

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Council**

**THURSDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 1919**

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THURSDAY, 6 NOVEMBER, 1919.

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

### ADDITIONAL SITTING DAY.

#### FRIDAY SITTING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones): I beg to move, without notice—That the Council, at its rising, do adjourn until 3.30 o'clock p.m. to-morrow.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: This is rather sudden, as the lady said when a proposal of marriage was made to her.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Are the intentions honourable?

HON. P. J. LEAHY: The motion has taken me completely by surprise. If the Minister wished to have another sitting day, the usual course would have been to give notice yesterday to that effect. I do not know what the arrangements of hon. members on this side are, but I understood yesterday that a number of them were leaving for home to-day and would not be here to-morrow. I am quite sure that, if it is possible for our members to be present to-morrow, we do not desire to inconvenience the Government. It may turn out, on the other hand, that a very large number of hon. members may be away; and, if that is so, it is hardly fair to ask us to consider the large number of important Bills that will come on to-morrow. It would be very much better if the Minister would agree to adjourn until Tuesday. What occasion is there, after all, for us to rush all these Bills through? Does the Minister seriously contend that the public interests—and, after all, they are the only thing we should consider in this Chamber—will in any way suffer if we do not sit to-morrow but meet again on Tuesday? I think we have a legitimate grievance against the Minister for not giving notice of this motion. He submits it to us now after hon. members have made other arrangements. It will be no inconvenience for me to sit to-morrow, and I am perfectly willing to be here; but I do not know how it will suit the convenience of other hon. members, and I would suggest to the Minister that, with a view to enabling us to see whether we can have a full attendance to-morrow, he will postpone the motion until a later hour, and in the meantime we can give the matter consideration.

HON. T. M. HALL: Knock it out.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am quite agreeable to accept the suggestion. I am sorry the Hon. Mr. Hall has made that interjection. The Hon. Mr. Leahy is not quite correct. On Tuesday evening I intimated that I intended to take this course rather than give notice of motion, and I hope the hon. gentleman will not insist on my giving notice on this occasion, because it is too late to give notice now. Quite early in the session I submitted a similar motion, and I then informed the Council that it was not necessary to sit on Friday for that week, and that probably it would not be necessary to sit except on the last Friday in the session.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: But we did not agree to that motion.

*Hon. A. J. Jones.]*

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: If time permitted, I could quote from the hon. gentleman's speech to show that he and others opposite agreed to that. I withdrew the motion because hon. members on the other side said that at that stage the motion was unnecessary, and they would agree to sit on Friday, if necessary, at the end of the session. I am the judge as to whether it is necessary.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Is this the end of the session?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am only asking hon. members to sit this Friday. I withdrew the motion on a previous occasion.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Give us a little time to think it over.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am quite willing to postpone the motion until after the dinner adjournment to give hon. members time to consider the question.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: That was not my intention. My idea was that the Minister should bring it on again before the dinner adjournment, giving us an hour or two to think about it. I am willing that he should bring the motion forward again after the first speech on the Profiteering Prevention Bill rather than postpone it until after the dinner adjournment. It will be quite sufficient if the hon. gentleman will agree to move it before 6 o'clock.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am quite prepared to do that, and I therefore ask leave to withdraw the motion for the time being.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### QUESTION.

##### UNCLAIMED DEPOSITS IN GOVERNMENT SAVINGS BANK.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES asked the Secretary for Mines—

"1. What is the number of depositors of unclaimed deposits of value of £2 or over in the Government Savings Bank?"

"2. What was the total amount of unclaimed deposits in the Government Savings Bank on 30th June, 1919?"

The SECRETARY FOR MINES replied—

"1. 1,119, being 0.4 per cent. of the total number of depositors.

"2. £16,450, being 0.1 per cent. of the total amount to credit of depositors."

#### PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Report of the Director of Labour, and Chief Inspector of Factories and Shops for 1918-19.

Nineteenth report of the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations.

Report of the Department of Agriculture and Stock for 1918-19.

Report of the Department of Public Works for 1918-19.

#### APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 3.

##### FIRST READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES, this Bill, received by message from the Assembly, was read a first time.

{Hon. A. J. Jones.

#### SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—That the Bill be now read a second time. The Bill covers a period of approximately two months, extending to the middle of January next. The appropriations asked for are £1,400,000 from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, £250,000 from Trust and Special Funds, and £600,000 from the Loan Fund, making a total of £2,250,000. Although the Treasurer has not yet delivered his Financial Statement in the Assembly, full details of the revenue and expenditure from the various funds for the quarter ended 30th September last, together with the disposal of the cash balances at the same date, have been published. Revenue and expenditure for the month of October under the main heads have also been published, so that information in regard to the public finances practically up to date is available to hon. gentlemen. I think the debate yesterday proved that. Hon. gentlemen had a great deal of information on the subject, and I was able to give a good deal of information in reply to the criticisms of hon. gentlemen opposite.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You were not able to refute anything.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is therefore idle to say that the Government are adopting the policy of "hush" as was stated yesterday, or that anything has been kept back from hon. gentlemen because the Financial Statement has not been presented to the Assembly.

Hon. T. C. BEYRNE: Why hasn't it been?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I repeat that the Assembly is the House in which the Financial Statement is delivered, and not this Chamber. Had the Financial Statement been delivered last week, hon. gentlemen would have had no further information than what has been already published.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: That is ridiculous.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: However, the session will not end this week. There will be a short adjournment for which good reasons have already been given; and no doubt the usual time will be taken in the Assembly to discuss fully the Financial Statement. This Council had a fair discussion on the state of the finances yesterday, and I am in hopes that the second reading of the Bill may be carried with little or no discussion, so that we may get on with public business, and dispose of the important Bills which have come to us from the Assembly, and that we may pass some of the legislation that the people of the State are looking forward to.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Then why seek to adjourn Parliament?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We can pass the most important legislation that is now on the business-paper, and adjourn without any inconvenience to the people of Queensland or to ourselves. I trust the Bill will be passed with little or no discussion. I think I have given sufficient information. Yesterday I gave reasons for the adjournment of the Council at the end of this week, if possible, or early next week.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I am very doubtful really whether we should pass this Bill. The hon. gentleman, on the 15th October last—

Hon. G. PAGE-HANIFY: I bet you are not game to throw it out.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The hon. gentleman is a great better, but he is not game to back his opinions. He is a great advocate of 6 o'clock closing, but, when we brought in a Bill embodying that principle, he was not there. On 15th October last the Government got two months' Supply, and that should carry them on till the middle of December. Now the Minister comes along and says, "We want Supply to carry us on till the middle of January, and for that purpose we want to double the money we asked for for a two-months' Supply." How does that happen? On 15th October the hon. gentleman asked for £800,000 from the consolidated revenue. To-day he asks for £1,400,000 for a three-weeks' Supply.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: How do you make it out that it is for three weeks?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The Government have got appropriation up to the middle of December, and that will only leave the period from the 15th December to the 15th January as the period for which Supply is provided in this Bill. That is thirty days, and for those thirty days the Government want the right to spend £1,400,000 from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, £250,000 from Trust Funds, and £600,000 from Loan Fund. On the basis of £800,000 from consolidated revenue for two months, £1,400,000 should be for nearly four months, and if we pass this Bill that will enable the Government to keep the House in the dark right up till April. The proposition is an extravagant one, but it is quite in keeping with the financial system of the Government. Therefore, I question whether we ought, under present circumstances, to pass the Bill. At any rate, I think the Minister might modify the Bill by reducing the amount. The hon. gentleman stated that the Estimates are going to be laid on the table in the Assembly. But when? Shall we get any Estimates before Parliament rises?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Why do you slavishly follow the opinions of the Opposition in the Assembly?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I do not know what was said in the other House, as I have not read the debate which took place there, either in the newspapers or anywhere else.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Opposition in the Assembly moved an amendment, and your remarks and their amendment agree.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: That shows that they recognise, as we do, the financial incapacity of the present Government, and that great minds think alike. I congratulate the Opposition in the other House on taking the same view of this matter as we do. This House, at any rate, should have some further information as to the way that £1,400,000 from consolidated revenue is to be spent, as to the way the £250,000 from Trust Funds is to be spent, and as to the way that £600,000 from Loan Fund is to be spent. We know that the Loan Fund Account is in a deplorable state at the present time. The Government are spending far more heavily than they did last year, when they spent over £3,000,000 of loan money. Altogether, the Government in this Bill are asking us to pass £2,200,000, for a two-months' Supply they say. If they are going to meet again in the middle of January, they might ask for half that amount, and then in the middle of January ask for a further appropriation.

The demands of the Government, as disclosed in this measure, are excessive, and they ought to be moderated.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: I did not really intend to speak on this question, as I have not studied the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Well, let it go.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Anyhow, I desire to enter a protest against the passing of the Bill, which will give Supply practically till the middle or the end of January.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Oh, no! Till April next.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: I mentioned that I had not read the Bill, but, according to what the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn says, this Bill will give the Government Supply till April. It is a question whether we should not ask the Government to withdraw the Bill, and introduce another measure for a smaller amount. I have a strong objection to giving the Government Supply till next April.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We are not asking that.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: The Hon. Mr. Hawthorn says that this amount will enable the Government to carry on till April.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Until January.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: In any case, the feeling I have about it is that we ought to consider very seriously before we pass this Bill. If the Minister will not withdraw the Bill and get the Government to introduce a Bill for a smaller amount, I would suggest that we might postpone the further consideration of the measure until Tuesday. It is a very serious matter to throw out an Appropriation Bill, but it is not a serious matter to postpone its consideration, and I think the suggestion that we should postpone it till Tuesday is well worthy of consideration. Of course, if the House decides that we are to sit to-morrow, which it has not yet done, we might postpone the consideration of the Bill till to-morrow. If I desired to make a long speech on this subject it would be an easy matter to do so, but I would be practically repeating figures which were given yesterday, and I have no desire to weary the House by doing that. I suggest that some other members should speak on the question for a few minutes to give the Minister time to consider the position.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES in reply: The Hon. Mr. Leahy is entirely wrong. In moving the second reading of the Bill, I distinctly stated that it covers a period of approximately two months, extending to the end of January. The Hon. Mr. Hawthorn is also wrong in saying that the Bill will provide Supply till April next. The previous Appropriation Bill covered a period of five weeks only, and the hon. gentleman, being an ex-Treasurer, should know that the expenditure is not the same for every month.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: What time does this Bill cover?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Early in January.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: But what time—two months?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes, practically two months. This Bill asks for Supply till the middle of January. With regard to the statement of the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn that the Loan Fund Account is in a deplorable condition, I have to inform him that we have loan money available or at

*Hon. A. J. Jones.]*

call on short notice to the extent of £1,298,883.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: How much of that is Savings Bank money?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Not one penny of that is Savings Bank money.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Where have you got it from?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Where did you commandeer it from?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: We want information on that point.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Well, I rise to give information to the Council.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It takes a lot of dragging to get the information.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Under Secretary to the Treasurer has handed me a memorandum showing that the—

Cash balance at the close of last month (October) was ... ..	£368,693
Balance of loans due to State under agreement with Commonwealth, and which we are now drawing as required ... ..	690,000
Amounts due by Commonwealth on account of loans to State for expenditure on soldier settlement ... ..	240,190
Available at call or short notice ... ..	£1,298,883

Those figures show that the Loan Fund is not in a deplorable condition, as stated by the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn. The position has been stated quite clearly. The Appropriation Bill is to grant Supply till the middle of January, and not till April, and I hope hon. gentlemen opposite will pass the Bill.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The position before us is unprecedented. I have taken the trouble to look up Appropriation Bills in the past history of Queensland, and I can find no incident to compare with the present situation, where the Government practically ask for Appropriation for seven months' expenditure, and do not care to disclose to the people how they are going to spend that seven months' Supply, nor state that they intend to let the people know how they expect to get the revenue to meet that expenditure. What will be the result if we allow the Government to go on with their present policy? The result will be retrospective taxation from the beginning of this year, and no business man in the community will know where he is. It is due to the business men of the community that they should know what taxation they are going to bear during the coming year, otherwise they will be in a pretty pickle at the end of their financial year. The Government say, "We want millions of pounds; we will not tell you how we are going to squeeze you for it, and we will not tell you what we are going to do with it." It is not until we get the Auditor-General's report that we see what the Government have done with the finances, and how they spent £170,000 in cash in purchasing Lyndhurst Station. According to the Auditor-General's report, which is a silent and most astounding witness against the Government, that is what they have done.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Your trouble is that we are so successful.

[Hon. A. J. Jones.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Yes, very successful in bluffing the people for the last four years, but the Government must now stage some other picture show instead of "cheap food." This is a most serious

matter for Parliament, because, [4 p.m.] if we agree to the conclusion to which the Government wish us to agree, it will mean that a Government can go on spending public money for practically as long as they like, so that practically the whole of the year can pass by without the Government's telling the people how they are spending the money. Of course, the Minister will say that they send out their monthly statements, but that only means that they are showing the actual way in which the money is being spent by merely allotting it to the departments. If rumour is correct, one department is already £250,000 behind in an amazing fashion, and the Government dare not disclose the facts to the electors.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You base all your arguments on rumour.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We shall see. Rumour proves itself in the pages of the Auditor-General's report, and when the Auditor-General's report upsets the Government, they say that it is not true. Fancy making an aspersion on the report such as came from the lips of the Minister last night, when he tried to controvert a statement in two places of a loss of £47,000 on one undertaking!

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I did controvert it. I say there is not a loss.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Auditor-General does not agree with you.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I do not agree with him. Not one penny of the assets has been credited.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Fancy the Government taking up that attitude with regard to their own Auditor-General—bludgeoning the policeman! On 15th October we were asked to pass an Appropriation Bill for two months, giving enough money to last until 15th December. Now the Government come to us and say, "Give us an appropriation for two months more"—enough to last them until 15th February, according to their own statement.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Is not that reasonable?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is the most outrageous proposition ever put to sensible men in this Council—that we, who are responsible equally with the Assembly for the money of the people, should allow any Government to go from 1st July to 15th February and not give the slightest hint to the people how they are spending the people's money. It is an unprecedented thing.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: That applies to other Appropriation Bills.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Parliament is sitting all the time, but now the Government propose to muzzle Parliament.

HON. R. SUMNER: You want to muzzle the Government.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Not at all. We want daylight all the time. All we ask for is a statement the Government dare not give to the country. They want to get the money, put the shutters up, and go like a

howling menagerie all over the Commonwealth. I take the Government's own statement, and it is bad enough. It is outrageous that they should wish to go from 1st July to 15th February, seven months, and not give to the people even a whisper of what they are doing with the money. We should be renegades—we should be false to our trust to the people—if we allow the Government to go on like that without the strongest protest in word and deed that the Council can raise. I thought the Minister might have come along with some excuse about the public servants not getting their pay, but that excuse is swept away from him. They will get their pay for the next four weeks. If they do not, where has the money gone?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The last Appropriation Bill goes to the second week of November.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is supposed to go to the second week of December. At any rate, what is the necessity of wanting us to give an appropriation extending into next year and then shutting down Parliament until January? Surely the business of Queensland is important enough to keep at their post Ministers who are paid £1,000 a year each! Surely there is enough to keep members who are paid £500 a year and more at their work! Are they running away from their jobs? We are asked to become conspirators in this financial orgy. We are asked to connive at the action of the Government by giving them a cheque which will carry them to next year without asking how the money is to be spent. If we did that kind of thing we should deserve to be turned down by the people.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You have been turned down by the people. The trouble is that you are not turned in.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Minister knows that is quite untrue. We should deserve censure at the hands of all voters if we did not at this juncture say, "No. Before we vote any more, we must know on behalf of the people how the money is to be spent."

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The last appropriation, you say, extends until the middle of December. It does not. It extends into two weeks of this month.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Then why ask Parliament to adjourn at once?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It has nothing to do with the adjournment of Parliament. Whether Parliament adjourns or not, you would have to pass this Bill this week or next week.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: If Parliament sat for a few weeks more, the Treasurer could not escape putting his Budget before the people. I cannot find any year, except one year in which there were, I think, two elections and the usual routine was upset entirely, when the Budget Speech was delayed later than November. The House met late, and now we are asked to adjourn. What antics is that to ask Parliament to perform before the people—to call us here late because someone is jaunting on the other side of the world, and then ask us to shut down early in November in order to allow members to go about the country on a foreign electioneering campaign?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is in Australia.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is foreign to this State. From every possible point of view, I submit that hon. members will find it very difficult to consent to the outrageous proposition of the Government. If ever the Council were called upon to perform an important public duty at a time that is critical, if it were ever expected to say to the Government, "Even if you can gag the Opposition in another place, even if you can muzzle all criticism, and put up the shutters with one touch of the Premier's hand in another place, nevertheless, here criticism will be made, and in this the last place where free speech can be heard, you will have it heard," it is at the present time. The people are making strong objection to this policy of getting money without letting it be known how it is spent.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That argument will apply to Appropriation Bill, No. 1.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Government were not adjourned then. Parliament was sitting, and it was possible for anybody to ask questions. Unless the Press is good enough to ferret it out, or the Ministers like to be straightforward themselves, or unless by some leakage or accident the truth gets out to the people, we shall not have the slightest inkling of what is going on behind doors in the Government's financing, and they can go on from now until next February, unless they like to call Parliament together. The Press do their best to give the public information, but it is only in this Council that information can be got; and I would like to ask in that connection whether the information that was ordered by the Council a fortnight ago on the motion of the Hon. Mr. Turner is ready? The Minister is supposed to respect the wishes of this Council.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Has the Council respected our Orders in Council?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We carry out the law. This Council passed a resolution that certain information should be tabled, and yet the Minister flouted it: does nothing. It seems as if the Minister expects this Council to sit quiet, vote increased salaries and extra appropriation, and then go home thinking it has done its duty. I, personally, at any rate, decline to take that view of the duties of the Council, and I think the Minister would be well advised to adjourn the motion until next Tuesday, until he can see what a travesty of Parliament he is trying to foist on this Council. He would be horrified. His own men would have sat for weeks on end, and spoken for continuous all-night sittings five years ago against such a proposition as this, and they would have been justified in doing it, because the people have a perfect right to know. I have no hesitation in finding it consonant with my own conscience to vote against this motion. At great personal inconvenience I would come to-morrow to expedite the passage of other Bills if the Minister wants them, but I should vote against this Bill until the country knows how the money is going to be spent, or has been spent for the seven months of this financial year.

HON. R. SUMNER: The Hon. Mr. Hawthorn stated that Supply has been granted until the middle of December, and the present appropriation would last until the middle of April.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It ought to under any reasonable Government.

*Hon. R. Sumner.]*

HON. R. SUMNER: The facts are totally opposite. In the other Chamber the Treasurer said he was asking for two months' Supply to last him to somewhere about the second or third week in January, when he hopes to call the Houses together. If the Houses are to adjourn at all, it might be convenient to meet in the second or third week of January, and we should make an appropriation accordingly. I think the Labour party are stronger in the country than ever, not only this State Labour party, but also the Federal Labour party. I think they will sweep Australia on 13th December.

HON. T. M. HALL: It will be "Good-bye, Australia" if that is so.

HON. R. SUMNER: I think there is no reason why the Bill should not pass.

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: It is quite necessary to ask one or two questions about this matter. The matter has been involved in a good deal of diplomacy and secrecy, and we do not seem to be able to get at the secret. I do not know why. If there is nothing whatever in the public finances of the country to conceal, then why can Parliament and the country not be told what the exact position is? We can get no information. Questions have been asked here time after time. Insinuations have been made, and feelers have been put out, but we can get no response. The Minister is absolutely dumb on the important question now before us. I do not know why it should be so. They are not the rulers of the country. They are here to administer the affairs of this State, and they are responsible to the public. Why they cannot answer questions straightforwardly and candidly, and give information that the people who put them where they are are looking for, I cannot understand.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We have given all the information required.

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: We cannot get the information. It is no use the hon. gentleman using nice fine phrases. We were trying almost the whole of yesterday, and we are trying now, to get a statement presented to Parliament in the usual way setting out the present condition of the finances and what are the Treasurer's Estimates for the rest of the year.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I was an hour and a-half giving the information yesterday.

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: Why cannot we, in the usual way, get the Treasurer's Estimates as to the requirements of the State for the remaining portion of the year, or for the whole year? Time after time we are asked to vote large sums of money on account, and hitherto we have voted them. Would it surprise the Minister and those whom he represents here if we were to intimate, when information applied for is refused time after time—and resolutely refused as it is in this case—that it is sufficient to excite suspicion that something is not quite right? For the last four years the hon. gentleman has been becoming practised in administrative diplomacy and in the art of concealment.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: There is nothing to conceal.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Why not put the information on the table?

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: It would be better for myself if I kept quiet at the

present time; but I cannot sit still and see vital questions like this treated in the way they are being treated by the present Government, who ask us to hand over to them a lump sum of money that will carry them on until the middle of January, and that we are to trust them with the expenditure of that money without knowing anything about the way in which they are going to spend it. Is it a reasonable thing, is it a just thing for the country, to ask that so much of the country's money should be handed over in a lump sum, *holus bolus*, without any question whatever, to the Government, who are under the most sacred obligations both in usage and principle to let the country know at this time of the year what is going on, and how the money is to be expended? If there is something to conceal, we shall know by and by, but we want to know now.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We say there is nothing to conceal.

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: We are asked to hand over £2,250,000 blindfold, so far as the objects on which it is to be expended are concerned. Is that a fair way to treat members of Parliament? Is it a fair way to treat the country?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You are raising an Aunt Sally.

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: We should be doing the proper thing if we absolutely refused to go on with any business until we got the Treasurer's Financial Statement.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We passed an Appropriation Bill a few months ago. Why was not the same argument used then?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Because we were not entitled to the Financial Statement then.

HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: The country is eager to know what the Treasurer's Estimates are for the whole year; and it is time that those Estimates were put before Parliament. The ordinary practice has already been ignored, and we cannot get the slightest inkling from the Government as to what is taking place. Let the Government tell us straightforwardly why the country is being put off not only from day to day, but from week to week, and month to month in this way. And now we are asked to hand over money to this extravagant—I use the word advisedly—this extravagant Government, giving them enough to carry on till the middle of January. On that ground I take my stand, and whatever is thought advisable, even to blocking the passing of this Bill, I am prepared to stand by my friend.

HON. T. M. HALL: The question has been fairly well ventilated, and I take it that, through the medium of the Press, and through other sources, the people will by this time have awakened to the fact that something unprecedented has been done thus suddenly to end this session of Parliament. Having done that much, I think the Council has done as much as it possibly can in the matter. We are certainly confronted at the present time with a very serious situation. The important business of the country is to be brought to a sudden standstill. We are expected to treat something like eight important Bills that now appear on the business-paper—and the number will be added to every few minutes—in a rational and reasonable way. We are told that Parliament will adjourn to-morrow, and we are expected to pass all this business. And

[*Hon. R. Sumner.*]

what for? To enable a number of men to go out and engage in propaganda work in connection with another Parliament with which we have nothing whatever to do except as individuals.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Not necessarily to-morrow. We may come back next week.

HON. T. M. HALL: So long as we are given reasonable time to conduct our business, we are not prepared to block the Government. Attention has been drawn emphatically both to-day and yesterday to the extraordinary conditions under which we are asked to pass this Bill without having before us any evidence as to how the money is to be disposed of, or what future taxation is likely to be imposed on the people. We are asked to pass this money blindly, and let the Government loose, I suppose, to criticise this Council and to criticise the Federal Government, just because those matters seem to them to be more important than the important crisis which is likely to occur in a very short time in connection with the finances of the State. Personally, I am not going to oppose any Appropriation Bill. I think it is our duty to criticise whatever the Government do in matters of this kind, to point out what we regard as unprecedented action on the part of the Government, and to emphasise our opinions in such a way that the public may get to know that the Government desire to hide something from them. The Government have to take the responsibility of their own action. If they manipulate this money in any dishonest way, their sins will be visited upon them by an enlightened public a little later. I do not intend to vote against the granting of this appropriation, but I take this opportunity of protesting strongly against this unseemly method of bringing the session to a sudden conclusion when we have still important measures before us. Having made this protest, I hope the Government will realise that the affairs of the State are of paramount importance even when compared with the Commonwealth elections.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: May I be permitted to make a brief personal explanation?

The PRESIDENT: The hon. gentleman has spoken. Is it the wish of the Council that the hon. gentleman be allowed to make a personal explanation?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. P. J. LEAHY: I glanced at the Bill very hurriedly, and was under the impression that it covered Supply up till April next. I find now that it only covers Supply to the middle of January, which removes the principal portion of my objection to passing the Bill to-day. (Hear, hear!)

Question put and passed.

#### COMMITTEE.

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

Clause 1—"Appropriation"—put and passed.

Clause 2—"Treasurer to pay moneys as directed by warrant"—

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: He would like a little further information, if the Minister was prepared to give it. He understood that the Cabinet had been discussing

the Estimates, and he presumed that by this time they were pretty well settled. What means of taxation was it proposed to adopt to make ends meet on the Estimates they were going to submit?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He would take this opportunity of stating the position relating to Appropriation Bill, No. 3, both this year and last year. Appropriation Bill, No. 3, last year provided Supply till July last. No. 1 Appropriation Bill of this year provided Supply for August and September. The Hon. Mr. Hawthorn said that Appropriation Bill, No. 2, for this year, carried them on till the middle of December.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I understood you to say that it was a two-months' Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That was not so. The Bill granted Supply for October and about two weeks in November. It was, therefore, necessary to pass this Bill either this week or next week. It provided for two months' Supply from the middle of November, which would carry them to the middle of January. There was nothing unusual in introducing a No. 3 Appropriation Bill in this way. Whether the Financial Statement was presented to the Assembly or not, the Bill must be passed. The same argument might have been used against Bill No. 1 or Bill No. 2 for this year; so that hon. members opposite had not stated the position clearly. Yesterday he replied at considerable length to the same arguments that had now been advanced by the Hon. Mr. Hall and the Hon. Mr. Fowles as to whether the Government had the right to adjourn Parliament during the period of a session. The adjournment would only be a very short one. The Premier stated yesterday in the Assembly that it was intended to adjourn until 6th January next. That was not unprecedented. If his memory served him aright, Parliament had adjourned for a few weeks before now and had then resumed. The session would not close this week. There was nothing to conceal.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Will you tell us about the proposed taxation?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Hon. gentlemen did not discuss the Financial Statement; it was presented in the Assembly. He admitted hon. gentlemen were entitled to information. They based their criticism of the financial position of the Government [4.30 p.m.] ment yesterday on the very latest information they could possibly have. No later information could have been given if the Estimates had been presented. Hon. gentlemen had the financial position of the State to the end of September of this year. What later information could they want? Hon. gentlemen know as well as I do that we are on the eve of a big Federal election and this is only a political cry. A protest has been raised in the other House and has been raised in this Council. The opportunity was seized yesterday and to-day of making some kind of attack on the financial position of the Government. Regarding the question asked by the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn, it is not my duty to anticipate the Financial Statement of the Treasurer in another place. I think notice ought to be given of a question like that.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Will you answer it if I do give notice?

*Hon. A. J. Jones.*}



The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman knows very well he will get all that information in due course and at the proper time. (Laughter.)

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The same old "gags": "In due course," and "Give notice of the question." When we do give notice we never have the question answered, or we are advised to bring in a motion. Motions are brought in and passed, and months go by and we get no reply. That is the way we are treated here. Yet the hon. gentleman expects us to sit down and suffer uncomplainingly. He has given us no information as to taxation, and he shelters himself behind the statement that it is not unusual to have a third Appropriation Bill. Our third Appropriation Bill last year covered the whole of the expenditure of the year after the Financial Statement had been brought in. We complain that we are not in the position, with this Appropriation Bill, of being able to say what is going to be the condition of the finances of the State during the next six or seven months. I think we are justly entitled to enter a protest of this kind when we see so much money being spent compared with what was asked in the other two Appropriation Bills, and knowing also there will have to be a still further Appropriation Bill—No. 4—probably covering the expenditure for the balance of the year.

Clause 2 put and passed.

Clause 3—"*Treasurer to be allowed credit for sums paid in pursuance of warrant*"—

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Before the final clause is put I wish to emphasise, in Committee also, the enormity of the offence which the Government are committing at the present time in endeavouring to bludgeon this Appropriation Bill through Parliament without affording the people any opportunity of knowing how the money is being spent. This day will be recorded and it will be remembered against the Government. As a matter of fact, the Government know they are doing wrong in this and they are escaping from the searchlight of Parliament as soon as they can. They dare not let the electors know what is the state of the public finances at the present time. They are shivering in their shoes lest there be a run on the Government Savings Bank.

HON. A. SKIRVING: Oh, don't start that!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We are going to have the Financial Statement as soon as ever we can. We are not going to allow political dodgery to go on any longer without a protest. We are not going to allow unscrupulous, devious methods of finance to be foisted on the electors of Queensland. We are going to know what the Labour party stand for, or sit down for. Where are the Estimates? Where is the Treasurer's Budget for this year? Where are the answers to the questions that ought to be on the table of the House? The Government simply are acting in the dark and not letting the electors know where the money is going. Now they are beginning to pay for huge and risky cattle stations in cash instead of in debentures. Why? It is time the public asked these questions, and it is time a Royal Commission was appointed to investigate the finances. I know that the Auditor-General cannot go behind vouchers. I know that he has to take receipts whether they are in the name of John Smith or anybody else, and he cannot ask whether the Government got value

for the money or any value whatever, or whether it is a genuine receipt. It will be sure to be stamped. In these days of camouflage and Gordon spies the most respectable people sometimes may not look respectable and the greatest criminal may sometimes look like a local preacher—a very pattern of respectability. As a matter of fact the Government, by ploughing along in this way, are simply making their own grave.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: And the country's grave.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Worse than that, they are plunging this State into financial ruin, and they know it. The crisis is coming within twelve months from now. This is a day to be remembered, because this is the only place in which the nefarious designs of the present Government can be blocked. They dare not put the facts before the electors because there would be such a complete exposure, such a howl of indignation, such a blaze of resentment through the land, that we would have a strike of the whole of the electors of Queensland. I say this now because it will come true. The people of Queensland will awake. It is a wonder the railway sleepers do not awake. (Laughter.)

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Some of them are in a very loose condition, I know.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: And the liquor Government are in a very tight condition in regard to the finances. I suggest, even at this stage, that we consider the unwisdom of conspiring with those in another place to defraud the people of knowing how their money is being spent. It will be useless for us to complain of retrospective taxation next January if we pass Bills like this. It will be useless for this Council to lift up a finger of protest against back money being called up by the Government if we now play into their hands in this manner. This is the time when we ought strongly to protest in word and deed in passing this Appropriation Bill. Even at this stage I would warmly oppose the third clause and every other clause of this Bill. Every other clause is a pitfall, and a step downwards to a bottomless pit. The next Government, when they come in, will find nothing but an empty Treasury, and they will wonder where the money has gone to.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: That will be a long time hence.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It will be a very short time before their pockets are empty, and as soon as their pockets are empty the Government themselves will resign.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Not they; you will have to kick them out.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: They will not stay any longer. As a matter of fact, this Appropriation Bill is the greatest outrage on parliamentary decency and procedure that the Queensland Parliament has been subjected to. If there is one proposition that commends itself to us it is that the Government should be straightforward and frank with regard to the public finances. The money does not belong to them. They are the trustees, the mere custodians, of the people's money in the public welfare. They have no right to spend a single halfpenny without letting the people know how it is being spent.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You do not suggest that any money is spent without the public knowing it, do you?

[Hon. A. J. Jones.]

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Hundreds of thousands of pounds are spent—Unforeseen Expenditure and a Validating Bill. Now they try not only to fool the people but to fool the calendar as well, and say this money will only last them up to January. I am amazed that it will last them so long.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: It might not yet.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: As a matter of fact, under ordinary economical administration, this amount of money which we are asked to pass to-day would easily—as the ex-Treasurer said—carry them over to April. But if they intend to go spending left and right, knowing that the money is not theirs but belongs to the taxpayers, it will not last them until Christmas. I still beg leave to think—and without the slightest trace of hesitation—that the Council would be doing their duty in rejecting this Appropriation Bill. I still beg leave to think that the right course, the obvious course of duty, is not to lend ourselves to the schemes of another place, but to do our duty here fearlessly and in scorn of any consequences. There is nothing that can happen to the public service. They will get their money, unless the Government have spent it, and find they have not got any and want to dip into this.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: The Bill is no good in that case.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Perhaps that is the reason of the Government panic at the present time.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is a good thing the Government do not take you seriously, and neither do the people.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The people will take the Government seriously, there is no doubt about that. Soon you will not be able to shake a sixpence out of the pockets of the taxpayers if you hold them upside down. I am somewhat amazed at the Government bringing in this proposition, because it is a rope round their own necks. I will beg leave, even at this stage, to divide the Council on the matter so that we might see where the Government stand.

Question—That clause 3 as read stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided:—

In division,

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Before the division is taken I ask the ruling of the Chairman as to whether the amendment is in order or not.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: There is no amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Well, as to whether we are in order in dividing on this clause.

The CHAIRMAN: I will deal with the point of order later on.

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„ A. G. C. Hawthorn	„ T. J. O'Shea
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Tellers: Hon. E. W. H. Fowles and Hon. A. H. Parnell.

Resolved in the affirmative.

The CHAIRMAN: With regard to the point of order raised by the Secretary for Mines, it appears to me that there is no ground for the point of order. In any case, the clause is carried, and it is not necessary for me to give any decision on the point.

On clause 4—“Short title”—

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES moved that the word “Appropriation” on line 40 be omitted, with a view to inserting the word “Misappropriation.”

The SECRETARY FOR MINES rose to a point of order, and asked the ruling of the Chairman as to whether the amendment was in order, seeing that it was a frivolous amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment is not in order, as in my opinion it is a frivolous amendment.

Clause put and passed.

Preamble put and passed.

The Council resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment, and the report was adopted.

THIRD READING.

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

MESSAGE TO ASSEMBLY.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I move that the Bill be returned to the Assembly with the following message:—

“Mr. Speaker,—

“The Legislative Council having this day agreed to the Bill, intituled ‘A Bill to Authorise the Appropriation out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland of further Sums of Money towards the Service of the Year ending on the Thirtieth Day of June, 1920,’ beg now to return the same to the Legislative Assembly without amendment.”

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I think this is too important an occasion on which to return the Bill with a message in the usual form. Unusual circumstances have happened in this case, and I think we should intimate to the Assembly that we protest most strongly against the non-production of the

[5 p.m.] Financial Statement and the Estimates before we go into

recess. I move as an amendment that to the message there be added the words—

“But the Council protest most strongly against the innovation of the Government in not supplying to Parliament full Estimates and the Financial Statement showing the condition of the finances of the State, as is usually done before the end of the year.”

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I cannot allow the amendment to be put without making some reply, although I treat it rather

*Hon. A. J. Jones.]*

lightly. The Government can afford to treat it lightly. For two days we have discussed the financial position of the State. Yesterday the whole day was spent on the motion moved by the Hon. Mr. Curtis, and hon. members had a fair opportunity of placing their views before the people. I know that that was their intention. The amendment, I say, can be treated rather lightly by the Government, because there is nothing to hide.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Why hide it?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We are hiding nothing at all.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You are hiding everything.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Not at all. I stand as one of those who are perfectly satisfied with the action of the Government in this matter, and I am quite candid enough to say that I agree to the adjournment of this Council and the other House over the Federal or State or any other kind of election, even a referendum on a vital question, so that the public men of the State can place their views clearly before the people. Not only Labour members, but hon. members opposite are concerned. It is a fair deal all round. Members in the Assembly who are opposed to the Government are just as anxious to get into this political campaign as members on the other side—even more anxious.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: It was never done previously.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I think we have any amount of precedents of the Houses adjourning and reassembling before the end of the session.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Not for a Federal election.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Why do we not go on with the business? This amendment is hardly worth dividing on, although we have quite a number of our supporters on this side ready to take a division. We feel that the amendment is almost not worthy of a division. The hon. member, as ex-Treasurer, knows that the Government must pass Appropriation Bills.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: And bring in Financial Statements, too.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We have important business to discuss. The Hon. Mr. Beirne is waiting to make that two-hours' speech that hon. members deprived him of making last night on the Profiteering Prevention Bill.

Hon. T. C. BEIRNE: What about Tuesday?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I think we will probably have to meet on Tuesday. I rush business through this Council—I rarely delay the Chamber by making long speeches. Hon. members last night forced me to make a second reading speech on a Bill.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: Although you were not ready.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am always ready on every Bill, but I will admit that I had not read that Bill as carefully as I might. Why debate this any longer, or send the message to the Assembly? It is really a reflection on the Government, on the members of the Assembly, to protest against this Council's adjournment. I think

{Hon. A. J. Jones.

the leader of the Opposition in another place is very anxious to get out and place his views before the country.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY and Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: What has that got to do with us?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: And hon. members will be doing some campaigning work on behalf of the Prime Minister, I take it.

Hon. T. C. BEIRNE: It is beneath the dignity of our position.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We have the Fair Rents Bill. Hon. members are anxious to pass that, and the sheet is fairly full of other measures. I am sorry that the hon. member has delayed the passage of the Bill by moving the amendment, although I do not think it matters much whether it is added to the message or not. All we want as a Government is to get through legislation, get through the business that the people of the country has sent us here to pass. The people of Queensland are looking forward to the passage of the Profiteering Prevention Bill. If you come in on the tram or train you overhear conversations which show that they want to know what is going to happen to it. I do not know what the opinion is in the Assembly—like hon. members opposite, we are not so much concerned about that—but rather than delay or lose some of the business now on the business-sheet, I will come back on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of next week.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: We will sit all the time.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. R. SUMNER: Mr. President, I ask your ruling as to whether the amendment is in order. The Bill was reported without amendments, and the proper course is to say that it shall be accompanied with the usual message. Instead of that it is amended.

The PRESIDENT: The amendment is in order. It does not affect the Bill in any way. It is only an addition to the message.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: I think we should pause before we rush into a division on the amendment for the motion. I am usually able to follow the logic of the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn, but I am also a sport, and when the vote goes against my conscience that is the end of it. I am not going to weep tears over spilt milk, especially when we have spilt the milk ourselves—I speak of the Council. To me it seems the height of the ludicrous that, having voted for the Appropriation Bill, we should now move a protest against our having done it.

Hon. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Good sense at last!

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: The hon. member who moved this amendment—and we usually can follow his arguments—voted for the Appropriation Bill, and now wishes the Council to protest against the passing of the Appropriation Bill.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: No, I protest against the non-production of the Financial Statement.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: What was the right way to protest? It was to hold up the Appropriation Bill until the Financial Statement was delivered.

Hon. F. T. BRETNALL: You could not get a majority to do that.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: However, good things come out of evil sometimes. It shows that there are no parties in this Council, and that we vote according to our conscience. I cannot be a party to the incongruity, to the blazing topsy-turvydom, of actually voting for it and then crying because we have done it.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: That is poetic license.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is like the man who meets a burglar and has a pistol with which he can defend himself. The burglar takes all his money and then when the burglar has gone he carefully writes out a protest against the burglar's having stolen his notes. I, for one, would prefer to have used the pistol, and not to make a wordy protest after the Council has voted for it. Let us accept the decision of the Council.

HON. T. M. HALL: We want to make a protest against the conditions under which it was put before us.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Has there not been a most effective protest in the Hon. Mr. Curtis's motion? The time to make the protest is before the deed is done.

HON. L. McDONALD: You will be known as "the ineffectual protest party."

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I do not belong to that party. Whatever in the wide world is the good of passing the Bill and then adding a protest on to it? We weakly protest about what we have already done ourselves! Hon. members are seeing the inconsistency of the whole position—that they had in their own hands the power to force the production of the Financial Statement. When they have thrown away that power, they sit down and start writing out a protest against their having thrown away that power.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Did you not do it on the salaries Bill yourself?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You voted for the second reading.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I did not.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You only tried to get clause 3 knocked out.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I shouted out "Not content" on the second reading. I shall take my gruel like a man, vote for the motion, and not cry over spilt milk. I am not going to waste myself on paper, crying over spilt milk. The Council has decided in a certain direction. Let us accept it without any milk-and-watery protest.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: I fail to see any inconsistency in the action of the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn and myself or anybody else who supports the amendment. We helped to pass the Appropriation Bill, after considerable discussion, not that we approved of it or of the manner in which it was done, but because, considering all the circumstances, we thought it was the right thing to do. That is one thing, but it is quite a distinct thing to inform the Government that they should have brought in the Estimates in the ordinary way, and not adjourn Parliament without following the ordinary practice. I do not see that there is any inconsistency or incongruity whatever.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Why protest when you could have forced them to do it?

HON. P. J. LEAHY: I am not at all sure that we could have forced them to do it if we threw out or postponed the Appropriation

Bill, because it takes time to prepare Estimates, and even if the Government have started to prepare them it might be two or three weeks before they are ready, and I think it would be going too far to take the extreme step of throwing out an Appropriation Bill.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Why not adjourn it for a fortnight?

HON. P. J. LEAHY: That, possibly, could have been done, but that might lead to very serious inconvenience. I think this protest is reasonable, dignified, and consistent, and I hope it will be carried.

HON. B. FAHEY: I have taken no part in the discussion of the financial affairs of this Government, nor do I intend to do so except in referring to the remarks that fell from my hon. friend. He said he did not approve of the Bill and yet supported it; and now how can he accuse any hon. gentleman in this Chamber of being inconsistent?

HON. P. J. LEAHY: To whom are you referring?

HON. B. FAHEY: I am referring to the hon. member.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: I rise to a point of order. The Hon. Mr. Fahey has evidently misunderstood what I said, because I did not use the words or language which the hon. member attributes to me.

HON. B. FAHEY: The hon. gentleman said, "Although I did not approve of the Appropriation Bill I voted for it."

HON. P. J. LEAHY: I did not say that.

HON. B. FAHEY: I heard the hon. member distinctly. The hon. member has a perfect right to his own opinion, but he must not be charging hon. members with inconsistency after an expression of that kind.

THE PRESIDENT: If the Hon. Mr. Leahy has said that he did not make those remarks, the hon. member must accept his denial.

HON. B. FAHEY: I will accept his denial. The fact is certain hon. members intended to protest, and they did protest by speech, but they have not protested by their action.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is the point.

HON. B. FAHEY: Words of protest are as evanescent as the winds unless supported by deeds, and that is what some hon. gentlemen in this Council have not done this afternoon. Therefore I look upon the amendment that has been moved as nothing but a farce, and I regret that it has been moved, and I regret that I did not dissociate myself with it by walking out of the Chamber, because I know that a great deal of inconsistent voting has taken place here this afternoon. I know that a great deal of inconsistency has been manifested here this afternoon. I realise that no greater question than this has been discussed in this Chamber during my fifteen years here. The decision will establish a precedent that will be vicious and far-reaching. I am not protesting against that. Hon. gentlemen carried out their own views, and very intelligently too. But the fact is—and I must protest against it—that we have too many leaders on this side. (Laughter.)

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: There are no leaders on this side.

HON. B. FAHEY: When we have less, our efforts will be more effective.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: We are all leaders.

*Hon. B. Fahey.]*

HON. B. FAHEY: I am not one.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You are the only one who is not.

HON. B. FAHEY: I have taken less part in the debates this session than I have done in any session since I came into the Council.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Come over here and you will be happy.

HON. B. FAHEY: No, I will stick to my guns and be consistent.

Hon. G. PAGE-HANIFY: We have only one leader.

HON. B. FAHEY: You have, and he is well worthy of his position. I compliment him on the manner in which he fences and circumvents certain questions—(laughter)—when he knows right well that the arguments are against him. Sometimes he is illogical, but all the same I think that he is a more valued member of the Ministry to-day than he was when he came here first, and that is entirely due to the improvement his probation in this Chamber is daily manifestly imparting to the hon. gentleman.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: It is improving his supporters too.

HON. B. FAHEY: I could speak for an hour and a-half on this all-important question, but I am not doing to delay business at this late hour.

Question—That the words proposed to be added (*Mr. Hawthorn's amendment*) be so added—put; and the Council divided:—

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Hon. T. C. Beirne	Hon. P. J. Leahy
„ G. S. Curtis	„ C. F. Marks
„ B. Fahey	„ C. F. Nielson
„ A. Gibson	„ T. J. O'Shea
„ T. M. Hall	„ E. H. T. Plant
„ A. G. C. Hawthorn	„ E. J. Stevens
„ J. Hodel	„ H. Turner

Tellers: Hon. T. M. Hall and C. F. Nielson.

NOT-CONTENTS, 10.

Hon. J. Cowlshaw	Hon. T. Nevitt
„ E. W. H. Fowles	„ G. Page-Hanify
„ A. J. Jones	„ A. H. Parnell
„ T. L. Jones	„ A. Skirving
„ L. McDonald	„ R. Sumner

Tellers: Hon. E. W. H. Fowles and Hon. A. Skirving.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question, as amended, put and passed.

ADDITIONAL SITTING DAY.

FRIDAY SITTING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move, without notice—That the Council, at its rising, do adjourn until 3.30 p.m. to-morrow. The intention is to sit to-morrow.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Why?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: To complete the important business that we have yet to deal with.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: You have got the money. Why wait to say "Good-bye"?

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Why not run away with it?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We are not quite as heartless as the hon. gentleman thinks. I am of opinion that, by reason of the Council opposing my previous motion to pass Bills through all their stages in one day, we cannot complete the business to-morrow.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Was it a reasonable thing to ask?

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Why not adjourn till Tuesday, or else close up to-night?

[Hon. B. Fahey.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: If hon. gentlemen had passed that motion, we could have passed the second reading of the Profit-sharing Prevention Bill to-day, and we could have passed the Committee stage and third reading to-morrow. It is quite necessary to pass the Jimbour Selections Bill.

Hon. T. M. HALL: We can get through that to-night.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I intend to move the second reading of the Governor's Salary Act of 1872 Amendment Bill to-day, if I possibly can. I am sorry hon. gentlemen opposite did not adopt the same course as was adopted towards the close of last session.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: That was the end of the session.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: On that occasion they carried the usual motion, and sat on Fridays to finish the session. I think it is quite necessary to sit to-morrow, and I hope hon. gentlemen will agree to the motion. I do not know whether it will be a late sitting, but we can get through a good deal of business to-night.

HON. T. M. HALL: The business on the paper to-day is of such importance that it will be impossible to put it all through in one day. Some of it is highly important to the State, and there is a good deal of sympathetic feeling towards it on this side, though often we have not much sympathy with Government measures. I think it is not fair that we should be asked to come here to-morrow and slum our work or attempt to rush it through. It has been clearly indicated by the Minister that we shall not be able to complete the business, and, consequently, it will be necessary to come back next week.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I do not think we shall be able to complete it, but we might.

HON. T. M. HALL: I can assure the hon. gentleman that we shall not be able to complete all the business to-morrow, or half of it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We can get through the third readings on Tuesday.

HON. T. M. HALL: If country members have to go home and come back again next week, why not give them a chance to go to-night, and take the whole of next week to do the business properly.

Question—That the motion be agreed to (*Mr. A. J. Jones's*)—put; and the Council divided:—

CONTENTS, 8.

Hon. A. J. Jones	Hon. G. Page-Hanify
„ T. L. Jones	„ W. J. Riordan
„ L. McDonald	„ A. Skirving
„ T. Nevitt	„ R. Sumner

Tellers: Hon. T. L. Jones and Hon. T. Nevitt.

NOT-CONTENTS, 18.

Hon. T. C. Beirne	Hon. J. Hodel
„ F. T. Brentnall	„ P. J. Leahy
„ J. Cowlshaw	„ C. F. Marks
„ G. S. Curtis	„ C. F. Nielson
„ B. Fahey	„ T. J. O'Shea
„ E. W. H. Fowles	„ A. H. Parnell
„ A. Gibson	„ E. H. T. Plant
„ T. M. Hall	„ E. J. Stevens
„ A. G. C. Hawthorn	„ H. Turner

Tellers: Hon. T. C. Beirne and Hon. T. J. O'Shea.

Resolved in the negative.

## PROFITEERING PREVENTION BILL.

## SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: I listened carefully to the Minister's second reading speech in explanation of this Bill. The conclusion I came to was that the Minister is altogether too honest a man to be a successful politician. He could not convince himself there was any necessity for the introduction of this Bill, or that prices would be lowered in consequence of its passing. Consequently he [5.30 p.m.] failed to convince the House. Although we asked him over and over again to give us one instance of profiteering in Queensland he failed to do it. He gave us various instances of profiteering in England, America, Australia, and other parts of the world, but he gave us not a single instance of profiteering in Queensland. Now, if prices cannot be lowered by Profiteering Prevention Bills—and the Minister knows they cannot be—what is the object of introducing this Bill? I think I know. The party outside demand it, and instead of telling the truth to those who are outside the party inside have conspired to throw dust in the eyes of the people.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. gentleman must not impute improper motives to members inside the Chamber.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: I am very sorry, Mr. President. I did not mean to be offensive or personal to the Minister. However, if they have not conspired to deceive them in any way and to throw dust in their eyes, the whole Bill is fireworks and camouflage, or, in other words, make-believe. I think I will be able to prove that. Before coming on to the proof of it I might say that I have the kindest regard for the Government, and particularly for the Minister. I honestly and sincerely sympathise with this Government in the position in which they are at present. Here is a Government which came into power on the cry of cheap food for the people, cheap clothing for the people, cheap cost of living. Those are wonderful and popular cries.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We never said anything about clothing.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: Well, cheap living. In a country like this people cannot live without clothes. I should think cheap living embraced cheap clothes. However, the people believed the cry and they returned to power this party which promised them all these things. Now, when the people find after four and a-half years of Labour administration that the cost of living has gone up to an alarming extent and out of all proportion to the increase in the other States, they are naturally wild and want something done, or, at any rate, something attempted. Hence the introduction of this Bill. We heard the Minister half an hour ago say that as he comes into town in the tram or the train he meets people every day who ask him, "When will you give us some relief with this Profiteering Prevention Bill? Why do you not pass it?" They expect something to be done; hence this Bill.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: It is not the party; it is the electors.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: Yes, I hear it myself.

HON. T. L. JONES: The Profiteering Prevention Bill will not injure anybody.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: I am not opposing this Bill.

HON. T. L. JONES: The general public think there is profiteering, and the Bill provides for making inquiries.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: I will say there is not the slightest necessity for this Bill in order to check profiteering. If this Government cannot afford to tell the people the real facts, there should be nothing to prevent members of this Chamber from frankly telling them that this Bill is camouflage, fireworks, and make-believe, and there is not the slightest necessity for its introduction. By this I do not mean to infer that there is no profiteering going on in our midst. But I do say without fear of contradiction that if there is profiteering the Government have already the power—and have had the power all along—to stop it. Immediately on the outbreak of war the Denham Government introduced and passed a measure entitled "The Control of Trade Act." The object of this Act was "to make provision against undue restriction of the supply of goods or undue raising of the prices of goods." It was to "come into operation on a day to be named by the Governor in Council by proclamation published in the 'Gazette,' and it shall remain in force during such period or extended period as the Governor in Council by proclamation published in the 'Gazette' from time to time declares." I have the Act here, at page 6273 of 1914 session. Section 4 says—

"In this Act the following terms have the meanings respectively set against them."

It goes on—

"Goods—All foodstuffs, commodities, goods, chattels, or things whatsoever which the Governor in Council, by proclamation published in the 'Gazette,' declares to be goods subject to this Act."

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Broader even than the definition in the Profiteering Prevention Bill.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: Yes. I says further—

"Person' includes a body of persons, whether corporate or unincorporate, and a firm of partners."

Section 6 provides—

"The Governor in Council may from time to time, by proclamation published in the 'Gazette,' declare that any foodstuffs, commodities, goods, chattels, or things whatsoever in such proclamation mentioned or referred to shall be goods subject to this Act. Thereupon, while such proclamation remains unrevoked, this Act shall extend and apply to the things mentioned in such proclamation, and the same shall be goods subject to this Act in all respects and for all purposes."

Section 7 provides—

"The Governor in Council shall appoint such and so many persons as he thinks proper to be a board of control for the purposes of this Act, respectively, in and for the Central district and the Northern district, as defined by the Central and Northern Districts Boundaries Act of 1900, and in and for the Southern district, being the residue of the State."

*Hon. T. C. Beirne.]*

Section 9 says—

“The Chief Secretary may at any time and from time to time, by order published in the ‘Gazette,’ declare that the price or prices specified in any report of a board for any goods or kind of goods shall, for the purposes of this Act, be the highest selling price or prices for those goods or kinds of goods in the district or portion of districts concerned.”

Then there is a penal section—10—which says—

“Any person who—

(a) Sells or supplies, or offers for sale or supply, any goods at a price higher than the declared price thereof for any such sale or supply; or

(b) Refuses to sell (except at a price higher than the declared price thereof for any such sale or at all) any goods—

(i.) Which he is entitled to sell, and

(ii.) Which are in excess of what are required for the use of himself and his dependants for a period of three months from the date of the refusal,

is guilty of an offence against this Act.”

Section 13 provides—

“Any person who commits an offence against this Act is liable to a penalty not exceeding five hundred pounds, and to be imprisoned for any period not exceeding six months.”

Section 17 reads—

“The Governor in Council may from time to time make and publish in the ‘Gazette’ all such proclamations as he thinks fit for giving full effect to this Act.”

I may be told that the Control of Trade Act is a war measure, and that now the war is over it is inoperative.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Did not the War Precautions Act practically override it?

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: No, I will deal with that point later. Hon. members will remember that when the measure was going through this Chamber the Hon. Mr. O’Shea and the Hon. Mr. Leahy sought to confine its duration to the continuance of the war or six months thereafter, but the majority of members would not sanction any limitation to its duration. I have here “Hansard” debates, volume lxvii., page 694, when this Bill was going through. The Hon. Mr. Leahy moved to confine its duration to the continuance of the war or six months thereafter. The Minister, who was then the Hon. Mr. Barlow, opposed it. He said—

“He trusted the amendment would not be pressed, because it would unduly tie the hands of the Government and the Government were supposed to act for the best. The Hon. Mr. Leahy appeared to think that a Government might come into power which would decline to cancel the proclamation, and would retain this, what he might call, socialistic measure in force.”

The Hon. Mr. McDonnell also opposed it. He said he—

“was surprised that his friend, the Hon. Mr. Leahy, did not have more confidence in the Government. He did not know what his idea was in introducing the

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amendment. Did he think that they would have a change of Government later on?”

And so on. Hon. gentlemen will see that, although the Hon. Mr. Leahy sought to limit the duration of the Bill, the House did not accept his view on the matter, but allowed that socialistic matter to pass and go on the statute-book, where it still remains.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: And this Government have never used it.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: I believe not, and they have not used it because they do not believe in its efficacy. I may be told that Victoria, New South Wales, and other Australian States passed similar price-fixing Acts about the same time, and that these States are now again introducing new and more stringent profiteering prevention Acts. I may mention that a couple of weeks ago I happened to be lunching at a certain hotel in Melbourne. I had with me as my guest the managing director of one of the largest woollen mills in Victoria. The conversation turned on profiteering, price-fixing, and on the agitation that existed for a reduction in the cost of living. The table at which we sat was not a large one, but a stranger to both of us also sat at that same table. While we were talking I saw him smile once or twice, and at last he said, “I cannot help hearing what you are saying, but as I am most interested in the matter you are talking about, I will introduce myself.” He happened to be a member of the Victorian State Ministry, and he quite agreed with the conclusions we came to that price-fixing is a dangerous experiment—that its tendency will be to raise prices more frequently than it reduces them, and that in the great majority of cases the effects achieved are the opposite to what was intended. “But,” said he, “the ‘Age’ newspaper and the agitation by various organisations outside compel us to reintroduce a ‘Profiteering Prevention Bill.’ although, personally, I have no faith whatever in its efficacy.”

HON. T. L. JONES: Had the Victorian Government a Control of Trade Act?

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: Yes; and it was not as stringent as ours. The Victorian Minister to whom I have alluded may have been expressing his own personal opinion only, and may not have been giving the views of his Cabinet; but there is this much to be said for the Victorian State Government: that the Control of Trade Act which they passed in 1914 was limited to that year; they passed another in 1915, again limited to that one year; so that, until the Bill introduced the other day is passed, they have no machinery to control prices. But the Queensland Government have not that excuse. The machinery already exists here to deal with prices, and yet the Government are afraid to put that machinery in motion. Instead, they would, I think, much prefer to have this Chamber throw out this Bill. In this hope they will, I believe, be disappointed. I have here a cutting taken from the “Sydney Morning Herald” of last week, headed “Necessary Commodities,” and reading as follows:—

“The Legislative Council yesterday carried motions, at the instance of the Attorney-General, declaring the following articles necessary commodities:—Tweeds, serges, flannels (whether made up into clothing or not), hosiery, knitted

goods, felt hats, boots, footwear, soap, and candles. Notice of a similar motion has been given in the Legislative Assembly. When that is carried, the Necessary Commodities Control Commission will be competent to fix the prices."

From this it would appear that the Act passed by New South Wales in 1914 was like the Queensland Act—not limited in its duration—and instead of deceiving the people by introducing another Bill, they are using the powers they already possess and doing something now.

I deeply sympathise with the man who, because of the high prices of commodities, finds it difficult to make ends meet. But if we would only stop for a moment and try to ascertain what are the real and the true causes of the high prices now ruling all over the world, we should be forced to the conclusion that while profiteering may be one of the causes, it is only a trifling one compared to some of the other causes.

Before prices can come down, production must be increased. (Hear, hear!) Will this Bill tend to increase production, or will it have the opposite effect? Profit is the main incentive to production. If this incentive is removed, shall we produce as much? If we increase production, prices will come down. There is no other real remedy.

Let us take butter as an example. If you increase the quantity of butter produced, prices will come down. But if you fix a maximum price without bothering about the quantity produced, what happens? What happened in New South Wales a few years ago? The farmers were willing to sell at 1s. 9d. per lb., but the Government fixed the price at 1s. 4½d. The farmers considered 1s. 4½d. was, owing to the high price then ruling for fodder, lower than it could be produced profitably, so they turned out their cows and stopped milking. The "Sydney Bulletin" epitomised the whole subject by wittily asking, "Is it not better to have good butter at 1s. 9d. than no butter at 1s. 4½d.?"

Let us take woollens as another example. There is a tremendous demand for woollens to-day. All the Australian mills are doing well, and some of them are accused of profiteering. Yet there is no class in the community who are taking less advantage of their position than are the Australian woollen manufacturers. It is possible to-day to buy from the manufacturer an all-wool tweed suiting for, say, 10s. per yard, while to get the same quality from Bradford would, with duty and freight added, cost about £1 3s. a yard. For the very best worsted suiting the Australian manufacturer quotes 12s. to 15s. a yard, and the cost to-day of the same cloth from Bradford is £1 16s. a yard. Is it not a great asset to Australia to have these manufacturers, and should they not be encouraged to extend their operations? And would it not be a good thing if more people were encouraged to invest their money in new enterprises of this kind, because, for every piece now produced by them, quite fifty people want that piece. Risks and losses are almost a constant feature of new forms of wealth production, and if to the ordinary risks of business enterprise you add this new terror of profiteering prevention, do you not think you will discourage enterprise, and so decrease production? But the great bulk of what is used in the way of clothing and

personal adornment is still imported, and I would like to know what effect this Bill will have on the goods we import from overseas, or on the goods we get from other parts of Australia? I know that it can fix the price charged for them after they are landed here, but it cannot affect the price the man at the other end of the world charges the Queensland importer for the goods. The danger is that under this Bill the risk may be too great—the goods may not be imported—and so the very scarcity of certain articles will force the price up. When importing goods one has to take into consideration, not only the price quoted at the source of production in the currency of that country, but also the cost of conversion of that currency into sterling. In Japan, the normal price of the yen is 2s. 1d.; to-day it is 2s. 6d.—in other words the Japanese depreciate our money 20 per cent.—and this is a charge that must be reckoned with in addition to the high rate they charge for the goods.

HON. B. FAHEY: Is that due to anything the Japanese Government have done?

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: No, the Japanese Government can have no control whatever over it. In America you cannot say that they are unfriendly to us, but the price of the sovereign there to-day is, I believe, 4 dollars 16 cents, although normally it is 4 dollars 86 cents, so that the Americans view the depreciation of our currency at present as being from 15 per cent. to 17 per cent. How is this Bill going to deal with these things? And if it cannot deal with them, how is it going to reduce the price of commodities?

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is an argument in favour of local production.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: Will this Bill encourage local production? The great incentive to local production is the possibility of profit, and a Bill of this kind, and particularly the Bill which the Government introduced a month ago and tried to pass—the Unemployed Workers Bill—is the worst thing any number of sane people introduced in a civilised country. You will not get over the effects of that for the next twenty years. The very fear of similar Bills being introduced by a Labour Government will deter people from starting industries. I happened to be travelling a few days ago on the train from Melbourne to Sydney with the late Premier, Mr. T. J. Ryan. We got into conversation, and I told him what I have just told hon. members. I told him, for instance, of a certain industry that was going to be established in Queensland. The machinery was on the way, but because of the Unemployed Workers Bill the directors were sending a man to Victoria to get a building and put the machinery there instead of starting in Queensland. A gentleman walked up at the time and stood at the door. He was the man the Queensland directors had sent to Victoria to investigate. He did not know Mr. Ryan, but he knew me, and he told me all about it in the presence of Mr. Ryan. That is an instance where £80,000, or £100,000 was driven from Queensland by that Unemployed Workers Bill. I can give the names and the whole particulars to the Minister privately if he wishes it.

HON. B. FAHEY: Did Mr. Ryan defend his action?

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: I will not say. Whatever was said was in the course of private

*Hon. T. C. Beirne.*



conversation and will not be repeated by me. We hear a great deal about the shipping ring—the shipping combine—and the tremendous profits they are making—one great authority saying that “The Australian shipping combine has made enough profits during the war years to enable it to pay off the whole of the Australian war loans.” Statements of this kind are ridiculous. I have no brief for the shipping fraternity, but it is only fair to state that the Commonwealth Government, under the powers conferred on them by the War Precautions Act, took over the whole of the interstate shipping, paying the owners an agreed price per ton of shipping per day—so that the profiteering, if any, was done, and is being done, by the Federal Government, and not by the shipping combine. The shipping companies have been for some time, and are still, just managing agents for the Shipping Controller, and have nothing whatever to do with the fixing of freights or fares. Just recently I overheard a man say, “There is the shipping combine again. They have raised freights.” They have had nothing to do with it any more than the President. They are merely acting as agents to the Commonwealth Government. If profits are made, it is the Commonwealth that is making them.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: The rates went up because of increased wages.

Hon. T. C. BEIRNE: Of course. Just in the same way the Queensland Government, as the Minister told us last night, chartered the steamer “Allinga,” and, I understand, are making £3,000 a year out of the arrangement. The Minister last night informed us that they are making £6,000. Who are the profiteers in this instance?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We could not help making it.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Making it out of the flour you shipped to the starving North!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. T. C. BEIRNE: And in any case, supposing the statement were true that Australian shipping companies are making big profits, is it not better that they should make money by rendering service to Australians, than that foreigners should do it? Do you know that the Nippon Yusen Kaisha, partly by carrying goods from Japan to Australia and vice versa, make a net profit of between eight and nine millions sterling—and that for the first half of this year they made a net profit of £5,300,000?

Hon. T. NEVITT: Australian trade only?

Hon. T. C. BEIRNE: Partly Australian trade, I said. Where is the good of hon. members beating the air and trying to get at the Nippon Yusen Kaisha? They cannot do it. They make those profits partly by carrying goods from Japan to Australia, and the great bulk is the goods we sell in Australia. The factories whose goods they carry have been averaging in war years from 80 per cent. to 400 per cent. Another Japanese shipping company paid a dividend of 700 per cent. last year. I merely put these figures as a contrast to statements made of the profits of the Australian shipping combine. It seems to me that a great many people in this country think that anyone who makes a profit in Australia must be a scoundrel or a robber. Is it not much better to see Australian

companies making profits, than to help foreign companies make them?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Hon. T. NEVITT: What about the Vacuum Oil Company?

Hon. T. C. BEIRNE: In any case, how could you get at the Vacuum Oil Company? Your anti-profiteering Bill cannot touch these concerns, but my point is that it would pay Australians better to encourage the manufacture of these things here. If you take away the incentive of profit, new industries will not be established, and existing ones will not be extended. Would you limit the wealth that any one man is allowed to accumulate?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Government side: Yes.

Hon. T. C. BEIRNE: Then you would be reasoning and acting on a false assumption. If it were a fact that there is only a certain limited amount of wealth in the country your argument would be sound, because, then, if one man got too much others would get too little. But, as a matter of fact, there is no limit to the amount of wealth that can be produced in Australia if people will only apply themselves intelligently to work. Why then limit any one man, when by so doing you limit the wealth production of the country? The Commissioner appointed under this Bill will have a tremendous responsibility, but I notice he will be governed and controlled by the Minister. How will they go about fixing prices? Will they limit or fix the gross profit allowed to be charged on invoice cost? Or will they fix a maximum price per article? Traders do not all buy alike. Some have much greater buying facilities than others, so either method would be unfair. In the Bill now before the Victorian House there is, I hear, a clause limiting the gross profit to 25 per cent. on invoice cost.

If that principle is established here, how will the State fish shops get on? The Queensland Government buys from the fishermen at the following prices:—

“Squire, 5½d., and retails same at 10d.—equal to 90 per cent. profit. Bream, 3d., and retails same at 6d.—equal to 100 per cent. profit. Garfish, 2½d., and retails same at 8d.—equal to 300 per cent. profit. Flathead, 4½d. to 6d., and retails same at 9d.—equal to 50 to 100 per cent. profit. Sea mullet, 2½d., and retails same at 5½d.—equal to 100 per cent. profit.”

Hon. T. NEVITT: They have to gut it—it loses in weight.

Hon. T. C. BEIRNE: It is a fair comparison, because other people have to deal with goods when they come in, just as the Government do when gutting fish. The penalty for profiteering is £1,000 or twelve [7.30 p.m.] months in gaol or both. Suppose a State enterprise is found guilty of profiteering, who will be punished. Is it the Commissioner of State Enterprises, the manager of the particular shop, the Minister for Works, or would you send the whole Cabinet to gaol for twelve months. Personally, I would advocate the latter course as being the most effective, with the one exception of the Minister representing the Government in this Chamber. Instead of fixing a price for every article or a gross profit on invoice cost, perhaps the Commissioner will fix a maximum net profit. In this case will it be on turnover, or will it be on capital?

Hon. T. NEVITT: On capital.

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HON. T. C. BEIRNE: In either case it would be unfair, and would drive a great many deserving people into the insolvency court. Some men start without any capital. A man if intelligent, energetic, with a good character, and a knowledge of his business, requires no capital.

HON. T. NEVITT: He has got to get credit.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: He is trusted by his banker and by everyone with whom he comes in contact. In reckoning capital, what will the Commissioner capitalise such a man for integrity, sobriety, industry, intelligence, and organising ability? If these qualifications are not counted as capital or assets, then this man will make an enormous percentage on his actual money capital, and may run a great risk of going to gaol as a profiteer, and yet he may really be selling cheaper than his competitor who is losing money. The successful man—the man who can show a big return on the actual capital invested—is not always the profiteer. Else, where would you class the Commonwealth Bank? A few years ago this concern commenced without any capital, and now it is making about £1,000,000 a year net profit. What percentage is that?

What is a profiteer? The Minister, last night, gave a list of companies that make big profits, and the Minister for Works, in his second-reading speech in another place, quoted the same companies, the names of which will be found on page 1499 of "Hansard." These are mostly shipping and trading companies combined. The profits these companies make are not all made in Queensland, nor are they made in Australia. But even if they were, does that bring them under the title of profiteers? I happen to know something of at least one of the concerns mentioned in that list, and although this concern makes big yearly profits, it has an immense turnover, and the net profit on that turnover is only 2½ per cent. For the service it renders to the people and for the goods it sells to the people, it only retains for itself, after all expenses and taxes are paid, 2½ per cent. on the money it handles. Is this considered profiteering? By interjections in the House I cannot help noticing that drapers are often suspected of profiteering. Well, I know something of the drapery business, but I do not know of even one Queensland retail draper who has come under the war time profits tax. I do know of one who, in giving evidence before the Interstate Commissioner two years ago, declared that in one of the war years his net profits on his turnover, after paying all expenses, including State and Federal income taxes, was less than 1 per cent., or, to be exact, there was left to himself after all taxes were paid, about 2d. for every pound's worth of goods sold; and yet that man, owing to his immense turnover, was making a good income, but would you call him a profiteer?

We are sometimes told that Labour is not getting its fair share, and that the increase in the cost of living is greater than the increase of wages. That may be so in some instances, but it is not so in all cases. Might I be pardoned for referring for a moment to the affairs of a business I know something about—that of T. C. Beirne and Co., the Valley. Suppose we take the year before the war and compare it with the present year. In 1913 we sold at least as many yards of material and as many articles of

merchandise as we did in 1919—possibly more—but, of course, the money value of the goods sold in 1919 is much greater. But the salesmen and clerks and porters and packers had quite as much work to do then as now. The wages paid in 1913 was £53,746, and for doing the same work in 1919 the wages amounted to £83,763. For both years the salaries or wages are for distribution only, and for the Valley business only. Our branches and the manufacturing end of our business are not included for either year. From this you will see that while the cost of living has gone up in Australia, since 1913 the salaries or wages in the drapery trade have gone up in an equal degree.

I have a most interesting chart here showing how the cost of living has increased since 1913, and how Australia stands in comparison with other parts of the world. The more this chart is studied, the more grateful we ought to be that our home is in Australia. The cost of living has increased since 1913 in Great Britain by 120 per cent.; in France by 140 per cent.; in Norway—a neutral country—180 per cent.; in Sweden—another neutral country—220 per cent.; in Canada, 80 per cent.; in Australia, as a whole, 50 per cent.; but in Queensland, under a Labour or socialist administration, the cost of food has gone up 62.30 per cent. I would like to emphasise this point: The cost of foodstuffs alone, including meat, show the greatest increase in Queensland, 62.30 per cent.; followed by New South Wales, 53.00 per cent.; Victoria, 43.80 per cent.; Tasmania, 42.20 per cent.; Western Australia, 37.50 per cent.; and South Australia, 36.00 per cent.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: By what percentage did wages increase in Australia during the same period?

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: I think they have increased by quite 50 per cent.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: You are wrong—nothing like 50 per cent.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: The figures I have given deal with the cost of food only; clothing is not included. They are taken from the latest number of "Life," the issue of 1st November, at page 139.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: I understand they are official figures.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: If the figures are questioned, I can quote "Knibbs," who gives the increase for Queensland at 64 per cent.—the greatest increase in any State in Australia. It will be seen, therefore, that the two sets of figures almost coincide. In any case, Dr. Fitchett is too intellectual a man to quote figures that could be contradicted by "Knibbs."

It is most interesting for a Queenslanders who knows to listen to the speeches that are now being made in Melbourne and Sydney by socialist candidates when addressing large gatherings of electors. In every instance the Queensland meatshop price-lists are read out, and after each price is given, the question is asked—"How does that compare with what you are paying here?" But these speakers carefully hide the fact that not more than 2 per cent. of the people of Queensland can buy their supplies of meat at the prices quoted from those lists. There are not enough State shops to supply more than a fraction of the people. Every householder cannot afford to wait an hour or so to be served at a State shop—nor is it

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convenient for every householder to pay cash on the spot and take his rump steak home with him.

If the State Government used the machinery of the existing butchers' shops to distribute their commandeered meat we would all share in the reduced prices—but I repeat that not more than 2 per cent. of the people get meat from the State shops at the prices quoted.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: And then they can only get beef.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: Even if it is restricted to beef, not more than 2 per cent. of the people can afford to go to the State meatshops, wait there for an hour or two before it comes to their turn to be served, pay cash, and take the meat home in their pockets.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: And then it is only possible at the expense of the Imperial Government.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: How do you arrive at the 2 per cent.? Is that a guess?

HON. I. PEREL: I can get my meat at a State shop.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: Where?

HON. I. PEREL: At the Albion State shop. More than 2 per cent. of the people at the Albion get their meat there.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: I cannot afford to get my meat at a State shop, and I cannot get anyone else to go there for it.

HON. I. PEREL: Your time is too valuable, but other people's time is not.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: But even with the State shops thrown in, the cost of food alone has gone up in Queensland 62.30 per cent. since 1913. It is all nonsense to say the War Precautions Act prevented the Queensland Government from dealing with trusts, combines, and rapacious profiteers, who are fattening, or, shall I say, battenning on the necessities of the people. The War Precautions Act was not applied to Queensland only. How is it that other States kept the cost of food from advancing at the same rates as that of Queensland?

The Minister, in his second reading speech, gave us very little information about the Bill. He referred to the question of profiteering only in a general way, but he did not quote one instance of profiteering in Queensland. Perhaps I might be permitted to go into more detail than the Minister did, and with this object in view, I will first refer hon. members to clause 2. Clause 2 is based on section 3 of the Control of Trade Act of 1914. The first proviso to this clause saves the right of statutory corporations. The second proviso is included in order to authorise the wide powers given to the Commissioner under subclause (7) of clause 20 of the Bill, under which, in the exercise of any of his functions or powers, he is not to be bound by the rules of any court or tribunal as to procedure or evidence. This particular power sought to be conferred on the Commissioner is far too wide. Clause 3 is the interpretation clause of the Bill, and is a very important one, because it contains many definitions of a wide and far-reaching character. Attention is drawn to the definition of "association" and "commercial trusts," which are wide enough to include

any association or combination. The definition of "commodity" is also very wide and elastic. It includes "any article of food or drink for man or for any domesticated animal." This is wide enough to include cattle and sheep on the hoof, sugar, cheese, butter, and other primary products. It also includes any article which enters into or is used in the composition or preparation of food, clothing, or footwear. This is general enough to include wool and hides. A number of articles are specifically mentioned; but, in addition to this, power is sought to include not only merchantable articles, but also "services rendered to the people," and also many things declared by proclamation to be commodities. This means that the Government can, by proclamation, practically include anything it wishes. "Trader" is defined as "any person carrying on the business of selling any commodities by any means whatsoever, and whether by wholesale or retail." Then subclause (2) of clause 12 deals with penalties with reference to wholesale trader and retail trader. The Bill, however, does not define what is "wholesale" or what is "retail." I would suggest that definitions of both "wholesale" and "retail" are necessary. I submit that "wholesale" are those persons who sell for the purpose of retail, and "retail" are those who sell for the purpose of consumption or use. A definition on these or somewhat similar lines is necessary. The power taken under this clause 4 to declare what shall be commodities is very wide, as under it any goods, wares, merchandise, services rendered to the people, or other things can be declared "commodities." This means that all trades and professions can be brought under the operations of the Act. Clause 5 provides for the appointment by the Governor in Council of a Commissioner of prices. Enormous and drastic powers are vested in the Commissioner under the Bill. The question arises as to whether it is advisable to place so much power in the hands of one man, and whether a board of three would not be preferable. It will be noted that under this clause the Commissioner is to hold office at the pleasure of the Minister, which would put him absolutely under the control of, and beholden to the Minister. Considering the great powers which are vested in the Commissioner, he should be at least free from political control or interference, and be independent. While subclause (4) imposes disabilities on certain persons from becoming the Commissioner, it is to be noted that it does not include the disability of a person who has been a member of the Executive Council, or of either House of Parliament during five years immediately preceding the passing of the Act, which disability is imposed by section 10 of the State Enterprises Act. This disability appears to have been specially omitted in the Bill, and a person now in Parliament could, on resigning, qualify for the position of Commissioner. Under clause 6, not only is the Commissioner to hold office at the pleasure of the Minister, as by clause 5 provided, but under this clause he is to be subject to the direction and control of the Minister in the administration of the Act.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: He is just a figurehead to carry out the Minister's instructions.

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HON. T. C. BEIRNE: The Bill, as drawn, makes the Commissioner the creature of the Minister, which is objectionable.

Hon. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Don't you believe in Ministerial responsibility?

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: Not as far as the railways or the banks are concerned. Would the hon. gentleman have Ministerial responsibility as far as the Commonwealth Bank is concerned?

Hon. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Oh, that is a different thing altogether!

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Even in the Queensland Government Savings Bank they have an independent Commissioner.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: Clause 7 is a machinery clause providing for the appointment of secretary and other officers. It is suggested that the powers under this clause should be vested in the Commissioner, and not in the Minister. Under the State Enterprises Act like powers are vested in the Commissioner. Clause 8 gives the Commissioner power of delegation, and authorises him to delegate his powers, functions, and duties to the secretary or any other officer, also to appoint a Deputy Commissioner.

Seeing that the powers are very wide, it is a question whether this power of delegation should not be restricted to the secretary alone. It also authorises him to appoint Deputy Commissioners for different parts of the State. This, no doubt, is to authorise the appointment of Deputy Commissioners for the Central and Northern districts. Clause 9 is a machinery clause, and imposes upon the Commissioner the duty of investigating and from time to time reporting to the Minister on various matters set out in the clause. Clause 10 gives the Commissioner the power in his absolute discretion to fix and declare maximum prices for the same commodities in different parts of the State. This is a very autocratic power to place in the hands of any one individual. Under this clause State enterprises are made subject to the prices fixed and declared by the Commissioner. That, of course, is quite right. Clause 11 empowers the Commissioner to prohibit any increase in the price of a commodity after a date to be fixed by him.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I would like to ask the hon. gentleman if he intends to deal with the clauses in detail. He is out of order in so doing. On the second reading of a Bill he should speak on its general principles. He can refer to the clauses, but in discussing them in detail he is out of order.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: I can refer to these others in Committee.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. gentleman will be in order in referring to clauses here and there that he may think are of special importance, but he cannot take each clause in detail, or take the Bill in detail.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: The next one is the heart of the Bill.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: Clause 12 is a very important clause in its way, that it enables a man—say a competitor of mine—to come into my store and, seeing certain material,

to say, "I want so many yards of that cloth." You have to sell it to him at the declared price. I may want it in my own workrooms. If I sell any of that cloth my tailoring department may be out of stuff. Yet under this clause I am compelled to sell that cloth. That, I think, is not a fair thing.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: At an arbitrary price, too.

HON. T. C. BEIRNE: At the declared price, although, perhaps, it is impossible to replace it at anything like the price. I suggest that under this clause it should be a defence to a prosecution to show that the defendant supplied a reasonable quantity of the commodity, or had not a sufficient quantity of the commodity in his custody or control to supply the quantity demanded over and above the quantity permitted to be withheld from sale. It should also be a sufficient defence to show that the defendant is not a wholesale trader in the commodity, and the person who demanded to be supplied was not a retail trader. The clause 13 empowers the Commissioner to call upon all traders to make returns of such commodities. You are constantly making out a list of what you have. It must be returned on a certain date. When you come to consider all the officials we have to employ to make out all the returns we are compelled to send in, it is no wonder that the cost of living has been increasing. There are a terrible lot of what I might call non-producers or parasites. With every one of these Bills there are more and more officials appointed who have to be paid. We have to provide men who do nothing all day long but make up returns. This is going to give us some more. I will support the second reading of the Bill, and when it comes into Committee I will do my best to improve it.

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

Question put and passed.

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

## JIMBOUR SELECTIONS BILL.

### COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1 and 2—"Short title" and "Interpretation"—put and passed.

Clause 3—"Relief in respect of selections taken up as agricultural farms"—

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: He would ask the Minister to give the Committee some information with regard to subclause (2) of this clause, as he did not quite

[8 p.m.] gather what advantage the lessee was going to get under this provision. The subclause said—

"If the lease of the agricultural farm has been converted into a perpetual lease of a perpetual lease selection before the date of the passing of this Act and such perpetual lease is at that date still subsisting, the lessee thereof shall be entitled, upon giving notice as aforesaid, to surrender the said lease and to be granted a perpetual lease of the land

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as a perpetual lease selection under and subject to the terms and provisions set forth in subsection four hereof."

What was the difference between a "perpetual lease" and a "perpetual lease selection"?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The lessee of a selection was a person who applied before the 30th June, 1918, for leave to convert his land into a perpetual lease under the Closer Settlement Act of 1906, and that person would be enabled under this provision to apply for a new perpetual lease under the Bill.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Under different terms?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes. The selector might then take advantage of the provisions of this Bill. Many of the original selectors—he did not quite know the number—had converted their original tenures into perpetual lease tenures, under which they paid  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. By coming under the provisions of this Bill they would pay only 1 per cent., and all the perpetual lease selectors would then be on the same footing.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: The fact that a number of the original Jimbour settlers had brought their land under the perpetual lease system must not be taken to indicate that they favoured that system. It simply meant that they found it impossible to carry on under the old high-price conditions, and that, like a drowning man catching at a straw, they converted their selections into perpetual leases under which the price was reduced, rather than forfeit those selections. Those lands which were converted into perpetual leases carried  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., and under the provisions of this Bill they would save  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. Since the previous evening he had gone through the whole of the clauses of the Bill, and he confessed that he did not see any necessity for any material amendment in the measure.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4—"Relief in respect of selections taken up as perpetual leases"—

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN said that last night, when the Bill was read a second time, there was a good deal of discussion about the Jimbour Estate having been acquired by the late Government, and a good deal of criticism regarding the high price paid for the estate. On going through the debates of that period, he noticed that the Hon. Sir Robert Philp, who was then in opposition, objected to the proposal of the Hon. J. T. Bell, who was then Minister for Public Lands, to give Mr. Pulsford an opportunity of reserving a large portion of the estate for Victorian and other Southern settlers who proposed to come to Queensland and settle under the group system. That scheme was stopped, and thus a number of settlers were prevented from coming to Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman was raising a ghost of the past. He quite remembered his own attitude on this question in 1907, and he supposed he was the first man who moved for a return in connection with the matter and opposed the late Hon. J. T. Bell's form of group settlement. Later on, the Hon. Sir Robert

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Philp also opposed it. He (Mr. A. J. Jones) also opposed giving preference to people from the South as against native-born Queenslanders. At that time he represented the large agricultural district of the Burnett, and he knew that native-born Queenslanders who were brought up in that district had not an opportunity of getting land, while preference was given, not only to people from the Southern States, but also to foreigners. On the Binjour Plateau, preference was given to people from overseas at the expense of Australians, and the whole of that beautiful land was settled by immigrants from Germany. He thought that was an unsound policy, and that while they should do all they could to encourage settlement on the land by making the conditions as attractive as possible, it was unwise to give preference to people from overseas as against native-born Queenslanders. Very few of those group settlements had been successful, and somehow the Government had a happy knack in those days of making experiments in that direction in the Burnett district.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—"Provisions as to unselected land on Jimbour"—

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: While not opposing the Bill in any way, he should like to ask the Minister whether he would deal out equally generous treatment to farmers in other districts—to men who, through no fault of their own, had not made a success on land acquired from the Government. Supposing that the soldiers at Beerburum, who were not farmers, failed to make a "do" on their holdings, would the Government treat them with similar generosity? Would they also treat in the same way settlers on the Binjour Plateau if they sent a deputation to the Government and asked for such treatment? Similarly, would the same generous treatment be accorded to all classes of the community who had had luck or were in similar trouble?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Government would treat every individual case on its merits.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Supposing the Government were treated on their merits:

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Then they would have a long lease of life.

Clause put and passed.

The Council resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment, and the report was adopted.

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

## LIQUOR ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

### POSTPONEMENT OF SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I ask leave of the House to move the second reading of the Liquor Act Amendment Bill to-morrow, and with that object in view, I move—That the Order of the Day be postponed until to-morrow.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I might ask the Minister for an assurance that it will be actually gone on with to-morrow—

that he will, at any rate, give us his second reading speech.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: I anticipate that there will be more than one speech to-morrow. If hon. members wish to have my speech to-night, I do not mind, but I thought hon. members would prefer to have it to-morrow.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is my duty to say here that the Government bring in liquor reform on the second last day before we adjourn, and the Minister proposes to deliver his second reading speech to-morrow. That is quite enough for the people of Queensland. The Government have wasted the session, they have done a parliamentary grab, they have got an Appropriation Bill, they have lost a petition.

HON. A. SKIRVING: Did they lose it?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: They have lost it. At any rate, they have not found it.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: They have lost their reputation.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: They never had one, or, rather, they had one, but a doubtful one. Queensland may as well know that this Government have managed to put off liquor reform until the second last day of the session.

HON. T. NEVITT: It is not the second last day of the session.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Call it session or whatever you like. They have put it off for twelve months of this year at all events—they could not put it off any more than that. Now they have proposed to adjourn it until to-morrow. We want this truth to be known—that for the whole of these twelve months the Government have managed effectually and cleverly to postpone any idea of liquor reform. What can the people of Queensland take from that? That this Government do not intend to bring in one atom of liquor reform. When they meet a Six o'Clock Closing Bill in another place they shy off, and when they come to a Liquor Act Amendment Bill the Minister moves the second reading—to-morrow. If he wants to get salaries raised to £500 he sends out an Archangel Gabriel call, and gets men right away down by wireless from Sydney.

THE PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: If the Government want to pass certain measures, they can sit to 10 or half-past 10. If they want to take one single hour off liquor they close at half-past 8. That is the sincerity—heaven preserve us!—of the present Government.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member himself altered the business-sheet last night and this afternoon.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I have had nothing to do with the business-sheet to-day. That is in the Government arrangement. The most vital part of their programme is simply relegated to the expiring hours of this session. We shall meet to-morrow, and wish each other a merry Christmas and a happy New Year—a drunken New Year so far as the other party is concerned.

THE PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. T. NEVITT: When did you see an hon. member on this side drunk?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: As a matter of fact I have frequently seen the hon. member sober. That is quite unworthy, because I know that he is quite as strong a temperance advocate as I am myself.

HON. T. J. O'SHEA: Is this a wowsier mutual admiration society?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Well, it is not a boosier admiration society, if it is a wowsier one.

THE PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Although there are many strong temperance advocates on the other side, nevertheless, if it comes to a question of putting a Liquor Bill to the people of Queensland they are prepared, it seems, to acquiesce in adjourning it. I have received a letter to-day in regard to this Bill from an association of which the Hon. Mr. Page-Hanify was president.

HON. T. NEVITT: We want your assistance to get it through later on.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Later on.

HON. T. NEVITT: Before long.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The hon. member will have got quite used to his environment in the celestial sphere before he gets liquor reform from this Government. This letter is from the International Order of Good Templars. It is dated 4th November, and says—

“Sir,—At a very large meeting of members of the above order held at Woolloongabba on Monday evening, the following resolution was carried unanimously, and I was instructed to notify you to that effect:—

That this united meeting under the auspices of the Metropolitan District Lodge of the International Order of Good Templars express their approval of the main features of the Liquor Act Amendment Bill brought in by the Government, and which has passed the Assembly, and we trust that the measure will become law during the present session of Parliament.”

HON. A. SKIRVING: Who signed it?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: A. B. Taylor, district chief templar, chairman.

HON. A. SKIRVING: The secretary told me he recognised he saw no chance of getting it before the adjournment, and he would be satisfied to get it through after the adjournment.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: To-morrow! It has been “put off until to-morrow” for four and a-half years. Are we going to die crying out “to-morrow”? This Government is supported by a large number of temperance reformers opposite. They can support the Government for half a year, and at the first opportunity when a Bill comes before the Council from another place dealing with liquor reform, they simply sit still and listen to their leader's motion that we have the second reading—to-morrow. I wonder that every hon. member on the other side with an atom of regard for the welfare of his fellow men did not jump up and make a protest—a most effective protest—against reading this Bill to-morrow.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: Some of your people will move that it be read this day six months.

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HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That would suit the hon. member.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: That is a practice of yours.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I have no doubt that hon. members are thoroughly ashamed—

The PRESIDENT: Order! I ask the hon. member to moderate his language. He is using language that is not parliamentary.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I was giving hon. members credit for feelings such as would belong to ordinary persons of humane dispositions, and I still give them credit for that—that they cannot live without a feeling of shame that their own Government, professing to be social reformers, have done nothing. We care not a rap for what people say. We look to what they do. We care not for how they speak, but for how they vote.

HON. A. SKIRVING: You wiped out the Popular Initiative and Referendum Bill, which would have given the people an opportunity to vote on the question.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It is not wiped out yet, but I will vote for it still. Now we have come to the end of the working year. We shall meet to-morrow, probably, to say "Good-bye," and that will be the last we will see of each other in a legislative capacity, until the end of the year.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Not the end of the session.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Is this a question to quibble about? Not an atom of progress has been made on this question during this twelve months.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: You are talking to the gallery.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am talking to the hon. member.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: There has been progress. It is introduced into this Chamber with a view to asking this Chamber to pass it.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Will the hon. member pass it this evening? Will he make his second reading speech this evening, and go on with the business of the country, or take the attitude of appearing to fool the electors once more on this matter? Everyone knows the attitude of the Government. Everyone knows that there are gentlemen on that side who are strong temperance reformers, but who have not managed to establish one single reform in four and a-half years. And now they sit still, knowing that the interests of the people of Queensland are bound up in liquor reform. They do nothing.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: What are you doing?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I would be quite willing to sit here in order to pass any measure whatsoever.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: What did you do when you had your Government in power?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It was not my Government. As a matter of fact, I believe the Denham Government did pass a Liquor Reform Bill, and were passed out as a result.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: You tried hard to make it your Government, though?

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HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am not aware of that, at all.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: What about the Fortitude Valley contest?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Yes, and Fortitude Valley returned two men—one to the Assembly and one to the Council. (Laughter.)

The PRESIDENT: Order! I hope the hon. member will not be led astray by interjections, and I must ask hon. members not to make them. We want to get on with business, and the question before the Council is the postponement of Order No. 3.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: And the postponement of Order No. 3 is the biggest question before the country this year, and the Minister, who has probably as humane a heart as anyone here, nevertheless, deliberately at half-past 8—although he asks us to sit to 11 on other evenings—postpones a measure like this, when he knows very well that the measure cannot come on for serious discussion until next year. I want it to be known that the Council, at any rate, is not blocking temperance reform. We are here to do our duty, and if the Minister cares to go on with the Bill—

HON. A. SKIRVING: That remains to be seen.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We are here to do our duty now.

HON. A. SKIRVING: We are here, and you are there with about one-third of your side.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: We have had to form a quorum for hon. members very often, and they would never have got their Appropriation Bill this afternoon if we had not given them a leg up with our own numbers.

HON. A. SKIRVING: You did not want it passed, anyhow.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It was passed. I do not whine over it in the slightest.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I want the Hon. Mr. Page-Hanify and others who support the Government to think seriously just at this point that, at their own wish, by their own leader's wish, at their own leader's motion, they are postponing the most important proposition of the Government for this year. I may not discuss the proposition; I wish I could, but this motion will prevent a discussion of it.

HON. W. R. CRAMPTON: It is a treat to hear you protest against delay.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I have been here every sitting until the Council has closed within the last twelve months. I have not left the precincts of the House until it has adjourned.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I would ask the hon. gentleman to address himself to the question before the Council and [8.30 p.m.] not to take notice of interjections; and I would ask hon. members not to interject; it is only delaying the business.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: If the Minister could give some indication that a debate

would take place on the Bill to-morrow, or that he would deliver his second reading speech—

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: He has assured you of that.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Or, if he would ask hon. members to return next Tuesday or Wednesday to discuss one of the biggest social reforms of the century—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: If your side will guarantee to pass the Bill as it is to-morrow, without amendment, I am prepared to go on with it.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: How could I give any such guarantee? We can guarantee on this side that any Bill brought before the Council will receive the most careful consideration, but I cannot guarantee what any hon. member on this side will do.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You want to kill the Bill with an amendment.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I would accept any Bill from the Government that would cut off one single hour from the most hideous traffic that the world has ever known. The hon. gentleman asks me to give a guarantee, but why does he not attempt to pass this measure in the same way as he scoured the four corners of the globe to get men to come and support another measure? Why does he not show the same sincerity in passing this great social reform as he did in passing the great social reform of increasing the salaries of members of the Assembly? Queensland will view the attitude of this Government with the most profound disappointment and disgust, and temperance supporters of the Government will find out at last that they are being thoroughly duped—that they are mere dupes of a specious platform that it was never intended to put into effect.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: I rise to say that I think my earnestness and sincerity in the cause of temperance can be pitted against that of the Hon. Mr. Fowles. I say here that I am quite prepared to back up the Minister in adjourning the debate, knowing that he is going to deliver his second reading speech to-morrow, and that the Bill will then probably lie over until we meet again in January.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Till we meet again!

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: No harm will be done to the cause by adopting that course. The Hon. Mr. Fowles's continual attacks upon the Government in this way have done tremendous harm to the cause that he professes to advocate, because the Government supporters always resent it. There is no point at all in objecting to the present motion. The Hon. Mr. Fowles knows, and I know, that this Bill is not going to get through the Council in one sitting—probably not in two sittings. I am sorry that the Bill has been delayed and that it came here so late; but I am quite satisfied as to the absolute bona fides of the Government as regards the Bill. If hon. gentlemen on the hon. member's own side do not wreck the Bill by sticking into it something which will be obnoxious, it will become law, and it will be just as effective becoming law in January as if it were passed now, because its first operation—with the exception of the one clause which deals with the poll at the time of the Senate election—will be a poll to be taken next October to decide an issue to take

effect in 1921. I only wish the hon. gentleman would accept the Minister's challenge, but I know that he cannot give that assurance, because there are those on his own side who intend to fight the Bill bitterly in the interests of the trade.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: I support the Minister in his desire to alter the business-sheet, and I would not have spoken at all, but that the Hon. Mr. Fowles addressed his remarks so persistently towards me. I am not at all ashamed of the position I have taken up as a temperance advocate in supporting the Government, and this Bill is a complete justification to the position I have taken up.

Question put and passed.

## GOVERNOR'S SALARY ACT OF 1872 AMENDMENT BILL.

### SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: This is a very small Bill of two clauses. As the title indicates, it is a Bill to amend the Governor's Salary Act of 1872 in a certain particular. Section 5 of that Act reads—

“An officer provisionally administering the Government of Queensland during the absence or incapacity of the Governor, or during the vacancy of the office, shall receive one-half the salary of Governor, and, if he be the holder of any other office, one-half the salary of such office.”

All one needs to do in moving the second reading of the Bill is to quote that section and clause 2 of the Bill, which reads—

“In section five of the Governor's Salary Act of 1872, the words ‘and if he be the holder of any other office one-half the salary of such office’ are repealed and the words ‘Provided that if such officer is already in receipt of any salary as a judge, or as an officer in Parliament, or as an officer under the Crown he shall not receive any part of the salary of Governor, or be entitled to the allowances specified in section seven of this Act, but he shall be entitled to such other allowances as may at any time hereafter be appropriated by Parliament in his case in substitution for the said allowances’ are inserted in lieu thereof.”

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: What are the allowances referred to?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I suppose they are certain allowances appertaining to the office of Governor. It might refer to travelling allowances. His Excellency receives a certain travelling allowance. The salary of the Governor was reduced in 1904 from £5,000 to £3,000 per annum, but there are certain allowances appertaining to the office. The Bill explains itself. I, therefore, beg to move—That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I do not know that we can oppose this Bill, but I would certainly have liked some information as to how the allowances are going to be cut down. Whoever acts as Deputy Governor or Lieutenant-Governor will have to keep up a certain amount of state, and will be put to a certain amount of expense in maintaining the dignity of the office, just as a real Governor is. I do not know that we should be asked to pass the Bill without

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knowing exactly what allowances are to be cut off. The Government have become very economical all at once. They chop down the salary that is to be paid to the Deputy Governor, but only a day or two before they do that they pop £200 per annum on to the salaries of members of the Assembly. I do not see where the economy comes in under those circumstances; but I suppose they are making the unfortunate Deputy Governor pay for the increase in the salaries of members of the Assembly.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: How much did you get when you were Treasurer?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I got the usual salary of a Minister, and I earned it. I guarantee I earned it better than the hon. member earns whatever he is getting.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: I am not so sure about that. You were never able to earn your own living in your life.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The hon. member is getting more now than ever he was worth.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The allowances are provided for by appropriation.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I think it ought to be specifically stated that certain allowances are to be paid, and not have them depending upon the sweet will of the Government of the day. It is rather interesting to see the Government chopping down this small item, and increasing the salaries of members of the Assembly, and also proposing to appoint another salaried Minister.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: This is probably the meanest Bill that has ever been brought before the Queensland Parliament.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I would ask the hon. gentleman to use more parliamentary language. He is not right in describing the actions of the Government as mean.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: This is probably the most parsimonious measure that has ever been brought before the Queensland Parliament; and when I have finished, I have no doubt that the President will feel that he has been rather hasty in calling me to order for using so moderate a term as "mean" with regard to this Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: In what way is it mean?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I propose to show exactly what is behind this Bill. It is one of the most contemptible pinpricks that has ever been inflicted upon an Acting Governor. I do not propose to let any hon. gentleman vote blindfolded upon such a measure as this. Section 5 of the principal Act provides that an officer may be appointed to act provisionally when the ordinary Governor is away from the State, or when he is ill or incapacitated. The functions of the Governor are set out in the "Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia," No. 11, at pages 917 and 918, and I commend them to hon. members opposite. They will find that His Excellency has duties that are not adequately remunerated by the small salary that is given to him at the present time.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You say the Governor's salary is too small at £3,000 per annum, and yet you contend that a member of Parliament can live on £300.

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HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I refer hon. gentlemen to Keith's "Responsible Government in the Dominions," where he contends that some Governors earn twice their salaries, and others earn nothing; it depends altogether upon the personality of the man. I discuss this quite apart from any reference to the present Governor of Queensland or of any of the States in the Commonwealth. Section 5 says that the officer who performs the duties of Governor is to receive half his own salary and half the Governor's salary; also that in the interim the Governor's establishment is to be kept up and that the usual expenses are to go on with regard to private secretary, confidential secretary, aide-de-camp, typist, lodgekeeper, etc.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That will be done by appropriation.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The holder of the office has most important duties to perform; duties sometimes demanding the most delicate skill, the clearest judgment, and the widest knowledge possible. Now, what does this Bill propose? It proposes to say to the present Chief Justice of this State, who has a dormant commission which was issued on 9th October, 1900, "You will have to be Lieutenant-Governor during the interim after the present Governor leaves," which is announced to be some time in December, I understand, or probably early in the New Year. It will take six or seven months for his successor to come across the water and assume duty. This Bill proposes to say to the Chief Justice, "You must take up all the duties of Acting Governor, but you are to receive not one penny of salary for doing those duties." Could there be anything like it conceived in constitutional history, even in the blackest pages of Jamaica and of Governor Eyre over there?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: All he could receive would be £2,750—half of £3,000, the present Governor's salary, and half of his own salary.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Exactly bearing out my argument. What a contemptible pinprick this is for the present Chief Justice.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: How could he lose? His present salary is almost equal.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Bill is one of those that is simply aimed in the dark like an Italian stiletto at the present Chief Justice. The dormant commission appoints the Chief Justice to act as Governor in case of the death, absence, or incapacity of the Governor, and Lieutenant-Governor, if any. The administration of the Government devolves on the Chief Justice or senior judge. That is endeavoured to be concealed in this Bill, but they had to let the cat out of the bag and they had the very word "judge" in the Bill. The very word condemns it. It provides that, if such officer is already in receipt of salary as a judge he is to be deprived of half the Governor's salary. I have no brief for anyone in this matter. He gets his own salary, but what else does he get for acting as Governor of this State? With regard to the upkeep of the establishment it is left to the sweet will of the Minister what is to happen.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: They can knock his secretary off.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is the first thing they would do. This is loaded, as

everybody can see. They first of all practically abolish payment for the office of Lieutenant-Governor to degrade the office in the eyes of all the other States. Then they say that the allowances for the upkeep of the establishment are to be altogether swept away and any new allowances are to be at the sweet will of the Minister. Could there be any Bill conceived in a more parsimonious spirit than this measure? It is a most remarkable measure. With regard to the actual expenses of governors in the State, I find that the gubernatorial establishment in New South Wales, including the salary of His Excellency, runs into £10,004. In Victoria it is £10,410, in Queensland £7,447, South Australia £5,311, Western Australia £6,965, Tasmania £3,856. The salaries of the respective governors, which are interesting, I also have. In the Commonwealth Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson at present gets £10,000. Lord Hopetoun said that £10,000 did not pay a third of his expenses. In New South Wales the salary is £5,000, in Victoria £5,000, and in Queensland £3,000. In South Australia, with a smaller population than ours, it is £4,000. In Western Australia, with a smaller population, it is £3,990. The little island of Tasmania, with a population that would hardly compare with Queensland, pays its governors a personal salary of £2,639. We, who could lose Tasmania in one electorate, pay our Governor the handsome, magnificent salary of £3,000. It used to be £5,000 once, but not in these days. As every Governor would tell you, he has to have a private income in order to make any display whatever in his capacity as Governor. Every Governor in Australia would tell you that.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: What about the poor member of Parliament on £300 a year?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: He has not half the calls on him. He has not half the state to keep up. It will be admitted probably that the type of man fitted to be Governor of a Colony is a little different from the type of man fitted to be a member of Parliament. This Bill invokes the whole legislative machinery of this country in order to cut down a paltry £200 or £300 salary from the present Chief Justice of the State. Now we understand why this Bill was brought in. Now we understand the real move of this Bill—to cut down salary, to practically abolish the salary—because the Lieutenant-Governor will only get his own—and leave the whole cost of the establishment at the sweet will of the Minister. It is the first sinister step towards abolition. I think any Government ought to be ashamed to bring in a Bill like this.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yesterday you wanted us to economise in every direction.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Economise! Why, they are economising at the spigot and letting it out at the bung.

HON. T. M. HALL: This Bill seems to have taken on a phase which was little suspected by those who discussed it before. If it is aimed at the Chief Justice of Queensland, whom I regard as one of the finest samples of a judge in every detail, but who probably has bumped up against—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I can say quite distinctly it is not aimed at the Chief Justice at all.

HON. T. M. HALL: Of course, that may be so, but we have the evident attempt to

get back on him for something that has already taken place publicly. Over and over again there has been a difference of opinion between certain members of the Government and the Chief Justice. If I thought for a moment this was aimed at any individual I would be the last one to support it in any shape or form. The Minister has failed to give us any indication as to what the allowances are likely to be. They are put in such a vague form that they may be anything; they may be sixpence or a postage stamp.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They will be the same allowances; there will be no difference.

HON. T. M. HALL: Under the present arrangement I take it that during the Governor's absence the Lieutenant-Governor receives half the Governor's salary—which, I think, is £1,500 a year—and half his own salary as Chief Justice, presuming him to be the Chief Justice. Under this arrangement he is permitted to have only his own salary as Chief Justice and nothing from the salary of the Governor. Is it proposed, then, to allow the Governor, who is retiring and leaving the State, to draw a full £3,000 a year, or is portion of his salary, which is usually set apart for the payment of his relieving officer, to be applied to some other purpose? The Minister has not given us very full particulars. If he could give us some details as to what the Lieutenant-Governor will be allowed by way of compensation for the amount of responsibility that will rest on him as Lieutenant-Governor there would be something in it. The position now is that the Chief Justice is expected to take on the responsibilities of Chief Justice in this State and in his spare time to do the entertaining and provide for the dignity of Governor in this State. There seems to have been no provision made for him except that he is to receive his salary as Chief Justice.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Lieutenant-Governor will receive his own salary, £2,500, and nothing else. Therefore, we would save £250 a year.

HON. T. M. HALL: What would the absent Governor draw?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: He gets £3,000.

HON. T. M. HALL: It is so indefinite that it begins to raise doubts in my mind as to whether we are not passing rather a serious Bill which will be used, if need be, at any time as a sort of revenge upon a man who has to do his duty and who in the past has done his duty most faithfully. I think the Minister would be well advised to allow this debate to be adjourned until we know something more about it.

HON. B. FAHEY: Do I understand from the Minister that there will be no addition to the salary the Chief Justice receives at present, when he is carrying out the duties of Lieutenant-Governor of this State?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is so, if this Bill passes.

HON. B. FAHEY: Under such circumstances I do not think it is at all an undue stretch of imagination to say that it is an attack upon the Chief Justice.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Order!

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It could not be, because the salaries are nearly equal.

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HON. B. FAHEY: At all events, he is Lieutenant-Governor of Queensland during the absence of the Governor. He receives no remuneration for that. He is under considerable expense for doing so. Certainly no Lieutenant-Governor Queensland has had carries out the duties of that position with greater dignity and capacity than he does. Under these circumstances I consider it is not at all friendly or just to the Chief Justice, the highest official in the State. For that reason I am opposed to the Bill.

HON. A. H. PARNELL: I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I hope the motion for the adjournment of the debate will not be carried, because it has been arranged to get through the second reading of this Bill to-night. In moving the second reading of the measure, I gave the House as much information as I possessed, and as much as is necessary. The salary of the official who has been mentioned in the course of the debate and the salary of the Governor are very nearly equal, the one receiving £3,000 per annum, and the other getting £2,500 per annum. There is no intention to pursue a cheeseparing policy in regard to the allowances. The Governor's Salary Act, which has been on the statute-book since 1872, provides that half the Governor's salary shall be paid to the official performing that duty, and half of that official's own salary. It appears to me that hon. gentlemen see danger in every Bill that we introduce.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Governor also gets £600 a year for travelling expenses and £200 a year for postage expenses.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Lieutenant-Governor does not get that.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: What will he get?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He will get all the allowance that is necessary.

The PRESIDENT: Order! This is a motion for the adjournment of the debate.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes, I understand that, and I was only replying to criticisms of hon. gentlemen opposite. I hope that the motion for adjournment of the debate will not be carried, and that hon. gentlemen will stand to the arrangement made, and pass the second reading of the Bill, and take the Committee stage to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

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

## DARAJI RAILWAY BRIDGE BILL.

### SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: This is a Bill "to authorise the erection of a bridge over the North Johnstone River at Daraji in connection with the construction of the North Coast Railway between Innisfail and Mooliba, and for other consequential purposes." The bridge is being constructed by the Railway Department, and clause 2 of the Bill provides that it shall be lawful for the Queensland Railway Commissioner, and he is thereby authorised and empowered to erect and thereafter maintain, manage, and use a bridge over the North Johnstone River at or near Daraji, at a

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height of thirty feet or thereabouts above high-water mark in the river, in accordance with plans and specifications approved by the Governor in Council. Clause 3 is the usual provision inserted in a measure of this sort, and provides that no action shall lie against the Commissioner for obstructing navigation.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Is the bridge being built on private land?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I understand that the bridge is being built on private land which has been resumed under the Public Works Lands Resumption Act.

HON. B. FAHEY: Has it not been provided for in the original plans?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I think not, but I shall be able to get that information for the hon. gentleman if he so desires.

HON. B. FAHEY: Is the bridge above or below Geraldton?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am not quite sure, but I can obtain that information for the hon. gentleman. I move—That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

### COMMITTEE.

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

Clause 1—"Short title"—put and passed.

On clause 2—"Authority to erect bridge"—

HON. T. J. O'SHEA: The question had been raised by persons who knew the locality well as to whether thirty feet was a sufficient clearance between high-water mark and the bridge. He understood that the vessels now trading on the river would not be interfered with, but that if larger vessels were employed in the river traffic, a clearance of thirty feet might be insufficient, and he would suggest to the Minister the advisability of increasing the height to thirty-five feet above high-water mark, as it was desirable to make provision to meet the needs of future traffic on the river should larger vessels be employed.

HON. A. SKIRVING: He thought the matter might be well left as it was. He understood that the river at the point where the bridge was to be erected was fairly deep, and that there was a tide of from five to seven feet, so that at ordinary tides vessels would be able to get through, even if they had a pretty good mast. Modern boats were built with masts of no great length, the tendency being to shorten masts, and as the engineers had, no doubt, gone thoroughly into this matter, and this proposal was made on their recommendation, he thought the clause should be allowed to stand as it was. In any case, it was only at high spring tides that any vessel would be affected by the proposed height of the bridge.

HON. B. FAHEY: He knew the Johnstone River very well, and thought that no coastal vessel went above the township of Innisfail. He quite realised that if the bridge was not to be built below Innisfail, 30 feet was quite ample. The Bill as it was should not be altered; it would be only a waste of money.

HON. T. NEVITT: He thought the Hon. Mr. O'Shea, if he thought a little, would be able to agree that 30 feet was a very fair height, particularly as the site was the only

spot where the bridge could be built to answer the purpose. He did not know the river itself, but he knew the boats that went there, the "Tully" and the "Seymour." He did not think the "Innisfail" was ever there. He had consulted the hon. member for Townsville, who was thoroughly conversant with those boats, and he was satisfied that not one of their funnels was 25 feet from the water line, so the bridge would not interfere with the boats in the trade. He would point out to the Hon. Mr. O'Shea that the boats were not built for that particular trade and were not modern. Modern boats would probably have less draft and would not need funnels 30 feet high. In any case, it would only mean lowering the top mast, a spar 8 or 10 feet high of very light construction.

HON. W. J. RIORDAN: The bridge would cross the river about 2½ miles above Innisfail, somewhere handy to the Goondi sugar plantation. It was not going to interfere with the Goondi people, because all their machinery was taken off the big boats at Mourilyan. No boats of any account went there since the railway had been built to Mourilyan. The "Lass o' Gowrie" anchored outside the river, and was met by a small motor boat. The river was becoming very shallow, and the traffic, instead of increasing, was likely to disappear.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: He would like to ask the Minister what was the estimated cost of the bridge.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: I do not know, but I can get the information for the hon. member.

HON. B. FAHEY: The bridge is part of the North Coast Railway, which was passed.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: If the plans were passed, the bridge was included in them. In any case, what was the use of bringing in the Bill when section 37 of the Railways Act of 1914 armed the Commissioner with full powers? It would be a foolish Railways Act if it did not give him authority to construct railways over rivers.

HON. T. NEVITT: The Hon. Mr. Fowles must know that the North Coast Railway was passed and the bridge included, but the Crown Law Officers had advised the Government that there was a possibility of trouble if navigation was interfered with.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: From whom?

HON. T. NEVITT: From those who were in the habit of running boats there. If there were no railway there, there might be some ground for complaint, but now there was a railway all the sugar came down by rail and there was no necessity for boat traffic at all.

HON. T. J. O'SHEA: That is not correct.

HON. T. NEVITT: He thought it was correct. He had not been on the river himself, but he knew the trade fairly well. The Bill was to indemnify the Government. If the people interested in the traffic were unable to get under the bridge at all states of the tide there was, he supposed, a possibility of lawsuits.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It seemed to him that the Bill was brought in without sufficient information. The Minister should be supplied with the proper information showing the reasons why they were asked to pass the Bill. All navigable rivers were supposed to be open, and the bridge was

evidently going to close this river, and the Government were bringing in a Bill to provide that they would not be liable to pay compensation. He would suggest to the Minister that in future he should be supplied with the proper information by the Minister of the department. Presumably 30 feet was fairly high.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: If hon. members were agreeable, he would be quite willing to postpone further consideration of that Bill and the Governor's Salary Act Amendment Bill until to-morrow if he were allowed, on giving notice that night, to carry both of them through all their stages in one day.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I think that would be a fair thing.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: I will confine it to those two Bills.

HON. P. J. LEARY: Provided we have the necessary numbers.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: He was agreeable, so long as it did not pledge them to pass the Bills if they were not satisfied with the information. It gave the Minister the opportunity of getting the information.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: He wanted hon. members to be thoroughly satisfied with both Bills. He thought it was a fair thing to postpone them until to-morrow. The Hon. Mr. Fowles asked the reason for building the bridge. Presumably it was to connect one side of the river with the other. (Laughter.) He could give the cost of the bridge to-morrow. He agreed [9.30 a.m.] that the Bill would not be necessary if the bridge were part of the railway proposal.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Or is it to cover enormous expenditure through day labour above the original estimate?

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member saw another "nigger in the wood pile." Did he understand that the assurance was given that he might move the motion?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Yes.

The Council re-umed. The CHAIRMAN reported progress, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

#### ADDITIONAL SITTING DAY.

##### FRIDAY SITTING.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—That the Council, at its rising, do adjourn until forty-five minutes past 3 o'clock p.m. to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—That the Council do now adjourn. The first business to-morrow will be the third reading of the Jimbour Selections Bill, to be followed by the resumption of the Committee stage of the Daraji Railway Bridge Bill and the second reading of the Liquor Act Amendment Bill. Then, there may be one or two messages from the Assembly dealing with messages sent to that House from the Council. I hope that we may be able to complete that business to-morrow.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Some regulations have been laid on the table within the last few days. I just wish to get an assurance from the Minister that Parliament

*Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn.*

is only adjourning, and that the session is not to be concluded to-morrow.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is so.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Then we shall have an opportunity, when we meet in January, if necessary, of rejecting any regulations that may have been laid on the table within the last few days?

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You will have to give notice before we adjourn.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: No; notice has to be given within thirty sitting days after the regulations are tabled, and only about eight days out of the thirty have gone. If the Minister can give us an assurance that the session is not to conclude to-morrow, then we will not be in any way prejudiced if it should be found necessary to move that any of the regulations be disallowed when we meet again in January.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I would ask the Minister whether it is intended to sit to-morrow evening after 6 o'clock p.m.?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: In reply to the Hon. Mr. Fowles, it may be necessary to wait to get the messages back from the Assembly, and it also depends on the length of the speeches that may be made on the Liquor Act Amendment Bill. In reply to the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn, I can say that to-morrow will not conclude the session. It is merely an adjournment. The date for resuming the session that was mentioned by the Premier in the Assembly yesterday was 6th January.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Might I ask the Minister, further, whether the Government have any information as to the probable date of the departure from Queensland of His Excellency the Governor?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I might have said, when dealing with the Governor's Salary Act of 1872 Amendment Bill, that it is almost necessary to pass the Bill before we adjourn, as it is probable that the Lieutenant-Governor will need to act as Governor during the period that Parliament is sitting after we meet again in January.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: There is nothing to prevent that under the present Act.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It would be very indecent to be discussing the question while the Lieutenant-Governor is acting as Governor; but that objection does not apply at present, as His Excellency the Governor is still here, and there is therefore no Acting Governor.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: On whom will the duties of Acting Governor devolve?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: During the period when Parliament will be sitting after 6th January, the Deputy Governor will be acting as Governor.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: That means the Chief Justice?

The PRESIDENT: I would call the attention of hon. members to the fact that some of them are jumping up two or three times. They are distinctly out of order. When an hon. member rises, he should ask for all the information he desires to get.

Question put and passed.

The Council adjourned at twenty-five minutes to 10 o'clock p.m.

[Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn.]