

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 8 JANUARY 1920**

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THURSDAY, 8 JANUARY, 1920.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Bertram, *Maree*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock p.m.

### QUESTIONS.

#### PROSERPINE MILL CRUSHING.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*) asked the Treasurer—

"1. How many tons of cane were crushed at the Proserpine mill for the 1919 season?"

"2. How many tons of raw sugar were made from cane crushed?"

"3. What was the average price paid per ton of cane?"

"4. Was the whole of the cane crushed?"

"5. Has the area under cane increased or decreased for the 1920 season?"

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

"1. Tons cane, Proserpine, 1919, 35,260.

"2. Tons raw sugar made, 4,876.

"3. Average price per ton cane, £1 14s. 3d.

"4. All available cane was crushed.

"5. The area under cane has increased for 1920 season."

#### SEED MAIZE BOUGHT FROM FARMERS.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"1. What quantity of seed maize was purchased by the department from farmers in the State during 1919?"

"2. What price was paid for same?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*) replied—

"1. 11 tons 13 cwt. 2 or. 17 lb. of specially selected seed.

"2. From 8s. 2d. to 9s. 6d. per bushel."

#### FODDER FOR STARVING STOCK.

Mr. CORSER asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"1. What quantity of fodder was distributed by the department to farmers for starving stock during the year 1919?"

"2. What quantity has since been distributed?"

"3. Has money for fodder been received by the department from farmers in drought areas?"

"4. Will such moneys be now refunded if so desired?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE replied—

"1 to 3. In relation to the inference of Question No. 1, the answer to Questions 1, 2, and 3 is 'None.'

"4. See answer to 1, 2, and 3."

#### TRAVELLING EXPENSES OF MINISTERS.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*), in the absence of Mr. Morgan, asked the Premier—

"What was the amount paid or incurred by the State in respect of the travelling expenses of each individual member of the Ministry during the year ended 30th June, 1919?"

The PREMIER replied—

"If the hon. member will also ask for similar information in respect of the year ending 30th June, 1915, the figures will be obtained."

#### TRAVELLING EXPENSES OF MR. T. J. RYAN.

Mr. FRY, in the absence of Mr. Morgan, asked the Premier—

"What is the total amount of travelling expenses paid or to be paid by the State in respect of Mr. T. J. Ryan's various visits to the Southern and Western States and to Europe during the twelve months ended 30th June last, the figures to include expenses of the whole of the party?"

The PREMIER replied—

"If the hon. member will also ask for similar information with respect to the Premiers of previous Administrations, the necessary inquiries will be made."

#### REPORTED VISIT OF PREMIER TO EUROPE.

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Premier—

"1. Is it his intention, as reported in the Press, to visit Europe during the current year?"

"2. If so, for what purpose is his visit to be made, and when does he intend to leave Queensland?"

The PREMIER replied—

"1. The matter is being considered.

"2. A statement on this subject will be made at a later date."

#### DISTURBANCES AT ELECTION MEETINGS.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*) asked the Home Secretary—

"How many persons were proceeded against by the police for creating disturbances, or for other offences, at (a) Nationalist meetings, (b) Labour meetings, in Queensland during the recent Commonwealth election campaign?"

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

"In order to obtain this information it will be necessary to wire to each district headquarters."

#### COLLECTION OF INCOME TAX BY COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*) asked the Treasurer—

"Speaking in the Federal Parliament on 23rd October, 1919, Mr. Watt, Federal Treasurer, stated that he had offered to collect the State's income tax for an amount not exceeding one-third of the present cost to the States. Why did the Government of Queensland not agree to this proposal?"

The PREMIER replied—

"The Federal Treasurer's proposal was made to the States as a whole at a joint conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers, but was not accepted. At the same conference a representative of one of the States offered to collect the Commonwealth tax at half what it was then costing."

LIABILITIES OF SCHOOL OF ARTS COMMITTEES FOR ACCIDENTS.

Mr. SIZER (*Nundah*) asked the Minister for Justice—

"1. Has any decision been arrived at by the Government to protect school of arts committees from personal liability in case of accidents, as raised by the Coonamble case in New South Wales, where damages were granted against members of the school of arts committee as a result of an accident?"

"2. If no decision has yet been arrived at, will he endeavour to treat the matter as urgent owing to the great uneasiness that exists amongst school of arts committees throughout the State?"

HON. J. MULLAN (*Flinders*) replied—

"1 and 2. The Insurance Commissioner is now in communication with the New South Wales Treasury Department with a view to introducing in this State an insurance scheme on the lines of that formulated in New South Wales as a result of the Coonamble case."

RESUMPTIONS ON TERROR'S CREEK LINE.

Mr. SIZER asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. Has any compensation been paid for land resumed, on the Enoggera-Terror's Creek railway, from T. Fitzgerald and J. Coonan, of Samford?"

"2. If so, how much?"

"3. Have any similar claims for compensation from other residents of this district been refused?"

"4. What were the special circumstances surrounding the two cases referred to above?"

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

"1. Yes.

"2. Mr. Fitzgerald, £75; Mr. Coonan, £150.

"3. No.

"4. Messrs. Fitzgerald's and Coonan's land was severed by the railway and convenient access from one side to the other was not provided. The construction of subways would have been more expensive than the payment of compensation. In Mr. Coonan's case land was taken for a ballast pit as well as for the railway line."

CATTLE RAILED TO WALLANGARRA.

Mr. GUNN (*Carnarvon*), in the absence of Mr. Morgan, asked the Secretary for Railways—

"What is the total number of cattle carried on the Queensland railways from various stations to Wallangarra for the year ended 31st December, 1919?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

"49,167."

PAPER.

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

Regulations under the Land Acts, 1910 to 1918; the Closer Settlement Acts, 1906 to 1917; and the Jimbour Selections Act of 1919.

WAYS AND MEANS.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

(*Mr. Pollock, Gregory, in the chair.*)

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*), who was received with Government "Hear, hears," said: As representing one of the most important electorates in Queensland, an electorate which may become the most important later on, judging by the development which is taking place, I want to make a few remarks on the Financial Statement. I have listened very attentively to the debate so far as it has gone, and I deplore the attitude taken up by the hon. member for Albert last night. He did not seem to criticise the Financial Statement; practically the whole of his speech consisted of abuse of this party. One cannot help deploring that, because the hon. member who followed him—the hon. member for Carnarvon—deplored the fact that we were lowering what we call the dignity of Parliament. It was, in my opinion, regrettable that we should have to listen to the hon. member for Albert and the abuse that he hurled at myself as the representative of the people of Bowen and one of the representatives of the people of the State of Queensland. During the Federal election contest several things operated to bring about the defeat of the Labour party. I have a great admiration for a straight-out opponent, but I have no respect for the snake in the grass, for people who by innuendo spread lies throughout the length and breadth of Queensland, as hon. members opposite did during the Federal election campaign.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Nonsense.

Mr. COLLINS: It is not nonsense at all. In my own electorate, in a sneaking kind of way, they spread the rumour that the Government of Queensland could not finish the Bowen Coalfield Railway owing to the fact that they had no money to build it with.

Mr. HODGE: Is not that true?

Mr. COLLINS: It is not true, because we have sufficient money in hand to build that railway. For the hon. gentleman to say that it is true is to decry the State of Queensland and to lower his own position as a member of this House. Does the hon. member belong to a party which wishes to see the State become bankrupt?

Mr. KIRWAN: Of course, he does.

Mr. COLLINS: Is that what the hon. member really wants to bring about? If loans are not the success they ought to be, it is owing to the attitude taken up by hon. members on the other side, who are continually crying out "stinking fish" in regard to the development of this great State. I am one of those who are pleased to think that the recent loan was successful. As one of the representatives of North Queensland, which is to some extent the outpost of civilisation in this great Commonwealth, I wish to see the full development of that part of Queensland, with its rich natural resources that are as yet undeveloped. I have said on many occasions that all reform and progress rest upon finance, and we cannot develop that part of Queensland without building railways, carrying out big irrigation works, and we cannot do these things unless we have the means to do it with. We have a Press in the North similar to the Press in the rest of Australia. It is a Tory Press, which is a disgrace to Australia. Practically it might be thought that the hon. member

for Bowen did not exist, so far as the reports of that Press of anything that I may say in this House are concerned—(Opposition laughter)—unless they can make it tell against the party to which I belong. Therefore, we have to use Parliament, and I intend to use it so long as I am a member of Parliament, to enlighten the electors that I represent and also to enlighten the electors of North Queensland as to what this Government are doing. For the benefit of my electors and the electors of North Queensland, I am going to quote the following extract from page 7 of the Treasurer's Financial Statement:—

“We have been in close touch with our London advisers for some time with reference to floating a loan, and early in December it was decided to make an issue of £2,000,000 at £98 10s., carrying interest at a nominal rate of 6 per cent. and redeemable in 1940, the Government having the option of redeeming at any time after 1930. Assuming the Government does not exercise its option in regard to the redemption date, and the loan runs the full term to 1940, the return to investors will be £6 2s. 6d. per cent. and the cost to the Government approximately £6 5s. 2d. per cent. The loan was largely oversubscribed, £4,080,000 being offered, although the lists closed a day earlier than intended. An outstanding feature of the flotation was the great number of applications for small amounts. Taking into consideration the condition of the money market, the fact that at the time of the issue colonial stock could be purchased in London returning from 6½ to 7 per cent., together with the extraordinary rush of capital for company flotation purposes, the issue cannot be considered as anything but very satisfactory, and is a fitting reply to those who were continually decrying the financial management of the State and predicting disaster to its credit whenever the Government approached the London market.”

As I said a moment ago, if Queensland is to be developed, it requires the expenditure of millions of pounds. I know of no better investment for the British investor than Queensland, or Australia in general. It has been my lot from time to time to listen to a lot about patriotism; but I say that the British investors have not been patriotic towards the people of Australia. They have been more concerned about lending money to the Argentine or some of the South American republics than about lending it to their own people and helping to attract people to Australia and build up a great nation. What is the use of talking about the “Eastern menace” when the British investing public do not avail themselves of the opportunity of making this country a great nation? In this respect they have not done their duty by the Australian Commonwealth. I do not make statements as a rule without trying to prove them, and, in support of the statement I have just made, I am going to quote from the September number of the “Contemporary Review,” which contains an article by Sir George Paish. He points out all the thousands of millions that Great Britain has lent—not to the Dominions, but to other countries—to foreigners—instead of helping to develop this country, which is one of the daughters of what they call the

Empire. This is what Sir George Paish says—

“The financial strength and credit of Great Britain are still undiminished. Prior to the war the nation's wealth was calculated at about £16,000,000,000, of which some £4,000,000,000 consisted of foreign and colonial securities. During the war Great Britain has lent to her allies and Dominions a sum not far short of £2,000,000,000, while, on the other hand, she has sold a moderate amount of her previously held foreign investments and has borrowed abroad about £1,500,000,000. Placing the new debt against the new investments, her foreign investments are nearly, if not quite, as great as they were prior to the war. At the moment the money she has lent to Russia is lost. This amounts to about £600,000,000. She has also lent over £500,000,000 to France, and nearly £400,000,000 to Italy, as well as nearly £400,000,000 to the Dominions and to minor European Powers. Even were the whole of the new investments to be disregarded, Great Britain would still possess foreign investments of nearly £4,000,000,000 against the loans she has incurred abroad. A reasonable estimate is that Great Britain now owns foreign investments to the nominal value of over £5,000,000,000, against which she owes about £1,500,000,000 abroad, and that, after allowing for the repayment of her foreign debt and writing off her doubtful investments, the net and real value of her foreign investments is at least £3,000,000,000.”

Great Britain has lent to foreigners at least £3,000,000,000, and we want to find out how much we, in the Australian Commonwealth, have received; and that is one of the reasons why our population is not increasing as rapidly as it should.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Were we ever refused a loan?

Mr. COLLINS: It is the duty of the hon. member to look after his children, and it is just as much the duty of the Empire to look after her children. I question whether the hon. member believes much in the Empire that he preaches so much about. If the investing public of Great Britain had been genuinely patriotic, our recent loan would have been oversubscribed to the extent of £40,000,000 or £50,000,000, so that we could have gone on to the market and got another £10,000,000 if we required it. Quoting from “Knibbs” for 1918-19, I find that the public debt of the Australian States, on 30th June, 1918, floated in London, amounts to £261,107,683, and floated in Australia £131,432,478, or a total of £392,540,161. Let us examine these figures for a moment. In all the Australian States put together, there has been floated, up to the end of 1918 in London, loans amounting to £261,000,000. And yet Great Britain has lent to Russia £600,000,000, or practically nearly three times the amount which all the Australian States have received up to the present time; and, according to Sir George Paish, that £600,000,000 is lost. The point I want to make is this: that the mother of nations should look after her children.

Mr. SZER: Was that lent for war purposes to Russia?

Mr. COLLINS: No, it was lent to Russia before the war. The hon. member for Nundah pretends to know all about it, so that

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he can get up and contradict my statement after I sit down. Then, again, suppose it was for war purposes, would the hon. member say that we did not do our part in the war?

Mr. SIZER: Some did.

Mr. COLLINS: If he is going to argue on those lines? It should be no difficulty for any State to borrow the millions of money which they require to develop these outposts of Empire, of which we are a part as well as Great Britain. They have the accumulations of ages behind them, and what would be wrong in their lending more than they have lent in the past for the development of the Australian Commonwealth? I say that their patriotism is more inclined towards a foreigner than what it is towards their own people. All we have to do is to study the investments which have been lent long before the war. The hon. member for Nundah ought to know that there was over £2,000,000,000 lent to foreign Governments before the war commenced.

Mr. KIRWAN: And money in Krupp's; he knows that, too.

Mr. COLLINS: Compare the amount that has been lent to the different States of the Commonwealth with the £600,000,000 lent to Russia, the £500,000,000 lent to France, and the £400,000,000 lent to Italy. Italy has received more by over £100,000,000 than the whole of the Australian States have received.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: They lent Australia all she wanted at 4 per cent. You spoilt our credit.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member has come from the same race as myself. I will have to borrow him a copy of William Morris's work on John Bull, to put a little of the English spirit into him. We find from the latest copy of "Knibbs," 1917-1918, in the Parliamentary Library that the total debt of the Australian States is only £653,000,000, or only £53,000,000 more than they have lent in Russia. No wonder the Commonwealth does not develop! How can it develop when the men who control the destinies of the different States of the Commonwealth only possess small minds? They cannot think big at all. Anyone who has travelled over Queensland wants to think big. Since I have been a member of the Public Works Commission I have been enabled to see a great deal more of the State than ever I was able to see before. I realise the position now. The deputy leader of the Opposition laughs.

Mr. VOWLES: You have a plank against public borrowing in your platform.

Mr. COLLINS: We have not a plank against public borrowing. The total amount lent by Great Britain to foreign countries is very large. The amount lent to France and Italy is £1,500,000,000. Imagine what kind of a Commonwealth we would have if the people in Great Britain lent us £1,500,000,000!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: We could have had it if we had wanted it.

Mr. COLLINS: As long as your party were governing the States and the Commonwealth it seems to me that the people in England preferred to lend larger sums to foreign countries than what they were prepared to lend to their own people. (Hear, hear!) The reason for that is that the people in London read some of the speeches of hon. members opposite. Leaving that part of the question, I can only say that Queensland, if it is to develop as it ought

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to be developed, will have to get more money than it has been getting in the past, that is, if we are going to increase our population at a greater rate than it is increasing at the present time. I am not aware that any of the States of the Commonwealth have ever repudiated their interest charges in regard to any money lent to them.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Some Labour men propose to do it.

Mr. COLLINS: We have never done that, notwithstanding all the spies and informers that your party pay to spread those lies about.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COLLINS: There are a few matters I wish to mention in connection with my electorate, because this is an opportunity I have of advocating their claims—not that their claims have been neglected. I heard one hon. member opposite say that all the money was being spent in the city of Brisbane, and I can give that the lie direct. The Bowen electorate is not in the city of Brisbane: it is 700 miles north of Brisbane, and there is a fairly large amount of loan money being spent in that electorate for the development of the country part of the electorate: not in the town itself; it has not become a city, but we hope it will become a city later on.

There are several paragraphs in the Treasurer's Statement which make reference to the Bowen electorate. On page 9 it is stated—

"The railway to the Bowen coalfield will be pushed on to completion as early as possible. The quality of the coal on this field and the possibility of its production in large quantities at low cost have been demonstrated beyond doubt. A remunerative traffic is, therefore, assured for this line as soon as it is opened."

I am very pleased to see that paragraph in the Treasurer's Statement, in view of the remarks I heard while I was in Bowen during the Federal election contest to the effect that we had no money to complete the line. I notice that there is a sum of £175,000 on the Estimates for the coalfields railway. That shows that the Government means business in pushing the line ahead as far as it is possible to do so. Of course, I know that fairly good progress is being made. I was along the line myself about a month ago. Owing to the shortage of cement and other materials, progress is retarded to some extent, but that is not our fault. We were not responsible for the great shipping strike that took place on the coast. The Commonwealth Government was responsible for that, just as they are responsible for the present strike. They do not want to assist in the development of North Queensland. If this strike lasts for any length of time, it will mean that unless we can get cement and other material to carry on railway construction, we may not be able to keep the men working. If Mr. Hughes has the brains of a statesman—as I have said before, I do not believe he has brains to run a lavatory, let alone the Commonwealth—he would settle this shipping engineers' dispute within twenty-four hours in the interests of the Commonwealth. We hear from time to time about losses which workmen suffer in regard to strikes. What losses are the whole of the community suffering at the present time? Why does Mr. Hughes not grant the engineers' demands?

He will have to do it later on, the same as he did in the seamen's dispute.

[4 p.m.] Why attempt to make North Queensland suffer? We know that that part of North Queensland suffers more than any other part. Owing to the rotten Press we have in the North, the people there are led to think that it is our State which is responsible for the whole of that.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: So it is.

Mr. COLLINS: Listen to that lie! (Hear, hear!) At any rate, I hope the railway will be pushed ahead as quickly as possible, because that will mean giving cheap coal to the Northern railway system. I also hope that the Government will push on with the construction of the railway from Proserpine towards Mackay, so that fruitgrowers will be in a better position to get their products to market than they have been up to the present. During the last shipping strike the people in the Bowen district were well treated by the present Government of Queensland, and were able to send away more cases of fruit from Bowen than they had been able to do for several months previously. As showing the importance of the Bowen electorate, I may quote from page 13 of the Financial Statement the following paragraph:—

"At the Bowen State coal areas development work has been steadily pushed forward, and machinery is being installed to carry on that work more expeditiously. Samples from the different faces tested and analysed show the coal to be of a high value both for steaming and coking purposes. It is evident that this mine is a valuable acquisition to the State and will prove of immeasurable benefit to North Queensland industry. At the Styx River coal is being produced from development work, and small quantities are being supplied to the Railway Department."

I am very pleased to say that during my tour in the North I visited this State coalmine, and what I saw there only bears out what I have said in this House—that the Bowen coalfield is going to be, not only one of the biggest coalfields in Australia, but also one of the biggest coalfields in the world. In an underlie from the surface down to a depth of 260 feet, there is a seam 13 feet 6 inches thick without a single band in it, and then we have the Garrick seam, which is 8 feet thick, and the Scott seam, which is 6 feet thick. The coal area has not been properly opened up as yet, and it is a debatable point whether it will not constitute one of the largest coalfields in the world so far as black coal is concerned. That area has been waiting years for development, and it has been left to the present Labour Government to take the necessary steps for its development. The "Bowen Independent," which is the only paper in my electorate that gives me a fair deal, has an interesting reference to this coalfield. The "Independent" is not a Labour paper, but it gives me a very fair deal and helps me in my endeavours to assist in the development of the Bowen electorate. The following remarks are made by that newspaper:—

"BRICKMAKING, BOWEN COALFIELD.

"In an interview with Mr. Jas. Sivyer, manager of the brickworks at the State coalmine on the Bowen coalfields, we

learn that he has just finished burning the first kiln of bricks, containing approximately 30,000 bricks. Mr. Sivyer speaks in glowing terms of the quality of the coal produced at the State mine, which, he says, is the best he ever used for brick-making, and he pointed out that, whereas an average of 17 cwt. of Southern coal is required to burn 1,000 bricks by the open-kiln method, the average requirement of Bowen coal, as shown by the kiln just burnt, is only 13 cwt. The clay deposits on the field, Mr. Sivyer says, are enormous, and, with the installation of machinery, sufficient bricks could be manufactured there to build a city the size of Melbourne and Sydney combined. The bricks just burnt are of excellent quality, and Mr. Sivyer is an enthusiastic believer in a grand future for the coalfield."

Hon. members will notice that Mr. Sivyer states that there are large deposits of clay in the locality, and that they are already making bricks on the site. Later on I suppose coke ovens will be erected there, so that there is a great future for that part of Queensland.

Mr. MORGAN: Are those State brickworks?

Mr. COLLINS: Of course, they are State brickworks.

Mr. MORGAN: I was wondering.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: You mean you were wandering, as you usually are.

Mr. COLLINS: We all know that where coal is worked that is generally the place where iron and steel works are established. I have put in a claim for Bowen for the establishment of the iron and steel works in that district. The arguments I used in support of that claim do not require reiteration on this occasion. However, I am glad to see this paragraph at page 10 of the Financial Statement—

"Full consideration of the proposal to establish State iron and steel works has shown that the initial outlay, as well as the ultimate cost of these works, will be very considerable. In view of the magnitude of the undertaking, the Government have not felt justified in launching the venture without fuller data with regard to iron ore supplies, markets for the products, and the probability of financial success. The additional information is now in the hands of the Government, and it is hoped that a final decision on the matter will shortly be arrived at."

Of course, quite naturally, the people of Bowen and the surrounding district are very anxious to see the iron and steel works established at Bowen, as such works will, no doubt, lead to a larger population than we have at the present time being settled in North Queensland. Only a few days ago I saw cables in the Tory Press of Brisbane with reference to what China and Japan are doing with regard to iron ore deposits. I am satisfied that if those countries had the deposits we have at Mount Leviathan—10,000,000 tons—and Mount Philp—40,000,000 tons—in the Cloncurry district they would be delighted to build railways to develop those mines and make their resources available to the country. Since I last delivered a speech in this House it has been proved that Bowen is the healthiest place in North Queensland. Bowen is the

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town in North Queensland which shows the lowest percentage of the hookworm disease in the North. That is another argument why the steel works should be established at Bowen, and I hope that that district will not be overlooked when the Government come to make their final decision in the matter. I now come to another matter which affects not only my own electorate, but also the whole of Queensland, and that is the matter of irrigation. I am pleased to notice on page 9 of the Financial Statement this paragraph—

“The Inkerman (Burdekin River) irrigation scheme is being pushed on to completion, and the indications are that the scheme will be successful and fulfil expectations.”

Yesterday I asked the Treasurer the following questions:—

“1. What progress has been made with the Inkerman irrigation scheme in respect to (a) surveys, (b) line construction, (c) well-sinking, (d) power-house construction?”

“2. Have there been any delays in the works; if so, from what causes?”

“3. When is it estimated the works will be completed?”

“4. How many men are employed on the works?”

The answers to the questions were—

“1. (a) Completed; (b) practically completed; (c) thirty-three wells have been completed, and this part of the scheme is progressing as quickly as material for lining the wells can be procured; (d) proceeding at a satisfactory rate of progress.

“2. Temporary delays have occurred owing to the difficulty in obtaining material.

“3. A date cannot at present be stated, but the works will be pushed on to completion with all expedition.

“4. At 1st December, 1919, ninety-four.”

That means that there were ninety-four men employed on the work. The reason I mention this is to show that from time to time I do read these Tory newspapers published in Brisbane. I noticed an article appeared in either the “Courier” or the “Daily Mail” in reference to irrigation, and they would lead the people of Queensland to believe—or rather, I should say, the people of Brisbane, because all the people of Queensland do not read the “Courier.” If they did the Government would have to enlarge Woogaroo. However, they do not all read the “Courier,” and those who do would think that this Government was doing nothing in regard to irrigation. Why, we are the one Government that has done something in that direction, and I am very pleased to think that it has been done in my electorate. It is quite right that it should be done there. I have been in this House a little over four and a-half years as the representative of Bowen, and the farmers of the Burdekin have had one good crop during the time I have represented them, and the only hope of making farming a success in that part of Queensland is to have this big irrigation scheme which this Government is carrying out on the Inkerman Estate. Of course, there has been delay. I mentioned a while ago the cause of the delay in connection with the construction of

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the Bowen Coalfield Railway, and the same arguments apply to the delay in connection with the Inkerman irrigation scheme. The Government have been unable to get ships to carry cement and other material required for the work that is being carried on there. From time to time I have heard hon. members opposite say we have done nothing for the primary producers; that we are doing nothing for the farmers. Is not this irrigation scheme being carried out in the interests of the farmers? I take it that it is. Not only are we carrying out that irrigation scheme in the interests of the farmers, but we have also established an experimental farm there. When I was up there the other day, I noticed that several acres had been cleared, and the part to be played by an experiment farm and its relation to the larger issues involved in the main irrigation scheme is fully realised, and it is proposed to demonstrate the several methods of applying water economically to various crops in addition to sugar so as to encourage general agriculture, not only on the Burdekin but also in other districts, thus inducing farmers to grow many crops that are now brought as fodder from the South, such as chaffs of various kinds, potatoes, etc. The idea of this experimental farm is to demonstrate to the farmers that something else besides sugar-cane can be grown there.

Mr. MORGAN: What is the estimated cost of the Inkerman scheme?

Mr. COLLINS: The estimated cost, if I remember rightly, is about £150,000. It is a long way from completion, owing to the lack of material. The water supply is there, and the work they are doing there is good work. In fact, it would pay the hon. member for Murilla to make a trip up there, because it would show him that work is being done there that I am told is not being done in any other part of Australia. That is the work in connection with the concrete cylinders which are being made on the spot, and which are being put into the wells after they are made. I believe it is the first industry of its kind in the Commonwealth. It is a splendid work, and I am satisfied that when it is completed we are going to get splendid results. But we are told that we are doing nothing for the farmers. I have to speak of these things in order to make known to my electors what we are really doing.

Mr. MORGAN: They do not know themselves.

Mr. COLLINS: They do not know what legislation we put on the statute-book unless it is made known to them by men like myself, because the newspapers do not report it. The papers that support hon. members sitting opposite, such as the “Townsville Bulletin”—one of the most Tory rags in North Queensland—do not report it. I want to make known to the farmers in my electorate that we have placed on the statute-book an amendment of the Co-operative Agricultural Production Act, and I am going to make known what they can get under that Act. They can get up to £200 for the purchase of dairy cattle, and have seven years in which to repay it. They can get £50 for the purchase of pigs, and have three years in which to repay it. They can get £200 for the purchase of sheep, and have two years in which to repay it. And they can get £150 for the erection of silos, and have five years in which to pay it. That is

something that is being done to increase production. When I was addressing the Proserpine farmers last April, I told them that they wanted to go in for something else besides growing sugar-cane, because it is the second wettest district in Queensland, if not the second wettest district in Australia, and I am satisfied that it is a district that is well suited to dairying. I am satisfied that as soon as the North Coast Railway is completed, and the people have an easy method of getting there, that the land in and around Proserpine will be rushed, because drought is unknown in that part of Queensland. Then, again, what about our Regulation of Sugar-Cane Prices Act? The sugar-cane growers for the years 1916, 1917, and 1918, owing to that piece of legislation, benefited to the extent of £389,881. That is a fairly large amount, and we all know that if we had not passed that Act that the farmers would not have benefited to that extent. The figures for 1919 are not yet available. As one representing a large sugar-growing district, I was very pleased to read the remarks on page 12 of the Treasurer's Statement in regard to sugar. He says—

"The sugar season of 1918 promised favourably, but cyclonic disturbances, frost, and drought all adversely affected the cane, with the result that the production for that year was much diminished. The 1919 season now closing again shows the effects of these visitations, and it is certain that over 100,000 tons of sugar must be imported to supply Australia's requirements until the next crop is available.

"Recognising that the conditions are such that the producers are entitled to an increased price for their product, the Government are negotiating with the Commonwealth authorities with the object of securing an increased price for raw sugar. Without any desire to impose on the consumer, and disclaiming any wish for present world's parity—provided we receive due recognition when or if the world's prices decline—this Government stand for increased production, and to make Australia self-supporting—and an increased price and a stabilised sugar policy are vital factors in this connection—as well as for the permanent settlement of a white population along our northern coastal belt."

I am one of those who has made a special study of the income tax returns, and no one during my political career or even when I was an organiser has ever heard me say that the farmers were in a prosperous condition, because I know they are not. I know that last year only a little over 4,000 paid income tax, and I know that there are 26,000 farmers and fruitgrowers in the State of Queensland. There are over 5,000 sugarcrowers in the State of Queensland, and I asked the Treasurer the other day how many of those sugar-growers paid income tax, and I am very anxious for the information. I am satisfied in my own mind that there were not over 2,000 who paid income tax, and if that is so we have 3,000 sugar-growers in Queensland who earn less than £200 a year. The argument is that they are not getting sufficient for their raw sugar, and the Treasurer, on behalf of this Government, is carrying on negotiations with the Commonwealth Government with a view to getting a better price for the raw sugar, which will mean a better price for the

cane-grower. Then we are told that we are doing nothing for the farmer. As I have said before, the principal agricultural industry in Queensland is sugar-growing. That is so far as the cultivation of the soil goes, and during the Federal elections I promised that I would do all I could in that direction, and I intend to carry out that promise.

Mr. SIZER: They gave you a shaking up.

Mr. COLLINS: I have had a shaking up before. I have been put in Parliament and put out of Parliament and no one heard me cry. I made the best of it. I eventually returned to Parliament and not very many men can say that.

I do not intend to say anything in connection with the Kalamia sugar-mill, as I understand that there is a law case pending, and I will have to await further developments. The Kalamia sugar-growers have not been treated as they ought to have been treated by the Australian Estates and Mortgage Company, and the Government were forced to take over the mill during the crushing season so that the growers would not be ruined altogether. I am very pleased that the mill was taken over under a clause moved in this House by myself. So it goes to show we are trying to assist the growers.

Mr. SMITH: That Act has been of great advantage to them.

Mr. COLLINS: Of course it has been of great advantage to them. Coming back to our railways. A member of the Opposition said the other day that we had increased the freights and fares—which, I understand, we have done. If we increased the land tax members opposite would squeal and lie about that, as they generally do, and say it was a tax on the small farmer, although I have proved over and over again that it is not, but that it is a tax on the large landowner. It is quite true we have increased the income tax on the higher incomes. I am not going to apologise for having done that. As I have pointed out before, the pastoralists of Queensland take one-seventh of the total amount of the wealth produced in Queensland, and what is wrong with making that kind of people pay up. They ought to pay up and look cheerful. They are quite cheerful when they are over at the Queensland Club drinking first-class champagne, and I hope they will remain cheerful when they are filling in their income tax returns, realising that this is a Government which puts the taxation on the right shoulders—the wealthy people—and makes them fulfil their duties to the State so long as this system of exploitation lasts which allows one man to exploit many men—a system which we hope to abolish as time goes on. Now, in regard to our railways, what do I find? At page 59 of his report, the Auditor-General says that the increase in wages to railway employees during the last two years amounted to £550,049. That is good work done for the railway employees. The money is not lost, it is still in the State. As far as I know, money is not lost which stops in the country and only changes hands for the time being. In my opinion this is the best Government the workers of Queensland have ever seen, and I hope they will realise that. I am going to quote again from the Auditor-General's report in reference to the depositors in our State Savings Bank, because it is very interesting. He says the balance to credit of depositors at 1st July,

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1918, was £13,498,437 1s. 10d. On 15th June, 1919, the amount was £14,322,146 2s. 5d. The number of depositors in 1918 was 242,483 and the number in 1919 was 261,902, an increase of 19,419. The increase in the amount of the deposits was £823,709 0s. 7d. That is ruin in the right direction. That is a sign that the right people are getting hold of a little of the wealth of the nation. One in every three of the community has a deposit. I would like to see more of them have a deposit in the Savings Bank, for the reason that it is from that bank we make advances to settlers. It is just as well for the settlers to realise that. It is from that source of income that we will be able to settle more and more men on the land. I am one of those who believe that to a large extent the solution of the labour problem lies in getting more and more people to be cultivators of the soil. I have no hesitation, in addressing industrial centres, in telling them to get on the land, to get away from being wage slaves.

Mr. MORGAN: They do not take your advice.

Mr. COLLINS: Some of them do. I notice the hon. member for Murilla doesn't always take my advice. If he did he would be far more radical than he is. (Laughter.) I have always believed in the doctrine of work. When I was a boy I read a pamphlet on the doctrine of work. I would not have been in Parliament to-day had it not been for the hard work I did. I preached to the industrialists that there is no such thing as the millennium. I do not believe in the millennium. There will never be a millennium. Life will be one continual struggle aiming higher, higher, and yet again higher. That is what I believe in. I believe in the evolution of man. I have occupied a position in connection with the industrial movement for a number of years. I have been a member of a union since the year 1836—a fairly long time. Very few members in this Chamber can boast of having been connected with unionism right away back to 1836. I believe there is one member sitting on this side of the House, the member for Musgrave, who can go away back to 1874. I am very proud of that hon. member. I have always preached that there is no success outside work. Having been an organiser in this State for some time, and having organised for the A.L.F., the A.W.A., and the A.W.U., I want to tell my fellow unionists outside Parliament that if we are going to achieve success there must be discipline, discipline, discipline. I want to tell them that those were the words which were preached by the Russian Prime Minister, Lenin, during the Russian revolution, both in Moscow and Petrograd—that if they were to succeed, there must be discipline, discipline, discipline. There is no need for us to have a revolution in Queensland or in Australia, but the industrialists must learn that gospel of discipline if we are going to succeed. It is they who draw up the platform on which I have been elected. What is the use of their sending me into Parliament to advocate a certain line of action if they themselves are going to rat upon that which they have sent me in to advocate. I told them that in Proserpine in April, in addressing the Australian Workers' Union. I am not afraid of my seat, if some hon. members opposite think I am. I would sooner be out of Parliament than sacrifice the principles of a lifetime. (Hear, hear!) There are other men sitting

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here who are of the same belief as myself, like the hon. member for Mundingburra, who fought many a forlorn hope before he occupied a seat in this House. I want to say to the industrialists that we who helped to pioneer the way had just as much courage in our day as they possess to-day, and may be in many cases a great deal more. The movement was not as popular in those days as it is now. We had to put our backs up against the wall on many an occasion and fight on, believing that what we advocated, was right, believing that it was true. I still believe that it is true. I still believe that it is right. I have said in this House before that in my opinion direct action is a form of atavism, or in other words it is a throw back. If the arbitration laws of this State are wrong, let the industrialists put their finger upon the portion of the Arbitration Act that is wrong and get it remedied through this Parliament or through other Parliaments, not go back into the wilderness. In my own electorate I was denounced, not by the Tory party, but by men, as a parasite, as a bloodsucker. They have no time for political action at all. I told one young fellow, "Neither have I any time for you. I have my doubts whether you are not being paid by our opponents."

[4.30 p.m.]

I wish that every industrialist would read Jack London's "Iron Heel," in which he shows how, in the industries of America when the forces of capitalism could not attack the industrialists from the front, they honey-combed the unions with their spies and informers and so helped to destroy them in that way. I believe that is what is going on here in the State of Queensland to-day. Everything is being done to discredit this Labour Government, who have been true to their principles and their pledges. As I have said, I believe in the gospel of work. When a young man I read "Sartor Resartus" by Carlyle, and I remember this passage—

"It is not because of his toils that I lament for the poor. We must all toil or steal (howsoever we name our stealing), which is worse; no faithful workman finds his task a pastime."

We must all toil or steal, and although some men whom I meet claim that we are parasites, I say that so long as society says that it must have laws to govern it, I am working just as hard in delivering this speech as a manual worker. Maybe it is taking more out of me than another kind of work took out of me when I used to swing the pick and wield the shovel. I claim that, so long as society has said that there shall be seventy-two members to govern the State of Queensland, we are working just as hard in the direction of good government, no matter on what side we sit, as the man who works in the railway cutting or the man who stands on the footplate or follows his calling in the factory, or the shop, or in the field. (Hear, hear!) We want people to realise this—that there is no short cut to reform, there is no magic about it; that you cannot reform society by a wave of the hand. As I said before, I am a believer in the law of evolution. People will progress just as fast as they develop their thinking powers. This Labour Government have been true to their pledges, and it is just as well that our people, who go to make up the great mass of the people outside, should realise that. We have broken no

plank of the platform; we have adhered to the platform they have laid down. They are the makers of it, and if it is not what they think it ought to be they have the power to alter it. The time has come when there has to be some plain speaking in connection with this matter—plain speaking to our own people—lest we go into the wilderness. They had a Labour Government in South Australia, and we all know that after a time they went into the wilderness, and they are in the wilderness still. If the working population of Queensland wish this Government to remain in power, they must do justice by this Government.

Mr. SIZER: They do not want your Government.

Mr. COLLINS: They do want our Government; but I believe that some of those men are subsidised to preach these damnable doctrines.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. SIZER: They are supposed to vote against you.

Mr. COLLINS: They do not vote. They deliberately go to the ballot-box and destroy their votes. They have told me that they were going to do that. So what good are they to us?

Now, I want to say a word about State enterprises. I hold in my hand the report of the Trade Commissioner, and, in my opinion, it is one of the best reports that have ever been presented to Parliament. It is one of those reports of which it may be said that he who runs may read. The gentleman who compiled the report deserves a word of credit for the way in which he has done it. It is a report that is readable, and I want to say to the Government that if I had my way I would have a copy of that report placed in the hands of every elector in Queensland. That is the only way in which we can combat the untruths told by the party opposite from time to time. Had a copy of this report been in the hands of every elector in Australia, I venture to say that we would have had a different result of the elections.

Mr. SIZER: Surely you would not use public money for political propaganda!

Mr. COLLINS: That is not using money for political propaganda. That is to let the people know the truth. Is the hon. member ashamed of the truth? I heard the hon. member for Carnarvon making out a balance-sheet last night. He was trying to belittle this State. We all know how they boasted about the splendid work done by our soldiers in Europe, and we all know, too, that if you are going to build up a great nation you must give them good food. I take it that the reason that those soldiers were so good was that they were fed on good beef and good mutton. Owing to the high prices that exist to-day, the consumption per head of meat has fallen in a few years by 118 lb. In other words, you have lowered the standard of comfort by the high prices you have charged for meat. What care I what the Englishman pays for his meat, or the Irishman, or the Scotchman, or the Welshman, or the man on the Continent, or the American likewise? All I am concerned about is what the people of Queensland pay.

Mr. SIZER: What about the brotherhood of man?

Mr. COLLINS: It fits in quite well with the brotherhood of man. The hon. member understands very little about the brotherhood of man. The Governments of Europe, which were all capitalistic Governments, did not believe in the brotherhood of man when they cut each other's throats.

Mr. SIZER: They did not profess to do so, but you do.

Mr. COLLINS: You had the greatest war in all history when you slaughtered 10,000,000 of the bone and sinew of Europe. The brotherhood of man! Cease your prating about the brotherhood of man. The only hope for the brotherhood of man is the Labour party. I say again that what I am concerned about is what the people of Queensland are paying for their meat. Hon. members opposite are not concerned about the people of Queensland. What they are concerned about is putting big profits into the pockets of a few of the people of Queensland who own the bulk of the capital of Queensland. I remember that during the election contest the Townsville "Bulletin" said that we were going to take one little strawberry cow, and they tried to win the election on that. This report of the Trade Commissioner should be circulated by the thousands throughout the State. What would be wrong in that? The people need to know what is really going on in Queensland. I heard one hon. member talking about production, production, production! I believe in production, and Australian production has not fallen off. During the past nine years the total production of wealth in Australia increased by £109,000,000. Somebody must be working; there is no going slow as some people would try to make out. From 1914 to 1917, the years of the war, our production increased by £74,020,000. These are not my figures, they are Knibbs's figures. They are there in your library for people to look at them, and hon. members who cry out about increased production should know what they are really talking about.

Mr. SPENCER (*Maranoa*), who was received with cheers, said: The hon. member who has just sat down said he represented one of the most important districts of Queensland. I am going to speak also on behalf of one of the most important districts of the State, or the most important, and I hope that if I say anything to hurt the feelings of my friend the hon. member for Carnarvon, he will not get up and rise to a point of order as he did yesterday. I was very much interested in the speech of the last hon. member, particularly in what he said about the extremists. I quite agree that if they are going to get control of the unions they are going to ruin the unions and Queensland also.

Mr. T. FOLEY: There was more in his speech than that, you know.

Mr. SPENCER: I am afraid that latterly the extremists have got control of the Government in this State. The recent election in Maranoa showed that the electors there have condemned the Government; and the reason for their condemnation is that they have lost confidence in them and have a feeling of insecurity. In the first place, the Government have commandeered their meat at 3d. a lb., although the real value is 4d. per lb.; and, in the next place, the Government are going to repudiate the terms of their contracts with the pastoral tenants in regard to the rents of their holdings. Any

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Government that would do a thing of that kind is not deserving of the confidence of the people. If there is one thing more than another that the people want it is to have confidence in and respect for the Government in power.

The hon. member for Bowen said that the seizing of the meat was quite a correct thing to do in order to give the people cheap meat. I want to know by what process of reasoning the Government can justify their action in seizing meat at 3d. per lb. when the proper value is 4½d. per lb.? If you are going to treat the producers in the country in that way, you will soon kill all production. The hon. member said that the action of the Government only affected the owners of big herds of cattle. I am going to prove that that is not so, but that their action affected the small man quite as much as the owner of a big herd. According to the latest returns from the Roma police district, the number of holders of cattle who own under 300 head is over 500, whereas there are only seven or eight who own over 400 head. Now, whom does the action of the Government affect there? The small man. The small men in that district carry on mixed farming. If it were not for the few head of cattle they own they would not be able to meet their bills at the end of the year. That is part of their living. So you see that the seizing of the beef by the Government affects the small man just as much as it affects the big man, because it reduces the value of cattle all round.

The people of Maranoa have shown pretty plainly that they are not satisfied with the administration of the Government in regard to the seizing of the beef, and also in regard to the proposals for repudiating the terms of pastoral leases. Such a policy should be unworthy of the Labour party. Their policy is to do away with private ownership, and they say that everything should belong to the State; but that is one thing that every thrifty, honest working man is opposed to.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Do you advocate closing the State butcher's shop in Roma?

Mr. SPENCER: No; but at that shop the people have to pay 2d. per lb. more than the people are paying in Brisbane. In our district the farmers used to sell their cattle to the local butchers and get a good price for them. Now there is no market for them at all. The Government have done away with that market, and the farmers showed pretty plainly by their votes at the recent election that they did not approve of the action of the Government in that respect. Let me tell hon. members a little about the administration of the State butcher's shop in Roma. During Christmas week the shop closed on Wednesday afternoon, and no one could get a bit of meat there until the following Monday morning.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: They did the same in Brisbane.

Mr. SPENCER: Had it not been for the private butcher, who opened on the Saturday morning, they would have starved at the week end. It is all very well for wealthy members of Parliament drawing their £500 a year, as they can afford to lay in a stock of eatable; but for the unfortunate people who have only enough to lay in supplies from day to day it is a different matter, and this

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action of the State shop caused a lot of trouble in Roma.

Mr. GLEDSON: If you had your way the people there would have to pay 2s. a lb. for their meat.

Mr. SPENCER: If the Government are going to take the cattle of the primary producers at the price they are now paying in order to supply cheap meat to the people who are non-producers, then it is going to be a very destructive policy for this country. I contend that no Government has a right to take beef away from the owners of cattle at less than its fair market value. Surely to goodness the producer is entitled to the world's price for his produce! If you do away with that principle you will kill all production.

I am glad to see that some small relief is going to be given to the small man in connection with advances from the State land tax. The maximum amount is being raised from £300 to £750; but I certainly think that the Government ought to make a further concession and charge no land tax on what may be called a living area. On anything over a living area the land tax might be imposed; but certainly a farmer or a small landowner should be entitled to have a living area without being subject to the payment of land tax. The land tax is one of the most iniquitous taxes we have got. Some people think it is a good tax, but I think it is anything but that, and certainly it tends materially to increase the cost of living. The shopkeepers in Queen street are supposed to pay this tax, but in reality it is the consumer who pays it, and it is passed on to the unfortunate primary producers, who cannot pass it on. In the same way the man who owns a number of properties which he lets passes the land tax on to his tenants.

I have no objection to the income tax, because it is only a fair thing that the man who gets a fair income should pay something in the way of taxation. I would suggest, however, that in making out your income tax return you should be allowed to deduct the amount paid in the Federal income tax. What would be thought of a man who made out his profit and loss account at the end of the year and did not credit himself with the amount he paid in Federal income tax? I certainly think that the Federal income tax is a legitimate deduction in connection with the State income tax.

The Government have indulged in a great deal of boasting about the assistance given to soldier settlement in Queensland. They claim that more assistance is given here than in any other State. As a matter of fact, the conditions are worse here than in any other State. We have a soldiers' settlement in my district, and I know a good deal about it. A certain area is reserved for the soldiers, but they cannot get a freehold. If a soldier wants a freehold, I certainly think he ought to be able to get it. A great many people have a sentimental preference for a freehold tenure, and they like to have their title deeds in their possession. Therefore, I think that soldiers ought to be able to get a freehold if they prefer it. Yet these areas are all opened under the perpetual leasehold tenure. The maximum area which can be held by any soldier is 1,230 acres. Some of this land is 20 and 25 miles from a railway, and anyone who knows

anything about Queensland knows that out in those Western districts it is not possible to make a living on 1,280 acres. There is a chance on land close to a railway, where it is possible to use the land for dairying and mixed farming; but when you have to go 20 or 25 miles from a railway it is utterly impossible for any man to make a living on such a small area as 1,280 acres. The carrying capacity of 1,280 acres there is only about sixty head of cattle, and you can only carry about 100 head by ringbarking, so that men taking up land there have not got a fair chance of success. Another objectionable provision is that they cannot sell their land. They have a perpetual leasehold tenure, and they cannot sell the land at all for five years, and at the end of the five years they can only sell to a returned soldier. Supposing an unfortunate soldier works on his land for two or three years, and finds it impossible to make a living, all his hard work and expenditure of money goes for nothing. Unless he can find another returned soldier to take the land off his hands the whole thing goes to the State. Certainly our soldiers should be treated better than that. If there is anybody in this country who ought to be treated well, it is the returned soldiers. We all owe them a debt of gratitude that we can never repay, and the least we can do is to give them every assistance to enable them to become successful settlers on the land. At the end of ten years they may sell their holdings to anyone who is not a returned soldier, but even in that case they are restricted to the landless man. These restrictions practically prohibit them from selling their land at all, and the man who finds after some years that he cannot make a living has to walk away and leave the whole lot to the State. I dare say an alteration can be made in this respect later on, when it is found that these men want to dispose of their land, and I hope that the Labour party will be liberal enough to give them something in return for their years of labour.

Then, with reference to the income tax, I hope the Government will allow a deduction of the amount paid for Federal tax. There is one thing in regard to the soldiers' settlement that I want to complain about. There is a settlement at what is known as the 61-Mile Siding. There were some sheds built there for them, but for some reason or other, just before the election, a notice came that the siding was to be removed 6 miles further on. All the buildings were pulled down and sent to another part of the line, and these unfortunate men had to go 6 miles further on to get their goods. I believe that, since then, further instructions have been given to put the buildings back on the 61-Mile Siding, but I am not sure.

With regard to land settlement, we know that land is not being settled as it should be. I do not think that any Government has ever given the assistance to land settlement which they should have done. I am not blaming this Government altogether. Men are being driven into the city every day, instead of being induced to take up land. We should make land settlement more attractive, so as to induce men to take up land on which they can make a living. How are we going to do this? I have had a good deal of experience in land settlement in the West. The Government should appoint a practical man who knows what is a living

area in each district for farming or cattle or sheep raising, and fix on a suitable area, and then assist men in regard to improvements. Out in that timber country, one of the most important improvements, and one which will give the biggest return is ringbarking. The Government might put the unemployed to improve the public estate by ringbarking it. It would cost perhaps 1s. 6d., 2s., or 3s. per acre. They could clear hundreds and thousands of acres of land during the proper time for ringbarking, say from February to June, and give the men a price which would allow them good wages, and reserve all timber suitable for building and fencing, and also all edible trees and shrubs. The interest on the cost of these improvements could be added to the rent. Anyone who knows anything about land settlement knows that timber land which is worth 1½d. per acre as grazing land, would be worth 3d. or 4d. per acre if ringbarked. There is no investment which would give a greater return than ringbarking. I say that a lot of this land should be improved before the settler goes on it.

Provision should further be made for water, either by sub-artesian bores or by large tanks, so that the selectors, in a time of drought, would be able, by going 3 or 4 miles, to get permanent water for their stock. The losses of stock this year have been entirely due to want of water, many selectors having had to cart water 5 or 6 miles. If the Government would make provision for water for selectors, I am certain that land settlement would be more successful, and it would be very much better for the country.

Mr. BRENNAN: How do you suggest they should proceed?

Mr. SPENCER: In some parts of the country, you could take the water over, say twelve or fourteen selections from a sub-artesian bore, which would result in a large saving of stock. On a 1,280-acre selection it would cost a settler £500 to put down a sub-artesian bore and provide necessary tanks, but if the Government would put down a bore sufficient for ten or twelve settlers, it would mean very little extra cost to the State, which could be charged on to the rent.

There is another thing in our district which the Government ought to give attention to—that is, the Muckadilla bore. I suppose that is the greatest asset in Australia so far as suffering humanity is concerned. Year after year hundreds of people go there with rheumatism, practically incurable, and after a few months, go away cured.

Mr. KIRWAN: It is not well enough advertised.

Mr. SPENCER: It is not well enough advertised. If there is anything in the country that should be a State enterprise, it is the Muckadilla bore. This matter has been brought before the Government on several occasions, but they say they have no money to make it a State enterprise. They can put up State hotels and buy cattle stations, and yet they have no consideration for suffering humanity. A good many unfortunate people go there without money to pay their board at the hotel, and they are turned away. I know several men who went to the bore to get relief, but they had no money, and could not get any relief. It is

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necessary to have a place for the cure of rheumatism and other ailments.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You do not believe in State enterprises.

Mr. SPENCER: I am a great believer in State enterprise, and I am advocating it for the Muckadilla bore.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: But not in State butchers' shops.

Mr. SPENCER: I believe in State butchers' shops, properly managed. I will tell you how the butcher's shop is managed in Roma. They have not got a horse and cart to take the bones away. They are paying 20s. per week for the use of the horse and cart. They give the offal to a man to feed his pigs on. The horse and cart is brought back to Roma, and as they have not got a shed to put it in, they pay another man 12s. 6d. for the use of a shed to put the horse and cart in.

Mr. BRENNAN: Why should they have a shed if they have not a horse and cart?

Mr. SPENCER: It is one of the conditions that the Government shall keep the horse and cart under shelter. There is an electric light company at Roma, and the manager of the butcher's shop went to the manager of the company and asked what the cost of installing the electric power to run the mincing machine and refrigerating chamber, and supply electric light, would be. The manager offered to do it for £3 per week. The matter was referred to the Government, but they said, "No, we must have our own engine and engine-driver," and it is now costing about £8 per week to supply the electric power.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Does not the manager himself drive that?

Mr. SPENCER: Do you people believe in two jobs for one man? Sometimes the manager does drive it, but he must neglect his business in the shop, or neglect the engine; one or the other. It is against the principles of the hon. member's party to let one man have two jobs. The Secretary for Public Works asked me if I was in favour of State enterprise. I have no objection to State enterprise. The railways and the post offices are State enterprises: they are public utilities. Take Mount Hutton station, which I know something about, because it is in my district. The Government bought Mount Hutton, after a two years' drought, on a book muster, and paid for it in debentures. When the cattle were mustered, there were about 4,000 short. The Government sold the cattle. The agreement for the sale of the cattle was one of the most one-sided agreements I ever saw in my life: the advantage was all on the side of the purchaser. A Crown officer inspected, and yet the agreement was all in favour of the purchaser. The Government could not deliver the number of cattle, so I believe the purchaser received from the Government £3,700 as compensation for breach of contract. They delivered the cattle about February of last year, but for some reason or other they kept all the men on; they were supposed to be mustering cattle till about July, but during that time they could not muster enough cattle to keep the stockmen going who were riding about the station.

[5 p.m.]

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Would you recommend the dismissal of the State servants who recommended the purchase of that station?

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Mr. SPENCER: Would it do any good if I did? I now come to another matter, the Roma oil bore. As hon. members know, the oil bore at Roma was put down some months ago when an obstruction occurred, and nothing has been done since. I should like to know what the Government propose to do in connection with the bore. There is a man there who is paid a high salary, and no work is being done at the present time. I believe that some time ago the oil wells of Queensland were nationalised—not by the present Government, but by the Denham Government, I think—and no one was allowed to put down a bore to search for oil except the Government. If we are going to get oil, we should give a big bonus to the man who will discover oil in payable quantities, and nationalise the oil afterwards.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Do you think the money that was spent on the Roma oil bore was well expended?

Mr. SPENCER: I do. The men got down 3,708 feet, and then an obstruction occurred. It is a most unfortunate thing that we have had three bores put down 3,708 feet, and that then an obstruction occurred and the work was stopped. I do not know why that was.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: That may be due to money power.

Mr. SPENCER: It may, but I know nothing about that. In my opinion the Government should invite tenders from a well-boring company to put a bore down to a depth of 4,000 feet, and they should offer a big reward to the man who will find payable oil.

We have another little place in the Roma district which is called a State farm, and I am glad to say that we have one of the best men in Australia in charge of that farm. But I ask what about the administration of the business? Do you know what wages they pay to a man who has a wife and five children, and who has to find his own house?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I suppose the union rate of wages.

Mr. SPENCER: That man gets £2 11s. a week, and has to find himself and keep his wife and family.

Mr. STOPFORD: When was he appointed?

Mr. SPENCER: I do not know the date of his appointment, but it was within the last six months.

Mr. WEIR: Why doesn't he join a union?

Mr. SPENCER: What union?

Mr. WEIR: Any union. (Laughter.)

Mr. SPENCER: We have also some railway workshops at Roma, to which I should like to make some reference. Some little time ago a meeting was called to consider the condition of the railway workshops at Roma. I do not propose to read the whole of the report of that meeting, but I may give the Committee this information, that the man in charge of the Locomotive Department said—

"Evidence would be given showing the methods in the Roma shops were out of date and inefficient. Thirty-nine years ago the shops had been established, and there were then two or three engines only comprising the Western traffic. There were ten times as many now, and they were expected to carry out the duties required by thirty locomotives

with a plant installed thirty-nine years ago. It was absolutely ridiculous and absurd. When he started in the service thirty-five years ago, the method of lifting a locomotive was with a screwjack at one end and a crane at the other. The improvements they wanted were such as had been made in the place where he started thirty-five years ago. He would ask for the whole shops to be swept aside and new shops built so the required work could be done. He referred to the evidence taken at Roma by the Royal Commission. They might think it packed evidence, but it was no such thing."

A Royal Commission was appointed to investigate the working of the railways, and they made a report upon the subject, but that report has been pigeon-holed and nothing has been done. The Minister for Railways, when he was up at Roma, promised the railway men that he would spend £40,000 or £50,000 in building new shops at Roma, and I hope that he will not break that promise as he did the promise which he gave with regard to increasing the railway fares, when he said that rather than penalise the unfortunate settlers in the West by increasing the railway fares he would have a deficit. The locomotive superintendent further said at the meeting to which I have referred—

"They might think it packed evidence, but it was no such thing. It was given by men and officers in the service who had a desire to do good work. It was the evidence of practical and competent men. He read an extract from an address to the Commercial Travellers' Club by the Governor-General, in which he advocated more co-operation between the practical and theoretical men. That was co-operation between the men who designed and drew and the men who built from the drawing and perfected the machinery. Queensland could build its own locomotives; and he instanced the importation to this State of twenty locomotives from Leeds, thirteen of which were delivered in packages, and in putting them together some had to be scrapped until parts had been replaced."

The report further states that—

"Mr. Bartlett also urged the necessity of installing power which would be labour-saving, and also a wheel lathe to enable them to cope with the work. They had the men, and only wanted the machinery. Since his arrival in Roma, twenty-two years ago, only two machines—two drilling machines—had been installed."

At the same meeting Mr. O'Donoghue said—

"They had advocated these things through their union for over three years. The shop had been in Roma for thirty-nine years, and had been for thirty-nine years without an emery wheel. At last they had got an emery wheel, which had now been out of commission about ten weeks while waiting the arrival of a pulley. That emery wheel in the shop would save £100 a year in files, apart from the labour saved. He would like to know who was at fault? Who was at fault for the 'go slow' they heard so much about? Engine wheels were sent away to Ipswich on 7th August to be turned up and were not back yet."

That was on the 20th September—

"He would guarantee, with the lathe in Roma, to have the wheels turned up and the engine ready for running within a week."

Mr. James Lynch said—

"They were present that night, not as railway men, but as citizens of the town who wished to benefit all. They had a lot of 'go slow' people in the town and a few on the town council. (Laughter.) The only progressive men on the council were the three present that night. The Toowoomba people had got their member to ask for the establishment of workshops. The citizens of Roma should take advantage of Mr. Simpson's visit. He was a practical man, and knew what was wanted in the locomotive and maintenance departments. He considered the Government yards should be a model to other employers. (Hear, hear!) They have had a 'complete joiner' for about three years, and it had not been put into operation yet. (Laughter.) He was glad to see the people making united effort. It would save the country a lot of money. If they had a steam hammer they could do a better job than was done at the Ipswich workshops. The sinkers at the oil bore could have been done here, and he believed they would not be hung up there at present, which would have saved the country a lot of money. The sinker welded at Ipswich shops was a disgrace to any smith."

Mr. McClary also spoke, and said that the machinery the men had to work with at Roma was utterly obsolete, and that they could not expect men to do good work with such machinery.

The railways, as we all know, showed a big deficit for last year. Some hon. members, I believe, blame the men on the railways for that deficit, but I blame the Government. It was due to bad administration and bad organisation. We all know that our railways are made the dumping ground for the unemployed. If there are any unemployed about they are put on the railways, and no wonder they show a deficit. Mr. Hunter, the present Agent-General, when he was in Roma a short while ago, said—

"During the short time I was acting Minister for Railways I had to put on 3,000 men at unproductive work."

Just fancy a practical Labour Government being in power and having to put unemployed on to unproductive work! It shows that the loss on the railways to a large extent is the fault of the Government. A Labour Government, with their practical knowledge of labour, should have put the unemployed on to reproductive works, such as improving the public estate.

Mr. GUNN: Cutting prickly-pear.

Mr. SPENCER: Yes; cutting prickly-pear, and also ringbarking in the season. The hon. member for Toowoomba knows as much about improving the country as anyone, and he knows that no improvement you can make will give such a good return for the money expended as ringbarking. That is what I want the Government to do. Put the unemployed on to do ringbarking, so as to make large areas ready for the settler. The train service we get out in the West is

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shameful. When I came to Brisbane the other night it was pitiful to see the way the unfortunate people were crowded in the carriages. In the West there is more traffic than ever before, yet we have only two trains a week, while formerly we had four trains a week, and previous to that six trains a week. Surely the people in the West deserve a little more consideration and should have better conveniences when travelling. I am sorry to see that among the railway employees there are a number of extremists. As the Premier says, the extremists have got in amongst these men, and I was very pleased to read what the Premier said at Cairns the other day with regard to the extremists: that they must be got out of the Australian Workers' Union. There is no doubt that the extremists are trying to get control of the Australian Workers' Union, and this Government will have to be very careful to see that the extremists do not get control of the unions and thereby control them. The people in my district were very pleased when there was a change in the Premiership, and I really think it was an act of Providence that Mr. Ryan did not get a majority at the Federal elections and thereby be put in charge of Australia. I may say that the people of Queensland have much more confidence in the present Premier.

Mr. BRENNAN: The squatters and others?

Mr. SPENCER: Not only the squatters, but the primary producers and the workers have much more confidence in the present Premier than they had in the former Premier. They believe that the present Premier is out to do what he thinks is the honest thing if his party will allow him to do it.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: He is the leader of the party. Why did we put him there? Because we have confidence in him.

Mr. SPENCER: The extremists at his back will not allow him to do that which he wants to do.

The Minister for Lands was in Roma the other day and he made a statement in regard to the butter position, and it would not be out of place for me to read it here. The "Maranoa Advocate" says—

"Minister Coyne spoke in Roma the other night, ostensibly in support of Mr. Macdougall, but his speech was chiefly a tirade of abuse of Billy Hughes. Still, he found time to say something about the butter business, and in doing so succeeded in demonstrating to those in possession of the facts how little he knew about the business. Mr. Coyne said that when Mr. Lennon took over the butter business in Queensland in 1915 he made a profit of £32,000, every penny of which was returned to the dairymen. The facts, as given to us by one prominently connected with the butter business in this district for many years, are that not one penny of that ever came to this district. As a matter of fact the local factory was compelled to buy butter for the Christmas trade in 1915 from Victoria at 156s. per cwt., and was compelled by Mr. Lennon to sell it as low as 126s. per cwt., with the consequence that the factory made a total loss on three shipments of £130. As the Roma factory is a co-operative concern, and the great bulk of its profits go to the producer, it is at once evident who was the sufferer.

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"Then, as a contrast, Mr. Coyne went on to state that when Mr. Hughes took over the butter in 1917-18 he made a profit of over £2,000,000. Did any of that come back to the dairyman, he asked, and, answering the question himself, said, "Not one penny." Well, let us look at the facts. The butter was sold to the Imperial Government by Mr. Hughes at the express wish of representatives of the dairying industry throughout Australia at 151s. per cwt., less 5 per cent., though the representatives would have been satisfied to accept less than that, as there was at the time no chance of getting it away owing to shortage of shipping. Of the profit which was subsequently made on the butter, one half, amounting to £573,000, was returned by the British Government, though they were under no obligation to return any of it. That £573,000 was divided amongst all the factories in Australia in proportion to the number of pounds of butter manufactured by them. Roma factory's share was £1,150 13s. 8d. Result, suppliers in this district got an unexpected bonus of £6 5s. per cent. for every £100 worth of cream supplied to the factory, varying in total amounts up to £40 17s. to the biggest supplier. If a Minister in the Labour Government has such an accurate knowledge of matters pertaining to the welfare of the dairymen in the Maranoa (and elsewhere), a simple sum in proportion will disclose how much Mr. Macdougall knows about it."

Mr. BRENNAN: I will give you those facts later on.

Mr. SPENCER: The Secretary for Public Lands made that statement, and he said that the Hughes Government gave no money back, while I know that the Roma factory got £1,150 from the Commonwealth Government, and I know that the Roma factory got no money from the Queensland Government.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We published a balance-sheet, and the Hughes Government did not.

Several HON. MEMBERS interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I hope hon. members will cease this cross-firing and allow the hon. member for Maranoa to proceed.

Mr. BRENNAN: He brought it on himself, because he misquoted.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. SPENCER: The Government have been boasting as to how much they have done to assist the farmer. I will tell you what happened to a farmer in my district. He got two pigs sent on to him at Roma. They weighed 2 cwt. 3 qr., and he paid £4 11s. 6d. railage on them. If that is what they call assisting the farmer, then God help the farmer.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: What was the value of the pigs? Did he have a whole truck between the two of them? He could have taken forty pigs in the same truck.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. SPENCER: Why should he have to pay that amount of freight?

Several GOVERNMENT MEMBERS again interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I suggest that the hon. member address the Chair, as he will then receive less interruption.

Mr. SPENCER: I do not think I need say any more at the present time.

Mr. SOMERSET (*Stanley*): I am of the humble opinion that the Financial Statement is nothing but a speech of studied camouflage. The Treasurer has carefully left out and avoided mention of certain delicate matters, and has purposely made misleading statements. The reason for the withholding of the Financial Statement he attributes to the London money market. It has been generally supposed up to the present time that the correct reason for withholding the Statement was the Federal elections. At all events, if this Statement had been produced before the elections, it would not have enhanced the chances of the Labour party. The very Treasurer who estimated the qualifications which were necessary to show a capacity for government, and who referred to the Liberal Government's reckless expenditure, has now had to resort to a squeal of drought, flood, war, soldiers, epidemics, and even natural and foster mothers, to gloss over his own and his Government's lack of capacity—according to his own estimate—for government. The Statement says this—

“The dry weather conditions prevailing during the latter part of the financial year resulted in a scarcity of employment in the agricultural and pastoral industries, and consequently led to unemployment and heavy claims upon the vote for outdoor relief.”

I think that is a deliberate misleading statement, because the Treasurer must know perfectly well that the true reason for the want of employment, and so on, was the strikes in the shipping industry, meatworks, sugar-mills, sugar-fields, and copper mines, and also the go-slow policy.

The PREMIER: I do not think there was a strike in the copper mines last year.

Mr. SOMERSET: What about Cloncurry?

The PREMIER: No; it was closed down owing to want of copper.

Mr. SOMERSET: The Treasurer also says in his Statement—

“The excess expenditure under the ‘State Children’ vote was caused by the increase in the number of children now supported from Government funds and the higher rates allowed to the natural and foster mothers.”

By the way, these women are not, as are public servants, exempt from stamp duty. I think it is rather a mean proceeding on the part of any Government to deduct from the small payments made to these women the value of the stamp. The Treasurer also omits to make any mention of the flouting by the unions of the awards of the Arbitration Court. I may say I was pleased to hear what the hon. member for Bowen said this afternoon. I agree with what the hon. member for Maranoa said about the Premier's attitude in the same direction. I think it is quite right that the men should

have unions. Unions have done them good service in the past, and will in the future, if they are not allowed to be dominated by these extremists. Members opposite say that members on this side are entirely opposed to unions. Such is not the case. I, for one, believe that in establishments like large meatworks, where there is a great number of men employed, you can obtain labour very much better through the unions than you can privately. What I do object to is that good men are often not allowed to show what they can do. They have to go slow to keep pace with their comrades.

Mr. FRY: They have to keep pace with the hotheads—the young, unmarried men.

Mr. SOMERSET: We must to some extent sympathise with the Government, because we know they are not actually their own masters. They have made an attempt to serve other masters, and only recently we have had an assurance that that is a most unsatisfactory state of affairs. There is no reference in the Statement to the Sinking Fund, which is now in abeyance and is not “temperamentally fit” for use at present. No provision is being made towards redeeming many millions on which meanwhile a very heavy interest burden is being carried. I notice, also, that there is no mention of the Government's action in commandeering meat. Whether we believe in State enterprises or whether we do not, we believe in fair play; and I do not think it is fair play that the State stations should be getting 4½d. a lb. for meat when they are commandeering the meat belonging to other people at 3d. a lb. Perhaps the most serious among the problems of to-day is the condition of the State railway service. Since the Government took office the railways have shown a loss of about £3,500,000. On the £43,000,000 invested in railways in Queensland the interest being earned has sunk from £3 16s. 7d. per cent. to 13s. 9d. per cent. That means that the taxpayer has to make up the difference, which is about £3 5s. per cent. At the same time the earnings per head of employees have sunk from £102 to £17. There is something radically wrong, it is quite evident, but the remedy is not so apparent. One thing I am pretty sure of is that the Government have gone the wrong way to remedy the trouble and the wrong remedy is now being applied—that is to say, charging extra fares and freights. I would like to remind the Minister for Railways that the downfall of the Philp Government was practically due to that very cause. I can remember the outcry there was among the producers in the country when freights and fares were raised during the time of the 1902-1904 drought. It would have been better to have gone the whole hog and had a big deficit. It is a very bad move to raise fares and freights on people who are suffering as the people were suffering in the country at that time. Although we have had rain on the coast, that does not

[5.30 p.m.] prove that the drought has broken up. We have been suffering not only for a year but for years from droughty conditions, if not from actual drought, and we have just gone through a very serious drought. In the big drought of 1902 the springs at all events gave out more water than their normal supply. Such has not been the case during this drought. What has made the conditions so severe has been the artificial water supply, because there have been no rains to replenish it since the

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big drought. I think it is a good suggestion that the Government should send some practical man to find out how it is that New South Wales and Victoria can manage their railways at less cost than we can.

Mr. FRY: Behind the system you must have the brains—that is the secret of success.

Mr. SOMERSET: Let us find out at all events what we can from them. The hon. member for Maranoa referred to the unsatisfactory service on the line from Roma to Charleville, and I have no doubt that he has had plenty of experience. He has lived a long time in that district. I can only say that on my line we are suffering from a very much worse time than we have ever had before, and, in my opinion, there are needless and useless delays at stations. The engines are burning coal all the time, burning it to waste, and the time-table ought to be altered and considerably improved.

I look upon the reintroduction of repudiatory legislation, as foreshadowed on page 8 of the Financial Statement, as abhorrent to me at all events. I feel that the Treasurer, instead of slating the Legislative Council, as he does all through this report, should give them credit for great assistance in obtaining the loan in London as satisfactorily as it was obtained.

Mr. BRENNAN: Did the Upper House do that? They should be abolished.

Mr. SOMERSET: Had that repudiatory legislation been passed, I do not think that that loan would have been obtained so easily.

If there is one department more than another that should give assistance to the man on the land, it is the Agricultural Department. I notice that this year the department requires £89,584, as against £78,009 last year; but still I consider that the increase is far too little for such an important department. I have previously advocated more than once the employment of expert instructors to visit the various agricultural districts and, first of all, to form their opinions as to what kind of produce should be grown in them, the most payable crops on which the people can rely, and then to give the people instruction as to how best to grow them. Every man who goes on the land in Queensland is not an experienced farmer. I well remember that Professor Shelton, of America, came up to my district many years ago, and gave a lecture to the farmers at Mount Beppo, particularly telling them how best to grow corn, showing them also how to stook it and cut it before it was stacked. He examined their land, and I am satisfied that great improvements were made just as a result of one lecture. One thing which stands out before us to-day is the tremendous demand for increased production. The best way to increase production is to teach the people how to produce. Such instruction, with a water supply and good roads, would make a vast difference to the producing industries of Queensland. With such seasons as we have experienced for many years past, little inducement has offered to people to remain on the land. It has been most difficult to get the young men to take up land or to remain on the farms to help the old people. The tendency is for them to fly to the cities, where they can get shorter hours and better wages. As the hon. member for Maranoa said, we ought to try to improve the conditions of the people in the country and make it to their advantage to remain there. It would help the health

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of the people and assist our population if we had people remaining in the country instead of coming to the big cities. While I am on that subject I would like to advocate the system that they have in South Australia of giving instruction and assistance to mothers. Trained nurses are employed to go round and lecture on the rearing of children and so forth. The mothers in the country apply for a centre—I do not know whether it is called a baby clinic or not—and there they get such help free. It is not every country doctor who knows much about children, and I recommend the South Australian system to the Home Secretary, in whose department it comes.

I have repeatedly advocated what I find with the greatest satisfaction is now in progress; that is, some attempt at ascertaining what capabilities we have for conserving water and utilising water for electric power. I find on page 9 of the Financial Statement these remarks—

“There is abundant evidence that Queensland has ample means and opportunities for water conservation and irrigation, and several promising schemes for such enterprise are under consideration. The work of surveying and reporting upon these will be continued, and where practical schemes can be established they will be developed as part of the settled policy of the Government. A survey of the streams of the State, with a view to ascertaining their hydro-electric potentialities, is also in hand.”

I can honestly say that I commend the Government for their efforts in this direction. I am also glad to see that they have done something for the nurses in the General Hospital in Brisbane, who have obtained better conditions since the Government took over the institution, both as to hours of work and remuneration. That is a thing that I advocated years ago in this Chamber.

Before I sit down I cannot help referring to the very regrettable incident which took place yesterday. Although I do not always see eye to eye with the hon. member for Bulimba, I think that he was hardly treated. With the hon. member for Albert, I consider that, but for the objectionable incident alluded to, no objection could be taken to the appointment of the Hon. William Lennon to the position of Lieutenant-Governor. That is to say, it is a good appointment as could be made from the Government side of the House.

The PREMIER: Well, whom would you suggest?

Mr. SOMERSET: I say that I agree with the hon. member for Albert that, if it was not for the objectionable reason that I have alluded to, I have no objection to the appointment so far as the Hon. Mr. Lennon is concerned. He is a man who is well fitted to fill the position with credit to Queensland.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. SOMERSET: At the same time, I do object to the appointment on the grounds stated by the hon. member for Bulimba.

The PREMIER: You must object because you are a member of the Opposition.

Mr. SOMERSET: No; but I think it is a partisan appointment.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Well, who do you suggest should be appointed?

Mr. SOMERSET: The Chief Justice. He is not a partisan.

The PREMIER: I do not agree with you. Save democracy from such an appointment as that.

Mr. SOMERSET: Well, one of the other judges who was never a politician could have been appointed. I believe in an Imperial appointment.

The PREMIER: Well, I assure you that this is an Imperial appointment. The commission is signed by the King.

Mr. GRAYSON (*Cunningham*): This is one of the most important debates on which hon. members have an opportunity of speaking in this Chamber. I have been a member of the House for many years, and during that time I have heard hon. members on both sides congratulate the Treasurer of the day on his splendid Financial Statement and on the flourishing condition of the finances of the country. On this occasion, so far we have not heard one member on the other side of the House compliment the Treasurer on his Financial Statement for the year 1919-20. In fact, only one hon. member on the other side has so far spoken during the debate. I was very much interested in the speech of the hon. member for Bowen, but he did not say one word in commendation of the Financial Statement. The only praise he gave was to himself for his services in securing many thousands of pounds of public money for expenditure in the Bowen electorate. It seems to me that one needs to be a supporter of the Government in these times if he expects to have any public works carried out in his electorate.

I noticed on reading the reports of the Public Works Commission that they have not yet recommended the construction of a single public work or railway in the electorate of a member of the Opposition side of the House. I opposed the appointment of that Commission. I have not one word to say against the personnel of the Commission; I am certain that no better selection could be made from the Ministerial side; but does not the whole thing seem to be a public farce? Is it not almost a scandal to spend £8,000 in the last two years in paying a Public Works Commission to go about the country to report upon public works when the Government know that they have no money to expend on such works?

The PREMIER: Do you say that we have no money?

Mr. GRAYSON: I know the hon. gentleman got £2,000,000 the other day, but no credit to the Government for getting that money. They are paying 6½ per cent. on the London money market for the money, and I know one member of the Opposition who went across to the Premier last night and offered him £26,000 of Queensland money at the same rate of interest, and the Premier turned him down.

The PREMIER: You are not justified in saying that.

Mr. GRAYSON: The hon. member who made the offer told me of it.

The PREMIER: You are not justified in saying I turned him down. I hope every hon. member opposite will come along with £26,000.

Mr. GRAYSON: Will the hon. gentleman pay 6½ per cent.? I have not got £26,000, or £6,000, or £1,000 to lend. The hon.

member who made the offer said to me last night, "I am going across to the Premier—"

The PREMIER: I don't think you are justified in making this public. It was purely a private conversation.

Mr. GRAYSON: There was nothing secret about it. I am not mentioning names. If the Premier had applied to the people of Queensland for a loan of £2,000,000 and had offered 5 per cent. for it, free of income tax and succession and probate duty, I am as sure as I am standing here that he would have raised the £2,000,000 without any difficulty.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That shows the confidence that the people of Queensland have in the Government.

Mr. GRAYSON: The people of Queensland have every confidence in Queensland and in the potentialities of the State, but I do not think they have the same amount of confidence in the Government.

Mr. WHITFORD: Your side are always trying to decry the State.

Mr. GRAYSON: I am not decrying the State, and I have never uttered a single word in this Chamber that could be said to decry the State. The late Premier, the Hon. T. J. Ryan, made a speech in Warwick during the Federal election campaign, in which he stated that nothing would surprise him more than that the farmers on the Darling Downs should vote against the Labour candidate, considering what the Labour Government in Queensland had done for the farmers. Has there ever been a Government in power in Australia which has done less for farmers than the present Government has done? They are now raising the income tax, and bleeding the farmers to death by taxation. The way they are taxing farmers in Queensland to-day is nothing but public robbery.

Mr. WHITFORD: You have been misled.

Mr. GRAYSON: I am not misled. I can tell the hon. member that the farmers of Queensland are heartily sick of this taxation. They gave a proof of their opinion at the by-election in the Maranoa electorate. The Hon. J. M. Hunter was returned with a majority of 700 at the last general election, but at the present by-election the Liberal candidate was returned by a majority of 150. At the recent Federal elections the Nationalists have been returned by a greater majority than ever before. I would like to show what the Government in New South Wales are doing for farmers there. The New South Wales Government has appropriated £1,000,000 for the assistance of farmers in distress in that State. This is how they intend to distribute it—

"The New South Wales Government has set apart £1,000,000 sterling for advances throughout the State to those farmers whom the drought has placed in serious financial difficulties, and who in many cases will be unable to continue operations unless some form of assistance is extended to them. Assistance will be given in the following forms."

Is the Queensland Government going to assist the Queensland farmers this year with seed wheat?

The PREMIER: Yes, the same as always.

Mr. MORGAN: You have not done it always.

*Mr. Grayson.]*

Mr. GRAYSON: Is the Treasurer going to supply the farmers with seed wheat as in past years?

The PREMIER: You had better give notice of the question.

Mr. GRAYSON:

"Advances of seed wheat where crops have totally failed.

"Advances against seed wheat when the applicant has raised his own seed but is in financial difficulties."

The New South Wales Government will purchase the wheat from the farmer who grows it himself, if he is in difficulties. Will the Queensland Government buy sufficient wheat from the farmer who is in financial difficulties to enable him to meet his liabilities?—

"Advances to cover the purchase of seed wheat by an applicant from his neighbour."

I think it is an excellent provision to advance money to a farmer to purchase seed wheat from his neighbour, instead of the Agricultural Department being compelled to get the wheat from Sydney or from some other long distance. I would like the Secretary for Agriculture and the Premier to take particular notice of those three concessions—

"Advances of fodder to feed working horses."

We know that many farmers did not make provision for fodder in case of drought, with the result that many of them have mortgaged their holdings to enable them to feed their working horses during the drought. The New South Wales Government is going to advance the farmers money for fodder to feed their working horses—

"Advances of fodder to small holders to save their stock in special cases."

Did the Agricultural Department send out circulars during the late drought to ascertain how many farmers in dairying districts would require advances to save their starving stock? One farmers' representative on this side, who is interested very largely in dairying, told me this afternoon that he had lost seventy of his best milking cows during the last two months, and that is only one instance.

Mr. CORSER: One of hundreds.

Mr. GRAYSON: I could cite any number of cases in which, perhaps, the loss was not so great. That loss represents £1,000 to that particular farmer—

"Advances to cover cost of water haulage."

The hon. member for Maranoa mentioned that many selectors in his district had to cart water 6 miles. Is it the intention of the Government to assist men who had to haul their water that distance? I know myself that many men on the Darling Downs had to haul water that distance during the late drought—

"In cases where farmers are in need of assistance to enable them to purchase groceries, etc., advances may be made to them for this purchase on certain approved conditions.

"When not engaged in the operations with cropping advances may be secured by the person making permanent improvement on his land. Improvements which are strongly recommended are the making of wells, tanks, or the cleaning of or enlargement of existing tanks."

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It should be the first care of the Government to assist the farmers to sink wells.

Mr. T. FOLEY: You do not blame the Government for the drought, do you?

Mr. GRAYSON: No; I am not blaming the Government for the drought. I say that the Government should make inquiries and assist these people who have been struggling against such great odds. I trust that the Premier will take into consideration the matters I have mentioned and render some assistance to what I consider the best type of men we have in the whole of Queensland—that is, the farmers.

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

Mr. GRAYSON (continuing): The New South Wales Government have appointed a central board to supervise the distribution of relief to farmers in necessitous circumstances owing to the drought. This board consists of A. G. Manning, M.L.A., A. McDonald, Chief Inspector of Agriculture, and Mark Reynolds, executive officer. Shire boards are to be appointed to assist the central board by reporting upon applications for relief. The assistance which will thus be made available will help farmers over a difficult period, and in most cases place them in a position to meet their liabilities. Each shire board will consist of three members, two forming a quorum. The Government nominee, when present, will act as secretary. The shire board will receive all requests, and will recommend the form of assistance to be given, the amount, and for what period. These advances in connection with farming operations are intended to include all sources of primary production. On receipt of the shire board's recommendation the central board will make all arrangements for the security required, and supply relief direct to the applicant. I was speaking to a member of a shire council, who informed me that the council are empowered to receive applications from selectors and farmers who are in poor circumstances for assistance in financing them in the purchase of dairy stock and seed wheat, and for the purpose of arranging for storing their wheat during the drought. That is a proper kind of relief to grant to men who are suffering in the same way as the farmers in Queensland and the other States, particularly Queensland and New South Wales, are suffering to-day. I should like to ask the Minister for Agriculture how many such grants has he dealt with during the time he has been in office. The Minister for Lands in New South Wales, Mr. Ashford, has assisted the agricultural farmers in that State. I saw a statement in the "Sydney Morning Herald" to the effect that the Minister himself visited every drought-stricken district throughout New South Wales and sent in his own reports as to what should be done to assist those who are in need of relief. I represent a farming constituency, and I may say that during the term the Labour Government have been in office in Queensland I have not seen a Minister for Agriculture visiting any of the agricultural districts. The late Minister for Agriculture, the present Speaker, the Hon. W. Lennon, certainly made a run up to Allora and one or two other places by rail, but that appears to be all that he has done to ascertain for himself what are the conditions in agricultural districts. I believe that the present Minister for Agriculture is in sympathy with the farmers. At the same time I would suggest to him that it would be

a good thing if he visited the districts which have been affected by drought and saw for himself how the farmers have suffered from the drought. If the hon. gentleman did that he would see that there is an absolute necessity for giving the farmers every assistance.

Mr. COLLINS: And your party would ask what such visits cost.

Mr. GRAYSON: No; no member on this side of the House would ask what was the expenditure involved in such a case.

Mr. COLLINS: Why, when the Premier visited my electorate to inspect the State coalmine a question of that kind was asked.

Mr. GRAYSON: I am not claiming that the Minister for Agriculture should visit the Darling Downs only, because there are other great farming districts, such as the Burnett and Moreton districts. I believe the hon. gentleman has seen considerable portions of the Moreton district during the drought. In any case, I can tell you that parts of the Moreton district have suffered more severely from the drought than many other places in the State of Queensland. The Rosewood and Lockyer districts have suffered considerably from the drought. In the Lockyer electorate men had to cart water for a distance of 5 or 6 miles during the drought. I regret to say that in travelling by train I have noticed that the cattle were poorer along the railway line in that district than in any other part of the State during the drought. I had a conversation with the hon. member for Rosewood this afternoon. I remember that on one occasion that hon. member stated that the Darling Downs farmers were sponged. This afternoon the hon. member informed me that he has made application for relief for farmers in some parts of his electorate, and I contend that the Government have a right to provide relief for farmers who have suffered from the drought. There is more lucerne grown on the Darling Downs than in any other district, and the land on which lucerne has been cultivated will have to be ploughed up and resown before it will produce another lucerne crop. I am prepared to support the application of the hon. member for Rosewood to have seed supplied to the farmers in his electorate, as I hold that all those farmers who require seed to resow their lands should be assisted by the Government.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: More socialism.

Mr. GRAYSON: I do not see where the socialism comes in. The Government cannot do too much for those farmers who have suffered through this drought. I very much regret to say that all the farming districts are not out of the wood yet, so far as the drought is concerned. The showers have been very patchy, and very little rain has fallen in many of the farming districts. I was very pleased when coming down on Tuesday to see that splendid rains had fallen in the Lockyer and Rosewood districts, but in many other districts, particularly on the Darling Downs and in the Burnett, they are still suffering from the drought.

Mr. COLLINS: The Southern Burnett has had fairly good rains.

Mr. GRAYSON: It would be much better for the State if the Government purchased seed of all descriptions for those farmers who are suffering from the drought than to employ 3,000 men on unproductive work.

The hon. member for Maranoa this afternoon stated, and he has not been contradicted by any hon. member during this debate, that Mr. J. M. Hunter, when in Roma, said that while he was acting Minister for Railways, he was compelled to employ 3,000 men on unproductive works in order to find employment for them.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: And yet they lost the election afterwards.

Mr. GRAYSON: That is from Mr. Hunter, one of their own Ministers, and the gentleman whom the Government have appointed as Agent-General in London to represent Queensland.

Mr. BRENNAN: A good man, too.

Mr. GRAYSON: I am simply repeating what the hon. member for Maranoa said.

Mr. SMITH: He said some very nice things about Mr. Hunter, too.

Mr. GRAYSON: That was a very serious statement to make, and is it any wonder that the farmers are being bled to death in order to keep up a system of that kind? I firmly believe that the present Minister for Railways will resist any attempt to repeat an outrageous act of that kind. The present Minister was not in Queensland at the time. We find that Victoria this year has had a very large surplus of wheat. Victoria has been the most fortunate State in Australia this year, as they have had good rains there and have had a splendid crop of wheat, and what is the Victorian Government doing? Although Victoria has had an immense surplus of wheat, and has been supplying New South Wales and Queensland, the Victorian Government has agreed to supply seed wheat to farmers in poor circumstances.

Mr. COLLINS: The "poor circumstances" qualifies the whole.

Mr. GRAYSON: I say the Government should supply seed wheat to the Queensland farmers who are in poor circumstances.

Mr. BRENNAN: Did they not do that last year?

Mr. GRAYSON: One hon. member sitting on the Ministerial side of the House made the best suggestion to me that has been made by any member of this House.

Mr. CARTER: I quite believe that. (Laughter.)

Mr. KIRWAN: Will you give his name?

Mr. GRAYSON: I will give his name. That hon. member asked me to explain the position of the wheat farmers on the Darling Downs. Of course, the Darling Downs is the great wheat-producing centre of Queensland. I explained the position to that hon. member, and he then said, "I would advise any Government to supply farmers in poor circumstances with seed wheat and charge them nothing, provided they planted every bit of it." Those are exactly my views, and that was said by the hon. member for Bowen.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member for Bowen still says so. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. GRAYSON: I say all credit to the hon. member for Bowen. It has been stated here that the farmers last year did not avail themselves of the opportunity of securing the seed wheat purchased by the Government. I have had a conversation with the present

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Minister for Agriculture on that matter, and he gave a proper explanation of the whole thing. He said, "If we do not bind a man down with a promissory note all these conditions are of no use whatever." We happened to have an ex-bank manager as Minister for Agriculture, and we know that a bank manager is always very careful to see that he has proper security.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Like you did.

Mr. GRAYSON: I have always been satisfied with a promissory note from a farmer for any goods purchased from me. I was in business on the Darling Downs for twenty-five years, and I can say that I never met a more honest or more honourable class of people than the farmers. The small grazier as well, and the small grazier is just as much entitled to assistance as the small farmer. The small graziers had a very bad time in many districts in Queensland during the late drought. I know for a fact—and I defy any person to contradict my statement—that there are many small cattle graziers in Queensland who have not realised £d. during the last two years. There has been no increase in their stock, no sales, and many deaths. I quoted this afternoon the case of a gentleman who had lost seventy head during the last few months. That is only one instance. I could cite other cases of a smaller number. That is a great loss and is almost ruination to the dairyman in question. I notice that the Agricultural Department has purchased recently 450 tons of chaff from Victoria for relieving starving stock in Queensland. This purchase should have been made twelve months ago in order to relieve dairymen in Queensland. They come at the end of a drought and make a purchase of 450 tons of chaff to supply the dairymen of Queensland to save their starving stock, when half the stock are dead.

Mr. BRENNAN: Did your Government ever buy any?

Mr. GRAYSON: Yes, on several occasions they bought fodder.

Mr. BRENNAN: When?

Mr. GRAYSON: I do not know when it was, but the Minister for Agriculture will be able to find out. I do not blame the Minister for Agriculture for this. I blame his officers particularly. I say the Minister is guided principally by his officers. He cannot have a grip of everything that goes on in his department; that would be impossible. I say it is the duty of the Under Secretary for Agriculture to send out two or three experts, many of whom are hanging round doing nothing, into the farming districts to find out the state of the country, in order to save the starving stock in those districts. But no. Here at the end of the drought 450 tons is coming when it should have been here anything between eight or twelve months ago. I notice in the Treasurer's Statement he gives a little reference to irrigation. I was very pleased to hear the hon. member for Bowen mention this afternoon that an irrigation scheme is under construction in the Bowen electorate. I say "Good luck" to the hon. member for Bowen if he can induce the Government to initiate an irrigation scheme in his electorate. I would support the Government in initiating irrigation schemes in any man's electorate. I do not care whether it is represented by Labour or by Opposition. There is one particular district in Queensland that the

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Government should not overlook if they intend to initiate irrigation schemes. The time is ripe for this Government to take up a matter of this kind. I refer to the Killarney district. The Condamine River runs through that district. It is one of the largest freshwater rivers we have in Queensland. It is the longest river in Australia. It empties into the Darling, and the Darling empties into the Murray. We are supplying water to irrigate those great irrigation schemes they have now in South Australia and Victoria. I say the time is ripe when the Government ought seriously to take into consideration the undertaking of a proper irrigation scheme.

Mr. COLLINS: Have you not read the Royal Commission's report on the Gulf railway, which shows that you can irrigate 1,000,000 acres of land there naturally?

Mr. GRAYSON: There is very little population there. The district I mention is a thickly-settled farming district and I think any member of the Ministerial side who has visited it will say that it is one of the picked districts of Australia.

Mr. KIRWAN: It is a good district, and there are good people there, too.

Mr. GRAYSON: It is one of the most choice districts in the whole of Australia.

Mr. BRENNAN: Quite so.

Mr. GRAYSON: I say it is the duty of the Government to send an expert up to Killarney and have a proper survey made of the head of the Condamine with a view of erecting a dam or a large weir. Sufficient water could be stored there to supply all the homesteads between Killarney and Warwick and also supply Warwick with a proper water supply. There are also many other districts. There is the Burnett district in which an irrigation scheme could be gone on with. That district should not be overlooked. It is one of the best districts we have. We have a new Premier now. I am not going to say anything about the ex-Premier. I hope the present Premier will do something to assist primary production. One thing he has done of which I do not approve since he has been elected, and that is to commandeer the pastoralists' meat at a low price. Who is going to be the greatest sufferer by that action? I say the grazing farmers of Queensland, the small men, will be the greatest sufferers. The big squatters do not care, because they have large runs and thousands of head of cattle and sheep. They will not suffer so much as the small men.

The PREMIER: No sufferers under that scheme.

Mr. GRAYSON: Oh! yes there are. Every dairyman, every small cattle-owner in Queensland will be a sufferer through the action of the Premier. He may live [7.30 p.m.] long enough to see the error of his ways, and I hope that during his term of office he will lend a more sympathetic ear to the primary producers of Queensland than the Labour Government have done in the past.

I would like to refer now to the incident that took place here yesterday afternoon. In my opinion, the hon. member for Bulimba was harshly treated.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. GRAYSON: I think that if the Premier will reconsider the matter he will regret having suspended the hon. member. What was the charge against him? It was that he took exception to two speeches made by two Cabinet Ministers, members of the present Government, in a certain clubroom in Queen street.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: That was not the charge at all. It was disobedience to the Chair.

Mr. GRAYSON: I am quite right in my statement about the two speeches that were made, and that the hon. member for Bulimba took exception to them. I am going to quote extracts from those speeches.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I say that you are disloyal.

Mr. GRAYSON: I do not wonder that the Minister for Railways, who made one of the speeches, does not wish to hear his own words repeated.

Mr. COLLINS interjected.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. GRAYSON: The Minister for Railways, in his speech, said, among other things, that—

“England is the home of cant, humbug, and hypocrisy.”

Mr. KIRWAN: Lloyd George—now Premier of England—said that.

Mr. GRAYSON:

“‘No Irishman,’ he said, should have ‘the impertinence to apologise for the rebels,’ and, he added, ‘The opinion is held by many young Australians that every Irish-Australian recruit means another soldier to harass the people of Ireland.’ Referring to the executions of the Easter week rebels in Dublin, he said, ‘A good deal was heard about the cases of Captain Fryatt and Nurse Cavell, accompanied by the denunciations of Germans, who, after all, had only done such things against alien enemies, whereas England had murdered people whose compatriots were fighting with her by the hundred thousand.’”

This is Mr. Lennon's speech at the same gathering—

“Mr. Lennon, having listened to the excitable words of Mr. Fihelly, said that he ‘admired Mr. Fihelly for his outspoken utterance. The time had come when the Irish should speak out, and refuse to allow their country to be the doormat of England. . . . The points which Mr. Fihelly had raised were worthy of consideration. Ireland had always had specially bad treatment accorded to her, and at last the Irish should let England know they were tired of it. He had spoken strongly, but was prepared, as at all times, to take the consequences, being firmly of opinion that all should speak out what was in their minds conscientiously.”

That is exactly my opinion about the hon. member for Bulimba. He should have been allowed to speak out his mind conscientiously. He did so. He did not find any fault with any speech made in this Chamber. It was

with speeches made in a club in Queen street, Brisbane, that he found fault. I think that the Premier acted precipitately in that case, and I have no hesitation in saying—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member knows that the hon. member for Bulimba was suspended on the action of the Temporary Chairman of Committees, and he is not in order in discussing that action. I have allowed the hon. member considerable latitude in permitting him to make the remarks he has, and I trust he will not continue.

Mr. GRAYSON: I have no intention of transgressing your ruling.

Mr. GLEDSON: You have not been thrown out yet?

Mr. GRAYSON: No, and I have no intention of being thrown out.

Mr. BRENNAN: What did you get for that land at Warwick?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. GRAYSON: I do not wish to say anything further, except again to repeat that I think a grave mistake was made in expelling the hon. member for Bulimba yesterday afternoon.

Mr. KIRWAN (*Brisbane*): I have listened, as I am sure a majority of members of this Committee have listened, with a certain amount of interest to the speeches delivered by hon. members who have addressed the Committee from the Opposition benches. We heard one or two remarkable speeches yesterday afternoon, and I want to say, as one who on the public platform or in this House has always endeavoured to address himself to those who are privileged to listen to him without being offensive, that I think the Opposition should take a leaf out of the book of the new member for Maranoa. Whatever he had to say this afternoon he said in a straightforward manner, leaving no doubt about what he meant, and without being offensive or insulting or being guilty of imputing motives, which seems to be the stock-in-trade of hon. members opposite.

The hon. member for Bulimba yesterday afternoon had something to say about this Government's being responsible for the large foreign element in North Queensland. The hon. member, as an ex-Minister, knows perfectly well, as a schoolboy of the fourth class knows, that the immigration laws are administered by the Commonwealth, and that any immigration that may come to the State of Queensland or any other portion of the Commonwealth is regulated by the Federal authorities, and any immigrants who are allowed to land here are allowed to land only by those authorities, and that this State has no control at all over the matter. But just by way of illustration, as showing the policy of the Nationalist party on the question of foreigners, let us take New Guinea. I am now quoting from the Sydney “Sunday Times” of the 2nd November, 1919. The article is headed—

“STILL GERMAN NEW GUINEA.

“SOLDIERS' LEAGUE DRAWS ATTENTION TO SOME MATTERS THAT REQUIRE, AT LEAST, EXPLANATION.”

I do not intend to read all of it, but I shall

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read some extracts to which I wish to draw the attention of this Committee and the people outside. The first paragraph is headed, "Diggers Not Wanted," and is as follows:—

"Evidence in the hands of the league suggests that the returned soldier is not wanted in German New Guinea. One man's case is cited in point. A returned man, it is stated, made application for a large Government plantation, which is leased by a German at £50 per annum. The soldier applicant offered £500 a year for the lease, and it is alleged that he was informed that it was useless for him to apply, as the German would be given preference. The plantation is producing copra valued at £2,000 a year.

"The same applicant sought to obtain a lease of Pidgeon Island, a Government-owned plantation leased to a German for £50 per year, and showing an annual return of £1,000. Again he was turned down."

The next paragraph is headed, "Yellow Races Pouring In," and is as follows:—

"Chinese and Japanese are pouring into the territory at an alarming rate. At present there are hundreds of celestials carrying on plantations and various businesses. Already the Japanese have a monopoly of the pearling industry of Rabaul.

"For purely strategic reasons the Returned Soldiers and Sailors' Imperial League claims that the yellow races should be denied admission to the country; and that if their presence is absolutely necessary for the economic development of the country, they should be admitted under indenture, similar to the conditions existing in Fiji, and return to their countries at the completion of the indenture period."

At twenty minutes to 8 o'clock p.m.,

Mr. T. FOLEY (*Mundingburra*) relieved Mr. Pollock in the chair.

Mr. KIRWAN: There is Mr. Hughes's policy of a "White Australia" that hon. gentlemen opposite had so much to say about during the Federal elections. The hon. member for Bulimba also said that there was a feeling of want of confidence in Queensland, and the hon. member for Drayton, with his usual disregard for the truth, declared that there was no money being invested in Queensland to-day. Both those statements were deliberate untruths. They were made by hon. members who knew that they were untrue, and they were made with the specific object of endeavouring to gain political capital even at the expense of damaging and maligning the State from which they get a living.

Mr. MORGAN: It is not in order to accuse an hon. member of deliberately stating untruths.

Mr. KIRWAN: If the hon. member for Bulimba did not make that as a deliberate misstatement then he was guilty of incredible ignorance. As a business man, the hon. member reads the financial columns in the "Daily Mail" and the "Brisbane Courier" very closely every morning. I would not mind betting that it is the first column in the respective journals over which he casts his eye

[*Mr. Kirwan.*

every morning, and he must have discovered the following quotations which I discovered between the dates mentioned:—

"NEW COMPANIES FLOATED (SHARES £1 EACH).

"From 18th October, 1919 to 23rd December, 1919.

	£
John Lysaght, 441 Ann st., Brisbane ... ..	100,000
W. McQueen and Co., Bundamba ... ..	50,000
Kaimkillenbun Co-operative Cheese Company, Limited...	2,000
Mercer Limited, South Brisbane ... ..	5,000
Wilson and McDonald, Limited, Rockhampton ... ..	150,000
Gardens Residential Flats Limited ... ..	50,000
United Graziers Co-operative Shearing Company, Limited, Queen street ... ..	100,000
Rankin and Carey, Limited, Maryborough ... ..	25,000
Centennial Hall Limited, Adelaide street ... ..	12,000
R. S. Hews and Co., Limited, Elizabeth street ... ..	6,000
Robert Reid and Co., Limited, Edward street ... ..	800,000
J. S. Kirby and Son (Dalgety's Buildings) ... ..	60,000
Star Brothers and Lewis Limited, Adelaide street ... ..	10,000
Henry Mort and Sons, Limited, Franklynvale and Redbank Stations ... ..	40,000
Beale and Co. (Queensland) Limited ... ..	105,000
Campbell, Molony, Limited ... ..	5,000
Prince Limited, Edward street	10,000

Total capital ... .. £1,530,500

"Increase in Share Capital.

Warwick Butter and Dairying Company, Limited ... .. £80,000."

After listening to the diatribes of the hon. member for Drayton and the hon. member for Cunningham, one would hardly be expected to find the Warwick Butter and Dairy Company increasing its capital by £80,000. That company exists solely for the benefit of the farming community in the Warwick district.

Mr. GRAYSON: A very important company.

Mr. KIRWAN: Yes, a very important company, but the shareholders cannot believe that the Labour legislation of the Government of Queensland is going to ruin the country, or they would not be increasing their capital by £80,000. The quotation continues—

	£
"Permanent Building and Banking Company, Limited ... ..	25,000
Joseph Astill and Co., Limited	27,000
Wunderlich Limited ... ..	80,000
Queensland Brewery Limited ... ..	50,000
Taylor and Colledge Limited...	75,000

Total increase in capital ... .. £337,000

"Comparison.

	£
Companies floated ... ..	1,530,500
Increase in companies capital	337,000

Total ... .. £1,867,500."

In the "Daily Mail" of this morning I notice that the company of Crease, Limited, Elizabeth street, has been registered with a capital of £20,000, and the Inkerman Farmers' Co-operative Company, Limited, has been registered with a capital of £20,000. Evidently the farmers of the Inkerman district, in the Bowen electorate, are not ruined by the Labour legislation of this Government when they can raise a capital of £20,000. Let me now read what the chairman of the Brisbane Permanent Building and Banking Company said at the annual meeting of shareholders, as reported in the "Daily Mail" of 18th October last. Hon. members know that at least 80 per cent. or 90 per cent. of the clients of these building societies are working men, yet this is what the chairman of that society said—

"An optimistic note was struck at the annual meeting of shareholders of the Brisbane Permanent Building and Banking Company, Limited, held yesterday afternoon. The chairman, Mr. W. J. Byran, in moving the adoption of the report and balance-sheet, said 'that the year just closed must be regarded as a record one.' . . . Unless adverse conditions again prevailed, there was no doubt that the volume of business would increase very much, and the company would be able to utilise much more extra capital. If shareholders found that capital it would mean extra dividends and more prosperity. (Hear, hear!)"

There is another illustration that Queensland is not ruined, and that, generally speaking, the investing public of this State—who are generally pretty shrewd business men—do not pay any attention to the calamity-howling and stinking-fish party opposite. I am now going to call another witness to prove that this State is prosperous, and, strange to say, the witness I am going to call is no less a person than the "Brisbane Courier," which is continually blackguarding this party and misrepresenting the effects of its legislation and the general state of the country. In the financial column of the issue of 14th October last this is what I find—

"Money is plentiful—people pay the enormous cost of good clothing, the ever-prevalent high figures for foodstuffs, and for rent, are able to crowd the places of public amusement, and still find money enough to expand the Savings Bank accounts. For the year ended 30th June the Queensland Government Savings Bank showed an increase of £823,710 in deposits, the average amount at the credit of depositors being £54 13s. 8d. The proportion of depositors to the population of the State was 2,674, and the deposits amounted to £20 9s. per head. In every respect the position has improved. It may be taken that if a man goes out for a tour of Queensland, including the cities, for every three persons he meets—men, women, and children—one will have a State Savings Bank account. Then there are the Commonwealth Savings Bank accounts to take into consideration. It is a most interesting feature of our social life that despite the high cost of living, and all our attributed and real extravagances, our savings as a community, our small savings, go on increasing. And that is despite the sale of war savings certificates and war

vestors at higher rates of interest than are given in the savings banks."

That ought to convince hon. members opposite that the place is not ruined yet. Let me now refer to Messrs. Finney, Isles, and Company, one of the leading firms in this city. One of the directors of that company is the Hon. E. H. Macartney, the leader of the Opposition, the gentleman who gets up in this Chamber and tells the country through "Hansard" and through the daily Press that the place is ruined, and then he advises the firm to do this—

"Messrs. Finney, Isles, and Company, Limited, on Wednesday purchased the properties adjoining their Queen street frontage, comprising the two shops occupied by the Marble Bar and Nissen and Company, jewellers, and offices. The purchase will afford an extra frontage of 40 feet to Queen street, as well as providing means for the extension of premises rendered necessary by the rapid growth of this progressive company's business. No doubt, when new buildings are erected they will be in keeping with 'Finney's' handsome Queen street frontage and an additional ornament to the city."

That shows the consistency of the leader of the Opposition, who, as leader of the Opposition, tells the country one thing, and as a director of a large business concern in Queen street, says, in effect, that the legislation and administration of the Labour Government are not going to ruin the country, but on the other hand he points out the necessity for buying 40 feet of additional frontage in the leading street of the city so that this firm may extend its business.

Mr. BRENNAN: A political hypocrite.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member for Bulimba also had something to say about the extravagance that this Government indulge in with respect to motor-cars. I would advise him to read the report of the Auditor-General of New South Wales, who, for a period of between two and three years, has been asking the Premier of that State what are the rules and conditions under which the motor-cars attached to the various Government departments are run, and he can get no satisfaction.

Mr. ROBERTS: The same thing applies here.

Mr. KIRWAN: It does not apply at all. If the present Auditor-General thought fit to comment on the method of administration of the motor-cars in the Government service, he would do it very quickly, the same as he has done in connection with other things to which he deemed it his duty to call the attention of Parliament and the country. I find that the motor-cars in New South Wales attached to the Chief Secretary's office numbered nine, the wages came to £1,486, the cost of repairs and petrol to £4,674, and the cost of running the motor-cars attached to Mr. Holman's office for one year only was £6,160. That information is taken from the Auditor-General's report in New South Wales, page 249. I find on page 251 of that report that the total cost in wages and repairs for motor-cars attached to the State department in New South Wales is £20,469 12s. 6d. That is in New South Wales, where we have a fine National Government in power which goes in for economy. There are no less than five pages of the Auditor-General's report in New South Wales devoted

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to the scandalous extravagance under a Nationalist Government in connection with Government motor-cars.

Mr. GUNN: At any rate, Mr. Holman was one of your productions.

Mr. KIRWAN: Mr. Holman is one of the products of the Labour movement in Australia. The Labour movement in Australia has done great work. It has given evidence that there are men in humble positions who, when they get the opportunity, are able to carry on the Administrations of the day. Mr. Holman was one of those to whom the Labour party gave an opportunity to rise from the lowest rung of the ladder to the highest. He saw fit to leave the Labour party, and the strange thing is that to-day we have the spectacle of the opposing party in the Federal Parliament and the New South Wales Parliament being unable to take out of their own ranks one of their own members to lead them, and they have to depend on the Labour renegades. They are welcome to the weeds that are pulled up out of the Labour garden and thrown over the wall.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. KIRWAN: Dealing further with the question of extravagance, I find that, according to the Sydney "Sun" of 17th September last year, at the meeting of the Macquarie and Murrumbidgee Councils, this resolution was moved. These gentlemen, I might mention, are not Labour supporters—

"That this council condemns the policy of the National Government in these times of financial stress for their wholesale creation of high-salaried appointments and of cheap trips for members and their political supporters without any result for the State."

Mr. ROBERTS: That is the case in Queensland.

Mr. KIRWAN: Hon. members opposite, if they were consistent, would condemn that, but consistency is something which, as far as principle is concerned, is not recognised by them.

Mr. MORGAN: What has this to do with the debate?

Mr. KIRWAN: I am pointing out what would happen in Queensland if we had a National Government in power. The extravagance of the Federal Government to-day is being denounced from one end of Australia to the other. So much has the rotten policy of the Federal party been viewed with suspicion that in New South Wales and Victoria a Farmers' party has been established. We hear about the wonderful victory of W. M. Hughes, a man who went to the country with fifty-two members and came back with thirty-five. That is what is called a victory. I hope the Opposition will have a similar victory at the next election, and there will not be much fear of them over there. The hon. member for Drayton complained about the falling-off in production, and the hon. member for Oxley made a remark to the effect that the legislation of the Government was curtailing industry, but neither of those hon. members produced a scintilla of evidence to support their statements. I am going to quote "Knibbs," a gentleman who has been very frequently quoted by hon. members opposite, dealing with the high price of living in Queensland. When the Denham Government was in power the amount of cheese

produced in Queensland was 4,000,000 lb., but that was raised to 11,000,000 lb. under a Labour Government. Here is the wealth of the Commonwealth for a period of nine years—

Year.	Production.
	£
1909 ... ..	174,000,000
1910 ... ..	187,000,000
1911 ... ..	188,000,000
1912 ... ..	206,000,000
1913 ... ..	218,000,000
1914 ... ..	209,000,000
1915 ... ..	251,000,000
1916 ... ..	270,000,000
1917 ... ..	283,000,000

Mr. MORGAN: That does not prove that Queensland has progressed.

Mr. KIRWAN: I have given this evidence, which shows that Queensland is progressing. I will give the hon. member a little more evidence that he will not appreciate.

Mr. MORGAN: I will give you some figures, too.

Mr. KIRWAN: Taking the three-year period between 1914 and 1917, the wealth production increased by £74,020,000, while for the period between 1911 and 1914, prior to the war, it only increased £20,904,000. Although we had 300,000 wealth-producers away from the Commonwealth, and the disabilities in connection with the war to contend with, we find the increase of production was treble what it was before the war, yet hon. members opposite, through their henchman and spokesman, Mr. Hughes, say "Produce, produce, produce." The great majority of the people, notwithstanding that 300,000 wealth-producers were away from the Commonwealth, produced more during the war than was produced prior to the war. The hon. member says that he will produce evidence about the terrible state of affairs in Queensland. We heard the hon. member for Drayton last night drawing a terrible picture of the taxgatherers of the Government going round and collecting taxes from the poor unfortunate drought-stricken farmer. The taxation of this Government is not going to hit the drought-stricken farmer. Those are not the people it is going to hit, and that is why hon. members opposite are so bitter against the taxation. I am now quoting the political bible of hon. members opposite, the Sydney "Bulletin," which we heard a good deal about during the last election campaign. In the Melbourne "Lady's Letter" in the Sydney "Bulletin" of 6th November, I find this—

"The Bananaland people flocked south in such numbers that the coastal boats had to leave scores behind at small ports for lack of accommodation. As it was one of the last steamers to arrive used most of the deck space for shakedown."

But this is the particular portion that the hon. member for Drayton is going to cut out, and paste in his hat, so that when he goes round at the next election he can show it to the electors in Drayton—

"With crowds of strange thirsts in town, Melbourne is short of champagne. Dealers could sell vintage at dizzy prices but the precious stuff has all been bought up. Bananaland particularly is regardless of expense when it comes to Melbourne for the Cup and this year Bananaland has arrived in droves."

These are the people who are ruined by the legislation of the Labour Government. As

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that extract is taken from the political bible of hon. gentlemen opposite, they [8 p.m.] can have no objection to it; and, as it is written by a lady, I should say it is truthful. (Hear, hear!) The hon. member for Oxley expressed his regret that this House did not desire to offer their congratulations to Mr. Hughes on his wonderful victory. As the name of Mr. Hughes has been mentioned, it is just as well to say a few words about that gentleman. I may remind hon. members that the people of Australia owe a debt of gratitude to this party for having stated the true issue at stake when the question of conscription was submitted to the electors of Australia. The people were then told that Mr. Ryan and the members of this party were telling untruths, and they were further told that the men opposing conscription were disloyal to Australia and were receiving German gold. What can we say of such statements coming from men supporting a man like Mr. Hughes, who offered the men who had fought for Australia an IOU to be paid later on in German gold? The correct name for that IOU is a Kathleen Mavourneen IOU—"It may be for years, it may be for ever." The Hon. Mr. Hughes stated that he had to break up the fifth division in order to supply other divisions with reinforcements, and he said that there was no provision for a sixth division. Let me call the attention of hon. members to what the Premier of Canada stated on this subject.

Mr. MORGAN: Why go back to the ark?

Mr. KIRWAN: Why dig up the truth? Hon. members opposite would go back to the days of Adam if they could get some scandal against the Labour party; and, if they could not get one, they would invent it. Sir Robert Borden, speaking in the Canadian Parliament, said—

"In March last (1917) I saw at the front a Canadian army of four divisions. Australia had five divisions. Australia has reinforced five divisions without conscription. She has enough reserves to replace every man in the firing line. She has a larger army in reserve than in the firing line. She has five army divisions in France against Canada's four."

Hon. members opposite scandalised and slandered this country by saying that Australia had not done enough. Yet here we have no less a person than the Prime Minister of Canada saying that she had done ample, and that she had done more by the voluntary system, though 10,000 miles away from the scene of conflict, than had been done by Canada. Who made the statements I have referred to? Let me quote a few testimonials to Mr. Hughes, and those testimonials I shall quote from Nationalist newspapers. Here is one. Mr. Holman, a brother Nationalist, according to the Sydney Press of 11th January, 1918, made the following statement:—

"I have long known that Mr. Hughes is a man whose pledged word is absolutely worthless; but I confess I am amazed and depressed to find that the whole of his colleagues have joined in the exploit . . . I can only attribute it in certain cases as due to a sense of mistaken loyalty to a man who has never been loyal to anybody or anything."

Hon. members opposite are never tired of repeating the same old slanders that I heard

twenty-five years ago against the Labour party, though those slanders have been refuted times without number. They repeated often the scurrilous statement that if Labour members were returned to the Commonwealth Parliament, a woman's marriage lines would not be worth the paper they are written on. They made that statement, though they knew that it was slanderous and untrue. Mr. Fowler, another brother Nationalist, said of Mr. Hughes—

"My greatest concern is: How long is Australia going to allow this calamitous mountebank, Hughes, to thrust her face in the gutter?"

The present leader of the Opposition in Queensland, who moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Hughes at the Exhibition Building, had previously said this—

"Mr Hughes is a hypocrite, and, as far as I know, the biggest hypocrite in Australia."

That statement was made by a gentleman who is a director of Finney, Isles, and Co., and who has advised that firm to invest in Queen street property, notwithstanding the land tax imposed by this Government. Here is another quotation, which is taken from "The Land" of the 11th January, 1918, the official organ of the Farmers and Settlers' Association of New South Wales—

"Mr. Hughes has attained the very apotheosis of degradation and dishonour. He stands revealed to the whole world as a leader whose solemn assurance is no more dependable than that of the commonest of racecourse 'spielers' who pride themselves on their exceptional capacity for cheating and hoodwinking less sophisticated people. . . . He has disclosed himself once for all as an unmitigated political impostor and charlatan, who will stop at no form of trickery or chicanery that will serve his ends and keep him in the position and the power he has so infamously abused."

That is a statement made by the editor of "The Land."

It has been rather amusing to listen to the reasons given by members opposite for the success of the Queensland loan. This can be said with truth—that whatever success has been achieved by the Queensland Government in floating a loan on the London market, it has not been due to anything said by the Opposition inside or outside of this House, because if the people in London had listened to their speeches Queensland would not have been able to raise a penny. The "Courier," in discussing the loan, said—

"The intrinsic credit of Queensland has been the really operative factor."

The hon. member for Oxley declared that the money-lenders were burning with patriotism and desired to show their appreciation of what Australians had done in the war by subscribing to the loan twice the amount of money required. The hon. member for Maranoa stated that the success of the loan was due to the result of the Federal elections.

Mr. PETRIE: No.

Mr. KIRWAN: It was an Opposition member who said it, at any rate. What is the truth regarding this success? Is it due to what the "Courier" says? Is it due to the desire to do homage to the Queensland soldier who played such an important part on the Western front? Or is it due to the

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Federal elections? Notwithstanding all the misrepresentations that this party has been subjected to; notwithstanding all the vile slanders that have been hurled at this party, never has one financial journal in Great Britain written of this party that which was written by A. J. Wilson in the "Investors' Review" in Great Britain of the party that hon. members opposite have descended from—they represent its wreckage on the Opposition benches to-day. The "Daily Mail" in commenting on the success of the recent loan, pointed out that the editor of the London "Times"—whom nobody will accuse of having any particular leanings towards this party—stated that while the legislation of the Queensland Government might be questionable, yet the conduct of their finances was much better handled than that of New South Wales. What has the hon. member for Murilla got to say to that authority?

Mr. MORGAN: I have no brief for Holman.

Mr. KIRWAN: Holman and Fuller—you cannot separate them. He is supported by a majority of Nationalist members, but, no doubt, if they find the load too heavy to carry at the elections on this occasion they will get rid of him by shoving him into the Agent-General's job in London. Mr. Grahame is not a Labour man, and the stench of his actions in connection with the wheat scandal in New South Wales is that strong—

Mr. GUNN: Are you sure he is not a Labour man?

Mr. KIRWAN: Yes.

Mr. GUNN: Mr. Grahame was a Labour man.

Mr. KIRWAN: I do not think so. I am satisfied that those men were received with open arms in the same way that Mr. Hughes and others were received when they went out on the conscription campaign. Hon. members opposite cannot wash their hands like Pilate and say, "We know not this man."

Mr. MORGAN: They were all Labour.

Mr. KIRWAN: The extracts I am now going to read are taken from the "Investors' Review," and they were reprinted in the "Worker" of 27th March, 1897.

Mr. GUNN: Twenty-two years ago.

Mr. KIRWAN: It does not matter. The longer ago it was, it is all the better, because hon. members opposite cannot say that Labour legislation, they cannot say that the Bolsheviks, they cannot say that the I.W.W. element, they cannot say that the go-slow element had any effect. The only people who carried any influence in this Chamber, or in the Chamber next door, at that time were the party opposite or their representatives. They were the people who were supposed to know all about finance; they had the management of the Queensland National Bank and other banks entirely in their hands and they were responsible for the biggest financial crash that ever occurred in Australia. Hon. members opposite talk about commandeering meat. We commandeered meat, but we paid for it, while in 1893 the Government then sitting on these benches commandeered all the deposits in the banks of Queensland that went into liquidation, and business men who wanted their own money for business purposes had to pay 6 per cent. interest for it and had to wait years—some of them for a quarter of a century—

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for money which was their own. That happened, not under a Labour Government, but under a Government composed of gentlemen who were heaven-born financiers.

Mr. BRENNAN: A lot of criminals; that is what they were. They ought to have been gaoled.

Mr. KIRWAN: This article is headed "Queensland National Bank Swindle," and it reads—

"It has been announced that the Government of this settlement is coming here for another loan, the proceeds of which shall lie at the Bank of England to meet the interest on its already existing debt as and when due. This is quite proper. After what has come to light regarding the National Bank of the colony, neither its Government nor its people are to be trusted with our money."

That has never been said about a Labour Government. It was said about a good, solid Liberal Government, or a Conservative Government, or a Nationalist Government, or a progressive Government, or any other name by which they like to call themselves. Further on I find this—

"All prudent persons can do is to take the utmost care that no more of their money ever finds its way to Queensland on any pretence. Brand the settlement as a disgrace to the English name, and let it alone until it comes to itself and decides to wipe out the disgrace this ugly story has put upon it."

I might read a lot more from the article, but these two extracts are quite ample to demonstrate what I wish to demonstrate—that under an anti-Labour Government composed of all the heaven-born financiers that could then be raked up in Queensland, we find this position existing: that they actually borrowed—and the committee of investigation in connection with the Queensland National Bank proved this fact—they actually borrowed some £600,000 ostensibly for the purpose of financing the requirements of Queensland, but in reality that money was put into the bank for the purpose of trying to keep it on its feet. No such corruption has ever existed under any Labour Government; and yet hon. members opposite hold up their hands in holy horror and come here as the Simon Pures of politics, and charge this Government with all sorts of alleged acts of maladministration. I challenge hon. members opposite to bring forward any act of the Labour Government which compares with those acts of previous Liberal Governments. Take the wheat scandal in New South Wales, in which several members of the New South Wales Government are mixed up. Hon. members opposite cannot say that there is any scandal attaching to Labour members. They may disagree with our views, and they may oppose our platform on the grounds that it is not in the interests of Queensland or in the interests of Australia so far as the Commonwealth party is concerned, but they cannot say that the Labour Government has done other than administer honestly and fairly the affairs of the State. One hon. member opposite said this was a party of destruction. What a wonderful discovery! Does the hon. member know that this party stands for reconstruction? Does he know that the Governments which held the reins of power in the various European countries when this devastating war broke out were anti-Labour Governments, and with

all their alleged gifts of statesmanship they were unable to prevent the greatest catastrophe that has ever overtaken the human race? The late war was a disgrace to civilisation. If you want a party of destruction, you have it in all the Governments of Europe; Governments of autocracy in the various countries, all doing their level best to destroy. I say it deliberately so far as some of the Allies are concerned; I do not say it so far as Great Britain was concerned, because Great Britain was forced into it by a secret treaty. Just here it might be as well to say a word or two about secret treaties. Several members of the British Government, the British Parliament, and the British people did not know of the existence of a secret treaty with France—that if she was attacked by Germany, Great Britain would have to come to her assistance.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: That was known publicly.

Mr. KIRWAN: It was not known publicly. When the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. Asquith, was asked if such an agreement existed, he denied it, and it was not until Viscount French, who is at present running a fine system of Prussianism in Ireland, published his book that the people of the British Dominions were aware that such a treaty was in existence. Look at the result of their policy of destruction in Europe. As the hon. member for Bowen pointed out, 10,000,000 of the prime of the manhood of the nations of Europe were sacrificed in that struggle. We do not need to mention the untold sacrifices and indescribable sufferings of the women and children, particularly the women of Servia and of Armenia, who were massacred after suffering the most diabolical of tortures. Yet to-day, after all this tremendous sacrifice, we have an open confession from the Governments of Europe that they are unable to prevent a repetition of this awful era of destruction. We are told to-day by Lord Jellicoe that we must prepare in Australia for the next war. We had a general landing in Sydney the other day who said that if he had his way he would pass immediately a law which would enable the Commonwealth Government to send the Australian manhood anywhere out of Australia to fight. I understood this war was to destroy militarism, but from my reading to-day I am compelled to say—and I say it with feelings of deep regret—it has enthroned militarism, which is stronger to-day in every country in the world except Germany, where it has been crushed, than it ever was before. Survey the military and naval votes over in America, Great Britain, Japan, France, Italy, or any other Power outside the Central Empires. You will find that these votes have increased to an enormous extent, that the people have not only to find interest on the tremendous amount of money that was fired away and thrown away in this awful devastating war, but they have to bear an additional burden, not for the purpose of crushing German militarism—for that has been crushed beyond all hope of recovery. Why is it necessary in the case of those Governments who tell us that they possess intelligence and gifts of statesmanship and are able to guide the destinies of nations? Whatever else may be said about the Labour party—people may question its principles, they may contend that they are based on unsound ideas, but they cannot say that as a party we do not stand for peace and for the

peaceful development of the world. Does any hon. gentleman think it is any credit to a Government to be responsible for the carnage, the slaughter and the devastation in Europe to-day? Only this morning in the "Daily Mail" I found this—and this is not in an uncivilised country, it is not among the Red Indians or some other uncivilised tribes—but occurred in Europe as a result of this catastrophe, the late war—

"AUSTRIA'S PLIGHT.

"FAMINE STALKS THE LAND.

"London, Monday.—The correspondent of 'The Times' at Vienna says that while visiting the forest of Dornbach he had a nightmare in the sight of an unending procession of wan and gaunt people of all ages, clad in drenched rags, that streamed through the snow and rain carrying bundles of fuel gathered in the forest. Some were so weak that after staggering along they fell prostrate beneath their bundles. Others glanced indifferently at those who had fallen, neither heeding nor helping them, but carrying their own troubles in their aching hearts."

That is what the Labour party are not responsible for. They have nothing like that to their credit, and on the day of the final judgment when the recording angel opens the Book of Life there will be no damnable things of that kind to the credit of the Labour party; they will be due to the anti-Labour policy which has controlled the destinies of Europe.

Mr. MORGAN: You have a Labour party in Russia.

Mr. KIRWAN: I have not got the time to-night to discuss the Labour party in Russia. I am prepared to meet the hon. member any time he likes to discuss that. I want to say that the statements made about the horrors of Russia are nothing compared with the horrors that we supported if we supported Denikin and that crowd. I read in an American journal that Yudenich did not take the trouble to hang his prisoners; he made them hang themselves. That is the crowd the allies are supporting. If the hon. member's humanitarian sentiments are so outraged by the actions of the Bolsheviks in Russia, why was it he did not raise his voice in protest when the autocracy of Russia acted in that merciless fashion? He never said anything about the Czar and the way in which he treated those who stood for freedom of speech—which the hon. member for Drayton spoke of yesterday. Anyone who stood for freedom of speech in Russia went to the mines of Siberia, if he were able to get there.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: There is no freedom of speech here.

Mr. KIRWAN: This House and this Committee are governed by a set of Standing Orders, and those were framed in case there were members of this Chamber who did not behave as gentlemen. I remember on one occasion the Hon. Mr. Huxham, the present Minister for Public Instruction, and myself were fired out one morning at half-past 3 for doing the same thing as the Hon. Walter Henry Barnes did yesterday afternoon, and that was disobeying the orders of the Chair. We were asked to tell, and we refused; and, notwithstanding that every other member of the Opposition had refused from midnight, we were suspended, and we walked out like

gentlemen and did not "belly-ache" about it and did not cast reflections on the Chair. The Standing Orders were framed by hon. gentlemen opposite to deal with the Labour party when they came into this House, and when they get a taste of their own medicine they squeal and squirm. But when they see a Labour man being fired out of this Chamber it is a cause of joy—the kind of joy that "passeth all human understanding." Coming back to the war, I want to point out that, as far as the cost is concerned, it is simply appalling. We have hon. gentlemen criticising the administration of this Government because the Government see fit to increase the salaries of the lower-paid public servants, give the school teachers a decent living wage, and insist that the men in the Railway Department shall be paid at such a rate that they can live in decency and comfort. We are condemned for doing that.

Mr. SIZER: No, you are not.

Mr. KIRWAN: Yes, we are. Hon. gentlemen opposite say we are spending too much money. The hon. member for Nundah will have an opportunity to give us an analysis of what amount of money is included that does not come under increased salaries and wages so far as the Government departments are concerned.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: You are spending money in sending navvies up to do useless work in order to win elections—that is what we complain about.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member for Drayton has another bad attack of what an eminent English statesman called "spasmodic morality." (Laughter.) I remember the time when he sat behind a Government in which one of the Ministers had a special train going round Queensland from the day of nominations till the day of the poll. The hon. gentleman sat here and kept his tongue in his cheek and never said one word about it. I want to point out that, when we come to consider the cost of this war and consider that when a Government attempts, either by loan money or by taxation, to do something by way of developing the State, we hear objections to it. Take a brief bird's-eye view of the money spent on this war. I am speaking up to March, 1918. It amounted to £32,000,000,000. One gentleman who sat down and computed the interest made the statement that, if a man had started shovelling half-sovereigns one a minute when Adam was formed out of the clay of the earth, and shovelled them day by day, month by month, year by year, and century by century down to the present time, he would only have shovelled the interest on the war debt. Dealing with the casualties caused by the war, if it were possible to put them head to foot they would form a bracelet for the entire globe. That is not mentioning the women and children who perished in Armenia and in Serbia, and who are dying to-day in thousands in both Austria and Germany as the result of starvation.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Who is to blame?

Mr. KIRWAN: How long has the war been over? I have heard people say we Britishers do not make war on women and children. Does the hon. gentleman say that we should? Does not his inter-

[8.30 p.m.] jection justify my statement in saying he stands to-day an alleged Englishman, what for—war on women and

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children because they belong to an enemy country? He is not satisfied with slaughtering their men. Now he wants to slaughter by slow starvation their women and children.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: You know you are telling a deliberate lie; and it is not the first you have told to-night.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I say it is a deliberate lie.

Mr. KIRWAN: I repeat that when I made the statement that women and children were dying of starvation he said, "They deserve it," or something to that effect.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. KIRWAN: Or, "Whose fault is it?" If the hon. member says he does not believe in the starvation of women and children, why does he not get up and denounce the blockade which has been continued by the Allies on the Central Powers since the armistice? They stand for the blockade which was responsible for the starvation of the Central Powers to-day.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: What have we got to do with the blockade? You are blockade enough. (Loud laughter.)

Mr. KIRWAN: I am hitting the hon. member, nevertheless; and I want to say—as I said at the outset of my speech—that any statement I make on the floor of this House I am prepared to back up, unlike the hon. member when he makes statements in this House. On one occasion the hon. member made a statement in this House, and the then Treasurer, the present Premier, asked him to supply him with particulars. Although the hon. member made a deliberate statement that the Government had collected land tax from certain men, it was found on investigation in the office that only one had paid land tax, and he had paid a small amount. But the hon. member did not apologise. The hon. member last night made statements that he knew were deliberate untruths, and if he did not, then the less said about his intelligence the better.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: You live in the town. You know nothing about the country.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member has said that because I live in the city I have no idea of the conditions of the country. I want to tell the hon. member that I know something about them, and I have just as much sympathy as the hon. member—a great deal more sympathy than the hon. member—for the farming community. He stands for the profiteer and exploitation.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: What rot!

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member stood up in this House and said that he was in favour of taking farmers' sons, whether they liked it or not, and sending them to the front to be made fodder for cannon, although everybody knew there were quite enough reinforcements over there. The hon. member misrepresented the position on every public platform on which he stood.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The farmers' sons fought for men like you.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member may say what he likes about my attitude on the war. I am prepared to defend it on every

possible occasion. At any rate, I repeat, for the benefit of the hon. member—he was not in the Chamber at the time—that I am not one of the party who offered the Australian soldiers an I O U, redeemable in German gold. (Hear, hear!) The hon. member went round the Darling Downs and supported Ministers of the Crown who stand for that.

Mr. GRAYSON: Ryan objected to our not getting more German gold.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member is not prepared to tax the 12,148 persons who have wealth amounting to £413,000,000 in Australia. A 5 per cent. taxation on that wealth would realise £20,000,000—that is, taxing only the people who have property of the value of over £5,000 each. No! He says, "Wait until Germany pays up the indemnity." That is his idea of showing his appreciation for the soldier.

Mr. ROBERTS: That was your resolution at the Labour Conference in October.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member is stating a deliberate untruth, and he knows it.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: You were the first man to stand up in this Chamber and advocate the confiscation of the interest on war bonds.

Mr. KIRWAN: My time is up, and I want to say this in conclusion. Three hundred thousand Australians enlisted to do their duty in connection with the great war. When the wealthy classes were appealed to to lend their money—not give it—what did they say? They said, "The rate of interest is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; we want  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., and we want it free of State and Federal income tax." In other words, "While the men of Australia are giving their lives," they said, "we want 6 per cent.; we want our pound of flesh." And it is because I denounced that form of "brummagem" patriotism that the hon. member dared deliberately to misrepresent what I said in this Chamber. (Government cheers.)

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I have no doubt that the hon. member's speech may be very interesting from one point of view, but in it he never touched upon one line of the Financial Statement.

Mr. KIRWAN: I took up all my time replying to your lies.

Mr. MORGAN: I think I may take for my text a remark made by the Treasurer before he became Premier, or occupied an important position in the Government of this State. The remark he made was, "Finance is the basis and the test of good government." I feel sure that the remark, when it was made, was made sincerely by the Premier, who at that particular time was sitting in opposition, and I feel sure also that anyone hearing his remarks must have felt that it was quite correct. If that is so, the Treasurer and his Government have absolutely failed so far as good government is concerned, because never before in the history of this Commonwealth of Australia—even bearing in mind the fact that in West Australia the Labour party made a miserable hash of the finances—never before in the history of Australia has a State been so badly managed financially as this State during the last five years. When the Labour Government took over control we had had for

eleven successive years small surpluses. Queensland at that time was one of the brightest stars—if not absolutely the brightest star—in the firmament of the States of Australia. People were flocking here from all parts of the Commonwealth, from New Zealand, and other parts of the world, anxious to embark in land settlement and make Queensland their home. But what do we find has happened in this short period of five years? To-day we find that Queensland, instead of being that bright star which undoubtedly five or six years ago she was, is at the present moment the Cinderella of the Australian States. Go where you will to any part of Australia to-day, you will find that you have only to mention the name of Queensland to have people point the finger of scorn at her.

Mr. BRENNAN: Why?

Mr. MORGAN: Why! Owing to the fact that the present Government have ruined her in the estimation of those who live in other parts of the world. In my opinion, it is a very great pity in one way that the ex-Premier resigned as he did, because it was owing to the fact that he endeavoured to capture the Commonwealth that Queensland was so badly advertised throughout the rest of Australia. In order to prevent Mr. Ryan's obtaining in the Commonwealth the power that he possessed in Queensland, from obtaining the position of Prime Minister, it was necessary right throughout the length and breadth of Australia—

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE and GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: To circulate lies.

Mr. MORGAN: Not to circulate lies but to "tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" about Mr. Ryan's Administration. I absolutely defy any member on the Government side of this House to show that any of the figures placed before the people of Australia were any other than figures compiled by Knibbs or by the different departments of the Queensland State Government, or from the Auditor-General's report, as the case may have been. Everything printed or circulated as to Queensland's financial position was perfectly true and correct. As I have said, for eleven successive years we were prosperous and lived within our means. During over sixty years, under successive Liberal administrations, the accumulated taxation only amounted to £1 8s. 2d. per head of the population. In the first four years that the present Government were in power, the taxation rose by leaps and bounds until it reached £4 0s. 9d. per capita; and the additional taxation that the Government now propose to place upon the taxpayers of this State will amount to no less a sum than £1 13s. 4d. per head—a greater increase in one year than the whole taxation of over sixty years of Liberal administration. In five years this Government will have increased the taxation per head from £1 8s. 2d. to £5 15s. 1d. Five years ago we were the lowest taxed people in the Commonwealth; to-day we are in the sorry position of being more heavily taxed than any other State in Australia. Hon. members on both sides will agree with me that there is no State in Australia that needs developing more than Queensland. In regard to developmental work, we are right behind in every respect. The hon. member for Bowen has told us of the wonderful resources of

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his electorate, and, no doubt, there are other districts equally as rich; and what is necessary to develop those resources is money. But is it likely that we shall encourage people to come to this State to invest their capital in developing those resources when they discover that we stand head and shoulders above every other State in Australia in the matter of taxation? When people contemplate developing the resources of any locality, they inquire, first of all, as to the taxation that will be imposed upon them. Undoubtedly, the wilful, wasteful extravagance of the present Government during the past five years has prevented the introduction of millions of pounds into this State. I can give numerous instances in which investments have not been made because of the administration of the present Government. I can mention the case of one property not far from my electorate where money was coming from the South to purchase and stock a particular pastoral property. But, owing to the legislation of this Government, its administrative extravagance, and the way in which the pastoral industry was being attacked, these people declined to invest their money in Queensland, and they are now thinking of going to the Argentine, where they intend to go into the pastoral industry, sooner than engage in pastoral pursuits in Queensland. I can also tell hon. members that there are people leaving this State almost daily and going to South America with a view to investigating what can be done in Uruguay, Argentina, and other countries there, intending eventually to get rid of their interests in this country and to settle in South America if the reports are satisfactory. Advance agents are leaving Queensland almost daily with that object in view.

Mr. BRENNAN: Who are they?

Mr. MORGAN: There is no necessity to mention names.

Mr. BRENNAN: You cannot, because you are not telling the truth.

Mr. MORGAN: I could give the names if I desired. I could mention the name of one member of this House who will be leaving shortly with that object in view; but I do not intend to mention names.

Mr. BRENNAN: Like the rest of your statements! There is no truth in anything you say. You never told the truth in your life.

Mr. MORGAN: What I say is absolutely correct, but I have no intention of giving the names of these people. At the present moment the country is not being developed. Go into the far Western portions of this State, and you will find stations which at one time were prosperous and well kept, the fences in good repair, the country well run and improved; and now, after four or five years of the administration of the present Government, there are signs of neglect. Suckers are not being kept down; ring-barking is being neglected; the fences are tumbling down; the buildings are not being kept in repair; and, in every way, the places are showing signs of decay. The owners are not prepared to spend money in keeping their places in the condition that they were in a few years back.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Where are these places?

[Mr. Morgan.]

Mr. MORGAN: You can go to my electorate, you can go into the Maranoa, Warrego, and Balonne electorates, and you will see what I have seen in my travels during the past few months. In the townships in those localities you will find the buildings suffering more or less from neglect and decay. This is due to the fact that the Government are doing all that they possibly can to kill the industries that have kept Queensland in a sound position up to five years ago. We obtain all our wealth from the soil. Our principal industry—grazing—is being attacked on all sides. It is evidently the idea of hon. members opposite, simply because certain individuals or companies have large pastoral holdings, that they are to be taxed in season and out of season with a view to providing money for the extravagance and waste of the present moment in and around the cities and towns of the State. In every locality—with the exception, perhaps, of a few favoured spots—the man on the land is being driven off owing to the fact that he has not been given the encouragement by the Government that he deserves. Is it not an absolute fact that the people are leaving the country and coming into the towns? Was not this referred to only a few days ago by Archbishop Dubig himself? Did he not impress upon his people the necessity for the young men of his flock going into the country, instead of being educated to fill positions in the public service and other walks of life in the towns? Did he not impress upon them the necessity, from the national point of view, of going into the country? ...

Mr. DUNSTAN: He did not say they were leaving their farms.

Mr. MORGAN: He may not have said they were leaving their farms, but, as one who travels and observes what is going on, he knows that that is what is happening. We all know that. Taking the figures from our own Agricultural Department's report we find that there are ever so many less engaged in the producing industries now than there were some time ago. Those industries have not now the attractions that other industries possess in and around the city.

Mr. GLEDSON: Yet the value of our products is greater.

Mr. MORGAN: The value of our products cannot be taken into consideration, as it is greater owing to the high prices. It is far better for us to produce a greater quantity. At the present time we know that prices are inflated in respect to all the products of the soil. We should produce a greater quantity, but right throughout the Financial Statement I do not see any encouragement held out to the men engaged in primary production.

Mr. COLLINS: What about the rise in sugar? Tell the truth.

Mr. MORGAN: The producing industries are not getting the support which they should. We find that in the Southern States, owing to the drought, loan money is being set aside with the view of assisting the struggling settler and placing him upon a sound foundation the moment the drought breaks up. But what do we find in our dairying localities to-day? We have an illustration in my own electorate, and also in adjoining electorates. A great number of small dairymen have lost 75 per cent., and up to 100 per cent., of their herds. Although the rain has

come, the drought has not broken, I am sorry to say, other than on the coastal portions of the State. We have had isolated rains on the Darling Downs, but further west practically no rain at all. It cannot be said that in the great pastoral areas of the State the drought has yet broken. All the vast hinterland is yet suffering from the effects of the drought. The moment the drought breaks we will find hundreds of small men with any amount of grass but with no cattle, with no seed for the purpose of growing crops, and the Government is making no provision with the view of helping those men immediately they have the wherewithal in the way of fodder and grass.

Mr. GLEDSON: You know that is not correct. The Government will supply them with seed wheat at any time.

Mr. COLLINS: We have already made provision. What about the Co-operative Agricultural Production Act?

Mr. MORGAN: We know that no provision has been made in that direction at all. In the Southern States the Governments have been buying up thousands of dairy heifers, with the view of the settlers getting them immediately they are required. They are reserving seed wheat, so that the moment the planting season comes round the farmer will be able to plant his wheat. What has this Government done? Last year it made a complaint about the farmers not using the seed wheat which they offered to them. Why was that? It was simply because the Government left it to the last few weeks of the planting season, when most of the farmers had made arrangements to obtain seed wheat in other directions. Even those who obtained the first supply of wheat from the Government found it was almost too late to plant. It is just the same with the fodder which is hung up in Melbourne at the present moment. Cattle have been dying for months, and this produce should have come to the department six months ago, so as to assist the farmer; the Government should have had a regular supply coming from the other States every month to save the dairy herds. Thousands of cattle would have been saved if the department had had a regular supply of fodder available to help the farmers. The Government has ordered about 250 tons of chaff, and the drought has broken, and a great number of those farmers who have placed their orders with the Government and sent in a cheque will, by the time the fodder reaches them, have sufficient of their own to carry on with.

Mr. GLEDSON: Not six months ago you objected to the State purchasing fodder from the South.

Mr. MORGAN: I never objected to it, but if the Government do anything, let them do it at once. If the Government are going to supply the farmers with seed wheat during the coming planting season, which will be on in March, April, and May, let them get to work now. But the department does not make a commencement. Perhaps about May a deputation will wait upon the Government from both sides of the House, and the Government will then decide to get the wheat, but by the time they get it and grade it, it will be too late for planting. That is the way the Government acts so far as assistance to farmers is concerned. Its

assistance is always too late, and we are thus led to believe that it is not the genuine intention of the Government to assist the farmers in any direction.

I would like to say a few words in connection with the taxation proposals of the Government. I notice that the income tax is to be altered in some directions, and I approve of some of the different ways in which taxation is to apply. Some time ago, when an income tax proposal was brought before the House, I moved in the direction of making an allowance of £52 for a wife or other person dependent upon the taxpayer, but the motion was thrown out by the Labour Government. Since then, at a conference held in Sydney, the Labour party have adopted that suggestion as a part of their policy, and the Government now recognises that a married man should get some consideration in regard to taxation, which saves what may be called a bachelor's tax; but they are not going far enough in that direction. They should make an allowance of £52 for the wife of a taxpayer, as £26 is not sufficient. At the present time it is the married man with a wife and family who is suffering the severest hardships. The single man, with his high wages and short hours, has any amount of money with which to attend the amusements and the races, and is in no way up against hardships or scarcity. If there is anything we can do to relieve the married man and place the burden on the single individual, it is the duty of the Government to do it.

Mr. COLLINS: You want to make the conditions so that the single man will get married.

Mr. MORGAN: The conditions are so good that he does not want to take a wife. In my opinion, these conditions do not make any difference. We want to provide that a man with a wife and family is not penalised because he is doing his duty in that connection.

With regard to land taxation, we have had on four different occasions an amending Land Bill brought before the House with the view of repudiating the agreement entered into by a previous Government with the pastoralists of the State, and on each occasion that Bill has been thrown out by the Legislative Council, which refused to be a party to repudiation. We on this side supported that attitude, recognising that a contract entered into by the Government with a pastoralist had no right to be broken. We object to a contract between individuals being broken, as it would be repudiation. If the Government repudiate a former agreement in respect to pastoral holdings, a precedent would be established for repudiating agreements entered into to-day in connection with pastoral leases. For instance, in ten, fifteen, or twenty years it may [9 p.m.] happen that the agreement which has been entered into by many of the agricultural farmers with the present Government may not meet with the approval of a later Government, and then they will have this precedent to justify them in repudiating that agreement. No Government has any right to interfere with a contract which has been lawfully entered into with any persons by a previous Government. This repudiation Bill is not to be brought forward in the usual way, and in my opinion the procedure which has been

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adopted by the Government is unfair. The Government have no right to bring in this taxation in the particular form in which it is proposed to be introduced, because if the Upper House do not agree with the proposal they must reject the whole of the taxation proposals of the Government. The Council must either withdraw their objection to this proposed repudiation or throw out the whole of the Government's taxation proposals. I should like to know if there is any connection between the manner in which the Government are introducing these taxation proposals and the appointment of the Hon. William Lennon as Lieutenant-Governor. Has this appointment been made so that, if the Legislative Council refuse to pass that particular measure—and they will not be worth the reputation they now enjoy if they go back on their previous decision—the Lieutenant-Governor may accede to the request of the Government to stuff the Council so as to secure the passage of their taxation proposals, and with the ultimate view of wiping out the Council altogether? We know that it is the object of the Government to abolish the Council, because their supporters have told them that they must do away with the Upper Chamber. We know also that so far as the abolition of the Upper House is concerned, and so far as this repudiation Bill is concerned, the Hon. William Lennon has expressed himself time after time in favour of both these proposals of the Government. The abolition of the Upper House has been one of the strongest planks in the programme of the hon. gentleman, and he has always voted in favour of the abolition of that Chamber. Will the Hon. Mr. Lennon be strong enough to refuse the request of the Government to stuff the Upper House for the purpose that I have mentioned? Looking at the matter from this point of view, I hold that the advice given to the King in connection with this appointment was immoral. It was not proper advice for any Government to give to His Majesty. I think that someone more fitted—more fitted from the point of view that he is not a strong partisan politician—could have been obtained for the position. The Hon. Mr. Lennon has no doubt been attending caucus meetings up to the present time; and in view of the fact that we are going to have submitted to us the two important measures I have mentioned, which he has, no doubt, discussed in caucus, I do not think His Majesty's advisers were acting in the best interests of the State or the best interests of constitutional government when they recommended the appointment of the Hon. Mr. Lennon as Lieutenant-Governor. I am sure that the Government could have obtained for the position a man who has not expressed himself on the particular matters to which I have alluded. We all know that the Hon. Mr. Lennon has in every way compromised himself in respect of those matters, and I am sure that a suitable man could have been obtained for the position of Lieutenant-Governor without having recourse to the Hon. Mr. Lennon.

Mr. COLLINS: The Governor-General of Australia, Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson, was a member of the House of Commons before he was sent to Australia.

Mr. MORGAN: The Governor-General of Australia is not a partisan politician as far as politics in Australia are concerned, and the Governors who are sent to Queensland

are not partisans as far as Queensland politics are concerned.

With regard to the report of the Agricultural Department for the year 1919, I notice that it is reported that the decrease in the number of males employed in general farming last year was 2,059, and the decrease in the number of females employed 205. The decrease in the number of males employed in the dairying industry was 1,088, and the decrease in the number of females employed 2,907. The total decreases in the number of persons employed in general farming and dairying is, therefore, 6,259. No doubt this House is responsible to a certain extent for that condition of affairs. It is quite true that a number of people engaged in farming and dairying industries have come to work in the cities, and do not intend to go back to the dairying and farming life. I know that people from my own electorate have come to Brisbane or gone to other towns where they have more opportunities than they had in the country for educating their children, and they are not likely to go back to the country to engage in farming again. In my opinion, the policy of every Government—for the next few years, at any rate—should be one of economy and production. We should do what we can in every shape and form to encourage production, and if people will not go on the land under present conditions, we should make the conditions more liberal, so that they may find it more profitable to go on the land and settle there; and when we get them there we should do all we possibly can to induce them to remain on the land. The trouble is that the Government of to-day—and this has been so right throughout the whole of Australia—are putting people on the land and then leaving them there to sink or swim. They do nothing to assist them in any direction. So far as water conservation is concerned, I am pleased to note that the scheme in the Inkerman district is going on successfully. I in no way begrudge the work that is being carried out in that district. I would not object to any of the taxation that has been placed on the people, if the money was used for the purpose of rural development. Can we show that while the revenue has increased by £2,000,000 per year during the last two or three years, or that while the national debt has increased by £15,000,000 during the last two or three years, that any proportion of that increase in the national debt or any proportion of the increased revenue has been spent in the rural districts? We find irrigation works are not being constructed in the way they are in the Southern States. Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia are spending millions every year in conserving water and on irrigation schemes. We have not spent in Queensland as many thousands as Victoria has spent millions on water conservation. We have practically done nothing in that direction.

Mr. COLLINS: Victoria has not spent eighty millions on irrigation.

Mr. MORGAN: They have spent over eighty millions in Victoria. I was a member of a water trust in Victoria, and that one trust alone spent twenty millions on irrigation, and borrowed money from the Victorian Government for water conservation. That was the Wimmera Water Trust. They constructed miles of channels with a view to giving the settlers of Victoria a supply of water. We have a Water Act on our

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statute-book, but practically no money has been spent under that Act, and no water trust has been formed. We have the power but unfortunately we have not been able to obtain the money to lock our rivers. Take the Condamine River. It is the longest river in Australia, and the whole of its water, right from its head at Warwick, runs into the sea in South Australia. That river could be locked as it is more suitable for locking than a great many of the rivers that have been locked in the Southern States. The timber for weir purposes is practically available on the banks and money could be well spent in that direction. But nothing has been done in the matter. If this Government or any other Government went on the money market and borrowed £10,000,000 for water conservation and irrigation purposes, I would support it, and I feel sure that the people of Queensland would support it. We cannot spend too much money in that direction in Queensland. No State suffers from drought more than this State, and it is up to us to do all we possibly can in that connection.

I want to refer to matters appertaining to the State stations. We know perfectly well that the Government have a number of stations throughout the State, and that they are the largest cattle-owners in the State to-day. I suppose, roughly speaking, that the State owns 200,000 head of cattle, and yet at the present time, notwithstanding the fact that the State are the largest cattle-owners in Queensland—they are the beef barons of Queensland—they have not sufficient fat cattle to feed a thousand people. Although they possess numerous stations they have no fat cattle. We were told during the drought period, owing to the fact that there was a shortage of fat cattle, that the squatters would not send them in; that they were holding their cattle for high prices. Yesterday there were only 350 head of cattle yarded at Enoggera, and they fetched 7d. or 8d. a lb. in the yard. If the State had no cattle we would be told that the pastoralists were holding up their cattle for high prices, or were deliberately holding up their cattle in order to starve the people of Queensland. If the State stations have no fat cattle to relieve the situation, how can they expect the pastoralists to have them? If the drought continues for another few months, instead of the State possessing 200,000 cattle, like a lot of the pastoralists, they will be on the verge of insolvency so far as the State stations are concerned. At the present moment cattle are dying in large numbers on the State stations. Notwithstanding the contradictory reports we have received, I have information to the effect that cattle are dying on the State stations the same as they are dying on private property. The State cattle are no more drought-proof than those owned by private individuals. Let us see what Mr. Ryan had to say on the recent shortage in fat cattle. This is taken from the "Daily Standard" of 8th November—

"They went to the bedrock in Queensland; they spent £688,000 on cattle stations, and they now had 105,000 head of cattle and 3,000 horses; not only could they sell cheap meat, but when the agents were cornering stock they sent, say, 200 fat cattle to the Enoggera saleyards and prices dropped as much as £4 per head."

Why don't the Government send their cattle to the Enoggera saleyards at the present time?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Is that true or not?

Mr. MORGAN: It is absolutely untrue. The cattle were never cornered any more than they are being cornered at the present moment. Mr. Ryan said all he had to do was to press a button, and down came the cattle to relieve the situation. I challenge the Government now to send cattle to Enoggera. I challenge them to supply any town in Queensland with fat cattle.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You know the incident he referred to.

Mr. MORGAN: I know that the State sent in only 202 cattle to the Enoggera saleyards spread over four weeks. Does the hon. member mean to say that that would break any ring? What would fifty or sixty head of cattle do to-day? The usual yarding at Enoggera is anything from 700 to 800 head. The yarding on Wednesday was only 350. What would 200 head do so far as that yarding was concerned? Absolutely nothing. We know perfectly well that at that particular period the cattle were not cornered at all. In order to show the deplorable condition the State stations are in at the present time I intend to read a report which has been supplied to me, and if the Government desire they can make all inquiries into the matter. I say absolutely that it is true. This report was supplied to me by those concerned in the statement I am going to make, and I give the Government an opportunity of repudiating it in any manner they desire. It reads—

"Owing to the drought the butchers in and around Cairns—viz., at Cairns, Babinda, Mareeba, Port Douglas, Chillagoe, etc., found their supplies of fat cattle so short that they approached the Government through the clerk of petty sessions in Cairns to buy 300 fat bullocks off their Lyndhurst State station; and, as they understood not many had been sent off as fats, and as there were said to be plenty bullocks of marketable age, they combined to buy 300 head in two drafts. The Government would not sell at less than £12 per head with delivery on station."

You might think £12 was a reasonable price.

Mr. RIORDAN: It is not a fair price for good cattle.

Mr. MORGAN: That is for fat cattle, but wait until you see what the cattle were like. He goes on to say—

"Purchasers tried to arrange with the State to put the cattle on the trucks, a matter of about 20 miles driving, and a convenience almost every station now grants, but this was refused, and the terms were strictly cash before delivery. To get the cattle the purchasers had to rail men and horses and droving plant from Cairns, a distance of about 220 miles, to move the cattle 30 miles, thus adding materially and unnecessarily to the cost. The cattle were railed over the State railways, with the result that the expenses came to from 12s. to 20s. per head to land them at their destination.

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Had the cattle been worthy of the name of bullocks the cost would not have been so bad, but twenty so-called bullocks one butcher got averaged 458 lb., while another twenty averaged 459 lb. Allowing, say, 460 lb., and taking 15s. as the average cost of railage, droving, inspecting, etc., this would work out at 55s. 5d. per 100 lb."

That is the cheap meat the Government are supplying to the people of Cairns.

Mr. RIORDAN: You can tell the chap who wrote you that statement that it is a lie, because Lyndhurst is 75 miles from Einasleigh Railway Station.

Mr. MORGAN: The hon. gentleman, and the Government, will have an opportunity of refuting this. He says—

"With very plain beef to cut at, the butchers could not possibly make ends meet at the prices they had been selling at. So, to avoid a heavy loss, they had to put the price up. Had they wanted to give cheap beef to the Cairns district they should have sold at somewhere near the price at which they are endeavouring to commandeer meat from works that at present do not own any meat."

Mr. RIORDAN: Some of them were killed in the rush getting to Lyndhurst. They were paying £18 a head on the adjoining station.

Mr. MORGAN: £18 a head may be cheap for a good bullock, while £12 a head may be dear for a poor bullock. Everyone will admit that a bullock weighing 485 lb. or 490 lb. is not fit for beef.

The HOME SECRETARY: Is that a letter or a newspaper quotation?

Mr. MORGAN: This is a statement which has been supplied to me.

The HOME SECRETARY: Are you prepared to place it on the table of the House?

Mr. MORGAN: It has been handed to me in good faith, and I am quite prepared to place it on the table of the House. [The hon. member did so.] If the Government desire, they can do what they can to refute it. I have been told that it is practically absolutely correct.

Now, I want also to refer to other matters in respect to this particular meat industry. We know that the Government now are trying to force the graziers and meatworks owners to enter into a contract to supply 20,000 tons of meat at 3d. and 3½d. per lb. During the coming meat season there is not likely to be a great number of fat cattle. The drought has not broken yet in the grazing area. You can see a report in the "Daily Standard" from the State stations manager, saying that at the bulk of the stations no rain has yet fallen. At a few there has been some, but not sufficient to say the drought is broken on any one of those particular places. The same thing applies throughout the whole State. If the Government insist on obtaining 20,000 tons of meat, that will mean at least 60,000 head of cattle. That is what the Government wish to reserve to themselves during a time of drought. I am doubtful if there will be more than 120,000 head of cattle killed during the coming year.

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The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Would you oppose cheap meat in times other than drought times?

Mr. MORGAN: I certainly object to the Government obtaining meat at a cheaper rate than the market value. I say the Government have no more right to obtain meat at less than its market value than to compel the large drapery firms to sell portion of their drapery, the large grocery firms to sell portion of their groceries, or the large butter factories and different other industries to sell any portion of their produce to the people of Queensland at less than the market value. You have just as much right, owing to the fact that you have State hotels and refreshment-rooms, to go to the breweries and compel them to supply so many hundred kegs of beer at £1 per keg less than what they supply it to the ordinary hotelkeeper; or to go to the different butter factories of the State and compel them to reserve so many thousand pounds of butter for the people of Queensland at less than market value.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Whether the season is good or bad, you are against cheap meat?

Mr. MORGAN: I am not against cheap meat. I am against the Government obtaining meat at less than the market value. The Government have no right to compel any section of the people to give any portion of their produce at less than its market value.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: So, although you referred to the drought, it has no bearing on the argument?

Mr. MORGAN: It has a great deal to do with the argument. I also want to refer to the fact that the Government are endeavouring to get this meat at 3d. per lb. For a 600-lb. bullock—which is the average the Government have been getting from the meatworks up to the present time—that would be equal to £7 10s. The Government are retailing that meat out to the people of Queensland, on an average, at 5½d. That comes to £13 15s. for the carcass. The pastoralist who grows the beef, the railway freightage on the animal, the slaughtering of it—not taking into consideration the hide or tallow—will absorb £7 10s. For cutting it up and retailing it over the counter, the Government get £6 5s., while the people who take all the risks get only £7 10s. In the Southern States they have retailers. The carcass butchers supply the shops. The retailers are thoroughly satisfied if they make 1½d. to 1¼d. per lb. all round on the carcass. I feel sure the majority of butchers in Brisbane would retail it all round at 4½d. per lb. and make good money if they could obtain that meat from the freezing works at 3d. per lb., as the Government do. They would not charge on an average 5½d. per lb. At the present moment the Government have a meatworks at Charleville. They were supposed to have a number of fat cattle there. At any rate they had 1,000 head at Dillalah. An offer was made to the manager of £14 per head on the ground for those cattle, but they were kept with a view to supplying the meatworks at Charleville with meat. What was the result? They were only able to kill a certain number. The first 500 were fairly good, and the meat was sent to Roma and sold in Charleville and other localities in the West. On account of the

drought the remainder of the animals got poorer and poorer, until a great number of those originally fat cattle, which could have been sold at £14 a head, became stores and were not any good at all. The same thing applied to a number of sheep which the Government bought. Owing to the fact of the drought continuing, a great number were not killable because of the condition they got into during the period they were kept. The cattle sent from the State station were put into the Charleville meatworks at £9 10s. a head. They were honestly worth £14. That was their market value had they been sold—had the State station been an independent concern and allowed to sell at [9.30 p.m.] market values the same as they did at Enoggera and Cairns. They put them in the Charleville meatworks at £9 10s. per head, no doubt, with a view to making that meatworks pay, although actually it did not pay.

The HOME SECRETARY: Did it not give cheap meat to the people along the line?

Mr. MORGAN: No. I will tell you what they did. To-day the Government have no fat cattle. They are buying cattle from the graziers out West and supplying Charleville and Roma. They are giving for those cattle the highest market values which exist to-day. Do we find the meat any cheaper? We find that meat is sold to the Brisbane public by the State butchers' shops at 5d., whereas 8d. is charged for similar cuts in Roma. In the western country, where the cattle graze round the slaughtering pens, as it were, the people are asked to pay, on the average, 2d. to 3d. per lb. more for their meat than the people in Brisbane who buy from the State butchers' shops. We find that the butchers at Roma are competing more than successfully with the Roma shop. The Roma State shop cost about £5,000 for land and buildings. The interest on that alone, at 6 per cent., is £300 per annum, or £6 per week. That is not counting rates or wear and tear. There is no butcher in any part of the western portions of Queensland who can afford to pay £6 per week for a shop and supply the people with cheap meat.

Mr. STOPFORD: Do you argue that that shop should be closed?

Mr. MORGAN: I argue that the Government have no right to spend £5,000 on the erection of a shop in Roma. A shop at a rental of £1 5s. or £1 10s. a week would have been sufficient. We are told that the cost of lighting alone is £300 a year—the hon. member for Maranoa told us that to-day. That and the interest on construction and other charges make £13 a week alone in practically two items of expenditure. Can that butcher's shop at Roma then sell sufficient meat profitably to the people in that locality at a reasonable price? We find that at Wallumbilla, a town not far from Roma, a private shop is selling meat at about 1d. a lb. on the average cheaper than the State shop at Roma. In Cunnamulla the people are being supplied with meat by a private butcher more cheaply than the people at Charleville—

Mr. COLLINS: Do you propose to close up the State shops?

Mr. MORGAN: And practically only one person in nine gets any benefit from the State butchers' shops at all. I notice that

they have not yet established one in Toowoomba, although it was promised.

Mr. PETERSON: They took mine away.

The HOME SECRETARY: Would you withhold a reform because you could not give them the whole at once?

Mr. MORGAN: It is not beneficial, and it has been the means of causing unemployment in the city of Brisbane. We are told that anything from 1,200 to 1,500 men are usually engaged in the meatworks in and around Brisbane. Can you wonder why they are out of employment to-day? Do hon. members realise how many fat cattle have gone out of Queensland to the Southern States during the past twelve months? Do they know—and I am telling what is absolutely a fact—that all the cattle in what is known as "the clean areas"—that is, areas free from ticks—have for the past two or three years right up to the present moment been bought by New South Wales and other Southern buyers? They are not coming to Queensland to be slaughtered.

The HOME SECRETARY: Then all this talk of a drought has been a fiction?

Mr. MORGAN: Those cattle are going away to be slaughtered, and can anybody wonder that people are out of employment?

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

Mr. JAMES (*Logan*): I rise to speak to-night on the Financial Statement, because I have an explanation to make to the Logan electors and the public generally for certain happenings of late. The incidents, though perhaps interesting in themselves, are of little consequence. The actual details may matter little. It is the inside change that really matters. In this case I take full responsibility for being on this—the Opposition—side of the House instead of being any longer a supporter of the Government. Of course, where I sit—the particular bench—matters little. It is what I say and the manner in which I vote, I suppose, that will carry weight in the end. The fact remains that I have resigned from the Labour party, although I was elected on the Labour party's platform. I blame no one but myself for that happening, because it has been a gradual progression, which has lasted right from the time of the election, and I suppose the education commenced before the election, when I came so closely into touch with the farming population of the Logan. I have had a good deal to think about. While in England I was studying the position up, and I do not think I shall be disclosing any confidences when I say that I discussed the matter more particularly with the Premier, Mr. T. J. Ryan, and the Secretary for Railways. If it had not been for certain incidents which occurred within the Labour party's organisation recently, I might not have taken such a definite stand, and might have continued longer within the party. I am not going to bring those incidents to the front, because I regard them as being confidential—inside the Labour party—and I intend to preserve any confidences which I contracted in that party just as strictly as if I were still a member. (Hear, hear!) I would like to say also that, as regards personal friendships and connections, they are as they were so far as I am concerned. There would be no difficulty for me in

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announcing now a new policy—I think anybody who has studied anything I have said since I have come back from the front will realise that there has been a slight variance from the usual accepted policy of the Labour party—there would be no difficulty in announcing a new policy, but there is considerable pain attached to the dissociation from friends of the past and personal connections of the past. In respect to this matter, I would like to say that the change has not occurred on any details, but it is rather because of the broad perspective of the whole position and the general principles and aims of the Labour party. Naturally, such a change as that is slow, but it must come to fruition in time, and no matter what incidents transpire by the way, it is sure to arrive at one culmination in the end. Now, I think I know definitely where I stand, and I have taken advantage of this debate to offer some explanation to the electors of the Logan as to why I am on this side of the House.

To get to the kernel of the matter, the Labour party, in 1890, branched out to do a certain thing—that was, to revolutionise the social system for the benefit of the working classes, or, in other words, to introduce socialism. And the basis of the political platforms of the Labour parties right throughout Australia is socialism—that is, the social ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange, so that the working man should get the full results of his labour. The youthful and inexperienced man who has reasonably humanitarian sentiments would naturally gravitate to a party which was trying to do good and to alleviate poverty. But, although the Labour party has now been some years in power, off and on, we find that the wage-worker generally is no better off than he was before the Labour party came into existence.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. JAMES: And any improvement in the working man's position that has accrued has come about equally in other countries where there has not been a Labour party.

Mr. RIORDAN: Why did you not stick to your guns and reform the party?

Mr. JAMES: I am sticking to my guns. I am here, and I may inform the hon. member for Burke that I have a greater admiration for a person who is capable and willing to think for himself and to act according to his convictions than for a man who changes his mind and still is afraid to get out of the party with which he has been previously associated.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. JAMES: I think that the real opportunist is the man who sticks where he is because he is afraid to do anything else.

Coming to the actual statistics as published by the Commonwealth Statistician, Mr. Knibbs, we find that, according to the comparative price of wages throughout Australia, the wage-worker is just about as well off as he was in 1900, but since 1911 the average effective wage has decreased by 1s. in the £1. That shows that political Labour parties have failed to ameliorate the condition of the worker from the very essential point of view of his capacity to buy food-stuffs and clothing for his family. They

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have failed in comparison with what they set out to do; because, if a political party is going to justify its existence in working revolutionary changes, it must do something substantial or have to admit comparative failure. The keynote of the Labour party's position is nationalisation.

Mr. STOFFORD: Do you think that the party on your side of the House will alter that?

Mr. JAMES: I will come to that later on, and I think the hon. member will see that, when it is developed in a particular way, the policy which I am going to announce—(Government laughter)—which is not associated with any party in this House except the party which I compose myself—(renewed Government laughter)—will do something for the benefit of the wage-worker. Every Labour party in Australia has practically embarked on the same voyage of nationalisation. Theoretically, socialism was going to change everything and make this a glorious world for the working man—a world in which there would be plenty for everyone and poverty would not exist. Nationalisation has not justified itself. If we take Western Australia, New South Wales—every State where there has been a Labour Government—they have nationalised concerns, but they have failed to make a glorious paradise for the workers of the country. Supposing a nationalised concern pays, that is no justification. The fact that it pays equally as well as a private concern is no justification. It has failed to return to the worker that part of the product of his labour of which he is supposed to be robbed. Therefore, if a nationalised concern pays its way and continues to exist, that is no justification from the standpoint of the Labour platform. In Queensland we find some of the nationalised concerns show a profit. The butchers' shops are showing a profit; but there is really no economic value to the State of Queensland in those butchers' shops showing a profit; because what advantage is it if the meat is taken at less than its value and sold in the State butchers' shops at nearly the price at which it is sold in private butchers' shops? What value is that to the State of Queensland? Anyone can make a butcher's shop pay on those lines. If it comes to that, in reply to an interjection made by the Secretary for Railways to the hon. member for Murilla about the high price of meat, I would like to say that I have never at any time thought that high prices on the whole were any disadvantage to the working classes, because inevitably in every arbitration award wages are fixed according to the cost of living, and, when the cost of living goes up, wages go up in proportion.

The HOME SECRETARY: How do you reconcile that with your statement just now that the working man is now so much worse off than in 1911.

Mr. JAMES: It is just a matter of adjustment. In this case there has been an abnormal rise in prices in a short time owing to the war, and wages have not yet been adjusted in accordance with the increased cost of living. There should be a sliding scale at all times between the cost of living and wages, so that, instead of referring each particular matter to the Arbitration Court, wages will automatically adjust themselves

in accordance with the cost of living. I think that is an answer to the interjection of the Home Secretary.

The HOME SECRETARY: According to your argument, wages are too low.

Mr. JAMES: I hope that the Home Secretary does not think that I have come to the position where I object to the wage-worker getting the largest wages that he can get in order to support his family in comfort.

The HOME SECRETARY: According to your argument, wages are too low.

Mr. JAMES: The hon. gentleman is trying to trap me, but he is not going to do so. If we glance over the statistics with regard to the State enterprises, we find that in no case have they been that overwhelming success that they should be if they are to ameliorate the condition of the wage-workers, and that was intended by the Labour party in announcing its socialistic platform. We find that the railway refreshment-rooms certainly show a profit, but we also know that you have to pay 2s. 6d. for a meal in the Queensland refreshment-rooms, as against 2s. in New South Wales and Victoria.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Did you ever criticise that while you were over here?

Mr. JAMES: I am criticising it now, and it is just possible that I refrained from doing so when I was over there, and that I refrained from giving a candid expression of my opinion of the Labour party, because I was a loyal member of the party while I was over there. Take, again, the State Produce Agency. I welcomed that when addressing the farmers of the Logan at the time of the election as an experiment which might, if well managed, do something good for the farmers. But, although the market makes a profit, it is practically of no benefit to the farmers. The farmers in the Logan tell me that the State markets are no better than any other markets; and, even if they show a profit, it simply means that there is so much more encumbrance in the public service and in Government institutions, and, therefore, they are not a success looking at it from that particular standpoint. Had the State markets branched out in some new directions, such as controlling the fruit trade of Queensland and regulating the export trade to New South Wales, Victoria, and other States, as it should be regulated, and so getting the fruitgrowers of Queensland a price something near to what they should get as a reward of their labours, then the State markets would be doing some good. Looking at it broadly, there is not one of these State enterprises that has done anything to justify its existence. On the contrary, we find the most remarkable fact that pretty well the whole of the energy of this House on both sides has been directed for some years towards State enterprises. Instead of trying to find out the way to develop the primary industries of the State, we find nearly a dozen Cabinet Ministers and the members on that side and the members on this side concentrating their attention on State butchers' shops, on State stations, State railway refreshment-rooms, and State hotels, and wilfully neglecting the things that really matter.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. JAMES: Although I criticise the present State enterprises in Queensland, I may say that I am not altogether against Government control and Government ownership; but I say that the policy of the Government, and of the Labour party as expounded in its platform—that is, to socialise the country by means of national concerns—is a failure, though I would not keep the Government out from all participation in the industries of the country. That would be suicidal. One of the most rising countries in the world to-day is Japan, and the Government of Japan is altogether associated with enterprise. They are associated with shipping; and Japan is one of the most go-ahead nations in the world.

Mr. STOPFORD: Do you consider that the condition of the worker in this go-ahead nation of Japan is such that you can stand up and ask Australia to support it?

Mr. JAMES: No; but I consider that if we were in as go-ahead condition as Japan is our working people would be better off than they are, and far away better off than they are in Japan. As expressing my views on nationalisation, I will quote a statement by Professor Arthur Pigeon, of the Cambridge University, given before the Coal Commission in England about nine months ago.

Mr. BRENNAN: Does that mean that he has the brains of a pigeon?

Mr. JAMES: Does that show the extent of the hon. member's intellect when he puns a man's name as meaning that he has the brains of a pigeon? The report states—

“Nationalisation, he added, in any sense could not be judged on grounds of general principle. What would work well under one kind of Government would work badly under another; and what under any given Government would work well for one industry would work badly for another.”

I might say there has been current gossip at different times that a Liberal Government, for instance, would do better with a large concern than a Labour Government, and with the employees and the consumers who buy from the concern—

“The desirability or otherwise of the nationalisation in any sense of any industry could only be determined after a detailed study of the characteristics of the industry in relation to the qualities of the country's governmental machinery. With complete control over the whole mining industry of the country, operating through officials and workmen who felt themselves servants of the State, a perfectly wise autocrat could do wonderful things. He could fit every mine exactly into its proper place, apply all improvements to all the mines immediately, and work each mine exactly to the most advantageous extent. All these and many other excellent things a perfectly wise autocrat could do. Whether an actual Minister of Mines, whose political complexion had always to be that of the Government of the day, would in fact do this was a different question.

“Under private initiative many people were seen lagging behind because a few

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got ahead. Under nationalisation none would be seen lagging behind, none would be interested to get ahead."

That is the opinion of that professor of the Cambridge University, as expressed before the Coal Commission. Now, as further enlightenment with regard to the tendency of State concerns, we have the report of the sub-committee inquiring into the different Government departments in England after the conclusion of the war. This is a portion of the report of a sub-committee inquiring into the Ministry of Food, which is in keeping with the findings in respect of other departments—

"In a joint report the sub-committees stated that they had found work which, in their view, served no useful purpose and should not be undertaken at all. They complained of undue departmentalism, of excessive registration of papers, of a lack of the knowledge or non-adoption of modern saving office procedure, of the absence in some cases of effective supervision over the lower-grade officials, and of officers 'filling in time' by doing work of a character below that appropriate for their rank or pay. 'Many senior officers,' they say, 'were at pains to explain that the work on which we found particular officers engaged must not be regarded as typical of their work. The force of such an explanation is obviously, in inverse proportion of its frequency.'

In my opinion, as long as a State enterprise has the whole energy of the Minister or public criticism directed upon it, it is more likely to be a success than when it becomes stereotyped; that is, if it gets to that routine stage where a personal interest as applied to private business no longer obtains. To my mind, the railways have got into such a state. They are unwieldy, and the staff has obviously grown out of all proportion to the services rendered and to the object of the railways. In that routine state it is almost impossible for an individual, with even the energy of the Minister, to grapple successfully with the problems that confront one with regard to the railways. In my opinion, there are too many employees on the railways. I think that the Minister for Railways, and other persons who have an intimate knowledge of the railways, recognise that the staff of the railways could be reduced considerably without interfering with the efficiency of the railway service, and, without advocating any system of harsh retrenchment—because the one thing I would not do would be to throw a man out on his head to starve—I would certainly reduce the number of railway employees, but would, first of all, provide some other means of employment for him, so that he would not suffer for it. Provision might even be made by means of a wise and broad unemployed insurance Bill, which makes provision for public servants, whereas the one that was introduced by the Government recently does not make provision for public servants, because the Government does not pay adequately towards the fund which is to provide the payment of the unemployed benefits.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You do not know the Bill. We subsidise it with £10,000 a year.

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Mr. JAMES: But you do not pay £2 per head. I think the staff of the railways can be considerably reduced without interfering with efficiency. If it comes to that, there are any amount of worthy projects—if the number of employees in the railways are to continue in the employment of the State—there are numerous directions in which they can be employed, which will develop the State instead of retarding production. Before I get on to that, I might suggest that there are methods whereby even the efficiency of the railways can be improved, apart from reducing the number of employees. In glancing casually through the railway timetable, I chanced on the line from Ipswich to Dugandan. In that case, the train goes 35 miles and takes from three to four hours. The trains have a different time assessed to them in the timetable in which to cover the distance. There is one mixed train per day and two mixed trains every second day. When I was in New South Wales recently I found that a very successful motor-rail car—I suppose that is what it would be called—was running from Lismore to Grafton. The McKean cars were probably not a success, but there is no reason why some cars should not be provided for quick transit on such a line as that.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We have a dozen of them.

Mr. JAMES: Why does the Minister not get to work and make a success of them? Some means should be devised whereby on branch lines the traffic can be maintained and coped with without having these half-bred, mixed trains. We can have trains which will deal with the goods [10 p.m.] traffic more effectually than it is dealt with by these mixed trains. One direction in which the Government can make the railways pay is by developing the country and enabling settlers to produce more wealth, which will give traffic to the railways and make them pay.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Don't you know that we have a number of the cars you have been talking about at the present time?

Mr. JAMES: There are several directions in which the country can be developed in order to make the railways a better-paying proposition than they are at present. It is a remarkable thing that enthusiastic officials in the Department of Agriculture have these things at their fingers' end, whereas the Government cannot see the way in which the business can be better managed. In the last month's issue of the "Agricultural Journal" there is a letter from Mr. W. S. Harding, inspector of dairies at Esk, in which he says—

"The winding course of the Warrego, from its sources in the Main Dividing Range beyond Augathella to a point about 8 or 10 miles below Cunnamulla, is about 350 miles; and throughout the whole of this distance there is everywhere a fine soil for wheatgrowing as the most fastidious farmer could wish to put the plough into. Even after the most terrible drought (1902) which has ever been recorded since Sturt's time, there were to be seen splendid reaches of deep water at short intervals all along the river's course. As for the river in flood time,

It is then really a river, and a grand one throughout. It did not appear to me as if it had much fall, as the water scarcely flowed quickly southward even in the longest reaches. Now, can anything be done to store this water which now goes practically to waste? The answer is, 'Yes,' and at an outlay small indeed in comparison with the benefits to be derived from the work, both by the State lessee of the land and by the State itself. But a few more words on the waterholes of the Warrego, which may be seen at every few miles. Just below Charleville there is a fine stretch of water. Between that and Dillalah there are two or three, and several between Murdoch and Claverton, and on past Coongoola to far beyond Cannamulla."

The Treasurer is blaming the drought for the lack of freight on the railways, and for helping to bring about the deficit. If the Government in 1915 had put their energy into some scheme for the conservation of water in the Warrego River and other rivers of a like nature, the country along those rivers would have been developed, a big population would have been established there which would bring traffic to the railways, and the people would have been prosperous. A wise policy of that sort would have done something to make the railways pay. It would have been Government enterprise on sound lines, whereas, no one can say that the Government enterprises we have had have done anything to materially benefit Queensland. We have on another matter the testimony of another servant of the Government who puts his whole energy into his work. I refer to Mr. Cuthbert Potts, the Principal of Gatton College. Speaking of the rural credits, he said—

"Suppose a farmer put 500 tons of lucerne hay, say, in stacks, with the object of holding it so as to place it on the market in times of drought. This would mean that this farmer was prepared to lock up in stacks, roughly, £1,000 of capital, for it costs, approximately, £2 per ton to put lucerne into the stack, and £3 per ton to put it on the market. How many farmers have £1,000 of idle capital? Aggregate this over the whole country, and could the farming community be expected to finance the conservation of, say, 10,000,000 tons of fodder? Yet this conservation would pay, but it is only possible if it is financed, and the control of finance lies in the cities."

In this case, we have a far-seeing servant of the Government advocating what has been successful in other countries. America, Denmark, and other countries have a good system of rural credits, but we have nothing of that sort proposed by our Government. Instead of that, we have hindrances to land settlement; they introduce leasehold, and then impose land taxation. I hold the view that agricultural or other farming land which is a reasonable holding should be exempt from taxation. The Labour platform lays down the one exemption of £300.

Mr. COLLINS: Why don't you resume your seat and be a man?

Mr. JAMES: When I was a member of the Labour party I tried to get some relief

from taxation for the men who own agricultural land. I notice that the Treasurer has included in his proposals a sort of relief or exemption on agricultural land up to £750. The intention is nominally to exempt agricultural land up to £750, but the exemption still remains at £300 in accordance with the Labour platform. That is absurd. Why do not the party keep the exemption at £300 if that is the intention?

Mr. H. J. RYAN: Why haven't you stuck to the platform?

Mr. JAMES: I prefer common sense to any platform in the world.

Mr. COLLINS: Why did you sign it?

Mr. JAMES: I signed the Labour platform because I believed at the time in the general principles of the platform, although I disagreed with details in the platform. I fail to see that any party or small clique should have a monopoly in politics any more than they should have a monopoly in a business. I oppose a monopoly in anything.

The HOME SECRETARY: Why did you not go back to your electorate and consult your electors?

Mr. JAMES: I am going to deal with this matter before the electors of Logan, but I am not going to consult any Labour organisation in the electorate.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Labour electors sent you here.

Mr. JAMES: The electors sent me here on the platform I enunciated at the election, and not on any written platform.

Mr. COLLINS: Why have you not the decency to do as Judas Iscariot did?

Mr. JAMES: Whilst, at the last election, I did not fight these things out to the same extent that I have to-day, I did take a broad view, and I said then that there were things in the Labour platform with which I disagreed, but I said that since there were only two parties in the country I thought that the Labour party represented the true democracy, but as soon as I got into Parliament and attended the caucus I found that on nearly every question that came up I had a good deal of criticism to offer to the Government. Since Government members are taking up such a high standard of political morality, I hope they will be consistent and will maintain that standard of political morality and not suggest to other people what they should do, but do it themselves.

Mr. BRENNAN interjected.

Mr. JAMES: I can reply quite sincerely and straightforwardly to all those interjections. In the first place, I am not going to contest the Logan again. It has been said that the reason I resigned from the Labour party was in order to win the Logan on another party ticket, whereas I could not win it on the Labour ticket. In my opinion I could win it on the Labour ticket, but I have no intention of running for the Logan on any ticket.

Mr. KIRWAN: One pledge dishonoured!

Mr. JAMES: I think that, instead of trying to reform the Labour party from inside, as one hon. member remarked, I can do much better work for Queensland and more on the

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lines of my own ideas by trying to enunciate some better policy which I think will make for progress. In my opinion, the people who are in most need of assistance at the present time are primary producers. While hon. members sit here and hurl interjections across the floor, do they think of the farmers out back who are feeding their cattle on prickly-pear and who are not receiving even a living wage?

Mr. H. J. RYAN interjected.

Mr. JAMES: Possibly the only difference between the hon. member for Cook and myself is that I see with my eyes that which he does not, and I learn from that which I experience.

Mr. H. J. RYAN: I would not win my place on Labour and once I get in throw it over. Resign your seat like a man.

Mr. JAMES: Whether I resign my seat or not is a question between the electors of Logan and myself.

Mr. H. J. RYAN: Be a true Labourite.

Mr. BRENNAN: You got in on false pretences.

Mr. JAMES: I think these many and sometimes bitter interjections really show that hon. members opposite have come to the end of their resources. I think there is room for a great deal of change in our political methods. The present Government, in introducing the Bill to amend the Liquor Act, included the principle of preferential voting. Why? Because there are three issues to be placed before the electors, and they know that where there are three issues to be placed before the electors, that in the interests of justice a split vote should be avoided and a true expression of opinion recorded.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: You have preferential voting in the State.

Mr. JAMES: It is not preferential voting; it is a contingent vote, and that is not usually effective.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Ask the hon. member for Pittsworth.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. JAMES: The reason, so far as I can see, why the Labour party will not tolerate preferential voting for one moment, now that they are in power, is that the two-party method suits them. The two extremes are represented, whereas preferential voting would really result in the representation in this Chamber of a greater variety of political views. In the recent Federal elections we had many illustrations in three-cornered contests where the people did not want either extreme. In Victoria the farmers' candidates scored by reason of that preferential voting, and if we went still further and got proportional representation, you would get an even wider representation than you have in that Chamber at the present time. I am opposed to this tinpot two-party method, because the two extremes form these two political parties, and the people of moderate views have to attach themselves either to the one party or the other. So far as the next elections are concerned, I would support any party for the time being which would introduce some better system which would allow for the representation in this House of more

varied views, and thereby make for good government. Proportional representation would provide for that to a greater extent even than preferential voting. The farmers of Queensland, and of the rest of Australia, have been ground between the millstones of the two city parties ever since there has been a Government in Australia. We find, in regard to most of the matters of interest to the country, that the country members have less say than those of the cities. Even in the handling of our different primary products during the war we found that to be the case. Owing to the control of city interests to a large extent, the average price received over four years for wheat was 3s. 8d. per bushel, while in the United States and elsewhere the price paid was over 9s. per bushel. Then, in the case of wool, we got an average rate of 1s. 3d. per lb., whereas in other countries they got as much as 3s. and 5s. for the same class of wool. In every other respect we find that Australia, in the matter of primary products, has been in a bad position as compared to other countries, owing to the fact that the primary producers have not had a sufficient say in the management of their own affairs. So soon as the control of wool had practically ceased, we found that an effort was made by the woolbrokers of Australia to form a national wool council for the handling of wool. But the primary producers came to the front, and now we have a representative national wool council on which the primary producers form a prominent part. In other respects we find that the same principle is being brought into effect, owing to the fact that the primary producers are organising forcibly to protect their interests. Take the case of butter; the new butter pool will be practically controlled by the dairy people, and if I had my way I would remove it altogether from Government influence. Presently the only Government influence will be that the Minister will have a general presidency over the butter pool. I think that the farmers co-operatively are quite capable of managing their own affairs, no matter what they might be, and I do not see why the primary producers of Australia should not take a leaf out of the book of the industrial organisations and organise industrially. I do not see why we should not effectively bring into being a dairymen's union, a sugar producers' union, and combine the different sections as a whole to act politically on their own behalf. That is being done in other States and in this State to a large extent. If I can do anything to further that, I will do so. That, in my opinion, would be far more in the interests of the wage-earners than the policy of the present Government. I think that flourishing primary production would do far more to bring plentiful work and high wages, and to reduce prices, than any effort made by a Government which sets to work artificially. It is not the objective of the present Government that I am conflicting with. It is that, in arriving at the object, they do not work along right lines. I think every man, if he could, would make this a heaven on earth, by socialism or any other methods. The methods of the present Government, as we have had experience of them, have done very little. The Labour party have done good in different humanitarian directions. But those humanitarian

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efforts are not the monopoly of the Labour party, any more than they are the monopoly of any other party. I think they are the outcome of the humanitarian feeling which is in all people. In spite of the interjections, I have done my best to show in some measure the lines I have taken, the points on which I am at variance with the present Government, and the lines along which I intend to proceed in the future. I would like the supporters of the Government to give me the credit of, at least, some little honesty, some straightforwardness, and some desire to act in the interests of good government; in exactly the same way as I think I have given them credit for the same honesty of purpose. I have not in any way reflected on the motives of any member of the Government, excepting in reply to unworthy interjections, but I have endeavoured to criticise their policy on scientific lines. I hope, as time goes on, when the feeling of the House is slightly calmer than it is at present, I will have the opportunity of doing so more fully and in more detail, and at the same time more carefully.

Mr. H. J. RYAN: Labour put you in. Why don't you be a man and get out?

Mr. JAMES: As far as the Logan is concerned, and the remark of the hon. member for Toowoomba that I am going out of politics at the next election, the reply is that I am not going to mortgage my future. I am not going to run for the Logan.

Mr. H. J. RYAN: Pull out on your own ticket now.

Mr. JAMES: If the hon. member for Cook continues to interject, I would like to say—

Mr. H. J. RYAN: You signed the pledge and broke it.

Mr. JAMES: I would like to say that the exception which was taken to me in the first place was due to a letter which I sent saying I would not contest the next plebiscite. I made it clear that I did not intend to run, and when such persecution was brought to bear on me as the result of that, I naturally began to stick up for myself. In conclusion, I will simply say that, so far as the Logan is concerned, my action is a matter between myself and the electors of the Logan. I no longer hold any allegiance to a political party which, I think, has given way too much to machine methods.

Mr. BRENNAN: It put you in.

Mr. JAMES: It has allowed itself, I think, to become a bond slave to creeds and dogmas, rather than to freedom of thought, which I thought we upheld in the twentieth century.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The House resumed. The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN reported progress, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I beg to move—That the House do now adjourn. I understand that Mr. Speaker will have his resignation ready by to-morrow. If that is so, we will proceed with the election of a new Speaker. After that we will resume the debate on the Financial Statement.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at half-past 10 o'clock p.m.