addition to the penalty provided under the Arbitration Act. I think it is sufficient that the disqualification should be for two months after the cessation of the strike, with the right of review.

Mr. HARTLEY: I would like to say a word on this clause before it goes through. I think the reduction of the term during which a man would be unable to claim the benefits to a period of two months is a very wise provision. It prevents a big and continuous punishment being carried on for six months. I was rather surprised at the explanation of the hon. member for Oxley—that he thought the six months' term was too drastic, when right below it he intended to move the deletion of a clause which made it possible for the council to review that punishment.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You do not know what you are talking about.

Mr. HARTLEY: If the hon. member looks at his words he will see that that is the intention of the amendment he has withdrawn. I think it is unwise to put in the hands of anybody anything which will enable them to continue to show a vindictive spirit after a strike is over. A strike is a necessary thing sometimes to direct the attention of the employers to the fact that there is an Arbitration Court, and it is an unwise thing to penalise workers afterwards to the extent that was previously provided.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. ROBERTS: I move—

“That the word ‘three’ on line 24 be deleted, with a view to inserting ‘two.’”

After what we have done in the previous clause, two months is quite sufficient penalty.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I will accept that.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I have an amendment to propose before that. I move—

“That there be inserted after line 14 the following new subclause:—

“(dd) No person who advises, counsels, or encourages any person or persons or any organisation to take part in any illegal strike or to commit a breach of the Industrial Arbitration Act of 1916, or who aids, abets, or financially assists any person or persons or organisation engaged in or about to be engaged in an illegal strike, for the purpose of carrying on such illegal strike,

shall be entitled to receive any such allowance for a period of six months after the cessation of such strike.”

Mr. HARTLEY: That is another clemency clause.

At ten minutes past 10 o'clock p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It is quite conceivable that a union may support a striking body of men in their action in defiance of the Arbitration Court. The object is to bring that supporting offender under the operations of this clause just as much as the striker would be. I think it must be admitted that anyone who helps or counsels any person to strike should also be placed in the same category in regard to sustenance as the original strikers. If the Minister is sincere—as I believe he is—he will admit there is reason in that argument. Why should the original strikers be called upon to make some sacrifice, and those who helped—aided or abetted them, and perpetuated the strike—get off without such a penalty?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I think the proposal is rather too sweeping, and is unnecessary. At any rate, who is to say whether a person is advising, counselling, or encouraging people to engage in an unauthorised strike? Why should we penalise a large class of workers who are simply carrying out the unionistic principle of contributing to the support of men who are on strike, when it is a question of humanity—helping the wives and children of those people? Under such circumstances, the unionist is not going to scrutinise too closely the reasons for or the causes of the strike. When an appeal is made for the support of a striker's family, money is contributed by many who, perhaps, are not unionists at all. Many are opposed to unionism. Employers, even, are known to contribute to a fund for the striker's family. It would be altogether too sweeping to disqualify such a large class.

Mr. HARTLEY: I am glad the Minister does not intend to accept this amendment. It is another very peculiar exhibition of the clemency of which we had a late example by the hon. member for Oxley as to how he would treat the workers. After thinking six months was too drastic a provision, he was going to wipe out any possibility of getting a review of that punishment. Now he comes along with a proposal to put a still more drastic provision in, not only to get at the workers concerned, but anyone who aids, abets, or helps to bring about a strike that may be necessary to prevent heartless working and the withholding of the proper conditions from the worker. I am very glad we have had from the hon. member for Oxley an exhibition of his sympathy for the worker, such as that in the amendment he has withdrawn and in this which he has moved. Evidently, the workers of Oxley will be able to measure up what his sympathy is worth.

Mr. VOWLES: I desire to support the amendment. The Minister missed the main point in it. The amendment refers to any person who aids and abets an illegal strike. There is no harm in any body of workmen supporting their mates when they are out on strike in a legitimate cause. We know that under the Arbitration Act, it is necessary in the interests of all concerned that certain notice should be given if a strike

Mr. Vowles.]

is about to take place. If any union decides to strike without observing the law, we say that all the parties who support them are parties to an illegal strike.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It is too sweeping.

Mr. VOWLES: If it were a legal strike, I could quite understand the contention of the hon. gentleman, but we are dealing with something which is illegal.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Who is to say?

Mr. VOWLES: We know it is done by union levy, and it would be the means of preventing a union doing an illegal action by striking against the law.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What would you do with the children—would you let them starve?

Mr. VOWLES: If a man abets a man who is committing a crime he is liable to punishment, and why should not the union or body of men who commit an illegal action be punished? It is just a question of degree as to which man is doing the worst. To my mind, the man who is finding the funds to continue an illegal strike is a great deal worse than the man on strike.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I would explain to the Minister that he is intending to make the wives and children of these illegal strikers suffer under his own Bill, but because we intend to bring those who aid, abet, and encourage these men in their illegal action under the same category, he says no.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: In one case you are dealing with a direct offender: in this case you want to drag in thousands of others who are innocent.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You have already said that a man who acts illegally has to be punished.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: But not the man who gives assistance to starving families.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You have already said that the man who goes out on an illegal strike is not to have the allowance.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: But what about the man who supports the strike in a humane manner?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: To make your Bill complete, you must consider the amendment otherwise you will be leaving the door open to abuse.

Mr. HARTLEY: The hon. member for Oxley needs to consider the circumstances which sometimes bring about an illegal strike when he talks about a six months' penalty.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You would know that I have altered it to two months, if you had listened.

Mr. HARTLEY: You have "six months" printed here, and if you altered it you should speak plainer. I can understand the hon. member's intention of clemency, which takes away the possibility of a counter review, after he says the penalty of six months is too much—I can understand it is pure humbug. While it is well that there should be a penalty for breach of the Arbitration Act, there are occasions when an illegal strike is justified, if it is possible to say that anything illegal is justified. We had an example of that in the North during the

influenza epidemic, when the shipping companies broke through the regulations for their own benefit and that of the merchants. The waterside workers in Rockhampton refused to unload the "Buninyong," as they were advised by people not in the unions that it would be disastrous to the health of the people to do so. It was an illegal strike, but it was in the interests of the community, and they were congratulated on their action. The same thing happened to the "Morialta" in Townsville. Those are two definite instances in which an illegal strike was justified in the interests of the community. They could not have taken the ballot necessary under the Act in those two cases, and given the necessary notice.

Amendment negatived.

On the motion of Mr. ELPHINSTONE, a formal amendment, omitting the word "Minister," and inserting the word "council," on line 20, was made.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I move the omission, after the word "Minister," on line 22, of the word "may," and the insertion, in its place of "shall." It seems to me that it should be mandatory and not optional.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I think we had better leave the clause as it is. It is hard to see how a mandatory provision of that kind could be carried out. The council will have certain knowledge that the worker has become unemployed solely through his own default, and may take what action they think necessary. On the other hand, a worker may show to the council that he has become unemployed through no fault of his own, and the council may not desire to take such drastic action. It may be assumed that they will take the proper action in such a case.

Amendment negatived.

Mr. ROBERTS moved the omission of the word "three," with the view of inserting the word "two," on line 24, thus altering the period that an allowance may be granted to an unemployed person.

Amendment agreed to.

A consequential amendment was made on line 25 omitting the word "Minister" and inserting "council."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I beg to move the omission of subclause (f), with the view of inserting the following amendment in its place, namely:—

"No person

(a) Whose total earnings during the last preceding calendar year exceeded two hundred and sixty pounds; or

(b) Who is not a worker within the meaning of this Act because his recent or usual employment has been with an employer who is not an employer within the meaning of this Act shall be entitled to receive any such allowance, unless the council in their discretion think proper to extend the benefit of this provision to the case of any such person; in which event such person shall be entitled to receive such allowance."

This obviously is to make it clear that in certain cases even those persons who receive more than £260 may come upon the fund if, in the discretion of the council, they are permitted to. Persons not being workers in the definition mentioned in the Bill may

[*Mr. Vowles.*

be accounted as workers for the purposes and benefits of the fund if the council think fit.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I do not think the amendment meets it at all. I do not think a man getting £260 a year should be accounted a worker under the Bill. I think there should be an effort made to encourage thrift in life.

Mr. WHITFORD: With the present cost of living?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Yes. They should be encouraged to live within their income. Amendment agreed to.

On clause 14, as amended—

Mr. ELPHINSTONE moved the omission of the words, "the matter may be referred by the Minister to the council for decision, and" on lines 34, 35, and 36. That would make the subclause read—

"If any dispute arises with respect to any person's right to receive such sustenance allowance the decision of the council thereon shall be final."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I think that the clause is necessary as a person may receive sustenance quite apart from the working of subclauses (e) or (f). The Minister may refer the dispute to the council for decision. I think the subclause should remain as it is.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I will withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 14, as amended, put and passed.

Proposed new clause—

Mr. TAYLOR moved the following new clause to follow clause 14:—

"14A. Where it is shown to the satisfaction of the council that any worker who has repeatedly lost his employment by reason of imperfect technical knowledge or skill, the council may direct that he receive instruction at any State technical college or in any other institution or business, and that the cost of such instruction, together with an allowance for the sustenance of the worker during his period of instruction, shall be borne by the fund wholly or in part at the discretion of the council."

That is a clause that should commend itself to the Minister.

[10.30 p.m.]

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That will be all right, but I think you will have to omit the words "in a prescribed trade" on the second line.

Mr. TAYLOR: I move the amendment accordingly, with the omission of those words.

New clause agreed to.

On clause 15—"General powers"

Mr. TAYLOR: I wish to propose that clause 15 be deleted, and that a new clause be inserted.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member cannot move the deletion of the clause. He can vote against it. If the clause is deleted, he may then move his amendment.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Move it as a new clause to follow clause 14A.

Mr. TAYLOR: I beg to move the insertion of a new clause to follow clause 14A, as follows:—

"Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Governor in Council is hereby empowered to issue such orders and give such directions and prescribe such rules as may be necessary to give full effect to the carrying out of this Act."

Clause 15 is of such a sweeping nature that it really gives the Governor in Council power to, practically do anything, and I certainly think there should be a limitation placed on those powers. Under that clause the Governor in Council could give instructions that the Opposition should shift over to the Government benches, and that hon. members on the Government benches should come over to the Opposition side of the House in the interests of the unemployed. By making the alteration I have suggested, we will remove many of the arbitrary powers and some of the objections which exist at the present time to the Bill. Then, again, clause 15 asks for a complete transfer of all the powers of Parliament to the Governor in Council, and I do not think any hon. member can justify that. Parliament should still have a certain amount of control; and, if the Minister was reported correctly in the papers the other day, he said, in reply to a deputation, that he was prepared to consider an amendment on the clause.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Although I intimated that to the deputation, they have not submitted any amendment.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am submitting the new clause as being a better one than clause 15. The hon. gentleman will recognise that those people who were so vitally interested should have some say in the matter, and that the Governor in Council should not be allowed to go outside the scope of the Bill and do something which he thinks may be in the interests of the unemployed, but which, at the same time may be detrimental to other sections of the community.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I received a deputation from the employers' unions and associations touching the Bill, and they explained their objection to clause 15. I expressed my opinion to those gentlemen—that they were interpreting this clause more widely than they need, and wider than it would be interpreted by a court of law. They were of the opinion that almost anything could be done under the powers conferred by clause 15—whether it was in furtherance of the main objects of the Bill or the general purposes of the Bill or not. Of course, nothing of the kind was intended. However, to make it perfectly clear that nothing of the kind could be done, I will omit the word "or" on line 47, and insert the word "and" when the new clause is disposed of, so that it will be perfectly clear that the exercise of the powers under this clause will only be in the nature of giving full effect to the provisions of the Act.

Mr. MACARTNEY: This is one of the clauses of the Bill to which so much exception has been taken. The amendment which the hon. gentleman suggests is not one that will give any relief whatever, and clause 15.

Mr. Macartney.]

will give the Governor in Council the widest possible powers. He could—

“ issue such orders and give such directions and prescribe such rules as will, in his judgment, be calculated to safeguard the requirements and wellbeing of the people, or to give full effect to the provisions of this Act.”

Under that clause anything that you could imagine could be provided under a rule or Order in Council. It is practically giving the Government power to add to the provisions of the Act. To see what is actually intended, if hon. members will look at clause 19, they will find there that the same extraordinary powers are sought for the Government, because they have got power to—

“ make regulations providing for all or any purposes, whether general or to meet particular cases, that may be convenient for the administration of this Act, or that may be necessary or expedient to carry out the objects and purposes of this Act, and, where there may be in this Act no provision or no sufficient provision in respect of any matter or thing necessary or expedient to give effect to this Act, providing for and supplying such omission or insufficiency.”

That is an expressed license to extend the Act by regulations. I know there is a somewhat similar provision in the Land Act of 1910, but, nevertheless, it is not a proper authority to give to any Government.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Was it a proper authority to give to the Administration in 1910?

Mr. MACARTNEY: I have said that in the Land Act there is a similar comprehensive provision which the Government has attempted to take advantage of. But if it were done on that occasion, it is no reason why it should be done now. The hon. member says that he told a deputation that it did not follow that the Government would do certain things because they have this clause in the Bill. They told the people of Queensland that under the Sugar Acquisition Act they did not intend to go beyond certain things. It is our duty to prevent such power being given if we can. I realise that as an Opposition we cannot do so, but we can point these things out. There is no doubt that the Government have a tricky way of doing things.

The PREMIER: You are attacking the Privy Council.

Mr. MACARTNEY: No; I am attacking a tricky Premier, if I may say so.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

The PREMIER: That is a compliment, coming from you.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It may be. The hon. member seems to be running after compliments just now, seeking a little advertisement, perhaps. (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: This has been referred to on more than one occasion as a dragnet provision—as singular and extraordinary, as something that could not be justified on any ground. I drew the hon. member's attention to a somewhat similar provision in the Land Act of 1910, passed by the Kidston Administration, and

[Mr. Macartney.

there are somewhat similar provisions in other statutes. In the Income Tax Act of 1902, passed by the Philp Administration, there is a provision that the Governor in Council may make regulations—

“ Providing, where there is in this Act no provision or no sufficient provision in respect of any matter or thing necessary to give effect to this Act, in what manner and form the want of provision or insufficient provision should be provided; providing for any purposes, whether general or to meet particular cases that may be convenient for the administration of this Act, or that may be desirable or necessary to carry out the objects and purposes hereof.”

Mr. MACARTNEY: You do not object to that?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No; I think it is very necessary to make the administration of the Act full and efficient. That is the only reason why the provision is inserted in this Bill, not to do any of the dark things the hon. member imagines. Such practices would not be resorted to by this Government.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted (*Mr. Taylor's new subclause*) be so inserted—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 14.

Mr. Barnes, G. P.	Mr. Hodge
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Macartney
„ Bayley	„ Moore
„ Bebbington	„ Roberts
„ Bell	„ Taylor
„ Elphinstone	„ Vowles
„ Fry	„ Warren

Tellers: Mr. Fry and Mr. Roberts.

NOES, 25.

Mr. Armfield	Mr. McLachlan
„ Butler	„ Mullan
„ Carter	„ Payne
„ Cooper, W.	„ Riordan
„ Dunstan	„ Ryan, D.
„ Fihelly	„ Ryan, T. J.
„ Foley	„ Stoford
„ Gillies	„ Theodore
„ Hartley	„ Thompson
„ Hunter	„ Whitford
„ Kirwan	„ Wilson
„ Larcombe	„ Winstanley
„ McCormack	

Tellers: Mr. Dunstan and Mr. Thompson.

PATR.

Aye—Mr. Appel. No—Mr. Smith.

Resolved in the negative.

Clause 15—“ *General powers* ”—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I move the omission of the word “ or ” in line 47, page 12, with a view of inserting “ and.”

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

On clause 16—“ *Publication and effect of orders* ”—

Mr. MACARTNEY: This clause provides that—

“ Every Order in Council made or purporting to be made under this Act shall be published in the “ Gazette,” and forthwith upon such publication shall be read as one with this Act, and construed as being of equal validity, and shall not be challenged in any proceedings whatsoever.”

The fact that it is proposed to give such effect to an Order in Council is one of the reasons for challenging the extraordinary powers which the Government seek. It may be that such a provision can be found in other Acts, but it is an extraordinary thing that an Order in Council, which is not in accordance with the intention of Parliament, is to be valid, and is not to be challengeable in any proceedings. That appears to account for Government success in the Mooraberrie case. If so it did not call for much deep legal consideration.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: This is not a novel provision. I think we have followed the precedent set by the hon. member's Government in introducing such a clause into a statute, and that ought to be sufficient justification to the hon. member for the proposal.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 17—"Offence against Act"—put and passed.

On clause 18—"No action against Minister, etc."

Mr. TAYLOR: I move that after the word "anything," on line 2, there be inserted the word "legally." I think this is an amendment which the Minister might accept.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The amendment would have the effect of narrowing the application of the clause; would, in fact, render it nugatory. The very necessity for the provision arises from the fact that the question of the legality or validity of the proposed action will be involved, and I hope the hon. member will not press the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause 18 put and passed.

On clause 19—"Regulations"—

Mr. TAYLOR: I move that all the words after "regulations," in lines 25 to 33, inclusive, be omitted, with the view of inserting in their place the words "necessary and expedient for the proper administration of this Act."

Amendment negatived.

Mr. TAYLOR: I move that all the words after the word "effect," in lines 49 to 51, inclusive, be omitted.

Amendment negatived.

Clause 19 put and passed.

Clause 20—"Report to be laid before Parliament"—put and passed.

On the schedule—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I move that the figures on line 32 be omitted, with a view of inserting "4 0, 5 0, 4 0, 5 0, 4 0, 5 0." The amounts originally provided for the sustenance of a child dependent upon a worker who is getting sustenance from the fund is on the moderate side, and the object of the amendment is to increase that allowance.

Amendment agreed to.

Schedule, as amended, put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.