

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 19 AUGUST 1920

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, 19 AUGUST, 1920.

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Bertram, *Maree*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

PAPERS.

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

Regulations, dated 1st June, 1920, under the Income Tax Acts, 1902 to 1920.

Regulations, dated 22nd April, 1920, under the Navigation Acts, 1876 to 1911.

Regulations, dated 22nd July, 1920, under the Pure Seeds Act of 1913 as amended by the Pure Seeds Act Amendment Act of 1914.

QUESTIONS.

INKERMAN IRRIGATION SCHEME.

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

“1. What is the total cost of the Inkerman irrigation scheme to date?”

“2. What is the estimated total cost of the scheme?”

“3. What is the approximate date on which the scheme will be completed?”

The ACTING PREMIER (Hon. J. A. Fihelly, *Paddington*) replied—

“1. £129,128 1s. 2d.

“2. £275,000.

“3. September, 1921, provided that materials and machinery can be obtained as required.”

ROYALTIES ON TIMBER.

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

“What was the royalty charged on sawmilling timber fallen upon Crown lands in the districts lying adjacent to and lying between Brisbane, Gympie, and Maryborough, on 30th June, 1915; and upon the 30th June last?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. J. H. Coyne, *Warrego*) replied—

“(a) Royalties on milling logs on 30th June, 1915: Gympie and Maryborough districts, 5s. 9d. per 100 superficial feet; Brisbane District, 3s. 7d.; Nanango, 4s. 3d. (b) Royalties on milling timber on 30th June, 1920: The old royalty system was abolished before this date, and the Forest Service now delivers the logs directly to the timber market, and offers them for voluntary purchase by auction or tender.”

MEAT FOR RETAIL BUTCHERS.

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Acting Premier—

“Will he seek the permission of the Imperial Government to enable him to make a similar offer to the retail butchers of Queensland as was recently arranged with New South Wales?”

The ACTING PREMIER replied—

“No such offer as suggested by the hon. member has been made to, or arranged with, the retail butchers in New South Wales.”

GOVERNMENT DEBENTURES IN LONDON.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*) asked the Treasurer—

“What sum has been subscribed to date in connection with the Government 6 per cent. debenture issue in Queensland?”

The ACTING PREMIER replied—

“£259,300.”

ALLEGED INSUFFICIENCY OF STATE SCHOOL TEACHERS.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“1. When will the Government make an attempt to provide sufficient teachers for State schools?”

“2. Does he consider that justice can be done to the children attending our State schools, and proper instruction imparted to them, by the present system of grouping children into classes of from forty to sixty in number?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. J. Huxham, *Buranda*) replied—

“1. The supply of teachers for State schools is ample at present.

“2. Under the provisions of clause 64 of the Regulations under the State Education Acts, 1875 to 1912, teaching staffs are allotted to State schools on the following basis:—

(a) To schools of classes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5—not more than one teacher for each forty pupils in average attendance;

(b) To schools of classes 6, 7, and 8—not more than one teacher for each thirty-five pupils in average attendance;

(c) To schools of class 9—not more than two teachers;

(d) To schools of class 10—one teacher.

Under this Regulation the word ‘teacher’ includes pupil-teacher, or pupil-teacher on probation; and two-thirds of the whole staff may be pupil-teachers. The returns of attendance for the year 1919 show that the average number of pupils taught by each teacher was—In high schools, 10; in State schools, 22.6; in provisional schools, 13; and in all schools, 22.”

COST OF STAPYLTON STATE SCHOOL.

Mr. JAMES (*Logan*) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“1. What was the total cost of the recently erected State school at Stapylton?”

“2. What was the total cost of the material used?”

“3. What was the total cost of labour?”

“4. What period of time elapsed from commencement to completion?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION replied—

“1 to 4. The hon. member should address his question to the Secretary for Public Works, who controls the vote for State school buildings.”

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*), without notice, asked the Acting Premier—

“Will the Auditor-General's report be in the hands of members before the next election campaign?”

The ACTING PREMIER replied—

“The hon. member has a fair idea as to the time when the report is ordinarily printed. The campaign is in the womb of the future.”

(Laughter.)

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BALANCES.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*), without notice, asked the Treasurer—

“When will the statement of the public balances up to 30th June be made available to the public?”

The ACTING PREMIER replied—

“I would ask the hon. member to give notice.”

HON. W. H. BARNES: Application was made to the Treasury, and it is not available yet. It is very significant.

PRESENTATION OF LOVING CUP BY PRINCE OF WALES.

The ACTING PREMIER: I ask permission of the House to make a statement.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the Acting Premier be allowed to make a statement?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The ACTING PREMIER: Before leaving Queensland His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales handed to me a loving cup which members might now see upon the table here, and asked me to present it to the House. He told me he was leaving here with most pleasant recollections.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The ACTING PREMIER: As his residence while in Brisbane was at Parliament House, he wished to thank members for making it available for him and his staff. He was very pleased with the accommodation and with the visit which, he emphasised, had crowned entirely his trip to Australia. (Hear, hear!) He has been around the world, practically; through Canada and parts of the United States, through the Panama Canal, and through the length and breadth of Australia; and he asked me to be particular to convey to members his felicitations and to express to them the fact that he was so pleased with his reception here and with the very warm Queensland hospitality which he had received on all occasions. I do not know whether it would be presumption on my part to suggest that there might have been something significant about the gift of a loving cup to this House. (Laughter.) I will not

refer to the disunion of the Opposition or the pleasant relations that exist between the officers and ourselves. I formally present it to the House, and I trust that you, Mr. Speaker, will convey to the President in another place the sentiments I have expressed here.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the ACTING PREMIER, it was formally resolved—

“That the Standing Orders Committee for the present session consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Hon. E. G. Theodore, Hon. J. Larcombe, Mr. Macartney, Mr. Swayne, Mr. Vowles, Mr. Gilday, and Mr. T. Foley, with leave to sit during any adjournment of the House, and authority to confer upon subjects of mutual concernment with any committee appointed for similar purposes by the Legislative Council.”

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the ACTING PREMIER, it was formally resolved—

“1. That, in compliance with Standing Order No. 298, a Select Committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the printing to be executed by order of the House, and for the purpose of selecting and arranging for printing returns and papers presented in pursuance of motions made by members.

“2. That such committee consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Hon. E. G. Theodore, Mr. Barber, Mr. Dunstan, Mr. Winstanley, Mr. Roberts, Mr. McLachlan, and Mr. Grayson.”

LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO HON. MEMBER.

On the motion of the ACTING PREMIER, it was formally resolved—

“That leave of absence for the present session be granted to Mr. E. T. Bell, member for the electoral district of Fassifern.”

PURCHASE OF QUEENSLAND SUGAR CROP.

On the motion of Mr. SMITH (*Mackay*), it was formally resolved—

“That there be laid on the table of the House a copy of the agreement between the State Government and the Government of the Commonwealth relative to the purchase of the Queensland sugar crop; also, all minutes of meetings and conferences held by the parties interested, and copies of all correspondence and telegrams bearing on the matter.”

LIQUOR ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

INTRODUCTION.

The HOME SECRETARY: I beg to move—

“That, under the provisions of Standing Order No. 274, a Bill to amend the

Liquor Act Amendment Act of 1920 in a certain particular be initiated and passed through all its stages in one day.”

I do not know whether it would be wise or whether it is the desire of the House that I make a statement as to what is intended to be done with regard to this—

Mr. FRY: It would certainly be honest to do it, if not wise.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member for Kurilpa may be a judge of honesty, and he may not be, Mr. Speaker.

In view of the announcement made in the Governor's Speech yesterday that [4 p.m.] it is intended to appeal to the constituencies at an early date, it is proposed to remove the restriction that is now in the Liquor Act Amendment Act of 1920 to allow the poll that has been fixed for the 30th October to be taken on that date. If the restriction were not removed, and a Federal or State election were to be held either sixty days prior to or after that poll, it would render the poll inoperative. We do not want to do that—we want the poll to be taken on the date fixed.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Oh, it has been fixed, has it?

The HOME SECRETARY: It has been fixed, and the hon. member knows that.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Fixed on election day, I suppose.

The HOME SECRETARY: If it is on election day—well, it is on election day. (Laughter.) All I am concerned about at present is to inform the House that it is intended to allow that poll to be taken on the day that has been fixed. Clause 8 of the Act distinctly says—

“In the month of October, one thousand nine hundred and twenty, and thereafter in the month of October in every third year, except as hereinafter provided, a poll shall be taken of the electors of every electoral district of the State upon the following Resolutions A, B, and C, submitted upon a ballot-paper in the following form.”

And then it goes on to give the form of the ballot-paper. It is mandatory that the poll shall be taken in October. The day in October is fixed by the Governor in Council. That day has been fixed, and is the 30th October, 1920. The Act further reads—

“Such date shall not be within sixty days before or after any State general election or any Federal general election or Senate election, and in order to comply with this provision the Governor in Council may and shall make such alteration in the date of such poll as may be found necessary.”

We do not want to make any alteration. We want the referenda on this question taken on the 30th October of this year, and that is why I move this motion. I do not think anything more need be said. As the Bill goes through the various stages I shall be prepared to answer any questions on the matter. But, as I have said, it is simply removing the prohibition which would come into force if an election were held sixty days prior to or after the liquor poll were taken.

Mr. VOWLES: I am glad the Home Secretary is giving us this information at this stage, because I think it will save a good deal of talk and probably a good deal of

Mr. Vowles.]

delay. I also hope that history is not going to repeat itself, as happened in connection with a poll which was taken previously under the Liquor Act, when, to my mind, the poll was deliberately taken on the same day as an election so that the result would be abortive. There is an intimation which makes it appear to me that we are going to have the general election and the referenda on the same day.

The HOME SECRETARY: Who said so?

Mr. VOWLES: That seems to be the intimation given. I would like to have an assurance from the Government that it is not going to be so, because the spirit which prompted us to make that sixty days' restriction when we agreed to the amendment of the Liquor Act was that the affairs of the people—

Mr. HARTLEY: You opposed the amendment to the Liquor Act, and now you are sorry for it.

Mr. VOWLES: I am not talking about what we did; I am saying that the spirit which was supposed to actuate members was that if a general, or a Federal, election came along people were not to be confused on outside matters; and if we are going to have these referenda on the same day as an election—whether Federal or State—then we are going right back on the principle we adopted on that occasion. We cannot decide when the election is going to be—that is a matter for the Government. I only hope they will not have the referenda and the elections on the one day, because, if so, they are breaking faith with this House, and will not be doing their duty if they bring about a state of affairs which the Opposition desire should not exist. I ask for that assurance before this matter goes through.

The HOME SECRETARY: You take the Bill as it is.

Mr. MORGAN: I think the Minister in charge should give us the assurance asked for.

The HOME SECRETARY: This has nothing to do with the elections.

Mr. MORGAN: It has a lot to do with it. Evidently the Government are going to make use of the campaign in respect of the Liquor Act—for or against, as the case may be—simply for their own purposes.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to confine himself to the question before the House—the suspension of the Standing Orders.

The HOME SECRETARY: You cannot find out something about another Bill on this Bill.

Mr. MORGAN: The Government seem to be afraid to trust the people. (Opposition hear, hears!) Everything is under a cloud.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. MORGAN: The people are kept in the dark.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. MORGAN: Will the Home Secretary tell us that an election will not take place on the 30th October?

The HOME SECRETARY: Ask at the proper time.

Mr. MORGAN: This is the proper time.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I think the time is opportune for asking the leader of the

[Mr. Vowles.

House to widen the scope of the measure. I take it this is the time that may be done.

The SPEAKER: This is a motion to suspend the Standing Orders to pass a Bill through all its stages in one day. The hon. member will have an opportunity of speaking about the measure when it is introduced.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I do not wish to accuse you in any way, Mr. Speaker, of wanting to reduce the scope of the Bill, but we do know that we have found ourselves absolutely out of court through some of the motions that have gone through this House.

The HOME SECRETARY: Did you read the motion?

HON. W. H. BARNES: Yes, I did. I must congratulate the Government upon going on with this particular business. I am quite sure, remembering the fiery time the hon. member has gone through, that he certainly deserves congratulation, because, in the camp where there were such divided feuds, I am certain that he had to stand right up with his guns; therefore, I very sincerely congratulate him. I take it that the Government shall have an opportunity later of showing that not only are they out to give the people an opportunity of speaking about prohibition, but, in addition, to make provision—if prohibition fails—to deal with 6 o'clock.

PROPOSED INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

The HOME SECRETARY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move—

“That you do now leave the chair.”

Mr. SIZER (*Yandah*): I think the time is opportune that, as this poll has to be taken, we should submit further questions to the people and the whole of the liquor questions—

The HOME SECRETARY: This is a motion for the Speaker to leave the chair.

Mr. SIZER: I do not want to be dictated to by the Home Secretary. No doubt this is a most contentious matter, and the vast majority of the people of the State are anxious to have a vote on the closing hours of hotels, besides the question of continuance and prohibition—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SIZER: In view of that fact, I intend to move an amendment to delete words “in a certain particular,” so that the motion will read—

“A Bill to amend the Liquor Act of 1920.”

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. Smith, Mackay, in the chair.*)

The HOME SECRETARY: I beg to move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Liquor Act Amendment Act of 1920 in a certain particular.”

Mr. SIZER: I beg to move, as an amendment, that the words “in a certain particular” be deleted, with the object of making provision for referring other questions to the people. Views of a contentious nature

are held and supported by many thousands of people in the State in connection with the liquor question, and I do not think it is right that the people of this State should simply be asked to answer only three questions. The people outside think that, in addition to being able to vote on prohibition, State control, and continuance, they should also be allowed to vote on the question of the hours the hotels shall open and close. The people should be allowed to say whether the hotels should be open from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., or 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*): I rise to a point of order. I ask if the hon. member has submitted his amendment?

Mr. VOWLES: Yes. He moved the deletion of certain words.

Mr. SIZER: A large number of the people wish to vote on more than the three questions provided for in the Liquor Act, and at present they find themselves in an awkward position. They will be compelled to vote on those three questions. They are desirous of liquor reform, and they prefer to have a vote on the question of the closing hours of the hotels. Now that we are placing the matter before the people, I think we should place in this particular measure something to give the people the right to vote on a fourth question.

The HOME SECRETARY: Can you show how another question can be put in to comply with your amendment?

Mr. SIZER: The Home Secretary knows quite well that if we carried his motion the people will be confined to the three questions of prohibition, State control, and continuance, and if we attempt to alter it at a later stage we will be ruled out of order. That is why I am introducing my amendment at this stage. I wish to widen the scope of the Bill on the lines I have suggested.

Mr. ROBERTS: I have considerable pleasure in supporting the amendment. You will remember, Mr. Speaker, that when the principal Bill was before this House members on this side were anxious to submit four questions to the people.

Mr. HARTLEY: Who wants this question?

Mr. ROBERTS: It was pointed out when the Bill was introduced that many people were anxious to have a vote on the question of the hours of trading. We have had experience of the other States, where the hours of trading have been reduced, and we have had experience of the old country, where there has also been an alteration in the hours. If we added a fourth question it would give the people a chance of voting on the question of the closing hours. Since the Bill was passed I had the privilege, by invitation, of addressing the committee and executive of the Strength of the Empire Movement. The secretary of the Licensed Victuallers' committee in Toowoomba did me the courtesy of asking if he might be present at that meeting; and I agreed, and he came along to the meeting. At the request of the meeting I explained the main objects of the Bill, and what was likely to be attained by the Bill. There was a general consensus of opinion there that there should also be a fourth question. A number of people outside are very much concerned that in Queensland they have not got an opportunity of reducing the hours of trade in the hotels. The opportunity comes to us this afternoon to amend

the Liquor Act, and it affords members of the Opposition, who took up the position of trying to get a fourth question added on a previous occasion, to again see if it is not possible to give the people of Queensland an opportunity of expressing their opinion on the hours of trade. Every other industry is guided by arbitration laws, and in this particular trade there is no reason why the opportunity to restrict the hours should be refused to the people. Lots of people tell us that they can neither vote for prohibition nor State control, and they are not satisfied with continuance under the present conditions. They want to see a lessening of the hours of trade. Consequently, I have considerable pleasure in supporting the amendment.

Mr. JAMES (*Logan*): I should like to support the amendment.

Mr. CARTER: Another 6 o'clock advocate.

Mr. JAMES: The question of the early closing of hotels has been a burning one for a long time, and I think the people should be given an opportunity to vote on that question. Wherever I go I find that the objection to the proposed referendum is that the people are not given the means of expressing their opinion as to 6 o'clock closing or on the earlier closing of hotels. That is why I support the amendment.

The HOME SECRETARY: Have you read the questions?

Mr. JAMES: Yes.

The HOME SECRETARY: Can you put in another question and get an intelligent vote on it from the people?

Mr. JAMES: I think you can.

The HOME SECRETARY: Can you get a vote from intelligent electors?

Mr. JAMES: Yes. I do not know whether the Home Secretary imagines he is putting this question to intelligent electors. I think it is quite possible to put in another question, in addition to the three already there, and have a vote on the whole four questions on the preferential form.

Mr. POLLOCK: Would you be in favour of handing back the "loving cup" if prohibition is carried?

Mr. JAMES: I am satisfied that the hon. member for Gregory could make good use of the "loving cup" if he had it in his possession for one moment. I think the amendment is essential, because we should be able to add the question relating to the closing of hotels.

Mr. BAYLEY (*Pittsworth*): I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment. I might point out that on the voting-paper as it stands at present the supporters of the liquor trade will have two issues to support. They will be able to support continuance and State control. The temperate supporters will only have one issue. They may vote for prohibition and State control, but they will really only have one issue which they can really support. It is time that the State, as a whole, had an opportunity of voting on the question of 6 o'clock closing; and I strongly urge on the Home Secretary and the Government to give these people an equal opportunity to those who are championing the liquor trade by having two issues to vote on.

Mr. HARTLEY: The temperance people don't want that clause in at all.

Mr. Bayley.]

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

AYES, 37.

| | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Mr. Armfield | Mr. Kirwan |
| „ Barber | „ Land |
| „ Brennan | „ Larcombe |
| „ Bulcock | „ Lloyd |
| „ Carter | „ McCormack |
| „ Collins | „ McLachlan |
| „ Cooper, F. A. | „ Mullan |
| „ Cooper, W. | „ Payne |
| „ Coyne | „ Pease |
| „ Dunstan | „ Peterson |
| „ Fihelly | „ Pollock |
| „ Foley, T. A. | „ Ryan, H. J. |
| „ Forde | „ Stopford |
| „ Free | „ Thompson |
| „ Gilday | „ Weir |
| „ Gillies | „ Whitford |
| „ Gledson | „ Wilson |
| „ Hartley | „ Winstanley |
| „ Huxham | |

Tellers: Mr. Carter and Mr. Gilday.

NOES, 15.

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Mr. Barnes, W. H. | Mr. Roberts |
| „ Bayley | „ Sizer |
| „ Bebbington | „ Spence |
| „ Elphinstone | „ Swayne |
| „ Gunn | „ Taylor |
| „ James | „ Walker |
| „ Moore | „ Warren |
| „ Petrie | |

Tellers: Mr. Bayley and Mr. James.

Resolved in the affirmative.

[4.30 p.m.]

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the resolution, which was agreed to.

FIRST READING.

On the motion of the HOME SECRETARY, the Bill was read a first time.

SECOND READING.

The HOME SECRETARY: I beg to move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Hon. members will observe by referring to the Liquor Act Amendment Act of 1920 that the only proposal in the Bill is to repeal the clause read out to the House by me some time ago, on the motion to suspend the Standing Orders to enable the Bill to be passed through all its stages in one day. The Bill consists really of only one clause—that is, the proviso with regard to the State general elections is to be removed in order that the referendum can take place on the 30th October.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I would like to point out that we are now proposing to suspend the provisions of the Liquor Act of 1920 for all time. I could quite understand, if this alteration of the law were being made for a particular purpose, that we should suspend that provision for the time being, but this subsection was agreed to by the Chamber after mature consideration. It was thought that it would be highly undesirable that it should be possible for any Government, whether present or future, to fix the date of a poll under the Liquor Act on the same day as a general State or Federal election. Now, what is the occasion of repealing it altogether? Why could not the Government suspend it in the meantime? If that were

[*Mr. Fowles.*

their intention—to meet an extraordinary position which has arisen—I could understand it, but why should the alteration be lasting? I do not want to delay the measure, but those are the objections I have, and I would again like to try to get an assurance from the Chief Secretary, if it be possible, that the date of the general elections and the date of the liquor poll would not be the same. I think that the Opposition and the general public are entitled to such an assurance from the Government. I cannot see any reason why they should be held on the same day. The question of the cost was duly considered when the matter was being dealt with before, and, notwithstanding the cost, it was thought that the public mind should not be confused at general election time with outside matters. If it is going to be made possible or if it is the intention of the Government now to hold the two polls on the same day, we are deliberately going behind what we considered then to be a fair thing. If we cannot get such an assurance from the Government, we can only come to the conclusion that this thing is loaded, and this action is being taken for the purpose of holding both on the same day.

The ACTING PREMIER: You are too suspicious altogether.

Mr. VOWLES: Why not tell us, then?

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): I quite follow the contention of the Government, and I totally disagree with the view of the leader of the Opposition. (Government laughter and interjection.) I cannot see any reason—if we are going to get an election within the next few weeks—why it cannot be held on the same day as the referendum poll. We know that to-day every pound in Queensland means something. Money is particularly scarce. We have a large number of unemployed in the State, and it is estimated that this referendum poll will cost anything from £8,000 to £10,000. Seeing that an election is going to be held within a few days, the public mind must be inflamed one way or the other. I can see what some men are anticipating. They are considering that it will have some effect on their election.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do not be so unfair to your own party.

Mr. ROBERTS: I am passing my own opinion on the matter, and I have a perfect right in this House to give expression to any opinion I may form. Some members may take exception and prefer that the question of liquor reform should be decided on some other day. The Act at present on the statute-book has provided for that, but now that it is likely that we shall have an election within a few weeks, there is no reason why it should not be held on one and the same day. The people have many questions put to them, and we have to remember that in any case a campaign is likely to eventuate within the next few weeks between the Strength of Empire Movement and the liquor trade. We have seen that only a few weeks ago a large sum of money—£10,000—was sent from New South Wales to Queensland in the interests of the liquor trade. So we can quite understand the campaign that will rage throughout the State on that matter, irrespective of the general election; and I do not see why both questions should not be decided on one and the same day, on the date which is not to be disclosed—namely, the 30th October. (Laughter.)

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I would like the Minister to give us some information as to how this proposal is likely to operate in the case of a Federal election. Suppose that a Federal election takes place within the next few weeks, either before or after the liquor referendum?

The HOME SECRETARY: That is a sound objection to the things ever being in the Act.

Mr. MORGAN: Exactly. So far as the date is concerned, I have no objection. What I want to know is this: If a vote takes place on 30th October and a Federal election takes place a month afterwards, what will be the position?

The HOME SECRETARY: The vote will be legal.

Mr. MORGAN: Is there not some Federal law which will prevent its becoming legal?

The HOME SECRETARY: No. There is a War Precaution Regulation which says: "On the same day." We cannot repeal that. I wish we could repeal some of those War Precaution Regulations.

Mr. MORGAN: We need to be very careful about this matter, and the people who are in favour of this vote also need to be very careful. We have had some experience of votes being declared illegal owing to interference of Federal legislation, and I want to know whether the Minister has gone carefully into the matter.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes.

Mr. MORGAN: If a Federal election takes place thirty days afterwards, would it interfere with this vote?

The HOME SECRETARY: No, unless they passed a new regulation.

Mr. MORGAN: I refer to the present law.

The HOME SECRETARY: If this amendment were not carried to-day, it would.

Mr. MORGAN: I quite understand that, but I want to know whether the Minister has gone carefully into the effect of the Federal law.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is not a law at all—it is a regulation.

Mr. MORGAN: Well, a regulation. Whatever the result on the 30th October, it should be final. There should be no interference with the decision in any shape or form. It seems absurd to think that it is going to cost the Government and the people about £14,000 to have a poll on 30th October, when afterwards it may be discovered that owing to some law in existence, whether State or Federal, the decision may be upset.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Federal law says, "On the day on which a Federal election is held."

Mr. VOWLES: In any case, the result is futile.

Mr. MORGAN: In any case, we need to be very careful. We dealt with it very, very fully last session; and now it is found necessary, although the Act has scarcely been in operation, to bring along an amendment, an amendment to suit the Government's own purposes.

Mr. GLEDSON: Do you object to the amendment?

Mr. MORGAN: No. With reference to the proposal to widen the scope of this Bill, I would remind members that previously

we thoroughly discussed that matter. We were defeated as to having a vote on 6 o'clock closing, although all members on this side favoured it. Now the opposing parties, the liquor people and the temperance people, have got their campaigns going and their ballot-papers issued, showing the people how to vote; and yet we are asked to reconsider it.

The HOME SECRETARY: Do not blame us for that. You had our complete sympathy.

Mr. MORGAN: Thousands and thousands of pounds are being expended by both parties, and why should we interfere?

COMMITTEE AND THIRD READING.

The Bill passed through Committee without discussion or amendment, was read a third time, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence by message in the usual form.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.

The ACTING PREMIER moved—

"That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would otherwise prevent the immediate constitution of Committees of Supply and Ways and Means, the receiving of resolutions on the same day as they shall have passed in those Committees, and the passing of an Appropriation Bill through all its stages in one day."

Mr. VOWLES: I would like formally to protest against the action of the Government in desiring to pass this Bill through all its stages at this juncture, more particularly in view of the fact that we have no details of any kind nor any explanation from the Acting Premier. We do not even know, in the first place, what credits we have to our balances, and we do not know how much money is to be asked for. The session could have been started a week earlier, if necessary, and all these matters which now are considered as urgent could have been dealt with at our leisure: we could have obtained all the details and discussed them on the different stages.

The ACTING PREMIER: Your Government introduced a similar motion every session.

Mr. VOWLES: Governments of the past have done this, and on every occasion the leader of the Opposition—more particularly Mr. Ryan—stood up in his place and protested against it. Mr. Theodore, when he was in opposition, always stood up and protested against the practice. Yet no Government has adopted the practice to a greater extent than the present Government have done since they have been on the Treasury benches. I think it is due to the House, in view of the intimation disclosed to us through the Governor's Speech—that the Treasury is empty, that the credit of the Government is stopped—

The ACTING PREMIER: No, no! Don't continue the work of defamation.

Mr. VOWLES: We should know exactly where we stand before we commit ourselves in a matter of this kind. It is the duty of the Government to the Opposition and to the public to let us know what the position is. We should know, by reason of the fact that we have not been given information as to what is the state of certain balances. When the public does not have the information and the House does not know it, this

Mr. Vowles.]

is the time—when the Acting Premier is coming along and asking us to concede something—for him to give us all the information at his disposal.

The ACTING PREMIER: You will get it later on.

The SPEAKER: Order! The question now is the suspension of the Standing Orders.

The ACTING PREMIER: I would be out of order if I gave that information.

Mr. VOWLES: I am giving the reason why I object to this practice. I am giving the same reason as was given by the recent leader and the present leader of the Government when they were occupying the same position as I occupy to-day—the leader of the Opposition.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Before this motion is put, before you leave the chair, Mr. Speaker, I take it we will have the opportunity of dealing with grievances before Supply.

The SPEAKER: The motion before the House is for the suspension of the Standing Orders. The hon. member will have an opportunity of dealing with that question when the motion that I do now leave the chair is before the House.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am going to take my opportunity—I want to assure the acting leader of the Government—to the fullest extent. I bow meanwhile to your decision, Mr. Speaker.

Question put and passed.

SUPPLY.

APPROPRIATION BILL, NO. 1.

The ACTING PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move—

“That you do now leave the chair, and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the Supply to be granted to His Majesty.”

Mr. VOWLES: It is a time-honoured custom of Parliament, generally recognised when Supply is being asked for, that the members of the Opposition have an opportunity of ventilating their grievances.

The ACTING PREMIER: Members of the Government, too.

Mr. VOWLES: Members of the Government also, and judging by the way in which the Acting Premier interjected those few words there must be many grievances amongst the gentlemen sitting behind him.

The ACTING PREMIER: Yes; they want some more of your seats. (Laughter.)

Mr. VOWLES: You will find that we will get a lot of your seats. We have not the information we should have on a question of this kind. We do not, as business men, know what our financial position is, and we are asked that you, Sir, should leave the chair with a view of going into Committee to discuss matters affecting money, when we do not even know that that money exists. We have been told, per medium of the Speech made by the Lieutenant-Governor, that the Government have been disappointed in finance; that the mission of the Premier to England has been a failure; and certain reasons are set out which they claim to be responsible for money not being forthcoming. I propose to show that a warning was given to the Premier and to his Government,

not only by the hon. members sitting in opposition, not only by the journals of the whole of Queensland, but even by letters which appeared in the London papers.

Mr. PETERSON: All inspired.

Mr. VOWLES: Letters which were made known to the Government long before the mission of the Premier to get this cash.

Mr. KIRWAN: Why did you send home the delegation if it were unnecessary to do it?

Mr. VOWLES: The hon. gentleman speaks about that delegation. Just let me tell the hon. gentleman that this delegation we hear so much about has nothing whatever to do with the members of the Opposition or the parliamentary party.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Nonsense!

Mr. DUNSTON: You can't get rid of it.

Mr. CARTER: Deny your leaders.

Mr. VOWLES: I am not in any way connected with them. I know that this is going to be a catch cry at the election, and I want to give the public this assurance now. I also want to review the actions and the attitude of the Opposition, to show the part they played in sending certain protests to the English Government through no less a person than the Lieutenant-Governor himself. A certain set of resolutions were come to by hon. members of the Opposition, and I propose to read them. I propose to read also a covering letter which I sent to the Secretary of State through the Lieutenant-Governor. It already has appeared in print. If I am not to be allowed to put it in without reading it, I am going to read it so that it will go in. This is a resolution passed on the 25th February last, before any delegation set sail from Queensland:—

“1. That this meeting of the members constituting the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly of Queensland is unanimously of opinion:—

(a) That the recent appointment of fourteen new members to the Legislative Council of Queensland was wholly unconstitutional and unnecessary, because such appointments were made for the alleged purpose of carrying legislation upon the whole or any part of which the will of the people could have been readily ascertained under the provisions of the Parliamentary Bills Referendum Act of 1909.

(b) That the number of the said appointments was excessive, because a lesser number would have given the Government an absolute working majority in the Council under the conditions which now exist in that House.

(c) That the appointment of the said members was improper, because the question of his free exercise of the power of appointment in such cases was, to the knowledge of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor himself, receiving consideration by the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies at the moment the appointments were made; also because such appointments afford additional facilities for defeating the full and free expression of the views of the majority of the adult residents of the State, and suggest real danger to its chances of future good government and general interest and prosperity.

[Mr. Vowles.]

"2. That the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies be respectfully requested to recommend to His Majesty the appointment of an Imperial officer as Governor, forthwith."

With that resolution was sent a letter dated 10th March, 1920. I will ask the indulgence of the House to permit me to put this in "Hansard" without reading it. As I have said before, it already appeared in print in April last, and no doubt members of the House are conversant with its contents.

[5 p.m.]

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the letter be taken as read?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The ACTING PREMIER and GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No, no!

The SPEAKER again put the question, and declared that the "Noes" had it.

Mr. VOWLES: I am very sorry, Mr. Speaker, because in the first place I am suffering from a bad throat, and secondly it has always been the custom—in fact, one hon. member here has a very lengthy speech in "Hansard," of which he said about ten words, and the rest was put in in a brief. On at least two occasions that has happened. However, I will read the letter. It says—

"Sir,—I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of a formal resolution unanimously adopted by a meeting of the members of the Opposition party in the Legislative Assembly, and to respectfully request that you will be good enough to transmit same immediately by cable to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies. I should further esteem it a favour if your Excellency would also forward to the Secretary of State the details of the following statement of the position as it exists in our opinion:—

"1. The Labour Party were returned to power in 1915, pledged to the abolition of the Legislative Council. In 1917 they secured the opinion of the electors upon that question by means of a referendum. The electors, by overwhelming majority, decided that the Legislative Council as then constituted should remain as portion of the Legislature.

"2. In 1918 the Labour Government was returned to power with a majority of seats totally out of proportion to the votes which they received—at an election at which the abolition of the Legislative Council was not an issue. They have, nevertheless, during their second Parliament, chosen to utterly ignore the mandate of the people as expressed through the 1917 referendum, and have more than once passed through the Legislative Assembly a Bill for an Act to abolish the Council. They have never succeeded in securing the passage of this Bill through the Legislative Council itself.

"3. During the period between the accession of the Labour Government to power in May, 1915, and the present date, thirty-two (32) appointments have been made to the Legislative Council, virtually doubling its effective strength. As conditions are at present in the Council, the recent appointments give the Government an absolute majority of supporters in that House, and transform what has hitherto been a non-party

Chamber of review into a party House controlled by a majority, bound by its pledges to follow the lead of the Government. Since the creation of a Labour majority in the Legislative Council the Government appears to have lost its desire for the immediate abolition of the Council.

"4. We maintain that the recent appointment of fourteen new members to the Legislative Council was wholly unconstitutional, unnecessary, and improper, for the reasons set out in the resolution which we submit for transmission by cable to the Imperial authorities. We desire, in dealing with this aspect of the case, to particularly stress the fact that the appointments were allegedly made for the purpose of carrying legislation upon the whole or any part of which the will of the people could have been easily ascertained under the provisions of the Parliamentary Bills Referendum Act.

"5. When His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor was appointed to office, the information was current in political circles that his appointment was being made, subject to some agreement, understanding, or arrangement between the Ministry and himself that he should swamp the Legislative Council, which Sir Hamilton Goold-Adams, Governor, was allegedly unwilling to do. This may or may not have been true, but the fact that Mr. Lennon's appointment was almost immediately followed by the swamping of the Council lends colour to the assertion.

"6. The creation of a Government majority in the Legislative Council has brought about an extraordinary position which endangers the integrity of the State's Constitution and renders Parliament always and completely subservient to the decision of a majority of Government members (which may, however, constitute only a minority of Parliament) and in some cases to the will of an outside privately-constituted organisation having no official status and representative only of a section of the trade unionists of the State.

"7. The Queensland Labour party, the political association which comprises the followers of the Labour Government and which to a very large extent controls the actions of Labour in power, is governed by an executive which has power, under the party's constitution, to endorse or withhold or withdraw the endorsement of any parliamentary candidate in the Labour interest. Before it can endorse a candidate as a Labour candidate, it must receive from him, according to its rules, a signed copy of the following pledge:—

I, _____, being a candidate for selection by the _____ branch of the Labour party's recognised political organisation, hereby give my pledge that if not selected I will not in any way oppose the candidature of the duly selected nominee; and, if selected, I will go through with the contest. I also agree, if elected, to advocate and support the principles contained in the Queensland Labour party's State and municipal platforms and the Australian Labour party's platform, and on all questions affecting

Mr. Vowles.]

the platform to vote as a majority of the Parliamentary Labour party may decide at a duly constituted caucus meeting. But in the event of the question of the interpretation of any plank in the platform being in dispute, it shall be referred to the Central Political Executive for decision, and that decision shall be final.

"8. As it has been announced that the members of the Legislative Council recently selected were chosen by a ballot of the caucus of the Parliamentary Labour party from persons whose names were submitted by the Central Political Executive of the Labour party, it may be taken for granted that they also have subscribed to the above pledge or to one of similar import.

"9. Having in view the power which the Labour organisations wield over the parliamentary members of the party, by reason of the extortion of the above pledge, and for other reasons, the ultimate result of the appointment of a Government majority to the Legislative Council is that now and in the future Parliament must be regarded as a single chamber, divided nominally into two parts, whose public acts of legislation, etc., will amount to no more than the formal registration of decisions arrived at by the majorities of both Houses sitting together previously in secret session. The real parliament of Queensland is now the Government caucus, acting under the guidance, in matters of moment, of the Central Political Executive of the Labour party. Government by the people has to all intents and purposes ceased to exist and is replaced by a system of government by junta for the benefit of a section of one class in the community.

"10. Apart from the considerations set out in the foregoing paragraphs, we would submit that the conditions which have been created as the result of the appointments are all the less to be condoned because appearances suggest that the Government has lost or is fast losing the confidence of the country. Our reasons for believing this are as follows:—

(i.) The result of the recent Commonwealth elections, conducted upon a universal adult franchise, upon which the State electoral franchise is also based, showed a majority against the Labour party of 17,000 votes in the aggregate, the Nationalist party being returned to power stronger by one seat than at the previous Commonwealth elections of 1917.

(ii.) The result of these elections was completely applicable as an expression of the country's view of the State Labour Administration, because—

(a) The Commonwealth Labour candidates fought their campaign under the lead and direction of the Hon. T. J. Ryan, who resigned the Queensland Premiership, while retaining the full confidence of Queensland Labour, to contest a Commonwealth Parliament seat;

(b) The issues of the campaign in Queensland hinged purely and simply upon the achievements of the State Labour party in power and the

readiness or otherwise of the electors of the State to invest Mr. Ryan and his followers with authority to apply the tenets of their State policy in Commonwealth affairs;

(c) The Commonwealth campaign in Queensland was conducted by the State Labour Political Executive, which also conducts State election campaigns, and virtually all members of the State Labour party urged the cause of the Commonwealth Labour candidates. The present Premier and all his Ministers participated in the contest.

(iii.) Almost immediately after the Commonwealth campaign, contests were fought in vacant State seats, which had been previously held by State Ministers. These seats were regarded as almost unassailable Labour strongholds. One of them reverted to Nationalism at the by-election, and in the other two the Labour majorities were greatly reduced. After the by-elections one sitting member of the Labour party crossed the floor of the House to sit with the Opposition.

"11. We are of opinion that the change in the public attitude, suggested by the facts detailed above, has been due chiefly to:—

(a) The unrestricted increase in the cost of living during the régime of the present Government which, though returned to power on a specific pledge to check profiteering, has taken no effective steps toward that end.

(b) The militant attitude of the Labour party, including members of the Government, not only against conscription, but against recruiting and all measures designed to bring victory to the Allies in the late war. This attitude only became clearly evident after the Labour party had been returned to power at the State election of 1918, and was in striking contrast to the patriotic views which they had expressed during the election campaign itself.

(c) The tendency which the Government has regularly shown to support persons prosecuted for disloyal offences, and its continual willingness to find employment for persons, who, convicted of war offences in the Southern States, found it advisable to come to Queensland.

(d) The fact that, while the Premier and other members of the Government have persistently denounced revolutionary extremism, they have nevertheless openly countenanced and given preference to persons whose support of Bolshevism and of movements designed to bring about the overthrow of constitutional government, as known among civilised peoples, is beyond question.

No better example of this could be found than the appointment of Mr. Robert Joseph Carroll to be a member of the Legislative Council, a few weeks ago. According to the Brisbane 'Daily Standard,' official Labour newspaper, this Mr. Carroll, in December, 1917, acted as President of the Universal Freedom League, a body which was then currently regarded by the State

Police as 'a blind for the I.W.W.' (an illegal association under Commonwealth law). On 12th August, 1918, at a conference of trades unions, Mr. Carroll moved a resolution expressing 'entire approval and hearty appreciation of the Bolshevie programme and of the work of our Russian comrade, leader Lenin.'

On 23rd March, 1919, Mr. Carroll took part in a public procession, principally organised by Russians, which carried the red flag through the streets of Brisbane in open defiance of the police, and afterwards compelled the authorities to open the gates of the Government Domain, so that an illegal meeting might be held there. To quote the 'Daily Standard,' Labour official organ:—'The procession was carried out in the teeth of strenuous opposition by the police.'

Afterwards Mr. Carroll took part in the illegal meeting, was fined on a prosecution by the Commonwealth authorities, and, failing to pay his fine, served two months in prison. Numerous other members of the procession were imprisoned for exhibiting the red flag and for assaulting the police, and some of the Russians were deported from the Commonwealth by order of the military authorities.

Other recent appointees to the Legislative Council were well-known extremists and revolutionaries.

(c) The toleration which the State has shown to various criminals, whose sentences have been almost completely remitted or greatly reduced without the consent of judges or the knowledge of the public. A case in point was that of a man named Chapman, who, with a mob of industrialists, broke into one of the principal stores in the City of Townsville a few months ago, and looted upwards of 200 rifles with ammunition. They afterwards paraded the streets of the city, and, in defiance of the police, 'practised with their firearms at the pigeons perched on the public buildings.'

All attempts on the part of the police to secure the return of more than a small proportion of the firearms were, at the time, unavailing. As the result of public clamour, Chapman and another man were arrested in connection with the looting. Chapman was sentenced to three years' imprisonment, but released after serving only a few months. His release was only discovered by the public through his boasting to a newspaper reporter that he had secured his release through political influence with the Government.

(f) The disregard which the Government has shown of Parliament's right to control expenditure. The expenditure by the Government not authorised by Parliament during the year 1918-19 amounted to over £1,000,000, or more than 10 per cent. of the total expenditure for the year. It should be emphasised that this was not in any way due to war conditions. In the State of Victoria during the same year, the unforeseen expenditure totalled only £15,000.

(g) The reckless extravagance of the Government, its use of public facilities for the private convenience of Ministers and their friends, and its use of State funds upon a large scale for political party propaganda.

(h) The Government's oppressive schemes of taxation which have hampered industry, reduced the natural revenue of the State in a corresponding degree, and created unemployment upon a scale never known previously in the recent history of the State.

(i) The deceptive attitude adopted by the Ministry in regard to certain legislation, and the ruses which have been resorted to and exposed, for obtaining certain results without the full knowledge of Parliament. A case in point was the 'Land Act Amendment Bill, No. 3,' introduced in the session of 1918. It was placed before the Legislative Assembly as a measure to define more clearly the meaning of a certain section of the Land Act of 1910. A careful examination of the amendment proposed and its effects showed that it was very evidently intended to alter the effect of the clause and entirely change its meaning. A rigid inquiry by the Opposition followed, and it was eventually revealed that the real objective of the Bill was to alter the law, make the alterations retrospective, and so ensure that the Government would succeed, on appeal, in an action upon which a lower court had given a decision against the Crown, and which the Crown could have no hope of winning in any court with the law as it stood.

(j) The revolutionary tendencies which appear to be gaining ground inside the Queensland Labour party have caused some general nervousness; and even the Premier himself has twice taken the opportunity, within a few weeks, to weightily and solemnly warn his own followers upon the subject.

"12. In view of the general conditions existing in the State as set out above, of the fact that the present Parliament is in its last year, and of the graveness of the step involved in making the recent appointments to the Legislative Council, we believe that His Excellency should have deferred such appointments until the Government had secured the opinion of the country upon its policy and achievements a few months hence.

"13. We further believe that it is completely inadvisable that the present position—in which there is in power a Labour Government willing to subordinate its own views to those of an outside committee of no official standing, and a Lieutenant-Governor committed to the views of the Ministry upon every important issue which is likely to arise within the next twelve months and dependent upon the Government and the Labour caucus for preferment—should be allowed to continue, and in terms of our resolution we ask that an Imperial Governor be appointed at the earliest possible moment."

Now, the reason for putting this on record, and to show the letter which was sent by the Opposition to ask for the appointment

Mr. Forster. }

of a permanent Governor, is to show that, so far as the delegation to London is concerned, it is unknown to the Parliamentary Opposition.

Mr. DUNSTAN: It went home to do the secret dirty work of your supporters.

Mr. VOWLES: I ask that the hon. gentleman withdraw those words. He has charged me with doing dirty work and of getting someone else to do it.

The SECRETARY for AGRICULTURE: He said nothing unparliamentary.

The SPEAKER: Order! I did not hear the hon. member for Gympie refer to the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. DUNSTAN: I made no reference to the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. BRENNAN: That stuff you read is dirty.

Mr. VOWLES: I do not know who the hon. member for Gympie referred to when he said something about doing dirty work. However, he says he did not say it; so we must be hard of hearing. Anyone who has read the Governor's Speech must see the glaring example of the Government making use of the privileges of this House to get out their party propaganda.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES: If ever there was an electioneering speech delivered under cover of the privileges of this House, it is the Speech read by the Lieutenant-Governor yesterday. I say that that is a travesty on constitutional government. We had a gentleman occupying the position of President of the Legislative Council and Acting Governor reading a Speech like that! Yet he told us, only a few weeks ago, that for the last four or five months he had no knowledge of politics at all, and politics with him was a thing of the past. A good many people do not understand that the Speech is prepared by the advisers of the Governor, and that the Governor simply reads the Speech. The whole of that Speech was nothing but party propaganda, and it was not a Governor's Speech at all. When I started to speak to-day, I said that warnings had been held out in England telling the Government of Queensland what they might expect when they went to England for finances. I have here an article which appeared in the London "Times" of June, 1918—

"Apparently a fresh effort is being made by the Queensland Government to pass certain land legislation to the detriment of the large amount of British capital invested in the pastoral industry, for we learn that the following resolution was passed at a meeting held at 45, Bishopsgate, E.C., on Tuesday last:— 'This meeting of leading Anglo-Australian banks, pastoral, and financial companies again records its emphatic opinion that any legislation having for its object the removal of the existing contractual limitation in the increase of rent of pastoral leases and grazing selections in Queensland would constitute a grave breach of Government covenant with Crown tenants, would render possible a practical confiscation of leases, and would tend to destroy the confidence of British investors in the good faith of the Queensland Government.'

"The fact that such important institutions as these should have felt it neces-

[Mr. Vowles.

sary to append their names to such a resolution shows how carefully legislative tendencies in Australia, and particularly in Queensland, must be watched by those to whom is entrusted the charge of British capital invested within the Commonwealth.

"This limitation of the increase of rent is obviously a vital condition for the lessee, for it enables him to calculate what his maximum liability for rent may be. Without that knowledge he obviously could not afford to invest his money, since he could have no guarantee that the rent might not be raised to such an extent as to make it impossible for him to continue his business. The Queensland Government has endeavoured to pass legislation to abolish the limitations on the power of the lessors to raise rentals, but on each occasion the proposal has been rejected by the Upper House of the Queensland Parliament. But it is feared that the Government may, by the appointment of its adherents to the Upper House, obtain the latter's consent to the passage of a Bill removing the limitation referred to. It may seem almost incredible that a State of the British Empire should contemplate any such suicidal proposal as that with which it is credited. To alter adversely the leaseholders' contractual position without their consent would be to adopt a species of Bolshevism which could not fail to destroy the confidence of British investors in the good faith not only of Queensland but of Australia generally."

My point is this: We are told that three certain gentlemen went home to England.

Mr. BRENNAN: Three crooks.

Mr. VOWLES: It was stated that these three certain gentlemen visited England, and by their misrepresentation of the true position in Queensland they were able to induce the financiers in London to refuse to grant a loan to Queensland. I think that this House is entitled to have from the Hon. the Acting Premier the evidence which he has got to support that statement—that these men did anything in the way of misrepresentation in London.

The ACTING PREMIER: You will get it.

Mr. KIRWAN: Wait until the brick hits.

Mr. VOWLES: I am going to show where it is on record that the hon. member for Gregory himself, two years ago, read out a warning which was issued by the financiers in London, telling the Government of Queensland that if they did not deal honestly with the lessees of the State it would affect their financial credit.

Mr. HARTLEY: And after that our loan was over-subscribed.

Mr. VOWLES: We have to realise, and the Government should realise, that we owe something like £65,000,000 as a State, and Queensland's proportion of the national debt of the Commonwealth amounts to another £55,000,000. That means that we owe £120,000,000 altogether, and about £30,000,000 of that will fall due in a few years' time. Something like £2,000,000 of that money is falling due almost immediately. Through the dishonest legislation which this Government has passed, and has placed on the statute-book, we are faced with the position that when we go to the financiers for money

we are told that we have a dishonest Government in Queensland, and they do not want to do business with us at all.

The ACTING PREMIER: Your party introduced the same Bill in 1910.

Mr. VOWLES: The Government is in the same position as a man who goes to his banker for a loan. When a man goes to a banker and asks for more accommodation, the banker says, "Let me see your business transactions." If he finds out that the man's business transactions have not been honest, he will tell him so, and will not grant him any money. He does just the same as the London financiers told Mr. Theodore in London. They told him to go back to Queensland and study and practise honesty. That is an unfortunate position that the Labour Government has placed this fair State of Queensland in. Our national credit has gone; and, so long as the Labour Government remains, there appears to be no chance of getting further finances from London. The unfortunate part about it all is that further money has to be raised in the future; and if there is any bigger risk attached to loans of the Commonwealth or of any portion of the British Empire, it simply means that we will have to pay higher rates of interest when we get our money. We have big loans maturing, and they have got to be renewed. At present our loan money averages something like 4 per cent., but we will have to renew it at a much higher rate than that. I understand that there are certain negotiations going on which will stagger the hon. gentleman leading the House. I understand that the rate that is going to be asked is 7 per cent.

The ACTING PREMIER: Tell us all about it.

Mr. VOWLES: The hon. gentleman has got the information. He is in communication with the Premier of Queensland, and he has inside knowledge which we have not got.

The ACTING PREMIER: Do you say that I have got that information?

Mr. VOWLES: Yes. We expect that the Premier of Queensland in London has been in communication with his Cabinet here, and with the acting leader, and the hon. gentleman is conversant with the whole position.

The ACTING PREMIER: Do I understand you to say that I have got information that will stagger me?

Mr. VOWLES: Yes.

The ACTING PREMIER: That is quite untrue.

Mr. VOWLES: We will have to wait till the Premier comes back to get the information. When the Premier comes back, and he makes the statement to this House, or wherever he makes it, information will be given to us which is denied to us to-night. We are told that because this money is not made available it is necessary to go to the country. For what purpose? To misrepresent the position to the people?

Mr. KIRWAN: Not at all.

Mr. VOWLES: Anyone reading the Governor's Speech must see that there is a campaign of misrepresentation started in that Speech.

Mr. KIRWAN: Don't you want to go to the country?

Mr. VOWLES: Yes, I want to go to the country. (Government laughter.) There is no one more anxious than I am to go to the

country, because I want hon. gentlemen opposite put upon their trial, but I want the issue to be put honestly to the people.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and Government laughter.

Mr. VOWLES: We are told that the Government are not going to get any further loans from the London market until such time as they have submitted their position to the people. What is the position? Assume that they get back by a narrow majority, is that going to inspire any more confidence in the financiers of London than there is to-day? Have they undertaken to deal fairly with the people in the future? I understand that certain promises were made by Mr. Theodore, and that certain suggestions were made that his Government would be prepared to alter their legislation if they could get cash.

The ACTING PREMIER: What authority have you got for the statements you are making?

Mr. VOWLES: We know that the previous Queensland loan was over-subscribed. At that time Mr. Ryan, who was a past master in the art of gulling the people, told the people in London—I think it was on the occasion of a banquet—he said that the Queensland Government did not know what repudiation or confiscation meant.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES: As a result of that, and also as the result of a certain compact he made with the insurance companies and shipping companies, the money was made available to him. But when he came back home the whole of his promises were not carried out by his Cabinet. In face of the fact that his Government was not supposed to know what repudiation or confiscation meant, they introduced a measure which was a confiscatory measure, and placed it on the statute-book. Hon. members in the Upper House and on this side of the House told the Government what the inevitable result of that legislation would be. To my mind, the way that that legislation was introduced was underhand. They swamped the Upper House for the purpose of putting confiscatory legislation on our statute-book. And now we have to carry the burden. Not

[5.30 p.m.] only was that legislation confiscatory, but it was actually retrospective. It went back as far as six years, and penalised people in some cases who for those six years were not even the owners of the property on which they have now been assessed. In the face of that, where foreign money—English money, although we may call it foreign as being foreign to Australia—where outside money is invested here, how can we expect the business community of Great Britain to turn round and lend more money to us if we will not treat honourably the owners of the funds invested in those properties? It was anticipated by no less an organ than the "Daily Standard" that Mr. Theodore would have difficulty in getting money. He is not the only one who has been refused. The Commonwealth itself has been refused.

The ACTING PREMIER: So we are all right?

Mr. VOWLES: Victoria was also refused.

Mr. HARTLEY: And they did not do any repudiation.

Mr. VOWLES: Probably the delegation had something to do with it? Were they

Mr. Vowles.]

the cause of the Commonwealth or Victoria or New South Wales not getting it?

The ACTING PREMIER: Then our credit is all right?

Mr. VOWLES: I do not know whether it is, but we will say that when we are told what we have in the Treasury, and what we expect to get in the future. The "Daily Standard," on the 30th July last, says—

"Before people make up their minds that the Philp-Cowley-Walsh delegation had any substantial effect in wrecking the Premier's financial mission to London, it would be well to keep in view how other States and the Commonwealth are faring in their monetary transactions. We have heard very little of what has happened to those fragile negotiations for the repayment of Australia's unpaid war debt of nearly £42,000,000 to Britain. Yet Mr. Watt's trip to London was claimed by the Federal Government to be so urgent that it was used to stave off a crisis in the House of Representatives, when the Country party had the appearance of meaning business.

"Seemingly that £42,000,000 matter still awaits full adjustment. The New South Wales loan of £2,000,000 at 5½ per cent. was so poorly subscribed on the London market that half of it was left in the hands of the underwriters. For an emergency loan of £2,000,000 to overcome drought distress, the New South Wales 'National' Government just before the recent elections made arrangements for placing it in the State, so little did the London prospects attract them.

"Now comes Victoria's experience, which has been that in a loan of £2,725,000 in that State the banks had to take £2,059,000, the public only subscribing £666,000. The fact must not be overlooked that the banks are interested in maintaining the State's credit, and that they could hardly afford to allow the loan to be a failure. But the banks cannot go on for ever taking up the balances of under-subscribed loans, comments one of the Tory Melbourne dailies. On that admission the Victorian loan was raised by what is in effect compulsion, because the banks felt it necessary to avoid the impression getting abroad that the State's credit was bad. It further admitted that 'the State loan was not nearly so successful as expected,' and that Victoria should be 'cautious about borrowing and hold with its economies.' It also offers the gloomy prediction that 'Mr. Theodore will face enormous difficulties when he attempts to raise a loan for Queensland within the State.'

"But what else remains for Mr. Theodore to do if the Tory-governed Victoria has to borrow locally because London has, temporarily at least, shut off the supply? The Commonwealth affected the success of the Victorian loan by its new 'peace' effort of £25,000,000. Its suspended £42,000,000 in London doubtless unfavourably affected Queensland's chances of getting that £9,000,000, just as it helped to bring about the slump in the New South Wales loan of £2,000,000. On closer examination of the financial position, it would seem that the Tory delegation was merely another straw added to the last that broke the camel's

[Mr. Vowles.

back, but at the same time their anti-Queensland malignity should not be forgotten."

Mr. DUNSTAN: They do not know about that bribe.

Mr. VOWLES: Again, on the 7th August, the "Daily Standard" says—

"On the pastoral investment and financial side the consequences have been far-reaching. They will go farther than the notorious trio and their 'National' party accomplices expected. The 'National' delegation hoped to spoil the proposals of the Queensland Government for financial assistance. Their expectation apparently has been realised. The London market at present is in the most difficult position for borrowers that it has ever reached since the substantial settlement of Australia. But any faint chance of the success of Mr. Theodore's mission was crushed by this atrocious attempt of the 'National' party to transfer the arena of our political contests to Britain."

There is an admission by the recognised authority of the present Government that any faint chance of success Mr. Theodore had only was affected, that money was very tight, and that he had a very, very remote chance of getting it. Yet hon. members turn round and say that the delegation which went home—as they were perfectly entitled to do as British subjects—when they and their class were not receiving fair play such as they should receive in any British community—that the delegation which went to the highest authority and put their case to the British Government are the whole cause of the trouble. And if the truth was told by them—all that had to be told was that the Government had carried out legislation they have been warned against because it was fleecing the people—if that truth was told, can the Government complain?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: And you repudiate them because they told the truth.

Mr. VOWLES: I am not concerned about them because they told the truth, but the Labour Government says, in the Speech here, that those three individuals misrepresented the real position so far as that legislation is concerned.

The ACTING PREMIER: They did not misrepresent; they lied.

Mr. VOWLES: If they lied, will the hon. member give us the lies they told?

The ACTING PREMIER: I will.

Mr. VOWLES: I will hold the hon. gentleman to that statement.

The ACTING PREMIER: I will show you on the hustings.

Mr. VOWLES: There the hon. member hedges. He says that irregular things have taken place, and he is not prepared to support his statements in this House. When he is challenged, he immediately hedges, as usual. (Government interjections.) Assuming that what the Lieutenant-Governor says in his Speech is correct, assuming that this misrepresentation took place, I ask—what was our Premier doing? Was he not on the spot? What was our Agent-General, Mr. Hunter, the man who was conversant with all the inside runnings of the Government and its intentions, doing? Why did not Mr. Theodore turn round and represent the true facts?

Mr. Theodore was present at certain public gatherings before his departure from the old country. He made certain statements. He was very careful for a start, but he showed his teeth and his vindictiveness afterwards. When he was cornered he showed his spleen.

Mr. DUNSTAN: He stood up for Queensland, which is more than you could do.

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

The ACTING PREMIER: Not even a good electioneering speech!

Mr. VOWLES: Let us hear yours.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): I have carefully studied the Speech of the Lieutenant-Governor, which was presented to us yesterday, and it is somewhat remarkable that the question which was pre-eminent in the minds of all those who listened to it was studiously and carefully avoided—that is to say, the whole of the destinies of Queensland are wrapped up in the question of finance. Yet, if one studies the Speech from end to end, one finds that the subject is absolutely and entirely sidetracked, except in regard to one phase of it, in which a torrent of abuse is poured out on certain gentlemen who have gone to England and who have no more to do with the Government or the Opposition in Queensland than I have to do with the Labour party at the present moment.

Mr. KIRWAN: Great Scott!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It is just as well to nail this question once and for all. If the Government think they are going to make any capital out of the Opposition or bring into their fold any casual voters by trying to tie on to the Opposition the delegation which has gone to England, I can tell them from the outset that they are doomed to disappointment, because there is not a member of the Opposition—there is not a member of any section of the Opposition, perhaps I would be right at saying at this stage—who is not just as condemnatory of that delegation as the Government themselves are. (Government laughter.) We hear from the cries of the hon. members opposite, we understand from their laughter, just what stress they are going to place on these matters. We can easily understand how these cries are going to be poured out on the hustings in order to bring them back to power for a further term of three years, I repeat that no member of this Opposition and no organisation associated with this Opposition—and I have a very intimate knowledge of the situation—has anything whatever to do with that delegation, and that the condemnation of that delegation was just as great from the Opposition itself as it is from the Government. I will go further and say this: That there are certain gentlemen occupying the front Government benches at this present moment who know absolutely as well as I do that that is true. In fact, I will go so far as to say that certain of those gentlemen were placed in touch with certain facts which confirm what I say in every respect, but it does not pay them to disclose it.

The ACTING PREMIER: You had better name them.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It does not pay them to acknowledge that at the present moment. They are absolutely bereft of any

plank on which to go to the country. Therefore, they have decided that, before this question gets cold, before the people forget this delegation: "We must go to the country immediately. We must alter our prohibition compact so as to place two issues before the people on one day. We must strike while the iron is hot. We are absolutely bankrupt of any policy, but we must strike the people through their passions, just as at the last election we struck them through their stomachs." That is the position to-day, and it is just as well to make it quite clear and let these gentlemen know once for all that the Opposition on the hustings are going to take up exactly the same attitude as the Government—that is to say, both sections of the Opposition.

The HOME SECRETARY: Both sections of the Opposition?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I quite agree with the Home Secretary that it is necessary to say "both sections" under existing circumstances, but I say this so that those gentlemen can alter their mode of attack, so that they may frame their platform and their policy so as not to meet with disappointment—that, instead of being opposing forces on this particular question, we are going to be at one. So we may as well draw their teeth in that regard at once.

In my opinion, as I have already pointed out, the whole immediate question is one of finance. That is dominating the situation at the present moment: and anyone of us who burks this question, anyone of us who fails to point out to the country the serious position of the finances of Queensland and the Commonwealth in general, would be failing in his duty. It is very easy to prepare window-dressing paraphernalia such as we see before us, in which all kinds of further benefits and doles are promised to the people, but the time has come when the advisers and the representatives of the people of Queensland should face the whole situation on the matter of finance. It is no use our posing as a self-governing Dominion. It is no use our imagining that we conduct our own affairs when, whenever a question of finance crops up, we have got to go to the other side of the world and face our task-masters. We cannot be a self-governing Dominion unless we can control our own finances any more than I, as a business man, can conduct my business as I want to if I have to go cap in hand and ask my bank manager for an overdraft. And it is no use my going for an increased overdraft if I have repudiated my obligations to him. That is the position of the Government at the present moment. Not only are they dependent on Great Britain for their finances, but also that dependency is subject to the good name and honour of Queensland; and because they have placed themselves in the position of failing to enjoy the confidence of those at home, instead of setting their house in order by removing from the statute-book any of those pieces of objectionable legislation, they are retaliating by saying, "We are going to make these people pay who have dared to remonstrate with us for introducing repudiatory legislation." Difficult as the subject may be, I purpose in the time at my disposal to point out the true position of the finances of Queensland and Australia generally. It is a fact that there are few criticsers or debaters who can talk on this subject, because figures are

Mr. Elphinstone.]

dry; but, nevertheless, I am going to do my best, humble as it may be, to show the position of Australia, because at the present moment everything depends on finance—and nobody knows that better than the gentlemen occupying the Government benches of the present time.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER interjected.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I have already stated that I hold no brief for the delegation. I condemn it just as strongly as does the hon. gentleman who has interjected. I think it is an abomination for any section of the community to interfere with the governing propensities of a country or with its credit. As I stated in the earlier stages of my speech, I am quite sure the leader of the Opposition and the leader of the Nationalist section are just as condemnatory of that action as I am myself.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Oh, no!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Let us understand that right here, because it is no good wasting time and raising the passions of the people on that particular question. I want to point out that the public debt of Queensland at the present time is approximately £70,000,000, and that the Queensland share of the Commonwealth debts approximately may be calculated to amount to £55,000,000; so the total indebtedness of this State—Federal and State—is £125,000,000, equivalent to £172 per head of the population. It is as well that we should dwell upon this question and understand its true significance. No less a sum than £125,000,000 is owed by something like 700,000 people in this State. One serious point about the indebtedness, as far as this State is concerned, is that of this £70,000,000 no less than £27,000,000 falls due for redemption within the next six years. There is £2,500,000 due in 1922, £13,000,000 due in 1924, and £11,750,000 due in 1926. Approximately, £27,000,000 has to be redeemed. In 1916 we abandoned the usual method of financial caution by postponing the Sinking Fund, so that any question of redeeming those loans has disappeared in its entirety, and all we can do is to ask for a renewal.

Mr. SMITH: There never was a proper Sinking Fund.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Another extraordinary feature about the present situation, and one of those many things upon which the Labour Government have to congratulate themselves, is that between 1914 and 1922 there has been no loan redemption in Queensland. That is a piece of good fortune upon which the Labour Government should congratulate themselves. The last loan redemption which this State had to face was that in Mr. Denham's time, when £11,750,000 was redeemed at a redemption interest of 4½ per cent. This Government have not had to face that situation; their only trouble has been spending, and it is wonderful the way they have achieved notoriety in that regard. Another point which we, as the legislators of Queensland, must consider is the extraordinary position as applied to this State in relation to the amount of loan money which is held in Australia. I am going to read this table, which is vastly entertaining and educational. For every £100 of public debt South Australia has £46 odd held in Australia and £53 odd held in London. In Victoria there is £45 odd held in Australia and £54 odd held in London. In Tasmania there is £35 odd held in Australia and £63

odd held in London. In New South Wales there is £30 odd held in Australia and £69 odd held in London. In Western Australia there is £28 odd held in Australia and £71 odd held in London. Now we come to Queensland. Here there is £19 odd held in Australia and £80 odd held in London, which shows how absolutely dependent this State is upon the goodwill of the London financiers. We go and sacrifice all that—throw it to the winds—by adopting repudiatory legislation which we on this side of the House at all times have condemned. We have gone out of our way to try and show the Government the fallacy of the policy they were adopting and the effect which it was going to have. If anyone cares to turn to past speeches made on this repudiatory Bill he will see that time and time again every speaker from the Opposition pointed out to the Government the effect that this was going to have. But the Government, in their over-powering wisdom, knew better; they congratulated themselves on possessing all the knowledge—all the wisdom. But those who had some small knowledge of Great Britain and the Stock Exchange and the financial markets knew quite well that repudiatory legislation was going to bring about the catastrophe with which the Labour Government are faced at the present moment.

The ACTING PREMIER: You know very well that your leader was in the Ministry that brought in the same Bill. Cabinet approves of every Bill that comes down here.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Dealing with that particular phase of it, this Opposition has nothing to do with the actions of the Denham Government years ago. I will say that where the Denham Government showed their wisdom and their sense was in withdrawing a measure which was found to be objectionable.

The ACTING PREMIER: All the Ministers agreed with it, otherwise it would not have come down here. They had a deputation from the pastoralists.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: We honestly and sincerely tried to induce the Government to withdraw that repudiatory legislation just as, apparently, attempts were made successfully to cause the Denham Government to withdraw it. The effect of their having changed their minds and withdrawn it is evidence that they had a mind to change. It showed their sense; it showed their broad vision in this matter. The present Government stand condemned in their claim that they possessed all the wisdom of the world in this matter. They snapped their fingers at the arguments we tried to put before them, with the result that we see them bankrupt in every regard at the present moment. I want to pursue my criticism of the finances and to say that the only course left open to this Government, or any other Government which follow in their footsteps in the next five or six years, is the renewal of those loans. We know quite well that that is going to entail another half a million of interest on the taxpayers of Queensland. Twenty-five per cent. of our revenue at the present moment goes in the payment of interest on loans. When this £25,000,000 comes up for renewal it means—if the present signs are to be believed at all—that an extra half-million has to be placed upon the taxpayers in interest for the redemption of existing loans. If this money had

[Mr. Elphinstone.]

been invested in remunerative directions, if the enterprises in which these loans are sunk were reproductive, the situation would not be half so appalling. We know quite well that the great bulk of this money is invested in directions which do not even pay the interest upon the money, and therefore the taxpayer has to be called upon to make it up by direct taxation.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: What directions are they?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I would remind the hon. gentleman that two-thirds of our public debt is invested in the railways, and the last time we had the opportunity of seeing the Auditor-General's report it was shown that the £43,000,000 odd invested in the railways was producing only 13s. 9d. per cent., whereas in reality it was costing the taxpayers something like 4 per cent. The nearest opportunity we have at the moment of knowing what is the position of the railways is to refer to the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech, at page 614, of the "Queensland Government Gazette," where we read these remarks—

"The railway revenue for the year 1919-1920 was £4,960,150, showing an increase of £964,099. The net revenue also increased from £291,297 in 1918-1919 to £635,758 in 1919-1920."

Taking those figures on a comparative basis, they show exactly what I forecasted when criticising the railway figures last year—that the deficit on the railways this year is going to exceed £1,000,000.

The ACTING PREMIER: No.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I will stand by that, anyway. It will be found that we have to face a further deficit of £1,000,000 on the railways for the current year. That is an answer to the hon. gentleman who interjected asking where is this money going. It is being wasted on these enterprises which are being run at a loss. Two-thirds of that debt showed a loss to the taxpayers of £1,400,000 last year and a further £1,000,000 this year. I would like to comment further upon the absolute lack of appreciation of the position as exemplified by the action of the Government during the past year. We have had the phenomenal expenditure of something like £5,000,000 from loan money. The Treasurer, speaking at Townsville, tried to find solace and comfort from the fact that this £5,000,000 went only as far as £2,500,000 before the war. That is perfectly true. But there is a very significant corollary, and that is that, although that £5,000,000 goes only as far as £2,500,000 went before the war, he failed to point out to his audience that it is costing us 50 per cent. more than £5,000,000 did before the war. So, if you carry his argument to its natural conclusion, you will find the position is a most appalling one; and any person in charge of the finances of a State of this description who can continue spending loan money at that rate, knowing those circumstances, shows his absolute disregard for the future of the State. That has been evidenced ever since this Government came into power.

The ACTING PREMIER: That is a grotesque exaggeration.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I want to deal for a few minutes with this proposal of the Government with regard to the additional £9,000,000 which Mr. Theodore endeavoured to raise in Great Britain. I dare say when

the truth is known regarding it we shall find that that £9,000,000 was not refused to Queensland. The view I hold is that it was offered to Queensland, or placed at our disposal, at a certain interest which the Government were not prepared to face. They have forgotten or, at any rate, they have not realised the fact that money is becoming tremendously scarce; that Mr. Theodore approached the London market at a most inopportune time when everybody else was demanding money, and consequently the price that he was called upon to pay was one which caused him to stagger. In my opinion that is going to be one of the finest lessons Queensland could have had. I already have said I hold no brief whatever for that delegation. I had nothing whatever to do with it. The Treasurer possibly might get a little comfort or solace from what I am saying: That this refusal—or, if not refusal, the conditions attaching to this £9,000,000 which have caused the Government to turn it down—may be one of the finest lessons Queensland ever had. Whether it is this Government or a new Government which returns to power, the lesson is a salutary one, and one which has to be learned: That it is time we set about looking after our own finances; it is time that we appreciated the fact, like the business man does, that we have to finance our own business; it is time that we thought of the cost when embarking upon some of these enterprises; and when we are setting out to borrow a further £9,000,000 from Great Britain we have to understand that that £9,000,000 was proposed to be invested in railways, steel works, road-making, and so on.

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

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: At the tea adjournment I was endeavouring to point out that the Government have been making attempts during the past few months—if they are correctly reported—to raise £9,000,000 of money with the object of building further railways,

of erecting steel works, constructing roads, and other such purposes. [7 p.m.] With a view to impressing upon the House the financial aspect of the matter. I want to say that had they succeeded in securing that loan it would have meant that that £9,000,000 would have been unproductive for at least five years.

Mr. BRENNAN: Ridiculous!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: My friend, with all his business knowledge, says, "Ridiculous." I would like to ask him how he conceives to erect a steel works and get it running in less than five years? I would also like to ask him what railways—particularly of the type of the railway to the Upper Burnett—if established, could possibly be productive in less than five years? Once more I say that £9,000,000 of money would almost in its entirety be a drag on the taxpayer for five years at least.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Would you advise the construction of more railways?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: My view regarding railways has been given more than once, and it is that the policy of this Government, and of any incoming Government, should be to finish the North Coast line, the Bowen coalfields line, the Longreach to Winton line, and then close down absolutely and entirely on railway construction work, so that these lines could be made to pay, because if we are going on building lines to distant parts of Queensland, with only a handful of people

[Mr. Elphinstone.]

to serve, it is perfectly obvious that the railway system will become an increasing burden on the taxpayer; and from evidences one sees from the speeches of hon. members opposite, it seems that certain of them are coming to that opinion. I contend that if that £9,000,000 had been secured and spent in the direction indicated, it would have been a drain—or the interest on that money would have been a drain—on the taxpayers for at least five years, which would mean another £550,000 added to the burden of taxation. What would the position have been with the renewal of the loans, which has to be faced in the next six years, amounting to some £27,000,000, which, as I have already pointed out, would have been an increased burden of £500,000 a year on the taxpayer; and with the interest on this unproductive loan to the extent of £9,000,000 as proposed, amounting to another £500,000 a year, it would mean that a further £1,000,000 has to be imposed on the existing taxpayers. What is the effect of that going to be? These gentlemen occupying the Government benches are continually deceiving themselves into thinking that the cost of living is due to profiteering or to any other reason but the right one.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE interjected.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I want to ask the Minister for Agriculture what is the right one. Surely a gentleman occupying his position should know it without my telling him! The position regarding the cost of living is that we have so much interference with private enterprise, so much taxation imposed upon a small handful of taxpayers who happen to be the producers, that these producers are doing exactly what anyone else would do—passing it on to the consumer, with the result that the consumer pays more for the commodities which he requires for his everyday existence. Those are two of the main reasons why the cost of living is what it is to-day. As I have said before, the effect of this taxation is going to be that the cost of living is going up, and is bound to go up, until these gentlemen awaken and face the situation in the proper manner.

The position with regard to the State at the present moment is that it bears twice the amount of taxation that any other State in the Commonwealth bears, and the taxation is also four times greater in Queensland than the least taxed State of the Commonwealth. That is as it stands at present, but what it will become with these renewals to be faced, and if the Government had been successful in raising this large loan, it is almost difficult to imagine. The position would have been staggering. I believe the total taxpayers in Queensland number something like 26,000—just a handful of people. They bear all the burden of taxation, and the more you impose taxation, and the more loans we set free from State taxation, the more aggravating the position becomes. It is all very well to offer these baits when putting the loans before the people, and say, "This loan is going to be free of State taxation," but what is the result? It simply means you are taking from the realm of taxation all these large sums of money, which makes the position all the more intolerable for the taxpayer. It has already been explained in this House that in 1914 the taxation upon the people of Queensland amounted to £1 8s. 2d. per head of the population. Last year it amounted to £4 14s. 3d., and what it is going

[Mr. Elphinstone.

to be in years to come if this Government continue to hold the reins of office—with that total indifference to the financial aspect of the matter and absolute disregard of the economic situation—it is difficult to imagine.

We must also consider the Commonwealth phase of the matter, because our financial position in Queensland, as a State, is wrapped up with the Commonwealth's position. The Commonwealth is accumulating debts in discharge of their war obligations amounting to colossal figures; and it will be, perhaps, as well to remind hon. members that within the next five years the Commonwealth has to redeem something like £120,000,000. In addition to this they are floating loans at present: £25,000,000 is on the market to-day, and 6 per cent. is being offered, free from State taxation. This means a staggering burden upon the few taxpayers. These taxpayers are really the leaders of industry—the men who make production possible—the men who make employment possible—and the bigger the burden and the more you interfere with production, then the more you encourage or aggravate the evil of unemployment.

It seems to me that these financiers in London who have made the position of the Government what they—the Government—consider intolerable, but what I consider to be, perhaps, the wisest thing that ever took place—these gentlemen, a couple of whom probably know as much about finance as the whole lot of us put together—belonging as they do to a country which has demonstrated in no uncertain manner the way to face its war obligations, a country that has produced Budgets recently which are a perfect eye-opener to smaller nations, as to what can be done in the matter of finance—appreciate that we in Queensland have been too much dependent on overseas for our loans, and they think, in all kindness and sincerity, that it is time some lesson was shown to a State like Queensland. I do not say Queensland is the only State to which that lesson should apply, because the State of New South Wales is gradually drifting into the same position; but the lesson has to be applied. It is just as I pointed out previously, when any man in business begins to, perhaps, go beyond his means, and his bank manager calls him up. We know how that is resented, and how the man thinks the bank manager is possibly exceeding his duties, but we also know later that the advice and action of the manager have been for that man's ultimate good. It is exactly the same position with regard to the Government to-day. The financiers of Great Britain have controlled the financial situation from the point of view of overdrafts and loans, and, instead of these gentlemen resenting what has taken place, they should be glad that this lesson has been brought home to them.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You are rather pleased with the result of the delegation.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: If the member who is interjecting had been in his seat earlier he would have heard that I have condemned in every regard that delegation to London. But I say I do not attribute the failure of Mr. Theodore's loan to the action of that delegation. From the reports of the financial papers in London it is quite obvious that this has been coming for quite a time, and if hon. members opposite had cared to

listen to some advice given by the Opposition they would have known that it must come. Instead of hon. gentlemen opposite being mad at the result, and vengeful as to what they intend to do, they should accept it as a lesson which all of us possibly need.

The question then comes, "What is Queensland going to do?" We have seen nothing in the Speech of the Lieutenant-Governor to indicate what are their intentions regarding the financial situation in Queensland. We know that their developmental work, which, of course, is their one means of absorbing unemployment and holding office, depends in its entirety upon the raising of large sums of money. This has been stopped, and we know quite well that the coming election has been brought about simply to divert attention from the chaotic state of affairs which the failure of this loan brought about. Even if this Government were returned to power, what could it do to alter the situation? The remedy, in my judgment, is very clear and simple. Instead of the State undertaking these obligations and thinking that it is its prerogative to undertake all the industrial development of Queensland, it should hand over that obligation and that development to private enterprise, which is the proper method of developing the State.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE interjected.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It is pathetic to hear the parrot-ery of our friend the Minister for Agriculture. His one refuge is State insurance, and I cannot imagine a more weak contention, because any line of business where a Government steps in and makes a monopoly and forces a man to come and deal with them, if they cannot make a success of that business, I certainly think that Government benefit of all Ministerial intelligence. The point is that the State is endeavouring to take to itself obligations of the natural developments of the State or the natural inclinations of business men. They are endeavouring to absorb all the industrial development of the State of Queensland. They have driven the private employers out of business, and they have determined to exterminate the capitalistic system. They are now suffering from the results of that method of doing business. As I said previously in this House, every Labour Government is bankrupt in financial balance. It takes three years for a Labour Government to introduce all its fanciful and attractive pieces of legislation; consequently, they naturally get returned for another term. That is because they make the people of the State believe that all their troubles are over, that there is no need to work any more, and that the State will keep them and do everything for them. It makes the people believe that there is no need for them to exercise their intelligence or to develop the State in any way. As the next three years go by, we see the natural consequence of such legislation. I do not blame hon. gentlemen opposite for what they have done, because it is simply the system they have been working under. It is simply the principles that they have been trying to inculcate. They have been preaching the millennium to the people and have been practising idle dreams, and they are now up against it financially like everyone is who endeavours to run his business in that way. I say once more that the present position, financially and industrially, is largely attributable to the Government assuming trading

responsibilities which do not belong to any Government, but to the private individuals of the State. It is time that they ceased teaching this doctrine of socialism and the doctrine of idealism; but instead they should encourage private enterprise and encourage the pioneering instinct in order to bring the State back to its proper position. I sincerely hope that the Government will take these things to heart and not in the vindictive spirit which is displayed in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech, and possibly in the speeches of the less responsible Ministers. If they do, they will see in it a salutary lesson for their benefit and for the benefit of Queensland.

* Mr. GUNN (*Carrarvon*): I take this opportunity of speaking on this question because, from what I can understand from the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech, I may never have another opportunity of addressing this House. It appears to me that we are going to the country very shortly, and I do not intend to ask my electors to elect me again. So this may be the last chance that I will have of addressing the House.

HON. W. H. BARNES: No man will be more missed than you.

Mr. GUNN: It is very nice for the hon. member to say so, but I think there is just as good fish in the sea as was ever taken out of it.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I venture to say that my statement is the general feeling of the House.

Mr. GUNN: I wish to congratulate the hon. member for Oxley on the excellent speech he has just delivered. His sentiments are mine right from the beginning to the end. I hope that that speech will be read frequently outside by the electors, so that they may understand the financial position. The whole system of government is bound up, more or less, by finance. The hon. gentleman who leads this House issued a pamphlet some time ago, when he said that finance was the test of Governments. That is the only natural way to test a Government—by its financial deeds.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Who signed that pamphlet?

Mr. GUNN: It was signed by Mr. Fihelly and Mr. Theodore. The finance of this Government reminds me a good deal of the Robin Hood finance, or of the old bushranging style of finance. Over fifty years ago the so-called bushrangers prevailed in many parts of Australia, and this was the method they adopted. They would stick up anybody who happened to have money or goods and take their property away from them and give it to the poor people. They took from the rich and gave to the poor, and, consequently, they were very popular amongst the poor people. That sort of finance is all very well for bushrangers, but when it is brought into the Government of a country like this you will find that people who have money are unduly taxed, and when their money is unduly commandeered they do not try to make any more money. That sort of thing has the result of making people take their money out of the State. It is also a lesson to the people at the other end of the world not to come here. I have a nephew who is employed in an architect's office in Brisbane, and I know that they have received plans of three business places to

Mr. Gunn.]

be erected in the suburbs of Brisbane to carry on manufacturing. The plans are from Southern businesses who wish to open branches in Brisbane, but orders have been given not to call for tenders until they see which way the elections are going. (Government laughter.) They have been told that if the Labour party gets in again these businesses are not to be gone on with in Queensland. I had a young man at my grazing farm the other day, a man who won great distinction during the war. His father has a considerable amount of money to invest. This young man has been going round the world to see where to invest his money, and while he was at my place he was reading the tables showing the different amounts of income tax he would have to pay, both State and Federal. When he saw he would have to pay such large sums of money he asked me if it was correct, and I said, "Yes."

Mr. CARTER: More stinking fish.

Mr. GUNN: He said that after reading the extreme taxes that he would have to pay he would not invest his money or his father's money in Queensland. In fact, he said, "No Queensland for me."

Mr. CARTER: He is better out of it.

Mr. GUNN: There are others just the same who want to invest their money out of Queensland.

Mr. KIRWAN: The old gag—money flying out of the State. There is more money invested in Queensland to-day than ever there was before.

Mr. GUNN: There is a friend of mine in the Argentine at the present time, who is inspecting properties with a view to investing his money there. I know that that money is going to leave Queensland.

Mr. BRENNAN: When he is dead he cannot take it with him. (Laughter.)

* Mr. GUNN: That is another matter. The British investor objects to the high death duty that he has got to pay. At the present time, the death duty is so high in Queensland that there is hardly anything to leave to the children. We have had too many Premiers who have been taught in the Labour school. Mr. Holman made a great mistake with his financing of New South Wales, as he spent too much money, both loan money and otherwise. When he changed his political views, and went over to the National side, he did not get rid of the habit of spending money. Mr. Hughes, the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, is the same. He is also bitten with the disease of financial indisposition.

Mr. BRENNAN: What is your opinion about the delegation?

Mr. GUNN: I will tell you later on.

Mr. WHITFORD: Tell us who financed them.

Mr. GUNN: The Speech read to us by the Lieutenant-Governor the other day is the poorest Speech I ever heard in this House. (Government dissent.) There is nothing in it at all. It is all propoganda work. It is something like reading the references and pamphlets that come out with goanna salve. (Laughter.) It is just about as good as that. Talking about this great delegation, I notice that the Labour party take their orders principally from the Trades Hall Council. Our Labour party in this House only have the

[Mr. Gunn.

privilege of putting a rubber stamp on what is done in another place. I have here some extracts from the "Daily Standard" in connection with the Townsville convention. In the issue of 28th June, 1920, there is an article over the signature of "Jack Cade." Now, Jack Cade is the nom de plume of the "Standard"; it is the "Standard" that is speaking, and not Jack Cade at all.

Mr. KIRWAN: He might be in the gallery looking at you.

Mr. GUNN: This is what it says with reference to the Townsville convention—

"In the final analysis the Labour convention is the growing force of Labour in politics; it is the master's voice that, for good or ill, directs and controls the workers' political machine."

At the Townsville convention, Mr. Demaine is also reported to have said—

"If money or credit cannot be obtained without the community being bled whiter by extortionate interest-mongers, then there is only left the method of increased taxation. We must have money, and those who through the protection of the State have made large profits and fortunes must provide it—(Hear, hear!)—increased income tax on large incomes and confiscatory death duties should be resorted to. (Hear, hear!)"

Who is going to invest money in Australia from abroad if all they make is to be taken from them? Then Mr. Demaine also said—

"Our Labour Government has done something fairly substantial on these lines."

I should think it has. (Laughter.)

"The capitalists' interests are threatened as never before by the Labour Administration."

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and laughter.

Mr. GUNN: Then Mr. Demaine also said—

"Russia, which was held to be a dark and hopeless nation, has shown the way and lighted a torch whose flame will spread throughout the world. (Hear, hear!)"

Is that the way to go and ask the money-lenders when you advocate the repudiation of debt, and advocate confiscatory death duties and all sorts of other things? When you were advocating taxing the money away from these people, and robbing them of their money at the same time, Mr. Theodore was in London asking the London financiers to advance money. Do not you think that was injuring the credit of Queensland far more than any delegation?

Mr. GILDAY: Did the delegation keep you well posted up?

* Mr. GUNN: The "Standard" kept me well posted up. I have another extract here from a union congress held in Brisbane, and reported in the "Standard" of the 24th August, 1918. It says—

"Mr. Moroney moved, and Mr. McLary seconded, in favour of repudiation of war debts. Mr. Wallace remembered that the Victorian Railway Union passed a similar resolution, and they brought down a heavy hand on them; he was expecting some excitement on this question. He was sorry that the Queens-

land Railway Union had not risen to the occasion. He intended to support the motion."

That motion was debated very fully, but the convention got rather afraid of it and never came to a division on it. Still, [7.30 p.m.] there it was. He advocated repudiation of the public debt. One gentleman said, "No, we will not repudiate the debt. We will repudiate the interest on it." Well, I do not see the difference. Then, again, "Jack Cade" writes in the "Standard" of 26th December, 1918, just about the same time—

"A good many things besides thrones, crowns, and such like are in the melting-pot to-day and included in the conglomeration of traditious policies, moralities, and obligations that are thus stewing in the fiery crucible of the world's revolution is undoubtedly the whole question of repayment of so-called national debts."

That is what "The Daily Standard" says. I could read a great many more extracts in which from time to time Labour supporters and Labour papers have advocated repudiation of public debts. Is that any encouragement to the London financiers to advance money? I notice that not so very long ago, before it got into the habit of blaming this delegation for everything, the "Standard" printed a leading article on the failure of the Queensland loan. On 30th July an article, which pointed out that other States had fared no better than Queensland, wound up as follows:—

"On closer examination of the financial position it would seem that the Tory delegation was merely another straw added to the last that broke the camel's back, but at the same time their anti-Queensland malignity should not be forgotten."

So that even the "Standard" then did not blame the delegation. It was only later on, when it was thought it would be nice window-dressing for an election, that they thought of doing so. These are some of the references that have been made to money-lenders: "Hands Off—Shylock's Impudence," "Arrogance—London Capitalists' Front," "Fiendish and Devilish," "Those Devilish Political Bagmen." Well, when you want to ask a man to lend you money, do you call him such names as those? Whatever those men who went to London may be, they are honourable men, gentlemen who have been connected with finance all their lives more or less. They are respected by the people who lend money from the other end of the world, and they did not go there to decry their own State. Of course, I do not know what they said, but if they did say anything they said that the Queensland Government was not fit to govern Queensland, and I quite agree with them.

Mr. WHITFORD: What did you pay to send them home?

Mr. GUNN: I know that nobody on this side of the House paid anything to send them home. I know that neither the Nationalist Association nor the People's Progressive Union subscribed one penny to send those men to London.

Now, the present Acting Premier once said that finance is the test of Government. I see that last year the expenditure out of revenue was £11,266,909, that out of loan was £4,797,864, and that from trust funds

£3,076,704, or a total of £19,141,477, equal to £27 per head of the population of Queensland, £54 per head of the adult population and £162 per family of six persons. Of course, we got a lot of it back again—but I suppose we spent about five or six millions more than we received. Nevertheless, after spending all that money we have unemployed, and the Government have to start relief works. It is a deplorable position.

Mr. WHITFORD: You would have retrenched.

Mr. GUNN: There is no retrenchment about that.

Mr. WHITFORD: There would have been, though.

Mr. GUNN: I find that "Knibbs" gives the public debt of Queensland for 1919 as £6,581,121, and since then there has been added £4,797,864, or a total at the present time of £11,378,985.

Mr. WHITFORD: Incurred by past Governments.

Mr. GUNN: When this Government came into power it was £56,869,046.

Mr. WHITFORD: And what did they do for it?

Mr. GUNN: They did a lot more than you did. The Labour party have added during their term £13,509,939. It comes to this—that the public debt per head in the last year of the Denham Government was £82, and during the last financial year that we know anything about of this Government it was £100, or an increase of £18. The public debt for each father and mother and four children was £492 in 1915 and now it is £600. Is that not a deplorable state of affairs? Then, again, when the Government brought out a Financial Statement the other day showing a surplus, a cooked surplus—

Mr. KIRWAN: Are you referring to Joe Cook?

* Mr. GUNN: No, worse than Joe Cook. It was cooked, because I find the revenue for July was £45,925 and the expenditure £132,360, or a deficit of £86,435. If you take the year's surplus of £26,833 from that, you find that for the thirteen months we had a deficit of £59,602. What sort of book-keeping is that? And, as the hon. member for Oxley said, all these renewals that are coming forward are very serious. In Mr. Denham's time he had to meet renewals of loans amounting to £11,728,800. Fortunately for this great financing Government no loans had to be renewed when they came into power: whereas New South Wales had to renew £29,000,000, Victoria £21,000,000, South Australia £10,000,000, Tasmania £2,000,000, and Western Australia, where another spendthrift Labour Government drove that State on the financial rocks, only £800,000. The sad part of it is that during the next few years we have to find for renewals £27,102,384, and it is quite likely that the interest will be 6 per cent. any way, and an increase from 4 per cent. to 6 per cent. means another extra £542,000 per annum, equal to a debt of another £13,500,000, for which we are getting not a pound to spend. To me it is a deplorable state of affairs.

Then we must remember how well these heaven-born financiers have managed the Railway Department. Five years ago our Railway Department paid interest; now it

Mr. Gunn.]

pays practically nothing. The loss last year was £1,421,328, and at that time we had 5,612 miles of railways, or a loss per mile of £253, and when the interest is increased it will be ever so much more than that. The Government have a Public Works Commission going all round the country advocating the building of more railways. We cannot have too many railways, but we must have our railways nearer a paying basis than they are now. We are committing financial suicide in building railways when we are losing on every mile we build as much as that. It would be far better if railways were pulled up instead of put down. If that is a sample of how the Government can manage the railways, the sooner we get back to privately-owned railways the better. Other parts of the world—Canada and the United States of America and Great Britain—were developed by private enterprise, and I notice that the railways that were taken over by the Government of Great Britain during the war showed losses of millions of pounds. In America there was the same thing, and they were glad to hand them back.

Mr. SMITH: Do you know that 16s. per week was the average wage in Great Britain before the war? Do you advocate a return to that?

Mr. GUNN: I know that the men on our privately-owned tramways are just as well treated as—far better treated than our Government employees. They are satisfied, and the trams are paying dividends; but so soon as the Government take them over there will be a less, and the men will be dissatisfied. Here is a quotation from "Hansard" of 1912, page 2483, in which the present Minister in charge of the House said—

"He hoped the Minister had taken into consideration the stringency of the money market, because he thought there was too much of the spendthrift, happy-go-lucky policy in the department. Loans in the past had been obtained too easily. Revenue had been good, and the department had taken little trouble with regard to expenditure. He hoped the Minister would not plunge the country into chaos as far as the Railway Department was concerned. The increase had been enormous since 1904-5, and it was good business provided the work done in opening up the country warranted the expenditure, but he hoped the department would not run amuck as far as the finances were concerned."

The member for North Brisbane said if he were put on a Royal Commission he could show where they could save a quarter of a million pounds. He was placed on a Royal Commission, and he brought in a report as big as a church. The heaven-born Minister who said what I have read, after getting control of the railways, drove the department into a financial bog. The National or Liberal Government, when they were in power, were not afraid of sacking a hand, because they were not depending on his vote. The present Government dare not discharge this or that man for fear he will record his vote against them at the next poll. That is the trouble in all the Government enterprises. There is so much Government patronage that it is not government by the free people of Queensland, but by the public servants. Then I notice that in 1912, according to "Hansard," page

[Mr. Gunn.

1348, Mr. Fihelly, on the Financial Statement, said—

"We have come to a pretty pass indeed when the person directing the destinies of the State does not know where to stop. To-morrow, or the day after, he might be compelled to save, and only for the rains he would have been compelled to save recently, and if he does not know where to apply the pruning-knife it is time that we removed him and put someone in his place who does know."

Then, again, he issued a pamphlet to the electors of Queensland asking them to turn out this horrible Denham Government. This pamphlet stated it was "Compiled by E. G. Theodore and J. A. Fihelly for the Campaign Committee of the Queensland Labour Party." I will read only a few extracts.

The ACTING PREMIER: Read the lot, it is all good stuff.

Mr. GUNN: I would not mind doing that. It says—

"But finance in the home is different from national finance only in the magnitude of the latter.

"If the breadwinner earns £3 per week and spends £4 per week he is on the way to insolvency.

"If a man borrows £5, pays back £7 to the money-lender in interest, and still owes £8 for the original £5 borrowed, he is a fool. Every man and woman will admit so much.

"When the principle is applied to public borrowing no one seems to notice that the same rule should hold good."

Lower down he says—

"Loans may be very necessary for reproductive works, but is it any wonder that our debt amounts to £52,000,000; that our debt per head of the population is over £80?"

Well, these heaven-sent financiers got into power, and they raised the debt from £52,000,000 to £70,000,000 and per head of population from £80 to £100. This pamphlet goes on to say—

"Do you know that a man and wife and family of four owe £490?"

They did then; but they now owe £600. It goes on—

"Do you know that a man who has a wife and family of four pays £18 in interest on loans every year, which means 7s. per week? Don't you think the system should be altered?"

This is the way in which they altered it—instead of paying £18 per year they have to pay £24 per year for interest. Continuing, it says—

"Just ponder on the awful stupidity of a policy that permits of our receiving about eleven millions of money, paying back in interest sixteen and a-half millions, and still owing just about twelve millions! That is the sort of Liberal finance that caused the great bank smash of '93. Will you alter these impossible conditions?"

"That is Liberal finance. What do you think about it? Could you conduct your own private affairs on such a ridiculous basis and have any respect left?"

"Does a business man take a loan from a banker in the same way? Is it the sort of finance that young Queensland and young Australia stand for?"

"Perhaps you now see why finance is supposed to be a very abstruse question. It would not do for the average man and woman to imagine for a moment that they could comprehend its subtleties and unravel its mysteries. They might find that there are not any mysteries at all.

"For instance, in one loan connected with a certain Australia State not a thousand miles from Queensland, an item appeared for cab hire, £207. Is that instructive?"

That was a Liberal Government in New South Wales. What about the motor-cars in Queensland run by the Government? Thousands of pounds were spent on motor-cars in Queensland when this Government came into power. Then it says—

"Is not the present an opportune time to wipe out for ever the Liberalism which is responsible for this calamitous condition of things? Mr. Denham's Ministry and their predecessors are the responsible parties. On their Liberal shoulders rests the blame."

They blamed the Liberal Government for the conditions that prevailed in those days. When they came into power they abolished the Sinking Fund which was then established. It amounted to the same thing as the action of the drunkard who gives his child the money-box for the mother and others to drop their pennies in. All at once he gets into financial distress, breaks open the child's money-box, and steals the savings. They stole the Sinking Fund we had established. Then this beautiful document winds up in this way—

"Finance is the basis of government; it is also the test of Governments. Apply it to the financial records of the two parties who are now before you."

I notice there has been a great cry made in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech regarding the wonderful profits the graziers or pastoralists have been making. Had it not been for the wool and the meat which have been exported from Queensland, there would have been nothing with which to pay the interest on the national debt. I find that the increase between 1914 and the present time—on wool, meat, and that class of stuff sold by graziers—amounts to about 50 per cent. The State income tax during that time has increased by about 450 per cent. There was no Federal tax in 1914, but now the Federal is equal to the State tax, so that the pastoral industry is bearing an increased tax of 900 per cent. In addition to that, there is the Federal leaseholders' tax and the Queensland land tax; so that, if the pastoralists obtained more for their produce since the war started, the Government have received nine times as much as the pastoralists. Then we are always told "about the beacon bright and fair that we are to follow—the Bolshevik. When our Acting Premier came back from England some time ago, this was what the "Standard" said on 11th August, 1919:—

"Referring to his experience in Europe, he says, 'It was instructive in regard to Russia. Perhaps the greatest man in the world to-day was Lenin. (Applause.) He commenced his adminis-

tration under difficulties, but given a fair chance, at the end of a year or a year and a-half, he certainly would have proved to the world that his original methods would be successful.'"

His original method was confiscation.

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

Mr. SMITH (*Mackay*): It is rather interesting to note the attitude of the various sections of the Opposition towards what is now known as the Philp Delegation. The leader of the Opposition, or that section of it having the larger number, stated that his party had nothing to do with the sending of that delegation. Later on the deputy leader of the remnant of the Nationalist party, claiming to speak for his little coterie, also disassociated himself with that delegation. Now it is well known that if members of the Opposition, by whatever name they are known, were to lose the support of certain interests and certain powerful influences outside Parliament they would never have any chance of attaining to the Treasury benches. We know there are powerful interests operating in Queensland who are opposed to the Labour party and the Labour platform. Those interests are prepared to go to any length if by so doing they can secure the defeat of Labour and regain control of the machinery of government. This delegation was born under rather curious circumstances. We often hear references by our opponents to the caucus meeting in secret, to a secret junta sitting at the Trades Hall, and so on. The first intimation the general public received of this delegation was a notice in the Press stating that a meeting had been held in Brisbane representative of large commercial, pastoral, and financial interests, and they had decided to send a delegation comprising Sir Robert Philp, Sir Alfred Cowley, and Mr. J. J. Walsh to England for certain purposes. The names of the men who were present at that meeting have not yet been revealed to the public. The interests represented, or where they held the meeting, has not been made public, and our opponents claim to disassociate themselves from them. The hon. member for Dalby read a lengthy document which purported to show that his party at least were prepared to make their protest in an official and constitutional way. Those things are all very well on the face of it, but we know that these people always act in two directions. There is their official action, the action which they are prepared to stand up to in public, and then there is their system of propaganda carried on by their hirelings secretly, and with whom they can disassociate themselves at any time. The hon. member for Oxley, in referring to the matter, stated that no members of his party were responsible for it. It is a well-known fact that the recently elected chairman of his party was present at that conference held in Brisbane. I refer to Mr. Cribb. It is well known that the President of the National party was present at that gathering and played a very large part in bringing the delegation about.

We know that our opponents have been attacking the Labour Government with regard to our financial policy. They have an army of organisers throughout the State who have done everything in their power to disturb the public mind regarding the safety of the finances of Queensland. We also know

Mr. Smith.]

that members of the party opposite were responsible for organising a "run" on the State Savings Bank. We also [8 p.m.] know that during the recent by-election our opponents—amongst whom was the member for Dalby—went through that electorate doing everything in their power to disgust the minds of the people against the stability of the finances of the State. They have an army of canvassers going about "whispering," as it were, the suitable lie, according to the individual with whom they happen to be speaking for the time being. Some of them call themselves the "Country party"—the shreds and patches who are left of the Nationalist party hang on officially to that name; but they should be designated as "The Whisperers' party." Who are the members of this delegation? They are the remnants of a political party that has long since been hurled into oblivion by the people of Queensland. Sir Robert Philp was defeated at the poll in 1915. Sir Alfred Cowley is known as one of the greatest opponents of our "White Australia" policy at the time of the deportation of the kanakas. He was the greatest advocate in his time in North Queensland of coloured labour in the sugar industry, and every attempt was made scientifically by our opponents to prepare the ground for that delegation—the official communication of members of the Opposition, the official communication of members of the Legislative Council, seeking to show that there was some basis for the statements which the delegation later on would make. An article which appeared in the "National Review," written by T. D. Chataway—another man long since hurled into political oblivion—also prepares the ground by seeking to lead the people to believe that Queensland is on the verge of revolution, and that barricades are about to be erected in the streets of Brisbane. It was part of a well-conceived and cunningly carried-out policy of the opponents of Labour in this State. They know that all reforms are dependent upon the ability of a Government to finance those reforms, that developmental work is urgently required in Queensland, because, in accordance with the Labour Government's policy, railways are being built, and require to be built, into the remote districts of the State, so that land settlement can be encouraged and increased wealth production brought about. The same thing applies to the housing schemes, and so on. Members of the Opposition and their supporters recognised that, if they, by taking direct action during the last session of the present Parliament, could withhold the necessary money from this Government, they had a chance of winning at the poll. What does it mean if the country is denied loan funds? They anticipated the closing down of railway construction; they anticipated that there would be no more money available for building homes under the Workers' Homes Act, that the Government would have no money to assist local authorities in their developmental work, and that a state of unemployment and general business stagnation would be brought about. That is the state of affairs which those who devised this policy desire. When they went to London they induced the opponents of Labour, who are the financiers in that country, to come to their assistance; they asked them, as it were, to indulge in a sympathetic strike. I have no doubt that

[Mr. Smith.

they assured the financiers of London that, by the withholding of loan funds, the Queensland Labour Government would be defeated, and they would be returned to power, and would be prepared to carry out everything asked of them by the financial circles operating in London and in Australia generally.

That is the position as it appears to me, and also the position that will appeal to the intelligent elector of Queensland, and I feel sure that the position is such that the electors of Queensland will not long tolerate anyone or any party who are prepared to stoop to such tactics as these. We know that in Queensland we have a system of government where every man and woman has a say in the government of the country of which they are citizens; and the proper place to fight out our political differences is on the floor of Parliament House and in the electorates of the State. (Hear, hear!). If a Government—no matter by what party—act in a way detrimental to the interests of the people of the State, then the proper thing for the opponents of that Government to do is to organise in the electorates with a view to securing the defeat of that Government in a constitutional way. With that no one could cavil. But we find our opponents seeking the assistance of the financiers of Great Britain to take direct action against the people of Queensland with a view to stopping all developmental work in order to bring about a state of unemployment greater than any that has ever taken place, and they felt that by so doing they would injure this Government. The terms which have been proposed by our opponents are such that no man believing in citizenship at all could support for one moment. Are the people of this State going to submit to a political veto held in the hands of financiers, some of whom have never set foot on Australian soil? Are we to have control of our own destiny, or are we going to submit to terms dictated by the money-lenders of Great Britain?

This is really no new thing. The practice has been adopted before, and has been adopted successfully in some cases. There are other interests operating besides money-lenders. One of the most striking features with regard to the war is the fact that the moneyed power in the British Empire has established itself in a much stronger position than ever it has been before. During that period, when they were able to exact large prices and extort large profits from the needs of the people, they were able to build up huge resources with which at present they are consolidating their position and endeavouring to dictate to the people of Australia and other parts of the British Empire. That holds good with regard to shipping. Shipping is extremely scarce owing to the war, with the result that those who control the steamers sailing on the seven seas are in the position of being able to reap huge profits out of the needs of the people served by those ships. An amalgamation of several steamship lines has taken place, known as the Inchcape Group. They control practically all the shipping of the British Empire, and they have sought to dictate to the people of Australia what they shall do with regard to their Federal line of steamers. To a certain extent they have practically dictated to the Government of the Commonwealth that, unless they submit to action such as indicated by the Inchcape Group, they in turn would isolate Australia

so far as their shipping lines are concerned. Here is a group of shipowners, the directors of which, sitting in London, can practically declare economic war on Australia, which did so much for the Empire during the war. It is also well known that many of the Commonwealth vessels at the present time, while they are able to get cargo from Australia to Great Britain and Europe, come back largely in ballast. That is due to the fact that if merchants ship their goods to Australia with a Federal steamer, an embargo is placed on them with regard to their exports to any other part of the world. That is to say, we will assume that a merchant in Manchester has goods to export to South America, South Africa, India, and Australia: if he gives his goods for Australia to the Commonwealth line of steamers, then the Inchcape Group places an increased rate on the shipment of his goods to other parts of the world. The result is that he—not being in business for the good of his health—decides to consign all his cargo by the Inchcape Group rather than submit to the increased freight charges. Those are the methods employed by the Inchcape Group, but it is hoped that the people of Australia will not stand any dictation of that kind, and that the fleet which we own is only the beginning of a very large fleet which will supply in the future all the needs of the people of the Commonwealth.

We have another large combination—perhaps the largest combination operating in Australia—that is the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. To-day the Acting Premier tabled certain papers relative to the purchase of the Queensland sugar crop. I wish to deal with that to-night, not at any great length, but to make some comments and show why influences were at work. We know that this Government have done more for the Queensland sugar industry, have done more to establish it on a sound basis, than any of our predecessors have done—(Hear, hear!)—and they took early steps with a view to securing an increased price for the Queensland sugar crop with a view to benefiting the miller, the grower, and the worker in that industry. (Hear, hear!) A conference was first held in Brisbane convened by the Minister for Agriculture. That conference later on went to Melbourne, and meetings of those interested in the matter were held from time to time in consultation with the Government of the Commonwealth. Mr. Theodore (our Premier), Mr. Gillies (the Minister for Agriculture), and representatives of those engaged in the sugar industry took part in that conference. A tentative agreement was drawn up, subject, of course, to the approval of the Commonwealth Parliament. Mr. Theodore left Australia, on his mission to Great Britain, thinking that everything had been settled up satisfactorily and that everything would proceed without any further hitch. But certain other influences were at work. We know that since this Government have come into office we have improved the status of the sugar industry by securing through the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act an equitable distribution of the money in the industry. (Hear, hear!) We have protected the farmer against the rapacity in some instances of the miller, and this company at all times have been opposed to that legislation and have done everything they can to violate its letter and spirit, just as our opponents the pastoralists opposed the Land Act

Amendment Bill. It is on record that Mr. Knox stated that he had found a means of evading that Act, and we also know that, before a Select Committee appointed by "another place," he condemned the Bill in every detail. Previously, under the old agreement, the Commonwealth Government placed an embargo on this State, prohibiting it from introducing any amended legislation dealing with the sugar industry and preventing us in any way amending our Act. I remember moving a motion condemning the Government of the Commonwealth for so doing. That motion was carried in this Chamber, but it was opposed by members opposite. They have endeavoured, at all times, to prevent an amendment of that Act with a view to being in their old position of dictating to the sugar farmers the price they shall receive for their cane and under what conditions it shall be grown and harvested. Owing to the activity of our representatives—and I wish to pay a tribute to Mr. Gillies in that respect, because it was to him that the chief business of handling the agreement was left—I wish to pay a tribute to him for the way he stood to the interests of this Government and protected the interests of the Queensland sugar farmers against the influences which were at work.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. SMITH: Immediately after Mr. Theodore, the Queensland Premier, had left this State, Mr. Knox, of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, sent the following wire to the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Hughes, dated 11th March, 1920:—

"Prime Minister, Melbourne.

"Ex Sydney.

"Throughout meeting on Tuesday I sat silent while the details of the conference agreement were being discussed for two reasons—namely, that we had no hand in framing such agreement; and, secondly, because of your insistence that the Commonwealth would, through the council, keep a controlling hand on any action taken in Queensland which would unfairly affect private millowners. It was impossible for me to follow the exact wording of the amendments agreed to, and now the statement submitted to Parliament makes it clear that the council will exercise no control over the amendment of the Cane Prices Act unless possible in suggesting alterations. Had this been even suggested on Tuesday evening, I would have said definitely that the company could not regard as in any way binding an agreement which permitted drastic changes to be made in the Cane Prices Act on the vote of the chairman of the board administering that Act. You will see, on referring to the conference report, that the conference over which he is to preside is to consist of six cane-growers and six members of the Australian Sugar Producers' Association. Even if the latter were all millowners, the council would be dominated by the Queensland Government's nominee, who has throughout administered the Act to undue advantage of growers and embarrassment of millowners, it being the confessed aim of Queensland Government to extinguish private owners (any). My company has always refused to seek

Mr. Smith.]

membership in the association because this body must include growers. Moreover, outside company there are a few independent millowners, and most of them are concerned in cultivation as well as manufacture.

"Memorandum as published must be regarded as completely surrendering to the Queensland Government the control of the affairs of independent millowners after the season of 1920; therefore, hope position will be corrected by making your intention quite clear at end last paragraph report of proceeding—that amendments must be subject confirmation by your Government.

"We regard it as essential in our relations with Commonwealth that so long as we are acting in capacity of their agents we shall be protected against fresh attacks by any State.

"EDWARD W. KNOX,

"General Manager,

"Colonial Sugar Refining Company."

Mr. WHITFORD: Where are the primary producers now?

Mr. SMITH: This is the big financial company existing in Australia to-day who have evaded the spirit and letter of the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act, who have openly avowed their intention of so doing, and who have exerted to the full economic pressure to force their suppliers to accept any conditions of payment which that company dictates. This corporation goes to the Commonwealth Government and demands that the Government of the Commonwealth and the Nationalist party Government take action in a certain direction. This company asks the Government of the Commonwealth to prevent the Government of Queensland from introducing any legislation having for its purpose the further protection of the sugar farmer. Let us see for a moment how this was received by the Nationalist Government in the Commonwealth. It will be noticed that the matter was held up for a considerable time. Correspondence passed between the Minister for Agriculture and the Government of the Commonwealth, and in June the Minister for Agriculture received a copy of a proposed sugar agreement amended in a certain direction. The essential point to remember is that men representing the sugar farmer, men representing the sugar miller, and the Government of Queensland and the Government of the Commonwealth also represented, came to a certain understanding in Sydney. They came to a certain agreement that the price would be £50 6s. 8d., and the conference representing certain interests would have power to suggest amended legislation. Immediately this conference dispersed, thinking everything was settled, Mr. Knox, of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, gets to work; and later on Senator Russell, a member of the Commonwealth Government, acting for Mr. Hughes, alters the agreement, and asks Mr. Gillies to sign that agreement, which contained this amendment—

"That this Government will only seek to give legislative effect to the recommendations of the conference (consisting of six U.C.G.A. growers and six A.S.P.A. growers, with the chairman of the Central Sugar Cane Prices Board as chairman) as may be acceptable to

[Mr. Smith,

both Governments, or such modification thereof as may be mutually agreed upon."

Here we find the Government of the Commonwealth, at the behest of the large sugar monopoly, seeking to make further conditions and to impose a further embargo on the Government of this State in its desire to assist its farmers.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Asking us to give up our constitutional rights.

Mr. SMITH: Mr. Knox, of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, demands from Mr. Hughes that there shall be no amendment of the Sugar Cane Prices Act unless agreed to by him. What does that mean? It means simply that Mr. Knox knows that so long as the Nationalist party is in power in the Commonwealth, so long as any fresh legislation is subject to that Government's veto, then the vested interest of that financial corporation will be amply protected. It is pleasing to say that we have in Queensland a Government who were not prepared to so readily surrender their sovereign rights. We had a Minister conducting the affairs of this sugar agreement who understood the position fully, and realised the necessity of preserving the agreement intact as originally arrived at. The result was that Queensland emphatically refused to sign any agreement or to surrender any of her sovereign rights.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. SMITH: I use this illustration to prove that it is a common method on the part of financial corporations to issue ultimatums to Governments controlled by the Nationalist party. They know that it is essential to their interests, and essential to the preservation of their privileges, that they shall have the whole control of machinery of government. It is only when the Labour party came to the Treasury benches that the people's rights were protected and the privileged class put in their proper place. I have given evidence of the activity of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company with regard to the sugar industry. I have shown where the Nationalist party are prepared to do everything desired by such a corporation. I have referred to the Inchope Group demanding that the Commonwealth of Australia shall abandon their rights to carry on shipping in Australia, or transport on the Australian coast; and I have shown where this delegation was conceived in the minds of our opponents. The members of the Opposition in Parliament may seek to deny it as they will, but we know that they owe their political existence to secret influences and to a secret junta which meets in Brisbane, and which sends delegations of this kind. The ground was well prepared by the resolution which the hon. member for Dalby read out this afternoon. It was prepared by articles such as I have referred to from the pen of ex-Senator Chataway. The intention was to take direct action against Queensland, to financially boycott Queensland with a view to bringing about a crisis of unemployment, with all the suffering it brings in its train.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: A financial blockade.

Mr. SMITH: This party have no desire to retain office on such terms. We will go to the electors on the platform which everyone can understand, and which everyone can receive a copy of. We desire to legislate in the interests of the people as a whole with a view to improving the conditions operating

in Queensland. We will not at any time submit to dictation by corporations such as this. I feel sure that when the electors in the various parts of the State get to realise the true facts of the position, and are confronted with the ultimatum of the financial corporations, backed by our opponents on the other side of the House, they will decide to stand by this Government, and stand by this party, and support us as the people's party, because we are prepared to legislate for the people as a whole.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

[8.30 p.m.]

Mr. JAMES (*Logan*): These matters, financial matters such as those with which Queensland is faced, should be dealt with in a broad manner and not from the standpoint of political prejudice, no matter what side the House we may be on. In this case we are faced with the very extraordinary spectacle of a Government which has a majority in both Houses of Parliament, which recently had obtained in the Legislative Council a majority for the first time in the period during which they have occupied the Ministerial benches, afraid to carry out the policy on which they were elected—

Mr. WHITFORD: Did you carry out the policy you preached in the Domain?

Mr. JAMES: Afraid to carry out the policy which they are supposed to put into operation in Queensland, because they see a golden opportunity as it appears to their minds—

Mr. WHITFORD: Your policy is your pocket, I think.

Mr. JAMES: An opportunity to run the country to a hurricane election on a war-cry that has really very little basis in actual fact. I am not alone in taking the view that the Government are really taking up a position which cannot be maintained from the standpoint of sound, concrete politics, because the present Parliament has a considerable time to run yet, and, as far as I can see, if the Government had proceeded in a satisfactory fashion up to date and continued to do, they could run to the end of their term, instead of making confession of absolute failure and that they have not the courage to go on, because of the results of their administration and legislation of the past. The "Standard" takes precisely the view I take. On Friday, 13th August, an editorial begins—

"At least three other Australian States are worse off, financially, than Queensland, and in regard to all of them they are in the same boat in having to depend on local resources, the reserve financial fat of their communities."

The ACTING PREMIER: In talking about courage, are you referring to the people of the Logan or to the Government?

Mr. JAMES: I am referring to the lack of courage on the part of the Government, with a majority in both Houses, which takes up the position that it would rather risk an election, in the hope of coming back here and muddling through somehow for three years, than carry on, because they know that if they waited until the end of the next six months the result would be that they could not possibly get back to the Ministerial benches.

The ACTING PREMIER: Do you know that you were elected to support that Government?

Mr. JAMES: I was, and to represent the people of the Logan. There are two principles in representation in Parliament. There is the representative's primary duty to his electors, and then you have a secondary duty to a party. I found that I could no longer support that party, and, in justice to the electors who elected me, I took the stand I did, and I am going to contest that issue in a very short time, I think, with results that will be a considerable surprise to members opposite.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Why didn't you do it before?

Mr. JAMES: I did not do it some time ago for the simple reason that by continuing propaganda in the Logan, by explaining the position more fully, the electors would have a clearer understanding of the case and the results would be even more emphatic than they would have been at that time. The "Standard," in the first part of the paragraph which I have read, has shown that other States than Queensland are in a worse financial position, and yet they are not running to the electors in order to disguise failure. On the contrary, they are going through the ordinary course and facing the situation in the manner in which it should be faced. In this further statement—that the other States are in the same boat—there is practically a denial by the "Standard," which is the organ of the Government party, of the assertion that the failure to get money is simply the result of the delegation which went to England from here on their own responsibility. The article proceeds—

"Therefore, in considering this session's work and the advisability of an early election, the Government and political Labour party can let financial matters weigh too greatly. There is a golden opportunity before the due date of next election to give the people long-expected and very valuable democratic legislation, to put the people in their box seat so far as political and municipal powers are concerned, instead of the Legislative Council and the rate-paying class, as under the Tory régime. To let it pass may be to lose it."

There is the "Standard's" review of the position, but the Government who charge me with having changed party—which is perfectly correct—are trying to avoid that conclusion. It is true that I have changed party. I realise that many Government supporters, probably some of the Cabinet themselves, have lost faith in that policy although the "Standard" has not, but the politicians who have had practical experience of administration and legislation have lost faith in it, whereas the "Standard," which has not had practical experience in Parliament, still goes on dreaming the dreams of the past. I might say that I have been in the past congratulated by members now supporting the Government on attitudes I have taken slightly contrary to the platform of the Labour party.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: On being a rat?

Mr. JAMES: When I came back from England over a year ago I made a speech in which I criticised the nationalisation policy, and several members congratulated me and said that they were not thinking too much of this nationalisation business.

Mr. GLEDSON: Congratulation on being a "rat"?

Mr. James.]

Mr. JAMES: I consider that the Government are showing cowardice and lack of confidence in their policy by rushing to the electors. It is possible that, with a sufficient amount of money being spent on the election and with election cries to gull the people into taking a wrong view of the position, they may succeed in their object, but I do not think in this case there is any chance of that being so. I thoroughly expect that at the general election that is coming they will be defeated, in order that Queensland may be in the future put upon a sound legislative and administrative footing. In the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech, to which I have referred, a great deal is made of the cry that the elections are the result of a stand taken by the Government. I think I would be one of the first to resist dictation in the political affairs of Queensland by any overseas Government, but I notice in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech a confession that the delegation—

“have not asked—they know it would be futile to ask—the Imperial authorities to abridge or annul our self-governing powers—”

which is a plain confession that, so far as Governments abroad are concerned, there is nothing to which exception can be taken by this Government, or of which an election cry can be made. It is purely a matter of business. The Government, in the position of borrowers, proceeded to London and there interviewed the money-lenders, and it was found that the security in Queensland was not sufficient to entice the investors in England to lend the money here when they could do it more advantageously elsewhere.

The ACTING PREMIER: Do you remember how you used to make speeches abusing the insurance companies because they raised funds to defeat us?

Mr. JAMES: I would oppose any monopolistic company which used its monopolistic power in order to, say, raise prices unduly. In any case where the powers of a monopoly are used to extort, say, higher prices than are justified from the people, I say I would roundly abuse them. I have never altered my own views on that point.

The ACTING PREMIER: Do you remember those harangues in which you pilloried the insurance companies?

Mr. JAMES: I would like to remind the Acting Premier that I remember many speeches outgrown, but of which I am not ashamed, realising that they are of an earlier stage of my development. I would remind him, too, that he might sometimes forget some of the harangues that found a place in his earlier career. For instance, there is a harangue in which the hon. gentleman was reported to have stated that “he had heard only recently an Englishman in the Queensland Parliament say, ‘Lord, deliver us from cant!’ England was the home of cant, humbug, and hypocrisy.”

The ACTING PREMIER: And you praised that in a very wild article.

Mr. JAMES: Possibly. (Government laughter.) But I am speaking now of the attitude you took. I believe that at that time I was saying some very foolish things, too; but, in order to show that the Acting Premier has also forgotten those times, I would remind him that at a banquet at which I was present, when he was entertaining in a most dignified manner the Prince of Wales,

he gave vent to some sentiments very contrary to those which he expressed in the harangue to which I have referred. For instance, he said of the probable future figurehead of the land, which he described as “the home of cant, humbug, and hypocrisy,” that he was—

“A man who, in the future, would be well fitted and well equipped to occupy the place now so capably held by his father. The traditions of our race and his race would live and inspire him whether on sea, in civic life, in matters of ordinary polity or political reform.”

Here is the land of cant, humbug, and hypocrisy being held up as something noble and great in the presence of the Prince, the scion of royalty.

The ACTING PREMIER: What have you got against the Prince?

Mr. JAMES: I have nothing against the Prince any more than the Acting Premier, who was so attentive all the time in making so much of his company. I congratulate the Acting Premier on having changed from his earlier views. Had a more sane policy been pursued in the past in Queensland, the Government would not be in the position of now having to forego legislation and declare themselves politically bankrupt.

Mr. CARTER: Not mentally, like yourself.

Mr. JAMES: We find that public expenditure is very large now as compared with a few years ago, but that is not so much to be deplored as the manner in which the loan money has been expended. If we investigate the manner of the expenditure of the large amount which has been raised by taxation and loan, we find that it has been spent largely in the duplication of industries and the extension of the administrative functions of the Government far beyond what they ought to be under ordinary circumstances. For instance, take State stations, on the figures which were produced last session by the hon. member for Carnarvon. We find that had they paid ordinary taxation practically no profits would have been left.

The ACTING PREMIER: Absolutely wrong.

Mr. JAMES: That is perfectly correct. If the Acting Premier desires the exact figures, they can always be forthcoming. For instance, those figures showed an estimated profit for that year of £43,000. The State income tax on that would have been £7,000, the Federal income tax, after State income tax had been deducted, £15,000, Federal land tax £4,000, and municipal rates £3,580, or a total of nearly £30,000. Those are figures gained by an exhaustive analysis by one of the best accountants in Brisbane, and are thoroughly trustworthy, because the Acting Premier knows that none of the State enterprises pay taxation. If a State butcher's shop is established in a suburb next door to a private shop, the private shop pays for the upkeep of the road in front of the State shop. There is a good deal of taxation lost through State enterprises paying no taxation, which means that private citizens have to be taxed to make it up. In other directions we find there has been duplication of industrial functions by means of loan money, debentures, and other things. We find there has been a huge expenditure in things which are not reproductive—which have done people

[Mr. James.]

absolutely no good. State stations have been showing practically no profit, for in addition to the direct loss of taxation, the interest payable on the debentures, by means of which the Government secured the State Stations are also free of income tax. In addition to that, the State stations have done absolutely nothing towards reducing the cost of meat, because the cattle have been sold in the highest market. The third excuse for the existence of these stations is that the employees have better conditions than the employees on private stations. I can remember the hon. member for Burke roundly abusing the Government because the conditions on the State stations were worse than they were on the private stations. That shows there is absolutely no benefit to be gained from those State stations, and, being useless, they should be discontinued. We find that a great deal of other expenditure by the Government has been equally useless. I notice in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech a reference to the fish supply. It is stated that when the trawler had had an opportunity to further investigate, no doubt better returns might be expected. It appears to me that before that £80,000 or so of capital expenditure was undertaken in connection with the fish business some investigation should have been made to see whether trawling operations would be successful on the coast. The action of the Government in this respect, and State management of industrial concerns generally, show a lack of business management and absolute waste.

The ACTING PREMIER: There are two columns of a speech by you here in "Hansard" on the fish business.

Mr. JAMES: The Acting Premier can turn up old speeches of mine in which I voiced wrong views. I could bring forth a great many more than the Acting Premier could in which I have given utterance to the most idealistic views one could possibly imagine. There was a made-to-order speech on the Address in Reply when I was first returned to Parliament—when I was a supporter of the Government—when I said what I was told and in the right manner on the platitudes of the platform on which I was elected, before I learned to think politically. It should well convince the Acting Premier that I have at least come to mature judgment. I really think sometimes, from the speeches of the Acting Premier, that he is reaching the same stage.

The ACTING PREMIER: I think I will quote your last letter to me.

Mr. JAMES: Possibly the hon. gentleman might. The Acting Premier has a perfect right to quote whatever he thinks fit. To come down to small matters, we can show why it is that the Government failed in the proper administration of the concerns they run. I may say this does not refer to any particular Government. In fact, I believe the establishment of the South Johnstone mill in its present wrong position took place before the present Government came into power, and is simply an instance of the fact that sufficient incentive to good judgment and good management is not present in the case of State enterprises. In the Logan the other day I found a man had been brought down from the North Coast to work on the railways. He was paid 2s. 7d. per day in addition to the ordinary wage because he was living outside his own district, while there were men unemployed in the district

looking for work. That shows absolute waste. If the figures were forthcoming which were asked for in a question to-day, we would probably find that the position disclosed last year in connection with the railways would be accentuated this year. For the financial year ending 30th June, 1919, we find the number of employees in the Railway Department increased by about 50 per cent. as compared with those of 1914.

The ACTING PREMIER: That is inaccurate.

Mr. JAMES: I have the exact figures here. The hon. member for Murilla asked the questions—

"1. What is the present number of employees in the Railway Department, temporary or permanent?"

"2. What was the number on 30th June, 1914?"

"3. What number of effective train miles was produced in the course of the operations of the railways during the year 1913-14; what was the number of train miles produced in 1917-18 and 1918-19?"

The Secretary for Railways (Hon. J. A. Fihely) replied—

"1. Permanent, 14,075; temporary, 1,871; construction, 3,859.

"2. Permanent, 10,546; temporary, 2,000; construction, 2,567.

"3. Train miles 1913-14, 11,346,334; train miles 1917-18, 10,319,694; train miles 1918-19, 9,942,744."

That shows that, whereas in 1914 there were 10,546 permanent employees, in 1918-19 there were 14,075—which is nearly a 50 per cent. increase. There were 2,000,000 less train miles run that year; so that half as many more men did less work and they lost over a million on the transaction. There is another case I found during my visit to the Herbert. The Silkwood State sawmill, on the North Coast construction line, was pulled down and re-erected three times, practically no timber being cut. I understand the manager of the mill is related to a family of politicians, and there are various other members of the family working there.

The ACTING PREMIER: From the Nationalists or the Country party?

Mr. JAMES: The Acting Premier is always after facts. Mr. Bertine, the manager of the Silkwood State sawmill, is a brother-in-law to Mr. Riordan. One of his brothers and two Riordans worked there.

The ACTING PREMIER: What do you suggest?

Mr. JAMES: I am merely suggesting that those who are in close touch with politicians have a better chance of getting a job in the public service than those who are not. I may say in this respect that if anyone in the Logan comes to me who holds a position as State school teacher, railway employee, or anything else, and says he has been unjustly treated or has not been promoted quickly enough, I take up the case and do the best I can, because I recognise it is the political system at the present time; and if I did not do that and other members from all over Queensland did, the public servants in the Logan would get a very poor deal.

The ACTING PREMIER: Did you find out how long this brother-in-law had been working there?

Mr. James.]

Mr. JAMES: I understand there have been about three managers to date at the mill. I was further informed by people in the timber business there that that mill was established on the site of another mill which had been operating for twelve years in the same district and had practically exhausted the supply of timber. I will refer now to the case of the Dunellan school, situated at the city end of the Logan, where eight classes have been held inside the school building ever since I was returned at the 1918 election, and nine classes have been held on the verandas without any protection from the cold westerly winds. We see money invested in State enterprises which do nobody any good; we see this duplication of industry going on; and yet we find the Dunellan school hung up for want of money all these years. Now the Minister for Education cannot see his way clear to proceed with new accommodation. If this money had been invested in the establishment of better schools and in bringing our present schools up to date, the position of the Government at the present time might not be so disastrous as it apparently is. Having embarked on State industry on wrong and unremunerative lines, the Government find it is very hard to stop. It cannot go on permanently.

Mr. WHITFORD: What have you been doing to leave in it that state?

Mr. JAMES: I have been interviewing the Minister for Education ever since 1918. We have had deputations. The last time I saw Mr. Huxham he said he would not receive another deputation from the committee of the Dunellan school, because he did not know what money was coming to him. It was not any lack of effort on my part. Instead of that, a school was built in Buranda, the only one in the electorate of the Minister for Education. By leaving Dunellan in a cramped condition, scholars might be attracted to the Buranda school.

[9 p.m.]

The ACTING PREMIER: Did not Mr. Ryan look after your electorate during that time?

Mr. JAMES: Mr. Ryan looked after it for a certain time, and I am very grateful to him for the good work he did for the electorate while I was away. This policy of socialism by means of nationalisation, which is unsound and unscientific, was endorsed at the Townsville conference, because it was proposed to amend the fighting platform regarding State sugar refineries and mills, smelting works, sawmills, flourmills, freezing works, and iron and steel works by including State tanneries, boot factories, and woollen mills. So, evidently, the party have made up their minds to proceed until the whole of their platform is put into effect. We find that all countries are not in the same disastrous position as Queensland is. The Governments of other countries are not giving up the ghost politically; they are not afraid to face a difficult period which might be followed by an election. In Canada, for instance, they have resolved to prosecute a policy of no more loans. The Brisbane "Telegraph," on 29th July, 1920, stated—

"NO MORE LOANS.

"CANADA'S EXEMPLARY RESOLVE.

"Sir Henry Drayton, the new Finance Minister, delivered his first Budget speech in the House of Commons on 18th May

[Mr. James.

(says a mail message from the Toronto correspondent of the 'Melbourne Argus,' dated 21st May). At the outset, he stated that the Government had stopped borrowing, and would float no more loans. It was the duty of the country to pay its way out of current income. This was the only way to improve the position of the public Treasury and to abate the inflation of public credit caused by war financing."

Owing to the number of big investments the Government have on hand, the State industries and inflated departments, it is very difficult to pull in—to retrench—and try to put the finances of the State on a sound basis again. Still, the thing must be attempted, and the only thing I can see is for the people to realise that this endeavour to try and create a new heaven on earth by means of nationalisation, and so give the workers the full produce of their labour, is a very beautiful dream, but which is impossible of realisation. In my opinion, the only method is to recognise that the first essential in any system—whether capitalism, socialism, or anything else—is good business methods, and, as far as possible, to reduce political interference, or association, with industry in any form. I understand it is the Government's hope—I cannot say it is their intention, in view of the financial position at present—to take over the tramways. As far as I can see, the taking over of the tramways by the Government at present—although it may to some extent appease the spirit of revenge of those who took part in the 1912 strike—will have no enriching effect on the people of Brisbane. The Brisbane Tramways Company is a monopoly, and therefore a thing which, if left uncontrolled, would have great power for harm in the community. But it is State controlled, and the fares have consequently been the cheapest in Australia.

In South Australia and Sydney the tramway fares have been increased. The rise which was made here the other day in Sunday fares was made in Adelaide and Sydney some years ago. In Brisbane we find the service has been the cheapest and one of the best in Australia. Now it is proposed to convert the tramway system from private ownership to Government ownership, and from that probably to municipal ownership under the Greater Brisbane scheme. We will then have a municipal government in Brisbane, elected on the franchise of the present State roll, which will possibly elect a Labour Government to Brisbane, and we can possibly find in the city of Brisbane the same policy being pursued in the future as the Government of Queensland has pursued in the State. We will have a certain amount of irresponsibility in that Greater Brisbane municipality, and they will go in for greater expenditure of loan moneys, so that an increase of rates will be necessary, and we will find the calamity going on in our suburban radius as at present we find in the whole of Queensland. That is why, in my opinion, the Greater Brisbane scheme is so unpopular around Brisbane—because those who have struggled to get a home together and found the payment of rates a certain burden, and wish to keep the rates down, can see that, with the introduction of this Greater Brisbane scheme, wild municipal enterprises will be gone in for on a grand scale, and the expenditure of loan money will increase their municipal expenses out of sight. As far as I can see, the Government may go to the

country now, but for no purpose. If they lose—as that paragraph in the “Standard” evidently assumes they have a very big chance of losing—then it will be for the Opposition to embark on the policy of economical administration to which I have referred; but if the Government return, what is the position? They are faced with exactly the same position as they are faced with now, and the only way of raising money, unless they can possibly induce the people to invest here in the future as in the past, will be a policy of even heavier taxation than we have to-day; and, though the taxation—according to Mr. Theodore—was supposed to fall only on the shoulders of those best able to bear it, all this taxation, excepting the taxation on the farmers, is passed on in the form of higher prices, so that the whole of the community have to pay. If this Government comes back, and wishes and hopes to succeed, they will find that they are forced by circumstances to change their policy and resort to the economy I have outlined to-night.

Mr. SWAYNE: There is a rumour current that this may be the last opportunity in this Parliament that we shall have of addressing ourselves to the various questions that, perhaps, need more discussion at this juncture than ever before. All I can say is that if the rumour is correct it is quite in keeping with the trickery that has distinguished this Administration from its inception.

The SPEAKER: Order! order!

Mr. SWAYNE: Queensland is in a most serious position under the present Administration. Speaking from memory, I think the financial figures for the first month of this year—last July—showed that while the expenditure increased by £173,000 the revenue increased by £45,000, also that for the very first month we expended to the extent of between £120,000 and £130,000 more than for the corresponding month of last year. I know it is said that some of this expenditure represents accounts that should have been paid last year. If so, that does not improve their position one iota.

The ACTING PREMIER: I give you my assurance that that is not so.

Mr. SWAYNE: I am only too pleased to take the hon. member's assurance. At any rate, our expenditure is increasing by between £120,000 and £130,000 per month, and if that is going to continue for twelve months I leave it to the House to calculate what our deficit is going to be for the last financial month of this financial year.

The ACTING PREMIER: As a matter of fact, we have a surplus.

Mr. SWAYNE: Through extra taxation. Anyone travelling the outlying portions of Queensland must be struck by the vast increase in the number of unemployed. When I was through my own electorate I saw more swagmen than I have seen for many years, and that is the state of affairs after five years of Labour Administration.

This brings me to a point raised by the hon. member for Mackay, who devoted a considerable portion of his speech to the sugar industry. It reminds me of the fact that, were it not for the action of the Nationalists' Federal Government in lately increasing the price of sugar, the conditions in the sugar districts would be very much worse than they are. What rather amused me was that the hon. member for Mackay was taking all the credit for this desirable state of things

now that loan money is so short and the avenues of State employment curtailed all round. He inferred that it was almost altogether owing to the efforts of his party that the rise took place. I do not wish to minimise the good work done by the United Cane Growers' Association, the Australian Sugar Planters' Association, or other organisations in the Federal Parliament that worked for this rise; but, after all, I think Mr. Hughes came forward most readily and gave a rise in price more than some people thought they were getting. As far as hon. members opposite taking any credit, I may say the reverse has always been the case. I have previously pointed out how, in 1914, Mr. Theodore objected very strongly to the then Premier asking a higher price for sugar. We know that when the price of sugar rose from £18 to £21 Mr. Tudor, the leader of the party in the Federal House, argued against it, and that the money that was being voted to the growers to pay them a higher price should be divided amongst the consumers and the taxpayers at large. I just wish to illustrate the attitude of the Government with regard to this matter. Of course, when they see how the cat is going to jump, they come in and say, “We did it.” At a convention held here in April, 1918, when, I think, Mr. Lennon was in the chair, and Mr. Theodore was present, the United Cane Growers' Association asked for an increase from £21 to £24. Mr. Theodore said £21 was as much as they should ask for. With regard to the increase given by the Commonwealth Government from £21 to £30 6s. 8d., I would like to quote extracts from the “Daily Standard” of 2nd March, to show that the “Standard” objected to that increase.

Then, again, the “Standard” refers to the fact that the Australian consumer will have to pay more for his sugar. I would like to point out that the people of Australia are getting their sugar on an average at less than one-half what the people in other parts of the world are paying. I mention these things because at election time hon. members opposite go round and claim credit which is not their due.

Mr. SMITH: Tell us about the wire which Mr. Knox sent to Mr. Hughes.

Mr. SWAYNE: I am quoting from the “Daily Standard,” which carried on a crusade against the increased price of sugar. This is what the “Standard” said about it—

“This increase in the price of sugar is a serious addition to the cost of living.”

That is what the “Standard” said, although the people are getting the sugar at less than half the world's price. The “Daily Standard” again, in its issue of the 18th, opposed the rise. On the 24th the “Standard” said it was reported that it was the intention of the Federal Government to increase the price of sugar to 6d. per lb., and that would give the consumer serious cause for consideration. The “Standard” dealt with figures, and objected to the increase in the price. It is just as well to mention these things when hon. members opposite are taking credit for things they do not deserve. I have here a copy of the agreement entered into between the Commonwealth and the State increasing the price of sugar from £18 to £21, and I notice from that that Mr. Hughes, the Prime Minister, was the first to mention to Mr. Ryan that

Mr. Swayne.]

there should be a rise in the price of sugar. I have not seen a copy of the last agreement.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You should read it.

Mr. SWAYNE: I am now dealing with the previous agreement. The Minister for Agriculture will not deny that the Federal Prime Minister came forward readily and increased the price of sugar. I do not think he will deny that. I notice where Mr. Gillies said it was a good arrangement for the people of Queensland, and a good arrangement for the people of Australia, too. A point was raised to-night by the hon. member for Mackay about the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act. I may say that the action taken to introduce that Act was initiated by members on this side of the House in 1913. (Government dissent.)

Mr. SMITH: You ran away.

Mr. SWAYNE: A Bill of this kind was first launched by some of us when we were sitting on the Government side of the House.

Mr. KIRWAN: But you all squibbed on it.

Mr. SWAYNE: We got it to the second reading stage. I am quite certain in my own mind that, if it had not been for some very smart work on the part of Mr. Ryan, this Bill would have been on the statute-book in 1914.

Mr. KIRWAN: Smart work by Knox and company.

Mr. SWAYNE: This smart work of Mr. Ryan's deprived the canegrowers of Queensland from the benefit of this legislation by fully a year. For the sake of party, and for the sake of holding it back so that he would be able to use it himself in the elections of 1915, Mr. Ryan deprived the canegrowers throughout Queensland of the benefit of this legislation for a year. We all know the benefit of an Act like the Sugar Cane Prices Act. I am prepared to admit that when we initiated it in 1913 we had the help of the party opposite. I will give them credit for that, but ten or twelve members of the Liberal party also assisted, and we got it through the second reading. The point is that we initiated it first, and were it not for the action taken by Mr. Ryan in 1914, I have knowledge which assures me that it would have been taken up by the Denham Government and placed on the statute-book in 1914. With his characteristic shrewdness, Mr. Ryan did not want anything of the kind done then. He wanted things left as they were, so that he could use it at the coming election. He did that knowing the way parties were run in politics, and knowing that, as an act of simple justice, Mr. Ryan should have consulted with us who originated that matter before he launched his proposal in 1914, and he should have asked us what we were going to do about it. If we said we were not going to do anything, then he would have been justified in going on with it. Instead of that, he took the extraordinary action of proposing a vote of want of confidence in the then Government because certain legislation was not contained in their programme. When the Labour party came in they introduced the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Bill and placed it on the statute-book. Hon. members opposite will admit that I supported them on every occasion, and other members on this side did the same. Members opposite should be the first to give me that credit. I heard the hon. member for Mackay indulging in a long

tirade against the Colonial Sugar Refining Company for contracting itself outside this legislation. I condemn the action of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company just as strongly as any member opposite in that respect, but the most extraordinary part of the matter is that provision was not made in the Act to prevent the Colonial Sugar Refining Company from contracting itself out. We were told that the Bill was drawn up by the ablest lawyer in Australia—Mr. Ryan. The Act was amended once in this House; and why was not the omission made good then?

Mr. SMITH: The legality of that is before the High Court of Australia now. A conviction was secured last week.

Mr. SWAYNE: The hon. gentleman can say what he likes, but the fact remains that that Act was amended once by this House, and that was the time when the omission should have been made good. Why was not a proviso put in then to prevent the Colonial Sugar Refining Company from contracting itself out? We amended it by putting in a provision that the Government could step in and take over a mill, and we could easily have inserted another amendment to take away the power of this great company to exploit their growers. Members opposite are very fond of throwing innuendoes. They are very fond of talking about the secret influences of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, but I think there is more ground for censure of hon. members opposite for their conduct and for suspecting them of being subject to secret influence than there is for anything that we did on this side of the House.

Mr. SMITH: What about Mr. Knox's wire?

Mr. SWAYNE: I have nothing to do with Mr. Knox. I am in hopes that at the first opportunity that arises it will be amended. We know that in all industrial legislation like this there should be no contracting out, but that should have been rectified by the party opposite. I would like to know if the Government have pointed out to the Commonwealth Government that such an amendment was necessary.

Mr. SMITH: What about the wire I quoted to-night from Mr. Knox?

Mr. SWAYNE: I never heard that the State Government pointed out that the Act required amending.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That telegram was sent by Mr. Knox to Mr. Hughes protesting against the Queensland Government having the power to amend the Act.

Mr. SWAYNE: I should like to see that telegram placed on the table of the House, and I should like to see Mr. Hughes' reply.

The ACTING PREMIER: What would you do about it?

Mr. SWAYNE: I would like to see it made public.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: It has already been laid on the table of the House.

Mr. SWAYNE: This matter has been going on for three years, and I have got all the correspondence relating to it except the last agreement. There is no reference to any application to amend the Act on the part of the State Government. I know that an agreement was come to the other day by which our representatives from the United Sugar Growers' Association and Australian

[Mr. Swayne.]

Sugar Producers' Association, with the chairman of the Central Board presiding shall have power to recommend amendments. That agreement was published in the papers, and I take it that this House has power to amend on the lines that that body laid down.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Mr. Knox wants to take that power away from us.

Mr. SWAYNE: We have members opposite walking about at election time giving their opinion about the Act, and saying that it should be amended, but it should have been amended by this House. We are quite as earnest as hon. members opposite in that matter. I would remind the hon. member for Herbert that it is owing to the action of the Administration of over five years ago that the two big mills in his electorate have been established.

The HOME SECRETARY: What two big mills are you referring to?

Mr. SWAYNE: I am pointing out that before hon. members opposite came into power the previous Government opened two big mills in the Herbert electorate.

The ACTING PREMIER: What two big mills in the Herbert electorate do you mean?

Mr. SWAYNE: I thought the hon. member knew that.

The ACTING PREMIER: There is only one—that is the South Johnstone mill. The Babinda mill is in the Cairns electorate.

Mr. SWAYNE: These interjections do not get over the fact that the Bill through which these mills were built was introduced owing to the actions of members on this side before the present Government came into power. The Government have gone so far back that the North cannot now support a steamboat service that has been in existence for thirty years. They put on a boat and charge three times the old rates of trading.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Look at the price they paid for that boat.

Mr. SWAYNE: Yes. I will spare their feelings on that point. I just gave an instance of what happens. The success of the sugar industry about Innisfail and Cairns and the establishment of the mills there were due to the previous Government. The system was carried out under our rule, and those mills were erected on sound co-operative lines. The people who grow the cane will own the mills, and there is no chance of exploitation, because for all time the rate of dividend is limited to 5 per cent.

Coming to the main part of my speech, of course we all know the deplorable condition of the country and what a blow it is to us not to be able to float loans. Hon. members used to say that they could go on without loan money, but, like all other [9.30 p.m.] Governments, they depend upon it. It is a pity they did not think of that before, and take such action as would restore confidence in the investors of other parts of the world. But they preferred to commit a breach of faith to persecute all those who have saved and put by. That is the financial feature of this Administration which have brought about the feeling that exists. I think I have an extract which shows how much the failure to get loan money lies with them. I notice that on one occasion the Hon. Mr. Mullan, for whom,

personally, I have every respect, when he was a Senator, went so far, at an eight-hour afternoon, as to suggest the non-payment of interest on war bonds; and I think if you look at Federal "Hansard" you will see that Mr. Ferricks moved a resolution with that purpose in view, and that it was supported by him. He is entitled to his opinions, but I do say it is injudicious, at least on the part of a Government who wish to retain their credit in the sight of the world, to put gentlemen who hold such opinions in high positions. I had occasion last session to draw attention to a speech of my friend the hon. member for Bowen as not being likely to create good feeling between us and investors on the other side. It was an extraordinary utterance when you come to analyse it. First of all, he laid it down as a sort of axiom that the mother country was in duty bound to assist her children—the Dominions—to give them as much loan money as they wanted.

Mr. KIRWAN: We furnished them with men, and they did not make too good use of them.

Mr. SWAYNE: It apparently did not seem to matter what use the Dominions made of it, or how they wasted it. And the hon. member, before he sat down, expressed the extraordinary opinion that he did not care a button how the old country got on—whether they had beef and mutton, or had not. That is not the sort of speech to bring about good faith or confidence on the other side of the world; and possibly not only the hon. member for Bowen but other members who desire big public works in their electorates, steel works and so on, whose constituents are looking forward in a sanguine fashion to them, will begin to realise that it is entirely their own fault if they have to go without them. A prominent figure in the financial world in London, according to a cable to our Press here, dated 20th July, expressed himself thus in regard to Mr. Theodore's decision—

"THE PREMIER'S MISSION.

"WIDESPREAD FEELING OF DISTRUST.

"London, 20th July.

"In reference to Mr. Theodore's recent speech, in which he made a violent outburst against the London investors, the representative of the Australian Press Association interviewed a leading Anglo-Australian financier, who said that any difficulty and loss of credit with which Mr. Theodore found himself faced in London was not due to any misunderstanding or prejudice on the part of the financiers or Stock Exchanges, but to the widespread feeling of distrust caused principally by the passing of the Land Act Amendment Act of 1920, which the financial community in London regards as a breach of faith and a violation of contract. 'It is unreasonable,' he continued, 'for Mr. Theodore to say that the refusal to lend his Government money is an interference with the sovereign rights of Queensland. The character of the legislation of any country is the governing factor in its ability to raise loans on the London market; and if there were a Government in Queensland which commanded the confidence of investors here, any money for a loan would be readily forthcoming.'

Mr. Swayne.]

Of course it is claptrap to talk about any interference with the sovereign rights, but people who have money have a perfect right also to refuse to lend it. Whilst the people of Queensland, or a majority of the people, have a perfect right to pass whatever legislation they like, other people outside Queensland have a right to do what they like; and if we pass legislation they do not approve of, which they regard as repudiation and breach of contract, they are perfectly entitled to do so. After all, under this Administration, what has happened? We have the figures of the hon. member for Logan showing how one great State enterprise—the railways—has gone back to a dreadful position, showing what wretchedly bad management, to use no other word, has been given to it. I think he pointed out that whilst the number of employees had been increased by 33 per cent. the work done had been decreased by one-half.

The ACTING PREMIER: You ought to read what he said last year.

Mr. SWAYNE: At any rate, something like 1,500,000 fewer miles were run, and he based his speech on answers to questions given by the Minister for Railways. (Government interjections.) Again, we find an inability to grasp the situation on the part of the Treasurer. When he was in opposition, if the Treasurer of the day made a wrong estimate of his probable receipts and expenditure, he was down on him at once. He gave us to understand how much nearer he would gauge the position if he ever got on the Treasury benches. But I find that the nearest he could get to it in his Estimates for last year's transactions was something like a million out.

The ACTING PREMIER: Oh, no!

Mr. SWAYNE: I find that he estimated his revenue at £10,450,800, and his expenditure at £10,418,527. In reality, the revenue panned out at £11,293,743, and the expenditure at £11,266,909—something like £370,000 out of his calculations. Again, I say that that sort of management, or financing, or ability to estimate, whatever you like to call it, is not the sort that instils confidence into the investor. It quite justifies me in saying that, no matter how bad our position may be, it is due entirely to the actions of the Government—in victimising the man who has saved. I understand that we shall not have an opportunity again this session of discussing Estimates, yet there was never a time when the departments needed a closer overhaul or a keener scrutiny than they do now. We know that the Railway Department management has been entirely taken out of the hands of the Commissioner and the Minister, and that the officials have no control at all. So far as construction work goes—which is most important, because it represents the largest expenditure in the way of loan money—I think any working man who knows what work is will say that £3 is being spent where £2 should be sufficient. The honest working men speak of it themselves. They know as well as we do that this sort of thing is going to end in general disaster. That is the sort of thing that has made Queensland's name what it is in the financial world to-day, quite apart from the fact that anybody has gone home. These investors have their own channels through

which they get information. They do not put their money into countries unless they have a knowledge of how their affairs are conducted, and I think anyone must acknowledge that the way the affairs of Queensland have been conducted, the methods of completing public works, the way departments have been allowed to get out of hand, and the way Ministers and officials have been defied by the employees, are not such as to instil confidence in investors. Big functions have at times been taken charge of by direct actionists, and the Ministry is powerless. The way money is squandered, I think, is sufficient reason why we cannot get any more. One of the strongest supporters of the Government in the Mackay district, who recently left them, gave me as his reason that they were acting directly contrary to their platform in the matter of loan money. I have one of their red dodgers of 1915, in which they lay particular stress on this matter; but since they have been in office the public debt has increased from about £55,000,000 to between £65,000,000 and £70,000,000, I think. The interest has increased accordingly, and, as this gentleman pointed out, none of their predecessors ever squandered or threw money about as this Administration have. I think that if the fault regarding not being able to get the necessary money lies with anybody, the necessary money to carry on public works and develop our resources and make Queensland a better country, it lies entirely with the present Administration, their policy, and their methods of administration. The blame must be laid at their doors.

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Bremer*): I would just like to say a word or two in connection with the remarks of the last speaker with reference to the delegation from this side to London, which has so vilified the good name of this State. At the same time I would like to correct a remark made by the hon. member for Oxley—that Mr. Theodore had applied for a loan of £9,000,000, and that the total amount was to be immediately paid. I think if the hon. member for Oxley had paid that attention to the financial situation which he ought, he would have known that Mr. Theodore's application was for a loan of £9,000,000 spread over a period of nine years, and a little mental arithmetic would have shown that the annual amount advanced would be £900,000; and if that is not a great step in the direction of the restriction of public borrowing, I do not know what it is. I think that for the hon. member for Oxley to compile figures showing that the interest on that £9,000,000 would be paid immediately from the time the loan was granted is one of those foolish things that can only be said by a gentleman who paid no attention to the finances of the State of whose Parliament he is supposed to be a member. I think that misstatement of his would be a sufficient reply to the whole of his financial criticism, because the rest of his statements in that regard were really on the same basis. I am in a bit of a quandary to know just where we stand as regards actual finality in these matters. To whom am I to look? Am I to look to the hon. member for Logan, who in this Chamber a little while ago confessed to the errors of his salad days?

The ACTING PREMIER: He was on the penitent stool.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Apparently he was on the penitent stool. I am reminded, by his poor excuses, by his indifferent, honest

[*Mr. Swayne.*]

attempt to square himself, of a few lines of Shakespeare in Henry VI., part I.—

“Between two hawks, which flies the higher pitch,
Between two dogs, which hath the deeper mouth,
Between two horses, which doth bear him best,
Between two girls, which hath the merriest eye,
I have, perhaps, some shallow spirit of judgment;
But in these nice sharp quillets of the law,
Good faith, I am no wiser than a daw.”

I think that quotation aptly fits the position of the hon. member for Logan. (Government laughter.) I would like to refer to some remarks he made in his first speech in this House to show how they compare with the last speech he is ever likely to make in this House.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I am looking to the future.

Mr. MORGAN: You are giving the show away.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Not altogether, because “he who runs may read,” and I judge that the electors of Logan, having returned a gentleman to support the Labour party in 1918 upon the advice and the platform of the Labour party, are going to return a Labour man at the coming election. It is not at all likely that they are now going to take the political pabulum the hon. member is handing out, especially when they consider the remarkable speech which he made at the opening of this Parliament. I wonder if he is the same gentleman, who, as the chairman of the International Socialists in Sydney, made such wonderful speeches in the Sydney Domain? I wonder is the present member for Logan the same gentleman who, when the deputation waited upon Mr. Butler when he was a candidate for Toombul in 1915, placed certain questions before him to see whether he fitted in with the platform of the International Socialists and coincided with the views of the deputation so far as certain aspects of the doctrines of the I.W.W. were concerned? I wonder is that the same gentleman? He has come, by easy and graceful stages, from the position of a direct and absolute revolutionist along the road until he finds himself safely snuggled in the feathered nest of Toryism, which embraces all people who started out as he did—green and salad and incompetent to judge the affairs of State. (Government laughter.) I looked with some interest on the speech he delivered in this House at the opening of Parliament, and I find that he started off with these words—

“We all notice the lack of attendance on the Opposition benches.”

Things have not improved since those days. (Government laughter.) He goes on—

“But I do not think that that is due to any concerted action beforehand but rather to the fact that the people of Queensland have appreciated the fact that the Queensland Government, during the last three years, have placed a sound and progressive policy before them.”

Mr. FRY: But he has found the truth out since then.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I would much regret to have to offer advice in certain directions. In certain directions I consider I am competent to offer advice, and I think the hon. member for Kurilpa is suffering from political ophthalmia. (Loud Government laughter.)

Mr. FRY: You remind me of a clown in a circus.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. F. A. COOPER: The hon. member for Kurilpa is quite entitled to say that I remind him of a clown in a circus. I could possibly earn my living as a clown in a circus just as well as he could earn his living in a circus as the educated pig. (Loud Government laughter.)

Mr. FRY continued interjecting despite calls of order from the Chair.

The SPEAKER: If the hon. member refuses to obey my call to order, I shall have to take steps to deal with him. I ask hon. members on my right to refrain from interjecting.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: The hon. member for Logan further said—

“Therefore, some of the gentlemen who represented electorates in Queensland during the last three years have not now the opportunity to sit on the Opposition benches.”

Many a true word, it is said, is spoken in earnest. (Laughter.) The hon. member for Logan, in those days, was somewhat pathetic! Maybe he saw the time coming when he, too, would get on the Opposition benches and gradually fade away. He was particularly positive that the bad financial position of Queensland in those days was due to the terrible attitude taken up by the Opposition and by the Legislative Council. Here are the words of wisdom that fell from him on that occasion—

“We find that there is a deficit in every State of the Commonwealth. It is a common condition of war time, but I must say that it is wholly due to the action of the Legislative Council, which is the shadow of the Opposition which we have here, that we have a deficit in Queensland to-day, for the simple reason that the finance Bills which were introduced by this Government in order to liquidate that deficit were turned down.”

They were turned down the next year, and it was only this year that those Bills were passed and we were able to get the proper taxation which certain individuals in this State ought to pay; the consequence being that the State came out with a handsome surplus of something like £26,000.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I would just like to mention that the hon. member for Logan in those days had some idea of the value of State enterprises. He said—

“We find that they are trying to the best of their ability—and I think very successfully—to bring the producers and the consumers nearer together, so that there may not be so much waste in the distribution between those two; so that a fisherman, for instance, may be able to get a better price for his product, and the consumer in the city better able to buy fish, which is rather an unusual proceeding on the part of a great portion of our suburban population to-day.”

Mr. F. A. Cooper.]

That position was rectified by this Government, through the action of the State Fisheries Department. We have been able to get tons and tons of fish to the people of Queensland which in the good old days were dumped into the river.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: You excel in the dumping part.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I believe the hon. member for Bulimba is right. We are the dumping party, and we will dump him this time. (Government laughter.) Mr. James said that during the election campaign certain fishermen remarked to him that they had recently sent several 40-lb. cases of mullet up to Brisbane, and, instead of getting a cheque, they received a bill in return. That was in "the good old days," before the days of State enterprise. Fishermen in the district of the hon. member for Logan sent their fish to the private fish markets, and instead of getting a return, they got a bill for expenses. He points out in this speech that since the introduction of the State Fish Department they have been getting 5s. 6d. a case for mullet, and he points out that in the days before the State enterprise if they got 2s. and 2s. 2d. in the mullet season they were particularly lucky. He says that the fishermen of the Logan returned him to Parliament, because they knew the value of State enterprise. That being so, I take it the fishermen of the Logan will return a Labour man at the next election and put Mr. James where he ought to be, providing he is successful in beating Mr. King in the plebiscite. The hon. member for Logan in those days had something to say about "political deadbeats" which hardly chimes in with what he said to-night. Here are his remarks—

"There is one objection which has been raised in the past to State enterprise. We have heard a great deal about 'the Government stroke,' about Government departments being used as hospitals for 'political deadbeats.' There may be remnants of the system in the departments, although it is not in the administration—but we must remember that if there is any of this system still remaining it is a legacy from the past."

What a wonderful testimonial for the people he is now content to sit amongst and share his fortunes with! What a wonderful thing for this gentleman, who has seen the light, to see that that is the correct light to steer by! It is a shocking state of things, when you come to think of it, that a young man, endowed with the gifts that the hon. member was endowed with, should so far forget all those things which were due to the people who elected him that he should now consort with the remnant of a party, or part of a party, or remains of a party, that he so correctly placed in his opening speech in this House. (Government laughter.)

Mr. MORGAN: He is not the only one; scores have "ratted" from your party. (Loud Government laughter.)

Mr. F. A. COOPER: The old saying—"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings"—comes to my mind. (Renewed Government laughter.) The hon. member for Logan made some reference to the humanitarian legislation of this Government, and this is what he said—

"The Liberal party made no pretence towards humanitarian legislation, and always took advantage of the natural

[Mr. F. A. Cooper.]

mother who desired to look after her own children, and paid her less than they paid to the foster-mother. That is an illustration of the difference in the outlook of the two parties. One is a humanitarian party, and the other is not a humanitarian party. That is the best way to put it."

To-day he finds himself "check by jowl" with these gentlemen about whom he said there was not one spark of humanitarian feeling.

The ACTING PREMIER: And they took him to their bosoms.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: And what delightful bosoms! (Laughter.) I know the Opposition are anxious to come to a decision, and I have no intention of delaying the House much longer. But I would like to refer to one further little incident in connection with this speech of the hon. member for Logan. Speaking of the Opposition, he said—

"During the election, apart from the domestic matters engaging the attention of electors, the question of patriotism entered very largely into the discussions which took place. I often wondered where true patriotism was to be found. I wondered if it was to be found in the Liberal party, which wears a national cloak in order to get the votes of a certain section of the people by pretending that it was a truly national party. I do not know how many names the party sitting opposite has had in the last few years. We know that any individual who is always changing his name is likely to be regarded with suspicion."

Not only is the individual who is always changing his name likely to be regarded with suspicion, but so is the party who is always changing its name. Time was—and even the political greenhorns will remember it—when

[10 p.m.] the party sitting in opposition were known as the "Liberal party." For some reason or other they found that that name was not acceptable to the electors, and they changed it—to the P.P.L. Goodness only knows what those mystic initials stood for in the first light. Later on, they became to be known as the "party for pulling people's legs." (Loud laughter.) In the same way, it has been said: "You can pull the legs of some of the people for a time, but not for all the time." (Laughter.) In the same way the party on the opposite side may gull all the people some of the time, but they cannot gull them all the time. Then they found it necessary once more to change their name from the People's Progressive League, and became the National party. Later on they became the N.D.C. One gets so mixed that he absolutely forgets what these letters stand for. I do not know whether they mean "Now definitely cowed"—(Government laughter)—or "Notoriously deficient crowd," or whether they really have "No damn chance." (Renewed laughter.) I think the Primary Producers' Union—these precious political upstarts—were people whose political principles were unknown. (Laughter.) I do not know whether that is the correct interpretation, but I honestly say that, notwithstanding the assumed divisions in the Opposition to-day, they are still the one party and hope to deceive the people who they think will say, "The Primary Producers' Union is something new, we can pin our faith to it."

Mr. BEBBINGTON: We are not the I.W.W.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: So far as the I.W.W. and you people are concerned, it stands for "I won't work." That little gag has done the best of its work; and you, as a farmer, ought to know that you cannot work that horse for ever. It is time you turned that horse out to grass. The gentlemen on the Opposition benches, who are trying to gull the people that they are separate parties, cannot carry on that game. We know that great big branch of the National Democratic Council—the Pastoralists' Association—have told the Primary Producers' Union that, unless they like to work in harmony with the National Democratic Council and reciprocate in the matter of candidates, there will be no money coming from the great pastoralists' co-operation to help the Primary Producers' Union. The Primary Producers' Union depend on the National Democratic Council for this money. They have to depend upon thin veneer of this kind to attempt to gull the people. They are still the party that is opposed to the people of the State, the people who desire to down the worker. They are the lineal descendants of all the parties of the ages that have ever opposed reform—the descendants of the party that stood with King John when he defied the barons who were oppressing the people of England, the descendants of the people who opposed Magna Charta, who stood with the slave dealers in the days of slavery, who stood with the big factories in the days of the factory system. They are the people who stand to-day—whether they like it or not—with the delegation that has defamed Queensland to the whole of the world.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. F. A. COOPER: They are the people who will have to take the punishment for that great crime. They may escape it for the moment, but when they go to their masters—the people—they will receive the punishment which is their just and true reward, and God grant that it may be soon.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BAYLEY: I have listened with great interest to the debate. Generally speaking, members opposite have indulged in extravagant praise of the Government, while those on this side of the House have given vent to adverse criticism, which, I contend, was quite justified. As for the remarks of the hon. member for Bremer, no doubt we were slightly amused at his speech, but he made one great mistake by imagining that for the time being he was in a fourth-rate circus, and not in a Legislative Assembly.

We are all quite prepared to admit that this Government have done a certain amount of good—some of their measures have not been altogether bad, but the greater part of them have been bad indeed. In 1915, when the present Government took office, the finances of Queensland were in an extremely buoyant condition. In 1914 and preceding years we had surplus upon surplus. Prior to 1915, when the Labour party took office, the name of Queensland stood for something high and honourable. To-day we find the Government of Queensland appearing in the rôle of rejected supplicants for loan money—absolutely turned down.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: To which party do you belong?

Mr. BAYLEY: I belong to the party which stand for freedom of action and freedom of thought, and it seems to hurt members

opposite when they find we have that freedom. No doubt they feel somewhat envious of our proud position in this regard. We are not bound in shackles; and if any member of this side of the House feels inclined or in duty bound to adopt a certain attitude, he is able to do so without being ostracised by the rest of the party.

In 1915 land values in Queensland were increasing steadily. Unfortunately, to-day we find that values have depreciated to a particularly alarming extent. (Government dissent.) I am honestly prepared to admit that adverse seasons have had something to do with the decrease, but it is very largely due to the policy of this Government—the result of land taxation and the treatment to which the freeholders and producers generally have been subjected. During the last few weeks a beautiful piece of lucerne country—for which, a few years ago, £8 an acre was refused—was sold at £3 an acre. We are told, "Cheap land for the people," but it is not fair to give land at a cheap rate at the expense of the pioneers, many of whom have given almost the whole of their lifetime in making homes for themselves and families in the country districts. Unemployment is rife at the present time, and it is going to be much worse. In the midst of all this, we find there is to be a general election. What need exists for this? The Government have a very large majority in this House and in the Legislative Council, and they have a Lieutenant-Governor of their own creation, and a mandate from the people in no uncertain way to carry out certain legislation—so they have told us time and again. The election will only impose a tremendous tax upon the State as a whole. Is it because they fear a crash? Are they anxious to get the general elections over and have their position assured once more for another term of three years before the people of Queensland fully appreciate the great straits to which this Administration have reduced them, or is it because they think they have a good war cry so far as the result of the delegation is concerned? We have been told time after time that members of the Opposition are responsible for that delegation going to England, and that this delegation was responsible for the loan proposals of the Government being turned down in such a summary way. I maintain that members of the Opposition are no more responsible for that delegation going to England or for the loan proposals being turned down than the present Government are responsible for the murders which have taken place in Ireland during the last few weeks. Surely the members of this proud and all omnipotent Government are not going to admit that three private citizens can go to England and exercise more power and authority than this Government commands. Surely, they will not admit that three citizens, without official recognition and without backing, can go to England and influence the financiers of the British Empire. No, the Government has sealed its own doom so far as the financiers of London are concerned. They have shown that they are prepared to break sacred contracts. I hold no brief for the pastoralists, and I claim that for many years they have paid too little, especially as compared with the graziers. I admit that Queensland has received far less than it should have received from the pastoral lessees, but a contract is binding on individuals and should be more

Mr. Bayley.]

binding upon Governments. It is a serious thing for a Government to break its contracts.

The ACTING PREMIER: In 1910 the Government, including Mr. Barnes, did that.

Mr. BAYLEY: It is not because of any action of the Opposition that the loan proposals have been turned down. When we consider that that delegation absolutely failed in their mission then we can see at a glance that the ridiculous claim now being put forward by the Government is absolutely fallacious. Did not the delegation make strong representations to have the appointment of the Lieutenant-Governor cancelled, but they failed. The Lieutenant-Governor still retains possession of Government House. Did not the delegation try to get a repeal of the Government's Land Act Amendment Bill? They were absolutely turned down. We know perfectly well that the delegation did not influence the British money-lender so far as the loan proposals were concerned. I candidly admit that that delegation has failed, and they will return to Queensland not having accomplished anything. The loan proposals of the Government were turned down because of their own misdoings. Another reason why the Government are prompted to precipitate a general election is because they see a "rift in the lute" so far as the Opposition are concerned. We are told that there is a split in the Opposition.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Is it true?

Mr. BAYLEY: We are told that the Opposition are disintegrating, and members of the Government think this an opportune time to force a general election.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What do you think yourself?

Mr. BAYLEY: Members of the Opposition are united absolutely in national ideals. We are united so far as loyalty to Australia and to the British Empire is concerned. We stand together in regard to the rights of individuals and in regard to the rights of all sections in Queensland.

At 10.30 p.m.,

Mr. SMITH, Chairman of Committees, relieved the Speaker in the chair.

Mr. BAYLEY: It must be remembered that a large number of us represent rural industries and country electorates, and we think we can serve the country interests better as a separate party. When the general election takes place, members of the Nationalist party and members of the Country party will be found together arrayed against the forces of ultra-socialism and against those forces which are ruining Queensland as fast as possible. We have certain interests to protect, and on big national questions and ideals we will stand together arrayed against the Socialist party. It is equally sure that after the election we will be sitting on that side of the House.

Mr. SPENCER (*Maranoa*): I consider that the Speech delivered by the Lieutenant-Governor was one of the most extraordinary I have ever listened to or ever read as coming from any Government in any Parliament.

The ACTING PREMIER: Is there anything in it that is wrong?

Mr. SPENCER: There is. I cannot conceive of any Government descending so low in political morality as to have such a Speech

[*Mr. Bayley.*

read from the Throne for the purposes of political propoganda.

The ACTING PREMIER: Why conceal the truth?

Mr. SPENCER: I cannot conceive of any Lieutenant-Governor reading such a Speech. I remember on one occasion, when Mr. Kidston had a similar Speech prepared, the then Governor said, "You can write the Speech, but I won't read it."

The ACTING PREMIER: That is quite incorrect. The Governor did read it. The "Courier" is wrong.

Mr. SPENCER: The "Courier" is quite correct. The Governor did not read it. Mr. Kidston had a Speech ready which was very similar to the one read yesterday, but the Governor would not read it.

The ACTING PREMIER: You are misinformed.

Mr. COLLINS: That Governor should have been sacked.

Mr. SPENCER: Surely the Government will not admit that it was through the action of three discredited politicians going home as a delegation that the financiers refused to lend money to Queensland. Is it not an extraordinary thing that three men, who members opposite say had no influence, had the power to do such a thing?

The ACTING PREMIER: They had plenty of money influence, but no standing.

Mr. SPENCER: Just fancy three men—with no standing in the country—unauthorised by anybody, being able to do that?

The ACTING PREMIER: £4,000 was subscribed in a room to send them home.

Mr. SPENCER: Who had the power to send them home? A handful of people in Brisbane calling themselves employers. Those are the people who sent them home. Hon. members opposite say that these three men with no standing were able to prevent the Government from getting any loan money whilst Mr. Theodore, the Premier, authorised by the whole of Queensland, with a big following, had no influence at all in getting his loan of £9,000,000.

The ACTING PREMIER: No money influence.

Mr. SPENCER: Surely the Premier could have explained the position of Queensland. The reason he did not get the money was because of the Government's legislation and the way they managed the country.

The ACTING PREMIER: We got £2,000,000 just before that, and it was over-subscribed.

Mr. SPENCER: But you have been drifting, and you would drift into the insolvency court if you were allowed to do so. I hope the electors will send you about your business at the elections, and allow someone else to govern the country properly. The reason the money-lenders refused the loan money was because they had no confidence in the Government of Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Why did they refuse to lend money to the Commonwealth and to the Victorian Government as well?

Mr. SPENCER: I do not know, but I do know why they refused to lend money to Queensland. Any body of men will realise that the legislation brought forward in Queensland and the repudiatory legislation introduced are sufficient to make any financiers lose confidence in this State. Take the action of the Government with regard to

the tramways and with regard to the Land Act. The Government are put in power by the Labour unions, who are always talking of repudiation.

The ACTING PREMIER: An amendment was circulated in your name last year by one of your friends, and you repudiated it.

Mr. SPENCER: I don't know who did it.

The ACTING PREMIER: It shows the tactics on your side.

Mr. SPENCER: The financiers in London lost confidence in Queensland simply because of the way the Government have governed the affairs of the country. The money-lender always wants to know the position of the man he is lending money to. He wants to know if the money is being spent in reproductive works and for remunerative purposes. A financier will often advance money not so much on the security as on the reputation of the borrower, and the reputation of this Government stinks in the nostrils of the money-lenders in England.

The ACTING PREMIER: That is not correct.

Mr. SPENCER: I think that the refusal of this loan money to Queensland is the best thing that could have happened the country, as it will teach us to live on our own resources.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: We will have to raise the money here.

Mr. SPENCER: I take it from that that the capitalist will have to pay higher taxes. I think that is a good thing, and it will be far better than borrowing. Queensland must realise that we must live within our own resources. If the Government had got the £9,000,000 loan, what a wild orgy they would have had. The people outside also imitate and copy what the Government do. It is about time that Queenslanders and Australians realise that they have to live within their means. If you look at the people and see the extravagant way everyone is living, it is no wonder that the country is going to the bad. It is the best thing that happened to Queensland that we were refused that loan, as if this Government had got it they would only have squandered it. It would mean that the Government would have had to pay a high rate of interest, and the people would have had their nose to the grindstone all their lives.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you object to our building main roads for the farmers?

Mr. SPENCER: No, I do not, but you never do it. Hon. members talk about helping the farmers. I have spoken for them in this House, and a deputation [10.30 p.m.] waited on the Secretary for Agriculture last year and asked that the farmers should be supplied with wheat. The Government did it, but it was too late. I was in the House when the rain came, and I said that if the Government had supplied wheat to them, instead of having 13,000 acres under wheat in my district, they would have had 50,000 acres. I know that when the Government did start to supply wheat they were very prompt. The manager of the State Produce Agency is an excellent business man, and whenever I applied for wheat from him it was supplied within a few days, but unfortunately the people had not the ground ready, and when the rain fell some had to be returned.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You do not blame the Government for that.

Mr. SPENCER: Yes, I do, because they did not supply the wheat in time. If they had supplied it a month or two months earlier—if they had supplied it in March—instead of having 13,000 acres in my district, they would have had 50,000. On one occasion there they had 60,000.

The HOME SECRETARY: When did you get the rain?

Mr. SPENCER: We got it in February—we got 5½ inches. Up at Toowoomba private individuals had to guarantee an overdraft in order to buy wheat for the farmers, and if the Government had supplied it at the proper time they would have found that hundreds and thousands of acres would have been put in.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The biggest area on record is in this year.

Mr. SPENCER: It would have been double the biggest record.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The hon. member for Oxley said that the Government were interfering with private enterprise instead of leaving it alone.

Mr. SPENCER: I do not know what the hon. member for Oxley said. I am saying what I know myself of my own district. I am not like some people opposite, who have to give the opinion of a small coterie round the corner. I am not taking my opinions from the Trades Hall or anywhere else.

The ACTING PREMIER: You are in the same camp as he is.

Mr. SPENCER: I am not. There is one common enemy we are fighting—that is socialism. The socialism which is carried on in Queensland is going to ruin us.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: And yet you want socialism in Queensland.

Mr. SPENCER: Last year the Government refused to supply wheat to farmers, and at the same time they passed £40,000 for relief work for men in Brisbane. If the Government had any brains they would have had them about the country improving it. There is no doubt that whenever there are any unemployed they are dumped on to the railways and put on to unproductive work. No wonder the railways do not pay. In the Government service no individual gets any encouragement at all. Merit is not considered.

The ACTING PREMIER: Oh, yes, it is.

Mr. SPENCER: I challenge the hon. member to say where merit is considered in the Railway Department.

The ACTING PREMIER: Oh, yes. Look at the heads.

Mr. SPENCER: The heads always look after themselves, but I am talking about the men below. I know that many excellent men, who are smart and clever, have to wait because men above them have been longer in the service.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You think the old fellows should be sacked?

Mr. SPENCER: No, but the people with merit are entitled to more consideration and a bigger screw. What is the good of keeping old men—not old men but men who have no brains—ahead of young fellows with brains?

Mr. KIRWAN: You would have to wipe out every railway regulation.

Mr. Spencer.]

Mr. SPENCER: The hon. member is an old railway man. Does he believe that merit should be recognised in the railway service?

Mr. KIRWAN: I do, in all Government services.

Mr. SPENCER: I would like to know whether the State enterprises have been of any benefit to Queensland. The squatter, it is said, makes an enormous amount of money. Have the Government, with all the capital they have put into it, made an enormous amount? Have they shown the squatter how the country should be developed? Hon. members know that less money has been spent on improvements on the State stations than on private stations.

The ACTING PREMIER: We will have a new manager shortly.

Mr. SPENCER: The Government had a very good manager. He was an excellent man.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He had a free hand.

Mr. SPENCER: He had a free hand? The free hand the Government gave him was that when his bullocks were worth £15 they made him sell them at £9.

The ACTING PREMIER: He bought Mount Hutton, and the leader of the Opposition complained about it. He bought Wando Vale, and the leader of the Opposition complained about it.

Mr. SPENCER: He had nothing to do with Mount Hutton. Mr. Hunter bought it.

The ACTING PREMIER: He inspected it.

Mr. VOWLES: He says he did not.

Mr. SPENCER: Is it not a pity that we have a beautiful country like this crying out for development, and the Government are putting away £40,000 a year for relief work?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There were ten times as many men unemployed when you were in power.

Mr. SPENCER: That does not excuse this Government. This Government always use the plea, "Look at what past Governments did." They say that the Denham Government brought in a Bill to repudiate the land rent limitation clause, but, at the same time, I think you will find that in 1905, on page 591 of "Hansard," I think, Mr. Herdacre said it was repudiation.

The ACTING PREMIER: He voted against deleting that clause.

Mr. SPENCER: You are right. He did. The Government say they want money to build railways. We all know that these railways do not pay and will not pay for some time. It must be very patent to anyone who goes about the country that we have enough railways as it is. Instead of putting it into railways, we should put it into development. We know that land is not developed at all merely because the small men do not get sufficient encouragement to go on the land. I know that the grazing farmer and the pastoralist can do well, but take the man with a small amount of capital who wants to go on the land and grow wheat or keep small numbers of cattle or sheep. A little time ago I wrote to the Government suggesting that the unemployed should be put on to ringbark an area of about 25 miles, right on the Injune Creek

[Mr. Spencer.

line, and that the country should be cleared of scattered pear, in order that settlers could go on and start to make a living straight away. There are very few men of practical experience on the land here, but anybody can realise that when a man takes up a selection with only small capital, by the time he has put up a fence and some sort of a house, he has to go away to earn some more money to keep his wife and family, and it takes him years before he can get it going. If you want to encourage land settlement you will have to encourage the small man, and if you do that I feel sure you will have production increased a hundredfold. Unfortunately, we find that the Lands Department has not encouraged the small producer, and now they are being driven off the land and are coming into the cities because they can get better wages and conditions of living. The Government will have to find out what is a proper living area, and then improve it for the man before he goes on to it. It would be far better to spend money in that way than to spend it on railways, I do not care what they are.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Is it not good business for the private banks?

Mr. SPENCER: No. There is no money in it. The Government are advancing money on prickly-pear selections when they have this good land on which they could put small men. The whole thing is badly managed not only by this Government but by other Governments. I think that the Government will find, when they go to the country, that the people are not so simple that they will believe that three men went home to England and were the cause of the refusal of this loan.

The ACTING PREMIER: What do you think of these men?

Mr. SPENCER: I think they ought never to have gone. I do not know who sent them.

The ACTING PREMIER: More repudiation!

Mr. SPENCER: I do not repudiate them, because I never sent them.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Your party.

Mr. SPENCER: No, they did not. I am not responsible for my party.

The ACTING PREMIER: I make bold to say that the hon. member for Pultimba, the leader of the second party, on the extreme wing, will not repudiate them.

Mr. SPENCER: I venture to say that he will repudiate them. I venture to say that the hon. member for Bulimba had no more to do with the visit of those men than he had to do with the hon. member's nomination for Paddington.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): Queensland is passing through a grave crisis, probably the greatest that has ever occurred in its history. There is no money in the Treasury, and nobody can be found to lend or give the Government credit. We are on the edge of a great financial chasm, into which we must fall if the Government do not change their policy of financial recklessness. Distrusted in Australia and outside Australia, without a case, they consider abuse an asset.

They have been informed, time and time again, that there was a reckoning day; and that, like every institution or business concern, they must face a summing up, an audit,

as it were, of the accounts. Now we find ourselves face to face with a summing up—crisis—brought about by the actions of the Government, and we are forced to consider our position and find a way out. The excuse which the Government have given is, to my mind, one of the weakest ever offered by a constitutional Government—a Government in charge of a State like Queensland, which is studded with wealth that will never be exploited for hundreds of years. A country which has every opportunity of becoming the wealthiest State in the world, if it were properly worked, is now face to face with bankruptcy. Why? Is it because the assets, or the possibilities, are not here? No. It is because we have been run by a set of men who have been gambling with the State's future, and, having lost, are now looking out for a cry to get a way out of the situation they have created. To blame three men for stopping their loans, and to attempt to tack these men on to the Opposition, is to misrepresent the facts. I can vouch for this: That I have not at any time supported that deputation, because I believe that the Government, which is elected by the people, should govern, and the legislation which is the result of sending a party to Parliament with a majority should be accepted by the people. It will apply equally with the Opposition when they get into power at the elections as it does with the Labour party to-day. Those are my views, which I expressed at the time I read in the newspapers that a delegation was going home to London for the purpose of getting something done in regard to legislation. I want members of the Government to accept the statement that no member of the Opposition to my knowledge has ever given that delegation one atom of support. I am warning the Government that the cry on which they are going to the country is making them the laughing-stock of the Commonwealth and of the world. Furthermore, it is weakening the position of Queensland in the eyes of the world. When we are dealing with questions of this sort, we must endeavour to be statesmen. If Queensland's future is properly managed and directed, it will bring blessing to many people. We say we should improve, as far as possible, the conditions of our working people. That opinion is shared by all of us. I think the Government should come out with a productive policy, and say, "We are going to reconstruct for the benefit of the State in general and those who reside in the State in particular." I have quoted Mr. Theodore when he advised his organization to kick out of their movement the extreme element. It is not an unknown fact that during the war, and since, the extreme element which is supporting the Government have advocated the repudiation of the national debt. I think the Premier should go to the country and tell the sins of omission and commission of the Government, and let the people decide on the facts. The member for Bremer to-night spent a great deal of his time berating the hon. member for Logan because he followed the dictates of his conscience and severed his association with the Labour party. I say all honour is due to a man who, realising his mistakes, does his best to remedy the position. What do we find? As soon as a member makes a statement he honestly believes to be true, but which differs from the hidebound and restricted thoughts or capacities of the members now comprising the Government,

they howl at and accuse him of all sorts of things. The time will come, sooner or later, when the Labour party as it exists to-day must break in twain, because some of the men will realise that they are going too far, and in their honesty and self-respect will stand up and reserve to themselves that little bit of manhood they still have. If this country is to be placed upon a sound basis, we must get away from the gambler's tactics and manage our affairs on sound financial lines. The crisis is here. As I said, it is probably the greatest crisis that has hitherto met any Government. Instead of the Government attempting to remedy the position, they take the first opportunity to go to the electors before the truth is known. We probably will not have the Auditor-General's report to know how the finances stand before the election takes place. We know very well the Government are keeping from the people the date when they will be called upon to record their votes. They are not upsetting the Opposition in this matter. As far as I am concerned—and I know as far as the other members of the Opposition are concerned—we have anticipated something of the sort. I think that when the cry—as the hon. member for Bremer called it, the "great cry"—loses a little of its greatness, the people will know the truth, and then the backwash or the rebound will take place. I listened with great interest to the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech, and I must say it bristles with inaccuracies and is studded with untruths. No Governor should ever be placed in the position of making a Speech like that, which is going to bring on him an odium which it will be hard to remove. In this House I always have refrained from making any remarks concerning the Lieutenant-Governor (now President of the Legislative Council). I never on any occasion have derided him, but I say that by reading that Speech he has fallen in with the suggestions which were made that he would be a party man, subject to party influences, and could be moulded just as the party desired. In the Speech we are told the State had a surplus of £26,000. In actual fact, we find the total revenue amounted to £11,293,745. The expenditure from revenue was £11,266,903, from Loan Fund £4,797,864, and from Trust Funds £3,076,704, making a total of £19,141,477. In round figures £19,000,000 was spent to gain £11,000,000, and in face of these figures we are informed that the Government has a surplus of £26,000. I contend the Government have been guilty of misrepresentation in this as in other respects. Let me refer briefly to incidents which show that you cannot trust the Government's word. During the Federal elections, when unemployment was rife in Queensland, we had the present Acting Premier saying there was no unemployed in Queensland. Yet in the "Industrial Gazette" for November, 1919, we were told there were approximately 8,000 unemployed. How can an Acting Premier of a State be so ignorant of the conditions which exist in the State as to say there is no unemployment when the paper issued by the Government tells us there were 8,000? Then we were told by the same Acting Premier that the fares and freights on the railways were not to be raised. A day or so afterwards they were raised 30 per cent. ! Then we were told by Mr. Theodore that there were to be no more appoint-

Mr. Fry.]

ments to the Upper House. Yet we find in a day or two afterwards they appointed fourteen, mostly union secretaries and organisers. Mark you—and I want to emphasise this—there was not amongst those appointees a returned soldier or a farmer. The farmer, to whom we look to till our soil and produce our foodstuffs, was forgotten. We also find the Government endeavouring to get the soldier vote. If the Government were doing the right thing, they would get the soldier vote, but they are not doing the right thing. Why did they not appoint a returned soldier to the Upper House? The Government told us the “Douglas Mawson” was never offered to them. We find that, first of all, it was offered to them for £12,500, and they bought it afterwards at £18,500. That, to my mind, was a deception. We find that when they bought it it was not in good order, and had to be docked, and after it got to North Queensland they found it was leaking. We are told in the Lieutenant-Governor’s Speech that the education system is constantly improving. By that we understand that it is making some progress. For the last two and a-half years I have been endeavouring to get from the Minister for Education some remedy for the shortage of teachers in our schools. Whenever I approached this question, and asked the Government what action they were taking, they always tried to bluff. I am not one of those individuals who is going to be satisfied with bluff. I want to get a straight-out answer from the Government. When I asked the question about the number of scholars in the classes I am quoted a regulation. That answer shows that, whilst the Minister knows the regulation exists, he does not take any steps to remedy the existing state of affairs. The member for Pittsworth tells us there are fifty to sixty scholars in a class in the schools in his district, and the member for Ipswich, for whom I have the highest respect, tells us the classes have thirty to forty students. I contend that the children cannot get the best advantage of an educational system if one teacher is called upon to train thirty to sixty scholars. The brightest scholars in the class will have the attention, and those who require special individual instruction will be allowed to go unattended. It is not the fault of the teachers. Once the Government realises their obligations, the children will have a chance.

It is a standing disgrace and a shame that the youngsters, who are depending on responsible government to give them a fair chance, should be suppressed as they are. If the Secretary for Public Instruction was honest in the matter, he would come forward and make a definite statement.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in order in questioning the Minister’s honesty.

Mr. FRY: I am not questioning the Minister’s honesty. The Minister for Education is not conversant with the work of his department or the administration of it, and consequently he is unworthy of the position he occupies. (Government dissent.) I do not care how the Minister takes it, nor how the Government takes it, as the Government of the day will not be the Government of the future. (Government laughter.) Governments move in cycles. They come and go, and another one takes their place, but the children always remain in the schools,

[Mr. Fry.]

and our educational system should be carried out on lines which will go to build up a sound, wise, and healthy people. We are told that upon the instruction given the working men’s children depends their chances in the world; and yet we find a Labour Government in power failing to provide proper educational facilities for them.

I read in the Governor’s Speech that the Government were going to reintroduce the Initiative and Referendum Bill. Just to show how insincere the Government are in this direction, I wish to quote the remarks of the Hon. G. Page-Hanify, a representative of the Government in the Upper House. Mr. Page-Hanify, again, is one of those respected members of the party who claims to be a man of his word. Mr. Page-Hanify, in the “Daily Standard” of 24th February, 1920, says this—

“Sir.—The initiative and referendum principle, which stands, and has stood, since the early days of the Queensland Labour movement right in the forefront of our fighting platform, and which also stands in the fighting platform (Federal) of the Australian Labour party, has been correctly described as a corner stone in the foundations of the Labour movement, and has been cited as a definite contradiction of the oft-repeated assertion that the political Labour movement is a purely class movement.”

Later, he says—

“In the 1918 session, having a renewed mandate for this measure from the electors, the party again passed the Bill through the Assembly, and it went to the Council, where only three amendments were inserted. The Bill has since been lying in the Assembly, and to-day, in the altered circumstances, requires only a message from the Assembly to the Council disagreeing with the Council’s amendments to ensure its becoming law as originally drafted, and thus placing this valuable piece of democratic legislation on our statute-books.

“As an earnest believer in the principles of ‘direct legislation,’ and a long-standing supporter of Labour in politics, I have received a shock on learning—and it is too true—that the Parliamentary Labour party, after having for over four years persisted in apparently endeavouring to pass this Bill, having now the opportunity of passing it by a mere message to the Council, has decided that the Bill shall not be proceeded with.

“Truly, the ways and the wiles of the politician are beyond comprehension!

“I confess that I am shocked and disappointed at what I regard as an evidence of political apostasy by the Parliamentary Labour party.

“The session will probably close before the end of this week, and if it closes without the passing of this measure the party will have indelibly stamped itself as insincere and guilty of dealing unfairly with its supporters.”

Let me quote from the “Daily Standard” of 3rd June, 1919—

“The entire country is getting heartily dissatisfied with the extravagant display of unfulfilled promises, and eternal pretence of doing something, while in

reality nothing is done at all. Criticism from the Tory side is continual and persistent. Unfortunately, very much of it is justified."

Mr. Page-Hanify tells us that the Government were not sincere with its Initiative and Referendum Bill, and yet we find it in the Governor's Speech to-day. Why is it in the Governor's Speech to-day? Because the party are insincere and are guilty of unfair dealing.

The ACTING PREMIER: You voted against it yourself.

Mr. FRY: I never did. That proves what I said with regard to the misrepresentation and want of knowledge on the part of hon. members opposite. I could go on indefinitely pointing out the inaccuracies and misrepresentations of the Government, but I will just quote an authority which, in the early days, devoted the whole of its attention to the building up of the Labour party, and that is the Sydney "Bulletin." (Loud Government laughter.) I may say that when I was a boy at school I had the pleasure of having the "Bulletin" in my hands each week, and in those days it was one of the chief things that moulded public opinion.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Did it mould yours?

Mr. FRY: My opinions are formed on facts and by truths as they are presented to me. I don't know if the Minister has any opinions of his own, or whether he accepts them from others. The Minister for Education might be contented to remain on board a ship with a drifting career. (Laughter.) The ship of State, of which he is a member of the crew, has been drifting on for about four and a-half years, and now it is on the rocks. I am not floating on a drifting ship. I like to be on a ship which has some mobility about it—something that can force its way through the world. This is from the "Bulletin" of the 29th July, 1920—

"REPUTATION DAY.

"The Queensland Government struck a sort of baby Waterloo in London when its application for a £9,000,000 loan was refused; but by a special dispensation of Providence the case wasn't nearly so bad as it might have been. If the rejected appeal had been for money with which to repay a debt falling due, the result would have been almost certain bankruptcy, unless the Federal Government had come to the rescue and taken as security the sole right to collect certain State taxes. And even the Federal Government might have found it hard enough to scrape up £9,000,000 in gold for such a purpose. Almost as certainly as the sunrise no one else in Australia would have taken the chance, even if money was available; and the appeal of a turned-down borrower to the United States—the only other lender these times—would have been far from hopeful even at the fancy rates which a prospective insolvent is willing to promise. By extraordinary good luck, however, the five-years' life of the most unfinancial Government in Australia has been free of renewal loans. Nothing has fallen due to give the British lender a chance to express in the fullest way his frank opinion of Ryan and Theodore and their

allies. One of the last acts of the Denham Ministry was to renew at 4½ per cent. a lamentable old I O U for £11,728,800, and the new crowd started with nothing to pay till 1922. It was the only State with such amazing good fortune. New South Wales had about £29,000,000 falling due in the same space; Victoria had £21,000,000; South Australia about £10,000,000; even Tasmania about £2,000,000. The price of renewal hit them all hard. Westralia, the other undeserving case, had less than £800,000 to struggle with. But for this weird streak of fortune the finance of the Ryan-Theodore combine would have dragged it or the State down before this. But it is up against a liability of £2,399,750 in 1922; £12,973,834 in 1924; and £11,728,800 in 1926. And unless rain falls to make new verdure in the loan market, or unless Queensland finds a very different sort of Government and does so very soon, the first State insolvency in Australasia is fixed for one of these dates, or earlier."

At twenty minutes past 11 o'clock p.m.,

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

HON. W. H. BARNES: An interjection from the other side reminded us of this fact: That the policy Speech which has been delivered in the other place by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor was one of the most extreme that has ever been delivered. I question if ever, in the history of this great State, there has been a Speech of the kind delivered before, and let me say that it is a most extraordinary thing that such a Speech should have been delivered. It looks to me that the hon. members who had to do with the preparation of that Speech were like men who were out fishing, and they had suggested one to the other what would be the best bait with which to catch the fish.

The HOME SECRETARY: You missed your fish.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The acting leader of the Government, all of a sudden, has apparently turned very sympathetic towards the holders of the war gratuity bonds. I quite remember that not very long ago the leader of the Nationalist party in the Federal House was very seriously blamed for not giving out cash for soldiers' bonds—for not saying that the soldiers' bonds should be in cash.

The ACTING PREMIER: Hear, hear!

HON. W. H. BARNES: Yet we find that this Government, which is financially on the rocks and with an election looming, are saying to the soldiers, "Look, in four months' time, if you come along, we will cash your bonds."

The ACTING PREMIER: That is utterly untrue. They were told that they could get cash on the 1st September.

HON. W. H. BARNES: At any rate, it was distinctly stated that in four months' time they would get payment.

The ACTING PREMIER: Payment was to be spread over six months.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Government are so financially bankrupt that they have to say to the soldiers who are working for them, "We are not able to do what private people are doing for the returned soldiers

Hon. W. H. Barnes.]

working for them," but they have spread payment over six months.

The HOME SECRETARY: You know that private people are not doing anything.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I know that this Government, who poses as the friends of the soldiers, did not cash the bonds.

The ACTING PREMIER: That is not true. The soldiers suggested that we should spread the payment over six months, as Hughes would not pay cash.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I would like to know who made the suggestion to the Government.

The ACTING PREMIER: The soldiers themselves.

HON. W. H. BARNES: We know how suggestions are brought about. Might I remind the Government that not very long ago a statement was made that an election was shortly to take place, and one of the actions of the Government was, at any rate, to say that the statement was not correct.

The ACTING PREMIER: That was because you made it.

HON. W. H. BARNES: It only proves what we have found again and again—that the statement was apparently correct, and it shows that I was right in saying what I did say.

HON. J. MULLAN: You have not proved it yet.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I have not proved it any more than the Governor's Speech has proved anything. We are told that we are to do certain business and get out. Why? For an appeal to the country. I believe that every member of the Opposition will heartily welcome that appeal. (Government laughter.)

The ACTING PREMIER: Which Opposition?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The combined Opposition, the men who are out to put up a fight and sink any differences they may have in order that they may re-establish same government in Queensland. (Hear, hear!) This afternoon we had an amendment on a certain Bill, and I want to say, as I said before, that I think the Government have done the right thing in making it possible for that vote to be taken. I have no fault to find with the Government on that score, but I want to draw attention to another fact—a fact that cannot be gained—the fact that this Government are afraid to give to the working electorates of the metropolitan area—because they know the people there have lost faith in them—equality of voting strength. (Government laughter.) And this is supposed to be a democratic Government! The hon. the Acting Premier has a vacant laugh in that connection, but I shall prove it right up to the hilt. The Government are afraid to allow the democratic principle to prevail in connection with the voting strength of the community.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The local authority franchise.

HON. W. H. BARNES: There the Minister for Agriculture chips in. He has just two stock things that he brings before this House, and then the whole of his intelligence is exhausted. What is the condition of the rolls to-day? Bulimba, after allowing for the deduction, has 12,318 voters, Nundah 9,447, Oxley 8,519, Toombul 8,963, Teowong 8,355,

[Hon. W. H. Barnes.

Windsor 10,455, making a total of 58,060, or an average of 9,677.

MR. KIRWAN: It is worse in Victoria under your form of government.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I remember that stock phrase coming from the hon. member for Brisbane previously. In Charters Towers there are 3,336 electors, Chillagoe 1,191, Cook 3,483, Burke 2,004, Kennedy 2,698, and Queenon 2,746, or a total of 16,168, and a difference of 41,892.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You want to take the representation away from the country?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I do not. That is another stock cry, but I have yet to learn that a labouring man's vote is worth less in your electorate, Mr. Speaker, and in the electorate of the Secretary for Public Instruction than it is worth somewhere else.

The ACTING PREMIER: You voted to give the employer three votes and the working man one.

HON. W. H. BARNES: No. That is another old red-herring that the hon. member is trying to draw across the track. There has never been a time when I have not voted for one man one vote and one vote one value; and here* is a so-called democratic Government afraid to give anything like a fair deal.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I have no complaint from my electorate on that score.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Is that an answer to something that should spell justice and right and equality? The Minister has managed so to smooth them down that they are the exceptions, if they are the exceptions, but I should be very much surprised if they are satisfied with the equality of representation. Another way in which we are handicapped in doing the criticising that we would like to do—and it is possibly our last opportunity, I imagine—is by reason of the fact that the Minister is too busy, or from another cause. Is it not a significant fact that to-day I sent to the Treasury a letter asking for the public balances as at the 30th June, and the answer was that they were not ready? You will remember that this afternoon, when I asked the question, I was asked to give notice; and is it not significant that the public balances on the 30th June are not yet available to the public?

The ACTING PREMIER: The balances are printed every month.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Is it not a fact, also, that we are going to an election without an Auditor-General's report? I do not say that the Minister is responsible for that, but on the last occasion the Auditor-General drew attention to the significant way in which we were drifting and to some other matters to which, if I had time, I would refer again to-night. It is significant that figures which would enable members to place before their electors matters which pertain to the vital interests of this great State are kept to one side, or that some excuse is made for not supplying them.

The ACTING PREMIER: You know that when you left the Treasury last time you did not know whether you had a credit or a debit.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member might take it a little more kindly. Depend upon it, when a man loses his temper, you

are hitting him and that he feels that he is being hit. The Hon. the Secretary for Public Instruction has been trying to draw me in regard to certain things, and I think the new member for Herbert, to whom I listened very patiently yesterday, drew attention to something which happened when the Denham Government were in office. He said that a Bill had been prepared with reference to the pastoralists. The point I want to drive home is that, whatever it may have been, it was never brought forward and passed. But this Government did not only deal with the land laws in a certain fashion, but went back as much as six years, and many people who have parted with their properties are being asked to pay up.

Hon. J. MULLAN interjected.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: One hon. member has already reminded us of something which was said by the hon. member who interjected, and I am sorry that he was not in his place at the time.

Hon. J. MULLAN: And he misrepresented me.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: One hon. member who spoke this afternoon put his finger on the point in connection with the failure of the Premier to get his loan money. He said that, generally speaking, when a man is seeking to get money by way of loan, it is not so much the security that is considered as the character of the man—personality and character; and the reason why the Government have not got the money they want is because people in the old country have lost confidence in them.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Have the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments lost their characters?

Hon. W. H. BARNES: It is quite sufficient for me to deal with this Government, who are bankrupt of ideas, and who have practically no money either, without bothering about the Commonwealth Government. The fact remains that the money was not advanced to Mr. Theodore because the Government do not possess the confidence of those who live in the old land.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: At a price.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: We are told that we could get it at a price. Do you see how the truth is leaking out? Do you notice how the Speech was dressed out? They must have spent hours in getting sentences which they thought would catch the public ear. It is perfectly certain that the reason for the high price asked by the investors is that the risk is so great.

The HOME SECRETARY: What would the rate of interest have to do with the security?

Hon. W. H. BARNES: The interjection shows how devoid of business knowledge the Home Secretary is. The bigger the risk, the bigger the rate of interest—always—and the hon. member should know that.

Mr. CARTER: That is a true usurer spirit. You are well up in it. You have lived on it all your life.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member apparently speaks of what he knows. It has been said that no other man has had such experience along those lines as he. The Acting Premier nursed his little founding of a surplus of £25,000 in such a way that you would think he had never seen such a baby before. It is quite true. He had not

But one thing in connection with that surplus is very significant. I know that you are a student of these things, Mr. Speaker, and I want to ask whether you read the figures published at the beginning of August in connection with the expenditure for July. Did you notice how it had grown?

I hope it did not pass through your mind, as it did through mine, that probably some of the items had conveniently been held over from 30th June, so that they might be paid during July and appear in the August statement. Let me draw the attention of the House to this fact:—In 1916-17 the Government deficit was £253,493; in 1917-18 it was £409,451; in 1918-19 it was £171,933. The surplus in 1915-16 was £34,000, and in 1919-20 it was £25,833. The expenditure from Trust Funds in 1918-19 was £2,446,566. In 1919-20 £3,076,704 was spent, and the receipts from Trust Funds were £2,932,582. From Loan Fund the expenditure in the year 1918-19 was £2,736,412, and in 1919-20 it was £4,787,364. Already to-night the attention of this House has been drawn to the big difference between the expenditure in 1918-19 and in 1919-20—a difference of about £1,500,000. When the then Treasurer (Mr. Theodore) presented his Statement I drew attention to the fact that the taxation which he proposed was going to bring in very much more money than he expected; and it is perfectly certain it did. The revenue exceeded the estimate by £870,000, and the expenditure exceeded the estimate by about £840,000. Let us look at how the people were bled. Income tax produced £133,000 more than was estimated, stamp duty £123,000 more than was estimated, railways £563,000 more than was estimated. I want to stress the last point—that every time there is a desire to increase revenue, who are the people who have to provide it? I say deliberately to-night from my place in this House that it is the producer who has to provide it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Nonsense.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: The aim is to get at the producer.

The HOME SECRETARY: You tried to get at them.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: The producer again and again by this Government has been made a football to get more money. This Government, through the railways, has penalised the producer more than any other Government which ever occupied the Treasury benches. Is it any wonder? I can remember when Mr. Ryan led that party he said, "Our duty is to make the man outside squeal."

The ACTING PREMIER: No, no; the squatter.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I ask, is not the squatter a man outside?

The ACTING PREMIER: He did not say the man outside. You are twisting; you cannot tell the truth.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I am glad to say I do not follow on the lines of the Acting Leader of the Government. As a matter of fact, we were told that the object of the Government would be to make people squeal and squeal again.

The ACTING PREMIER: Which ones?

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I do not know which ones you had in view; but nearly everyone in the community is squealing. I have in my home a placard with regard to

Hon. W. H. Barnes.]

butter. I say to-night that no man should grumble at paying the dairyman a fair price for his butter. That is a proper thing. But what happened at one election? They said, "Return us and you will have butter at 1s. per lb."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Your firm charge 3 per cent. to handle the butter.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Minister, I am sorry to say, does not speak the truth in that regard; because, as a matter of fact, we do not as a firm handle one single pound of factory butter.

The ACTING PREMIER: They will not let you; they are too careful.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman says they will not let us. I want to say that, as far as the State Produce Agency is concerned, our takings a long way eclipse its takings in the city of Brisbane.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: But they return half the commission.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I want to deal with that phase. I have said on the floor of this House before that they have an excellent manager. But what is the position? Supplying Government departments without any competition—who could not make a profit under such conditions? It does not require very much management to make a profit under conditions of that kind, especially bearing in mind that, according to the returns for the previous year, apparently a good part of the business must have been through Government departments. Now let me get down to the position with regard to taxation. In 1914-15—the last year of the Denham Government in office—the total amount received in direct taxation was £954,457. That was at the rate of £1 8s. 2d. per capita. In 1915-16 the taxation had grown to £1,455,359, being £2 2s. 9d. per capita; in 1915-17 it was £1,564,045, being £2 6s. 9d. per capita; in 1917-18 it was £1,761,232, or £2 12s. 2d. per capita; in 1918-19, £2,772,269, or £3 19s. 10d. per capita; and for the last financial year £3,323,745, or £4 14s. 3d. per capita. High finance! Yet notwithstanding taking out of the pockets of the people money in that way, where do the Government find themselves?

The ACTING PREMIER: Over here.

HON. W. H. BARNES: But their stay there is going to be very short-lived. Now let us look the thing fairly and squarely in the face. What does it mean? You can tax and tax again, but do not forget that you are going to reduce the spending power of the community and the result is going to be disastrous to the community. Look at the Speech, if you will. It is the most extraordinary Speech I have ever read. We are told what the Government will do in the sweet by and by. At the end it has a load which I am sure the Government must be ashamed of. They say in the sweet by and by they are going to do these things. Apparently the Government are sheltering themselves in that particular way. Now, what is the position in connection with unforeseen expenditure? We were told here to-night that so much had been done by the Government: but what is the position? Unforeseen expenditure in 1915-19 exceeded £1,000,000, which was more than double that of the previous year. The Auditor-General drew attention to that particular phase of the position. And there is another very extraordinary position. The cash balances

[Hon. W. H. Barnes.]

on 30th June, 1919, according to the Auditor-General's report, page 16, were £953,061. Then I will read a sentence. He says—

"To arrive at this balance allowance has to be made for the deposit of £1,000,000 placed at call with the Treasury by the permission of the Queensland Government Savings Bank."

The Government ought to feel very thankful that they have a Savings Bank from which they can draw in that way. What is the position with regard to the railways? Let us take a hurried glance. The earnings of the railways in 1914-15 were £3 16s. 7d. Notice how gradually they slow down. In 1915-16 they were £2 11s. 10d., in 1916-17 £2 1s. 5d., in 1917-18 £1 9s. 7d., and in 1918-19—as was pointed out at the time—the magnificent sum of 13s. 9d.

The ACTING PREMIER: Six and eight.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Some six-and-eight pences would be dear at any price. It would seem to me that the management of the railways by the Government has been a "six-and-eightpenny" management, because it has been disastrous to the country. Let us look at it again. Putting on the backs of the producers a load to carry, and yet at the same time returning only 13s. 9d.

The ACTING PREMIER: The primary producers turned you down.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I care not what the primary producers may do. My duty here is to serve this country, and I am going to serve it, and so are members belonging to the National party. We are going to be wise enough, and I believe the primary producers are going to be wise enough, to co-operate in this particular thing that is coming on, in the interests of Queensland. That is the position we are taking up.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: More representatives in the cities; that is what you want.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I was arguing for equality in representation, and the hon. gentleman knows that there is an Act in operation by which provision is made for a 20 per cent. quota in favour of [12 p.m.] the country. And the hon. gentleman should also know that it is possible for his Government to have a redistribution of seats without coming to the House at all. Is it a fair thing that Chillagoe—and it is significant that the Premier represents Chillagoe—is it a fair thing that Chillagoe should have less than 2,000 electors, and Bulimba over 12,000?

The HOME SECRETARY: It has not less than 2,000.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Those are the figures supplied to me to-day.

The ACTING PREMIER: Supplied by whom?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am not going to give the source of my information. I got them from the electoral rolls which are available to anyone.

The ACTING PREMIER: When you said "supplied," that signifies that some person supplied them.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I have sufficient money to buy a roll when I want one. I now want to make a few remarks in connection with the absence of anything in the Governor's Speech that goes to tackle the bigger problems of this great State. Let me compare the bigger problems of the

State with what has been the policy of the Government. The policy of the Government in the past has been not to look about and see what are the big things of this great State; but very frequently the policy has been to receive instructions from outside sources—to spend their money in certain directions, overlooking the great needs of the State. Is there not a call to every Queenslander to realise that at the present moment the number of people who are on the land is small, comparatively speaking? and it is the duty of those who are responsible to see that everything is done to widen out and broaden their viewpoints—to get away from the cities, much as they need attention.

THE ACTING PREMIER: Do you support the delegation to London?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman is trying to get my opinion in that connection, but I want to tell him that, as far as I know, the delegation was composed of excellent gentlemen whom it is a privilege to know and respect. I am not on my trial about anything the delegation may have done, but I simply wish to say that I had no more to do with the sending of the delegation to London than the hon. gentleman had.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: More repudiation!

HON. W. H. BARNES: Might I remind the hon. gentleman that if, after his political life is run, he is able to retire with a name as good as that of Sir Robert Philp and Sir Alfred Cowley, then he will feel that he has not lived in vain.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Tell us what you think of the delegation.

THE ACTING PREMIER: Do you think they succeeded?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman is missing his mark just now. I am not in the mood to oblige him. I can only say that hon. members on this side will welcome the election; that we are out to fight it fairly and well, and I believe that the great majority of the working men of this State have come to realise that if there is one thing more than another that is going to help the State of Queensland, it is by returning a Government which is not a Labour Government, and that they are going to so cast their votes. They will at least realise that there is greater security for them in any other Government than there is in the present Government. (Hear, hear!)

MR. BEBBINGTON (*Dreyton*): The Government seem to have got into a position of which they are ashamed—into a position where they cannot go either back or forward. They are in a position something similar to that in which many of our people have been placed after years of drought and who have been drawing on the banks so long that the banks have had to say they cannot keep them going any longer. The position, however, is different in one way. The producers have got into their present position owing to the disastrous droughts, while the Government's position has been brought about by long extravagance. They have had larger revenues than any previous Government, and the more they have received the more they have spent. It seems to me they are doing the best they can to break up the present system. They state that the present capi-

talistic system should be broken up. I am not blaming the members of the present Government personally for the present state of affairs. I blame the outside power which pulls the strings for members of the Government to dance to. We are forced into the belief that there are organisations outside which have no possible chance of studying the political position, which have no responsibilities, who are forcing the Government to do things that they ought not to do. If the hon. gentleman wants to know whose fault it is that the recent loan was not a success, I can soon tell him.

THE ACTING PREMIER: Whose? The delegation's.

MR. BEBBINGTON: Are they going to continually make a laughing-stock of themselves by saying that three citizens who have very little political influence—one of these gentlemen, according to the Premier, refused to have anything to do with politics, and even refused to be Lieutenant-Governor of this State. (Government laughter.) Was the Hon. Mr. Theodore right or wrong in what he said? Did the hon. gentleman make a deliberate misstatement when he said the position had been offered to one gentleman who was on the delegation and that he refused to accept it?

THE ACTING PREMIER: The Premier said that Sir Robert Philp had been sounded.

MR. BEBBINGTON: The Acting Premier said that the soldiers proposed certain terms, and no doubt the soldiers were sounded.

At ten minutes after midnight,

MR. BRENNAN called attention to the fact that there were only two members sitting on the Opposition side of the House.

MR. BEBBINGTON: It is about time the hon. member for Toowoomba knew more about the rules of the House. There is only one way out of the present position, and that is to do more work; but the Government have never suggested such a thing. They have never suggested increased production. Take their pineapple cannery, about which so much has been said. How are they encouraging production, and what is the cost of production? Take a tin of pineapples sold in their own butchers' shops and fish shops. Each pineapple costs about 3d., and I have no doubt that many of the pineapples would fill two tins. However, I am allowing a margin of 3d. a tin for the pines. These tins are sold at 1s. 4d. to 1s. 5d. The whole cost of labour is about 1s. per dozen. I challenge the Minister to say that a tin of pineapples, which they are selling for 1s. 4d., costs more than 3d., and the wages about 1d. Where does the other 1s. go? Surely the tin does not cost 1s. I want to state that there is too much waste between the producer and the consumer, which should be removed. If the State cannot reduce it, to whom can we look? Take the butchers' shops. We know that the Government get beef at 3½d. per lb., and sell it at an average of about 6½d., so that it takes more to cut up the bullock and put him over the counter than it takes to get him there. One hon. member has referred to the high price of wool as being responsible for the high price of clothing.

THE ACTING PREMIER: It has something to do with it.

MR. BEBBINGTON: A gentleman in this chamber had a suit of clothes made out of wool purposely to see what the cost would be.

Mr. Bebbington.]

The cost of the 7 lb. of greasy wool at 2s. per lb. was 14s. The cost of manufacturing at Ipswich was £1 6s. 8d., and the cost of the tailoring £4 17s. 10d., so that the total cost was £6 18s. 6d. I cannot see any profiteering in that. They tell me it is a week's work for a tailor to make a suit of clothes: and if so, it is not overpaid. How can the high price of wool be responsible for the high price of clothing? That man's suit was similar to the one I have on, which cost £3 10s. The cost is in the distribution from producer to consumer, and we have done all we possibly can to reduce it. I would remind the Government of the effort we made on the 4th September last year, when, at the request of the party on this side, I brought in a motion to extend the principle of the Co-operative Agricultural Production Act to industries, in order that we would not have to send our material away to be manufactured. They might be assisted in exactly the same way as the farmers have been assisted to manufacture raw material for market. I maintain that the ordinary mechanic has at least as much brains as the farmer: and why cannot our mechanics and artisans do something like the farmers, who have 60 or 80 or nearly 100 cheese factories, and a large number of butter factories, some costing up to £30,000? I say that we have the best raw material in the world in our young Australians, and, given the opportunity to do that, they could do it. There is one dark cloud—one black hand—hanging over everything. Australia is a land of sunshine and richness and plenty, but we see a country which the Acting Premier termed a little wet island, after carrying the world on her back for four years—a country to whom we owe £42,000,000 in one debt—emerging from a terrible war and paying off £300,000,000 of her public debt. That is in a climate very different from the one we have here. There are Australians to-day—and I can prove it to you—who are paying 82 per cent. of their incomes away in taxes, who did it in 1916, 1917, and 1918. And Great Britain has no land revenue. I believe that the Queensland Government are the largest landlords in the world to-day.

The ACTING PREMIER: And the best.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: And the worst. Out of over a million pounds of rent which they receive, how much do they pay back in improvements?

Mr. GLEDSON: Over 5,000 miles of railway.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: That has nothing to do with it. How much do they spend on the property from which they draw that million pounds? They never expend a shilling in improvements. Let the Minister for Lands say what he spends in improvements.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Over £40,000,000—on railways.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: They did not spend a single shilling on the property from which they drew the rents, and yet they cannot exist without borrowing enormous sums in order to keep people employed, and their existence as a Government is to come to an end purely because they cannot borrow money. Can you have a worse landlord than that? Talk about English landlordism and Irish landlordism!

The ACTING PREMIER: Do you know that we have to find £2,000,000 a year in interest on the money your old Government borrowed?

[Mr. Bebbington.]

Mr. BEBBINGTON: In 1914-15, when the Denham Government went out of office, the whole of the national debt paid £3 15s. 9d. in the pound. The next year the return was £2 11s. 3d.; the next year, £2 1s.; and the following year, £1 16s. 10d.; and the following year, 1918-19, 13s. 1d.

I see from the "Daily Mail" that a number of our loans, amounting to £15,000,000, must soon be renewed, and we cannot renew at the present time at less than 6½ [12.30 a.m.] per cent. To raise money at 6½ per cent., and then invest it in undertakings which bring in 13s. per cent., as the article says, is business that savours of bedlam. We have spent over £7,000,000 this year, and I would like to know how that money has been invested. A lot of it has been invested in works that will not return one-tenth per cent. I have heard it stated that £2,000,000 a year was as much as the Denham Government could well spend and supervise it so that it would return interest. How can this Government properly spend between £7,000,000 and £8,000,000? They have not done so. If we are only going to be able to borrow money at 7 per cent., when railway material and labour cost double what they did before, and the money only returns 13s. per cent., we shall get into a very bad position. The Government are heaping burdens upon our young people in the future. The young people ought to join together and vote against the present Government as a protest against this injustice. Financiers tell us that the interest on our national debt will be £3,000,000 a year when the loans which will soon mature have to be renewed. A good deal has been said as to why the Government did not get the loan: but how can they expect to get the money when their supporters in Queensland denounce capitalism and want to destroy it? Statements have been made in Labour conferences about the need for the consolidation of Labour's forces if capitalism is to be overthrown, and that they cannot have democracy until capitalism is overthrown. That appears from the report in the "Daily Standard" of the Labour Convention of 1918. How can you say you are going to overthrow and destroy capitalism, and then expect the London people to lend you money to do it? That explains the reason why the loan was refused. Right away from Rockhampton down to the South, we have the Labour party publicly proclaiming these views. We on this side believe that that kind of thing is crippling our industries, and is what kept us from getting loan money in London. The Government now want to put the blame on three harmless citizens who went to London to get a new Governor appointed. I think that that is what annoyed the Government. It is no wonder that the money was refused in London when there were people here stating that they would change the ownership of property at the first opportunity.

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

Mr. SIZER: I am pleased to have an opportunity of making a few observations before this Parliament passes out of existence. Much has been said in connection with the delegation which has gone to England. I am very pleased to see the Government have been generous enough in the official Speech to recognise that the Opposition had nothing

to do with the delegation. I was interested to hear the Lieutenant-Governor refer to the delegation as one of unofficial people. By that we understand that they went entirely on their own bat, and therefore hon. gentlemen on the other side have nothing to charge us with. I have never heard of any objection being taken to the Premier of Queensland going to a conference with De Valera and other enemies of the British Empire. I believe he also attended other conferences on behalf of Queensland, where other enemies of the Empire were present, and no objection was taken by hon. gentlemen. That had some effect upon the stability of the finances. We cannot forget those things, and also other delegations which went to Perth prepared to betray Queensland and Australia. Does it not dawn on hon. gentlemen that those things are known on the other side? We know those things have had an effect upon the financial position of Queensland. It is not remarkable we have reached a stage where the Government have been practically compelled to capitulate. My opinion is that the Government are going to the country in the hope that they will not come back into office. They know perfectly well they are facing a position for which they have been entirely responsible, and they are anxious to let some other Government make the attempt to set matters right because of their inability to do it. Members on this side of the House will do their duty irrespective of what the consequences might be, and in the best interests of the State. Whether the delegation went to England or not does not alter the case one iota. The fact remains that Queensland's credit has gone, and the financiers overseas no longer have any confidence in this particular Government. We cannot deny the fact that Queensland is in a very parlous condition. With a war debt of £400,000,000, in addition to the State obligations, the people have a millstone round their necks. If hon. gentlemen get a further lease of office they will place a greater millstone round the necks of the people. I have here a rather interesting little document, published in 1915, which refers to the Sinking Fund to meet maturing loans. On page 23 it says—

“How necessary such a provision is will be manifest when it is stated that the indebtedness of Queensland is £44,260,000, with an annual interest charge of £1,635,000.”

Then it goes on to point out—

“To wipe out that enormous debt absolutely nothing is being done.”

A little bit further on it says—

“In other words, most of our loans have been converted to pay interest on previous loans, and we are paying in Australia nearly nine millions a year in the form of interest on loans of money we have never actually had. The Labour party demands that this state of affairs shall cease.”

In 1911 it was the good administration of the much-maligned Denham Government which made provision for renewing £11,728,000 at $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. This particular Government, when they came into power, had no obligations to meet until 1922. Had it not been for the foresight of the Denham Government, the Queensland Government would have got their answer from the London market at a

much earlier date. Imagine, if you can, what the position of Queensland [1 a.m.] would have been had they been placed in a similar position to that of South Australia. Despite the fact that the Government had a record revenue, they have shown a surplus of only £26,000. They also showed a surplus in 1915-16 of £34,000, but when we had the Auditor-General's report we found that there was actually a deficit of £100,000. The Government, for electioneering purposes, has once again announced a surplus, but that has been faked also.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in order in using those terms.

Mr. SIZER: Then, I say it is exactly on a par with the 1915-1916 surplus, and we shall find, when the Auditor-General's report comes to hand, that there should have been a deficit shown. To say that the Government have not been indulging in some high finance would be idle, in view of the fact that we see that in July of this year the revenue increased by £45,925, and that the expenditure for the same period increased by £132,360. What happened in July to cause that immense increase in the expenditure? I suggest that accounts that should have been paid in June were held over until July.

The ACTING PREMIER: Quite wrong.

Mr. SIZER: I suggest that the hon. gentleman should give us some information on these matters. Even if the Government did not hold accounts over, it shows that we are going “from bad to worse” every day, and on these figures alone the Government stand condemned, and I am certain that the electors will put the proper interpretation on the financial administration of the Government. It has been proved beyond all shadow of doubt that, whatever the Government may say in regard to humanitarian legislation, they stand condemned on the question of finance. It is obvious to anyone that the surplus is only a fictitious one; and if we had to find the money which is supposed to be at credit, we would be in a very serious position. Since 1914, when the Government took over the administration, the very thing that they deplored has been brought about. The amount of the loan indebtedness has increased alarmingly. From that date till 1915, the loan indebtedness was increased from £44,000,000 to £56,859,046, and the interest bill amounted to £2,166,678. In 1919, with the Government still in office, the loan indebtedness had advanced to £65,581,121, and the interest bill had increased to £2,633,310; while in 1920 the public debt had increased to £70,000,000. Since the present Government have been in power the public debt has been increased by something like £30,000,000, and it is obvious to everyone that the Government have failed lamentably. The Government is practically bankrupt, and yet they have the audacity to put forward a programme which would cost millions of pounds to put into operation. They are attempting to again delude the people by putting on the programme Bills that they know will never be put into operation, and which would cost millions if put into operation. I would give the Government credit if they had admitted to the people that they were unable to carry on any longer, and if they informed the people that if they received

Mr. Sizer.]

a further mandate to carry on they must increase the taxation. And in this connection I would remind the Government that we have passed the limit of taxation to the best interests of the State, and that we are about reaching the limit of taxation that can be borne by the State. If they were honest, they would tell the people that if they are returned they must impose further taxation to carry out their programme. Even if they are returned with a bigger majority than they have to-day, it will not release the money in London. The Government should be honest, and tell the people that even if they are returned they will not be able to get money, except by extorting it from the people of the State; and if they tell them that, I have no fear what the answer will be. Let hon. members tell us how they propose to finance their programme. Do they propose to raise money which with charges may cost 8 per cent., and put it into railways returning 13s. 4d. per cent., or a little over $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.?

Mr. GLEDSON: They should have stopped the Terror's Creek railway.

Mr. SIZER: It is quite evident that the Government have crumbled to pieces on the financial question, and are endeavouring to seek whatever refuge they can. The Ministers, feeling that they themselves are safe, believing that they are certain to be returned to sit in Opposition and condemn a Government for trying to rectify the position into which they have got the State, whilst their less fortunate followers are defeated, seem not to care. The position the Government, with their enterprises and so on, have got the State into is alarming.

The HOME SECRETARY: Are you alarmed?

Mr. SIZER: If the hon. member, after looking the position honestly in the face, is not alarmed, then he is not fit to be a responsible Minister. We know that the coming year is going to be one of the worst we have ever experienced, that prices will soar still higher, and that money will be still dearer.

It is about time we had some definite results of the operations of the State trawler. We hear day after day that it is still exploring. The State is losing hundreds of pounds a month, including the losses of nets, and I have information—which I have no reason to doubt—to the effect that their hauls are so poor that they are compelled to put the crew to fishing with hand lines. I am quite prepared to support industries so long as they pay their way, but so soon as they become unprofitable ventures it is time the Government got out of them. Hon. members have referred to a speech of the hon. member for Logan, and said that one justification is that the fishermen get better prices. We know that at Easter time the Government increased the price to the consumers pretty considerably, but did not increase the price to the fishermen; and when heavy catches of mullet were being made fish was being condemned and dumped which was hardly dead—some of which was alive—so much so that they are threatened with litigation—for the simple reason that the market was glutted.

Mr. POLLOCK: You want to spend a week on the trawler and you would know what you are talking about.

Mr. SIZER: The hon. member should be there all the time, and then he would understand. Fortunately my information comes

[Mr. Sizer.

from somebody who is there all the time. Electors of mine have made heavy catches of mullet in the Pine River, and have been treated as I have said. I would be quite prepared to stand or fall by the answer of the fishermen. On that issue I would be in power to-morrow.

In the face of these facts, is it any wonder that the information has got overseas? Any individuals who would lend money to a Government whose record is such as that of the present Government, whose handling of the finances has been such as theirs, should consult a mental specialist.

Mr. GLEDSON: You think Queensland should not get money?

Mr. SIZER: I say that this Government should not get money. Queensland will get plenty of money when it gets better government, and probably it will be in the best interests of the State if this Government do not get money and they make way for a Government who will handle the finances wisely and well.

Mr. GLEDSON: If it repeals legislation.

Mr. SIZER: If hon. members are not going to retrench, they must be prepared evidently to throw the country into an election and to risk the chance of coming back into power by some mere accident.

The ACTING PREMIER: In rising to speak on this motion I cannot help referring to the lack of argument or the total absence of knowledge of present-day finance which has characterised the debate from the other side. At a time when we are approaching an election—of course, as everyone knows, an election is coming; that was announced in the Governor's Speech—there should be running in our minds some consideration of the important matters in which we are concerned. We should show some little attention and capacity; but during the afternoon, since half-past 3 o'clock till now, I have sat on the bench here and have heard nothing but captious criticism, more or less petulant observation, and mere peevishness which is quite absent, as a rule, from debates here.

Mr. VOWLES: And irrelevant interjections from the Acting Premier.

The ACTING PREMIER: Only to help the two leaders, and I have endeavoured to help the two deputy leaders and the whips, and the remainder of the party that comprises all officers and no soldiers. (Laughter.) At any rate, it appears that there is some complaint about the extravagance of the Government. We are always hearing complaints about the extravagance of the Labour Government. I well remember Mr. Cook, now Sir Joseph Cook, securing a double dissolution and going to the country with such a cry, and that also at the previous election, when Mr. Fisher went to the country, the cry was bad Labour finance. Mr. Hughes then was defending Labour finance all the time. Our opponents are generally bankrupt of intelligence, and our security lies in the safe sterility of the Opposition and the intellects of the Opposition. They always resort to a criticism of finance in their extremity. Now Mr. Hughes is the big financier and we are the bad financiers. We find Mr. Hughes lavish, extravagant. Money is coming in easily from the Customs, but—although we are told we cannot get money—Mr. Hughes cannot cash bonds for soldiers that our Government cash.

Mr. VOWLES interjected.

The ACTING PREMIER: That is absolutely untrue.

Mr. VOWLES: I said, "Have you cashed one yet?"

The ACTING PREMIER: I thought you said we had not. Mr. Hughes would not, and could not, cash those bonds, and there are only two Governments—Labour Governments—that are cashing them in Australia, for their own employees—the Queensland Government and the New South Wales Government.

Mr. SIZER: When are you going to cash them?

The ACTING PREMIER: We will cash them without dictation from the hon. member for Nundah, who has now risen to the position of whip, or dictation from the Imperial League, just as the Government honour any undertaking—not obligation.

Mr. VOWLES: Would you pay full face value or part of it?

The ACTING PREMIER: We would pay full face value. Public service soldiers made certain representations to the Government, and the Government were in a position to agree entirely with the request made. Nothing more could be asked, and it is sufficient [1.30 a.m.] that all of our soldier employees are satisfied, unless someone wants to compel them to go further. We have always the question of finance brought up when no other argument is left, and the Government is accused of being reckless in financial matters. One would imagine that during the last four years we have spent an unusual amount of loan money. Everyone admits that the loan expenditure of the different States has increased enormously during the war period, on account of the increased cost of material and the huge increase in wages. As a matter of fact, the Federal Government, in connection with the unification of gauges, reckoned that what would have cost them £12,000,000 in 1913 would to-day cost them £24,000,000. I took the trouble to pick out the figures with regard to the Denham Government's borrowing for the last four years. I find that they spent £10,600,000, while we during the last four years spent £11,620,000, a mere million difference, although the cost of material and wages had gone up all the time. Yet we are accused of extravagance. Their last four years is equal approximately to our last four years.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: There is one difference—we paid our way, and you are not doing so.

The ACTING PREMIER: The hon. member for Bulimba, ex-Treasurer and Heaven-born financier, paid his way by taking off the increase to pupil-teachers in the Education Department in receipt of £60 a year. This Government paid the automatic increases which the late Denham Government refused to pay these young fellows; not merely men at £60 a year, but £70, £80, £90, and £100 a year. They talk about their obligations! That reminds me that the leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for Dalby, was talking about honest government.

Mr. VOWLES: I was not talking about your Government.

The ACTING PREMIER: No, honest government; the history of alleged honest Governments whose honesty stunk in the nostrils of the people in the past. You can take the bank scandals in 1893, where

every politician on the Tory side was up to his neck in the bribery and corruption that surrounded the whole business. We talk about repudiation! Hon. members opposite have repudiated to-night the men that they sent home.

Mr. VOWLES: If we sent them home, how can they be responsible?

The ACTING PREMIER: I say that you could send home irresponsibles. They are being repudiated to-night. Every Opposition speaker has disowned this precious delegation. Sir Robert Philp was repudiated in Queensland some time before. He was turned out of his own electorate.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I hope you will have as good a record as he has.

The ACTING PREMIER: The hon. member for Bulimba talks with what I might call his pious intonations. It is like the honesty of the pirate who would cut a throat or scuttle a ship. He would praise Sir Robert Philp; but Messrs. Philp, Cowley, and Walsh stand repudiated by the electors who turned them down. The House would not tolerate Sir Robert Philp as Premier. Sir Alfred Cowley was Speaker and Minister, and was kicked out. Mr. Theodore took Sir Robert Philp's place as Premier. They are repudiated to-night, and repudiation appears, for the nonce, to be the gospel of the Opposition. They are repudiating their old friends, and turning them down. To look for honesty in politics one must go back to 1893, when you find that all the banks repudiated their obligations.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: They subsequently paid.

The ACTING PREMIER: The hon. gentleman who is interjecting, and who leads a remnant here, was Minister in a Government which introduced legislation exactly on the lines of the legislation introduced by us in regard to pastoral leases. Mr. Denham there laid down definitely what was a fair thing. He said—

"The Bill removes all trammels when re-assessing. . . . This Bill free of all trammels must not leave the court in doubt as to the basis of reassessment at the expiration of the term of ten years. With good seasons we may naturally expect a marked increase in our rentals. I ask hon. members to note that the independence of the court will be preserved."

That was left to the court—the fair judgment of the tribunal itself. No Bill comes down to this House unless it is approved of by the Ministry. Each individual Cabinet Minister is as much responsible as the Premier. No Bill comes down here without the full sanction of the Cabinet.

Mr. VOWLES: Did you approve of the amendment of the Liquor Act?

The ACTING PREMIER: What amendment?

Mr. VOWLES: Last session.

The ACTING PREMIER: There has been nothing in the House, while I have been a Minister, that has come down here for legislative purposes that I have not agreed with; there is not a measure that I would not take full responsibility for; and that is why we should have some explanation from the hon. member for Bulimba, leading what he calls the Nationalist party, and sneaking in behind the skirts of paltry excuse. He was in the Government which brought down the Bill,

Hon. J. A. Fihelly.]

and which he now declares was repudiation. Mr. Denham said—

“I apprehend that the question of repudiation may come up, and I wish to say there is nothing in the nature of repudiation in this Bill.”

Hon. members opposite have repudiated Sir Robert Philp and Sir Alfred Cowley. Mr. Denham, when the hon. member for Bulimba was a Minister, mentioned repudiation, but declared that it was not repudiation, but giving back to the people the rights which had been filched from them. If anything wrong is done, it is the right of another Parliament to remedy the wrong. If a Parliament is deceived or bribed, and does the wrong thing, the incoming Parliament must do the right thing and remedy the evil. He said—

“Here I may refer to the remarks made by Sir Samuel Griffith, who was Premier in 1884, when the question of repudiation was raised by the leader of the Opposition in regard to the position which the pastoral lessees held under the 1869 Act.”

In “Hansard,” volume 43, page 793, it will be found that Sir Samuel Griffith said—

“If it was a repudiation of a right the conduct of the Government was wrong; but they believed implicitly that there was no right of the kind, and that instead of repudiation of the right of an individual it was a deliberate assertion of the right of the country as against the unfounded claim lately put forward by every pastoral lessee in the country—that he was entitled to make freehold of, on an average, one-sixth of his estate. Believing that, he maintained that they were bound to take the course they were doing.”

Mr. Denham proceeded—

“That great authority adhered to the principle that repudiation was wrong. But under certain circumstances Parliament asserts that every contract may be varied if necessary in the public interest—(Hear, hear!)—always avoiding as far as possible injustice to the individual.”

Mr. Denham quoted that. He said that great authority adhered to the principle that repudiation was wrong. Mr. Denham, fully recognising that there was no repudiation, introduced the precise Bill that we made law.

Mr. Vowles: You said precisely the same thing, and it is not.

The ACTING PREMIER: It is precisely the same principle. What is now called repudiation was a part of that Bill in all its piety or wickedness. Mr. Denham, anticipating the argument of repudiation, then proceeded to quote reports from the Under Secretary for Lands and gave further statistics. He then said—

“I say it is not a fair thing at all, and I quote this to show that an arbitrary restriction of 50 per cent. is unsatisfactory. . . . There is no gainsaying the fact that, except for the liability of resumptions, pastoral lessees have better tenure than the grazing farmers—that is, longer term of years and much lower rents.

“ . . . I will say I am trying to remove a great anomaly. If hon. members will look at schedule 2 they will see the anomalies that exist, and those

anomalies can only be corrected by an honest and independent tribunal upon the merits of the case, and not upon the fortuitous circumstances that have happened or arbitrary limitation. The Land Court themselves speak about ordinary terms and ordinary conditions. I again quote the words of Sir Samuel Waiker Griffith—

Instead of repudiating the rights of the individual, it is a deliberate assertion of the rights of the country.”

I want to draw attention to the sham arguments of the Opposition. Sir Robert Philp and other pastoralists deputationised Mr. Denham between the second reading and the next stage of the Bill. The hon. member for Bulimba was a colleague in Mr. Denham's Ministry. The result was that the clause was not gone on with; it was deleted. They were bribed or threatened at the time; that is evident. Mr. Denham made that argument. There is his argument, and there is the fact that he permitted the clause to be deleted. We have gone on with it. We will not bow to the threat of the pastoralists, even if they subscribe £4,000 in a room, and have a promise of £10,000 more to send home Philp, Cowley, and Walsh. They may do that, but we will not allow them to interfere with the public powers of the State.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The ACTING PREMIER: When I was in England I had the privilege of talking to a gentleman who is concerned in the underwriting of different Australian loans, and he told me at the time that it would be difficult to get loans if we introduced and passed radical legislation, opposed to the interests of the insurance companies. I have a cable from Mr. Theodore, which reads—

“On my arrival in England I found that gross misrepresentations of the bona fides and motives of the Queensland Government have been diligently propagated in the London Press and amongst the financial interests there by the political opponents of the Government. The propaganda succeeded in creating an intense feeling of hostility towards Queensland, and alarmed many people who usually invest money in this State. Situation was made infinitely worse by the arrival from Queensland of the Philp delegation, whose surreptitious interviews and meetings with the Bankers' Company, representatives, investors, and brokers of London created a woeful atmosphere with regard to finances and stability of constitutional government in Queensland. Following the arrival of the delegation, Queensland stocks depreciated in value, and one broker informed me that the most alarming rumours were current amongst holders of our securities. The financial advisers of the Government also informed me that in existing circumstances any attempt to issue loan would be inadvisable, as we could not hope to raise money except at ruinous rate while the apprehensiveness continued in the public mind. I had numerous conferences with representatives of the companies financially interested in Queensland, and also met committee, London Stock Exchange. At these conferences I was given to understand financiers could not assist Queensland loan unless Government would agree to drastically modify its policy generally,

[Hon. J. A. Fihelly.

and would specifically (1) withdraw Pastoral Rents Act unconditionally; (2) abandon Unemployed Workers Bill; (3) modify recent Tramway Act to suit Brisbane Tramway Company; and (4) modify Insurance legislation and amend provisions of Succession Duties Act to meet wishes of English companies. In these negotiations I took up attitude that whilst I was willing to hear grievances of persons in England who thought they were adversely affected by Queensland legislation, I could not allow London financiers to dictate to the Government what political programme should be adopted in Queensland."

The delegation was doing their work; they were paid to go there. The members who subscribed £4,000 in the room in half an hour to send these precious gentlemen home would not donate a bursary to the University or a cot to the hospital. It is an investment with them. It is like what it was with the insurance companies here when we introduced our legislation. Fifty companies carried unanimously a resolution—

"That this meeting of Queensland representatives of insurance companies very strongly urges, in view of the serious and acute political situation in the State, that insurance companies should combine to subscribe a substantial sum to the Queensland branch of the Queensland National Union, with the object of such funds being utilised in propaganda work towards securing a change of Government, which must considerably benefit insurance companies generally."

Mr. NEWLES: Are not they entitled to look after their own interests?

The ACTING PREMIER: Are they entitled to subscribe funds to put out a Government that looks after the people—our Government, which reduced fire insurance rate by 35 per cent., doubled workers' compensation payments and reduced the charges to the premium payers—the employers? Are they justified in subscribing funds to defeat us, not for the benefit of Queensland, but for the benefit of themselves? That resolution which I read appears in 1917 "Hamard." After that they threatened us in regard to the tramways. Mr. Theodore proceeds—

"Following the arrival of the delegation, Queensland stocks depreciated in value."

Following the arrival of those men who have made money out of Queensland, amassed fortunes; these men whose wool has doubled in value during the war, whose clip this year is less than the clip of 1914-15. For the clip of 1914-15 they did not get £40,000,000. To-day they get £200,000,000. For the 1911 clip they got £22,000,000—a much bigger clip than this year's. Their beef is two and a-half times the price to-day as compared with the pre-war price. These beef and wool people, who have amassed fortunes, have gone there to endeavour to cripple us. You might find a neophyte like the hon. member for Nundah who does not understand these matters. He has not been here long enough, and I do not blame him. Everyone knows that a country like Queensland, with an area of approximately 700,000 square miles and one person to the square mile, must have money for developmental works. We have been accustomed to borrowing and we cannot cease

in a moment from that policy; it is impossible. What an extraordinary thing it is! We find men who have made money out of us through immoral deals with Parliament—because the pastoral influence here has all the time been against the public interest; it has always operated against the interests of the people—have gone home to damn and decry us. They do not intend to help in developmental works. As the Speech says, they have not displayed initiative, enterprise, or unusual business acumen. They have simply sat back while the wool grew.

Mr. PAYNE: None of them are pioneers.

The ACTING PREMIER: As the hon. member for Mitchell says, none of them are pioneers. The Jowetts, the Philips, and those associated in pastoral affairs with the Philips, like the Forsyths, are not pioneers.

Mr. PAYNE: They squeezed the old pioneers out.

The ACTING PREMIER: Mr. Theodore says—

"Following the arrival of this delegation, the Queensland stocks depreciated. The financial advisers of the Government also informed me that in existing circumstances any attempt to issue loans would be inadvisable; we cannot hope to raise money except at a ruinous rate while the apprehensiveness continued in the public mind. I had numerous conferences with the representatives of the companies having interests in Queensland, and also met the London Stock Exchange. At these I was given to understand the financiers could not assist Queensland loans unless the Government would agree to drastically modify its policy generally and would specifically (1) withdraw Pastoral Rents Act; (2) abandon Unemployed Workers Bill; (3) modify present Tramways Act to suit Tramways Company; (4) modify Insurance legislation; (5) amend provisions of Succession and Probate Duties Act to meet wishes of English companies."

That, I think, will do to-night to go on with. In the ordinary course of business while in England I found it necessary to have several consultations with the gentleman who does our underwriting. He was not, at that time, bothered so much about the pastoralists. He was not greatly worried about the tramways, although the big shareholders in England were associated with shipping companies and they had some influence upon him. He did not care much about these two businesses, although the controllers were noisy, and the tramway people were also mixed up with the shipping people, and that meant that extra influence would always be brought to bear. But he was greatly concerned about the insurance men—not so much with Queensland, because we have established our monopoly in workers' compensation, which gave double benefits at reduced cost to the employer at a smaller cost on the industry—but he was concerned for fear the other States, noting our wonderful success, might adopt our policy in regard to insurance.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: And they are.

The ACTING PREMIER: Of course, they are taking it up; that is inevitable; it will be in full force before very long. Still, Mr. Theodore's cable bears out my experience there, excepting that the position has been accentuated by the disloyal conduct of these three wealthy people. I will leave London and matters concerning the Philp-Cowley

Hon. J. A. Fihelly.]

delegation to the people who have sent them there; because the Opposition sent them there. The Nationalist party or the primary producers sent those people to England and now repudiate them. I will leave them for the time being, with this slight addendum—the Government of Queensland could not tolerate such dictation; we could not be told here what to pass, and what not to pass; we could not be told to do this and not to do that; we could not be in the position of introducing a Bill—like the Ministry to which the hon. member for Bulimba belonged—and then withdrawing that Bill at the behest of those who had the money. We would not think ourselves justified in holding down the seats on the Treasury benches if we were going to be dictated to by outside money influences. We could not stand for that sort of thing. It would be wicked. The time will come very shortly—we shall not be long—when this will be taken outside, and the constituencies will tell us what they think about it—whether we can be governed from London, as well as financed from London. Understand, there has been no great patriotism about the loans we have got here. They have been investments, and investments only. We have never yet failed to pay the interest on those investments. There is no favour in it. I do not abuse any person from whom we borrow, but I certainly would not have my domestic affairs controlled by the person of whom I borrow. We cannot tolerate dictation of that sort. The hon. member for Oxley said we proposed to borrow £9,000,000 to spend in one year. That is ridiculous. The programme was for a period of from two and a-half to three years. We will not have even the £9,000,000 on terms that would subvert our constitutional powers.

Mr. VOWLES: You said you were going back to the London market after the election.

The ACTING PREMIER: That, again, is not quite correct, although it might turn out to be correct. The Speech says, "We will not float a loan there without consulting the electors." We do not say we are going back to London after the elections or that we are not going back to London.

Mr. VOWLES: Where are you going to get the money, then? Why not go now?

The ACTING PREMIER: It might be a good thing if the leader of the Opposition awaited the return of the Premier. He will be able to tell him in a more detailed way, and probably in a more instructive way, what our proposals are and what our intentions are. Afterwards, when we come back here, if the leader of the Opposition is still here, we will be able to tell him further how we will get on. A lot has been said about reckless finance, among others, by the hon. member for Bulimba. I was not certain during his speech which was the more important—the finances of the State or the Bulimba roll. I had to conclude that with his vivid imagination, his vision, and his constructive ability the Bulimba roll ranks as the most important thing. On the matter of deficits, however, I would remind the hon. member that last year the Fuller-Holman Government in New South Wales had a deficit of £1,559,000. The Premier of New South Wales (Mr. Storey) told me he had no loan money, but in addition there was an overdraft of £2,000,000. That

was the legacy left by the Nationalist Government in New South Wales. They had an enormous increase in revenue—almost 33 per cent.—a revenue almost equal to the combined revenues of Victoria, Queensland, and South Australia. In Liberal Western Australia—from the population standpoint a comparatively small State—they had a deficit of £653,000.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: They paid some of that into a sinking fund.

The ACTING PREMIER: If we deduct what they paid into the sinking fund, it leaves a deficit of £600,000. Under the same circumstances, we could run a sinking fund very well. In 1918-1919 they had a deficit of £652,000; and in the year previous to that, £700,000. If they continued having a sufficient number of deficits, the sinking fund would be such a big venture that they might have a surplus. You find no other State at all, outside of Victoria, having a surplus. Queensland has a surplus, and Queensland is the only one which was Labour until quite recently. Mr. Storey, in New South Wales, merely came in to "carry the baby," to get the full burden of the deficit, and look after the overdraft of £2,000,000.

We are accused of extravagance in other ways. I have pointed out that all materials for which loan money is used has doubled in cost, and wages have doubled, and yet we only used for the last four years what the previous Government used in the same time. In normal times they used well over

[2 a.m.] £10,000,000, and in these abnormal times we merely used just about £11,000,000 and nothing more. Where is the extravagance there? In matters of revenue expenditure, I find we spent £359,000 more this year than the Government of which Mr. Denham was the head spent in 1914-15—just on aboriginals, Dunwich, hospitals, insanity, outdoor relief, police superannuation, and State children. We spent on those items approximately £400,000 more. There is nothing there that you could cut down.

Mr. VOWLES: That is only because of the increase in the cost of living.

The ACTING PREMIER: That is what I am arguing, but you won't allow for that. Take education. When the Liberal Government was in power in 1914-15 they spent in the neighbourhood of £500,000 on education, while we are spending £1,000,000. We are spending exactly 100 per cent. more.

Mr. SIZER: Take the relative value of the purchasing price of the sovereign now.

The ACTING PREMIER: That is what I am telling you. I told you that during the four last years of the Denham Government they spent £10,000,000 in loan money, and we are accused of extravagance because during the last four years we spent only £11,000,000. Take the purchasing power of the sovereign and apply it there. On this matter of education, would you cut down the vote? I do not think anyone has the temerity to suggest that we are spending too much this year. There will be over £1,000,000 on the Estimates for this year, and the Liberal Government's last year's expenditure was in the neighbourhood of £500,000. I do not propose to keep the House any longer on this matter.

Mr. MORGAN: And yet we only drew taxation to the extent of £1 8s. 2d. per head.

The ACTING PREMIER: Perhaps I might add a word on taxation. In the matter

[Hon. J. A. Fihelly.]

of taxation I can say that last session an amendment on the Income Tax Bill was circulated in this House in the name of Mr. Spencer, member for Maranoa, which provided for a poll tax. These are the days of a basic living wage, and the days also when the man who has a family will have to have his wages supplemented by a sum of money for each member of the family under a certain age, and there must be a maximum or minimum whereby the man who is merely earning a living cannot be taxed; but, hon. members introduced, in the name of Mr. Spencer, a poll tax provision. The hon. member had enough decency to get up and repudiate it, and said he did not know who it was, but someone on his side had put his name to the amendment.

Mr. MORGAN: Was that amendment moved?

The ACTING PREMIER: Of course, it was not moved. Are you in favour of it?

Mr. VOWLES: Is it in the Federal Act?

The ACTING PREMIER: It is in the Federal Act. Do you want it in our Act?

Mr. VOWLES: You are only fishing and cannot get any bites. That is the trouble.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: They are the "stinking fish party."

The ACTING PREMIER: That is a very appropriate name, because I could not imagine anything more stinking than their stinking-fish policy. They have sent a delegation home to take away and destroy our credit. That reminds me of the remarks of a patriot who said in regard to a certain individual who was traitorous to his country that if he did another thing or said another word he would hang him as high as Haman, and that would be the proper thing to do to those people if we had a democracy that understood what real disloyalty was. I say we did tax the people who were able to pay taxation. We preferred to tax the rich sooner than rob the poor. That is a truism. The people who to-day are on the bread line do not pay taxation, and they should not be asked to do so, but the wealthy people should pay taxation.

At ten minutes after 2 o'clock a.m.,

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

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I beg to move—

"That the hon. member be granted an extension of time."

Question put and passed.

Mr. MORGAN: In spite of the fact that you objected to a member of the Opposition getting an extension.

The ACTING PREMIER: I was sitting down when the hon. member asked me a question about taxation. What the hon. member for Murrumbidgee is thinking about is that, instead of allowing a lot of material to get into "Hansard" without being read, I preferred that the hon. member should read it. No member was refused an extension of time. There were 529 persons in 1918 whose incomes exceeded £3,000—an average of £7,400 per man, and they appropriated more surplus income—namely, £4,000,000—than the whole body of 170,000 employees who are 720 times as numerous as those 529 people. The income of these 529 people was such that they were able to pay more taxation than the whole of the other taxpayers other than the companies. I say it is only equitable that they should pay for the protection they

get. As a matter of fact, during the war the allies were coming out for wool and beef and other products, and we cheerfully charged them double the prices they were paying before the war, and they supplied the shipping.

Mr. MORGAN: That is absolutely untrue. We supplied meat cheaper than they were getting it before the war.

The ACTING PREMIER: The next thing I will hear is that we supplied wool cheaper, or that we supplied butter and cheese cheaper.

Mr. MORGAN: No country in the world supplied meat cheaper.

The ACTING PREMIER: No country in the world did so well out of the war as the squatters and graziers of Queensland. I could pick up "Hansard" for August, 1914, and show where Mr. Booker, then member for Wide Bay, agreed to accept under 36s. per 100 lb. for his beef, and he said every grazer at the Exhibition was agreeable to the proposal; and not six months after they were getting double that price. There has been no real criticism of the Government during this debate, but there have been a few electioneering speeches, some of them of no account.

Mr. MORGAN: We could keep going all night; only it is a farce.

The ACTING PREMIER: I have no objection. Shortly you will be informed when the Premier arrives that you will meet your masters, and you can appeal to them and argue with them.

Question put and passed.

OPENING OF COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Smith, Mackay, in the chair.)

The ACTING PREMIER moved—

"That there be granted to His Majesty on account, for the service of the year 1920-1921, a further sum not exceeding £3,300,000 towards defraying the expenses of the various departments and services of the State."

Mr. MORGAN: Only £3,000,000 odd passed in a few hours.

The ACTING PREMIER: I have known Governments with whom the hon. member has been associated to pass the whole of the Estimates in an hour. I need not apologise to the Committee for asking for £3,300,000 in nine hours, because the circumstances are unique. A delegation has been sent by hon. members opposite to England who have endeavoured to hamper Queensland's development, and who have also endeavoured to interfere with Queensland's legislation, and the Government is in the position that it has asked His Excellency to grant a dissolution, and, in the meantime, while awaiting an appeal to the electors to test public opinion as to whether we are to be dictated to, we are asking for Supply pending the Premier's return. It is the first Appropriation Bill of the session, and it is based precisely on the estimated expenditure for each month of last year. There is no variation and no alteration. It was estimated as the appropriations were made last year, and pretty well as the expenditure was.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I desire to know how long this amount of money is supposed to carry us, and I also want to ascertain what is the position of the Loan Fund, or the position at the 31st July or 30th June. The hon. member was evidently not anxious

Hon. W. H. Barnes.]

to let the public know what the public balances are.

The ACTING PREMIER: They are published every month.

HON. W. H. BARNES: They were not ready when I applied for them.

The ACTING PREMIER: You will get them afterwards.

HON. W. H. BARNES: We want the information now.

The ACTING PREMIER, in reply, said: Naturally, as an ex-Treasurer, the hon. member has a pardonable desire to prove that he is a student of financial matters. The amount asked for will carry us on at least three months I should say, or thereabouts. That is not a matter of great importance. The hon. member can divide last year's expenditure by twelve, and then divide this sum by the quotient, and he will find out.

HON. W. H. BARNES: What is the state of the Loan Fund?

The ACTING PREMIER: Very healthy.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Before we go further, it is only right to ascertain what is the position of the Loan Fund. In the course of my earlier remarks I pointed out that it was necessary to get £1,000,000 from the Commissioner of the Savings Bank, or there would have been a deficiency.

The ACTING PREMIER: Oh, no! You made similar rash statements last year.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Auditor-General drew attention to it in his report. I want to know whether there was a credit, of, say, £200,000 at the end of June. The public are under the impression that there was very little indeed.

The ACTING PREMIER: The hon. member, from his Treasury experience, will know that the balances are published monthly, but it might relieve his mind a good deal if I informed him that at the end of July we probably had about £600,000 owing to us by the Commonwealth—not quite £600,000, about £500,000. We had about the same in cash, and a sum in London.

Mr. MORGAN interjected with reference to gratuity bonds.

The ACTING PREMIER: That is where the hon. member is quite wrong. There are only two Governments—Labour Governments—that are cashing them. All the Liberal, Tory, Nationalist, N.D.C. Governments are not cashing them. The Queensland Government merely accepted the proposal put to them by the public service employees in assembly together. Their proposals met with immediate approval from the State Government, and what they were asking they are getting, but there is no obligation to redeem the bonds.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution, which was agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS.

COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Smith, Mackay, in the chair.)

The ACTING PREMIER moved—

“(b) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty on account, for the service of the year 1920-1921, a further sum not exceeding £1,900,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.

[Hon. W. H. Barnes.

“(b) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty on account, for the service of the year 1920-1921, a further sum not exceeding £700,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

“(c) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty on account, for the service of the year 1920-1921, a further sum not exceeding £700,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.”

HON. W. H. BARNES: I would like to ask the Treasurer how long he expects the loan money to carry him, and whether it includes the expenditure for August. I understood the hon. member to say that there was a credit of about £1,000,000. If the £700,000 appropriated here from Loan Fund includes August, it is apparent that it will be gone by the end of October, and there will be a balance of only £300,000. I would like to ask also where he expects to get further loan funds and how some of these works to which he has made reference are going to be financed. Is the Savings Bank Commissioner lending further moneys to the Treasury? Can he tell us when he expects to get further loan money and where, because the position of the Government is so unfortunate that nobody will trust them? We would like to know where this Government, who once said they would not borrow a penny, are going to get money.

The ACTING PREMIER: The hon. member for Bulimba must recollect that £2,000,000 has to be paid each year as interest on money borrowed by past Governments. He will understand that we could not carry on Government works [2.30 a.m.] without some loan policy. With regard to the Savings Bank, I would state, in all seriousness, to the hon. member, that any hint that might be levelled at the solvency of the bank is rather unfair in Parliament.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I have not suggested that.

The ACTING PREMIER: If the hon. member would come to me to-morrow, I would not have the slightest objection to giving him any information.

HON. W. H. BARNES: No; I went once for information, and you turned me down, and you instructed your Under Secretary to turn me down.

The ACTING PREMIER: I say that is not correct.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I say it is correct.

The ACTING PREMIER: As it is a delicate matter, it is a pity to have it brought up here, but it may relieve the hon. gentleman's mind when I assure him that the Savings Bank was never more solvent.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I never said that it was not.

The ACTING PREMIER: I have signed an agreement between the State and the Commonwealth which will give us if Parliament ratifies it, 70 per cent. of the gross Commonwealth and State deposits in Queensland, and which will eventually do away entirely with a duplication of staff officers and make for efficiency. The bank is so secure—

HON. W. H. BARNES: No one has suggested that the bank is not secure.

The ACTING PREMIER: I accept that. I have given the information. The loan moneys are carrying us along very well, and we can go a great deal further. We are continuing our developmental work, and we hope to continue to do so.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: But you have not answered the question.

The ACTING PREMIER: No; and I do not propose to do so, either.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): From what I can gather, we have got enough loan money to last till October. After that, owing to the position the Government has got the country into, it looks as if there would be a collapse. Evidently, the idea is to have the election before the distress becomes general. The Government will have money to splash with—perhaps to jerry-mander the electorates, and so on, and put navvies on the roll, as they did at the Herbert. I have a cutting here from the Sydney "Bulletin," headed "The Land of the Bottomless Pit of Finance," which describes the position which Queensland was in last year, and evidently we are no better now. Apparently, when the money which is available is spent, there will be a general state of distress throughout Queensland. That is what five or six years of Labour rule has done for Queensland.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): I would like to get some information from the Treasurer, on behalf of the men in Toowoomba, in particular, who have been put off two or three Government works. Men have been put off the proposed workshops in Toowoomba, and there is only a small number employed. Then we have a number of temporary employees on the railway. They are called upon to go up for examination, and with a view to let them down lightly, I suppose, the Government just passes them out. Then we have the unfortunate decision of the Government to retire a number of men at 65. All these men are being put off owing to the shortage of funds. Then we were told that a sum of money would be provided for school buildings. I waited on the late Secretary for Public Instruction on several occasions with regard to the East Toowoomba school. He made a minute on the papers to the effect that the needs of the East Toowoomba school should be one of the first works of the Education Department. The Department stated that they are waiting until they know how much money is available. The Treasurer might give us information as to that, also some assurance that the recommendation of the late Minister for Education that money will be found for this particular school for the convenience of the children, and to enable the staff to handle the children with comfort, will be carried out. Then there are a number of applications from shire and city councils. We might get an assurance that some better facility for meeting the requirements of these local authorities will be given. Probably twelve months hence there will not be the need for public works that there is now, and unless the Government have got sufficient loan money there will be a bad time for the workers. I want to satisfy myself before this vote passes that there is sufficient money available to keep the workers referred to in reasonable employment. We see foreshadowed in the Speech what it was proposed to do for the workers of the State. That Speech is of no advantage at this moment.

The advantage is the amount of money we will have to spend under the Appropriation Bill.

Mr. BRENNAN: I remember the time when we were going in for big works at Willowburn. Unemployed were sent from Brisbane, a strike was organised, and the member for East Toowoomba sent a telegram and did all he could, assisted by the chamber of commerce, the Returned Soldiers' Imperial League, and other kindred associations opposed to Labour, to try to prevent the work being started. Having a reasonable man as Minister for Railways, we were able to continue that work. £1,000 was secured for the Toll Bar road, and the city council put some permanent employees there instead of giving the work to returned soldiers. We have found work for about 150 men. This Government have done more for Queensland than any other Government before, and in the middle of our prosperity and progress our opponents allied themselves with the unholy trinity that went home to defame Queensland and Australia. They are preaching economy on the one hand, and asking for greater expenditure on the other. The Minister for Railways yesterday morning told me these men are going off on long leave, and after that they will be re-employed temporarily in the Railway Department. We want two schools built. Willowburn has been passed, and the papers sent to the Works Department to complete; but owing to lack of loan money that work cannot be gone on with for the time being.

Mr. SIZER: I would like to ask the Acting Premier what are the intentions of the Government with regard to loans to the Water and Sewerage Board?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Shortage of cement is their trouble.

Mr. SIZER: The Board has informed me that they will push on so soon as they get more money from the Government.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I would like to ask if the hon. member has on hand any more Commonwealth money?

The ACTING PREMIER: About £15,000.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I would like to ask further if there is any truth in the report that there is to be a cessation of money in connection with workers' dwellings. I also want to ask what the position is with regard to advances to local authorities.

Mr. SWAYNE: We have heard a great deal about the expenditure required in the South. I would like to ask if there will be sufficient to carry the North Coast Railway on as far as Mackay.

Mr. MORGAN said there were about ninety-two schools in his electorate, about thirty of which had no teachers and about fifteen of them had been condemned

[3 a.m.] fed by the local authorities, and he would like the Minister to state whether any of the amount appropriated would be used for the purpose of putting those schools in good repair.

Mr. SIZER asked whether the Government were asking for sufficient money to carry them over the elections.

The ACTING PREMIER: The "Whip" of the party had spoken twice on the question, first in reference to the Water and Sewerage Board. He might say that the Government had given the board a very handsome allowance for a number of years, and were doing

Hon. J. A. Fihelly.]

their best now. Money was available for the board.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Available for all they want?

The ACTING PREMIER: It was a good thing even not to give the Water and Sewerage Board all they wanted. It was only fair that the rest of the country should get something. The board was very badly off for cement supplies, but the Government had treated them most generously, as they wanted to see the work finished. The hon. member for Bulimba spoke about workers' dwellings. There was no falling away in construction of buildings, and the Government were shortly extending the principle. The local authorities were like the Government, owing to what the delegation to London had done for them. What they got done to them they must do to the local authorities. In the meantime they were not doing badly, as the Government had devised means whereby they were getting ample money. Indeed, they were rather fortunate, because they were getting the money at 5 per cent., when, if they went on the open market, they would have to pay 6 per cent., or perhaps a little more. The hon. member for Mirani mentioned the North Coast Railway. If he understood the hon. member properly he wanted that railway to stop at Mackay. The money to be spent on that railway would be apportioned on the basis that it was being apportioned now. That was to say, construction would be kept going, and due notice would be given before slowing down. The Government had been spending a large amount of money on the North Coast Railway, and at one time when he was Minister for Railways he had seriously contemplated asking his colleagues to cease work for a while, and if possible link up Winton to Longreach. The hon. member for Murilla mentioned schools. He had undertaken to bring that matter under the notice of the Minister.

Mr. FOWLES: You might mention Dalby while you are at it.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: You might also mention North Wymum.

The ACTING PREMIER: I would remind hon. members that we are spending this year £1,000,000 on education, not including the expenditure on school buildings, while in 1914-15 a mere £500,000 was spent. There would be no parsimony in connection with the department.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to certain resolutions which were agreed to by the House.

APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 1.

ALL STAGES.

A Bill, founded on the above resolutions, was introduced and passed through all its stages without debate, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence by message in the usual way.

JOINT COMMITTEES.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt from the Legislative Council of the following message:—

“ Mr. Speaker,—

“ The Legislative Council having come to the following resolutions, viz.:—

“ 1. That the President, Mr. Leahy,

[Hon. J. A. Fihelly.

and Mr. T. L. Jones be appointed members of the Joint Committee for the management of the Parliamentary Library;

“ 2. That the President, Mr. Nevitt, and Mr. Davey be appointed members of the Joint Committee for the management of the Parliamentary Refreshment Rooms;

“ 3. That the President, Mr. Perel, and Mr. Fowles be appointed members of the Joint Committee for the management and superintendence of the Parliamentary Buildings—
beg now to intimate the same to the Legislative Assembly, and to request that they will be pleased to nominate a like number of members from their body, with a view to give effect to the 8th Joint Standing Order.

“ W. F. TAYLOR,

“ Presiding Chairman.

“ Legislative Council Chamber.

“ Brisbane, 19th August, 1920.”

On the motion of the ACTING PREMIER, it was resolved that the following message be returned to the Legislative Council:—

“ Mr. President,—

“ In answer to the Legislative Council's message, dated 19th August, notifying the appointment of certain members to serve on Joint Committees to be appointed under Standing Orders of the two Houses, the Legislative Assembly beg to intimate that they have appointed—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Gunn, and Mr. Dunstan to be members of the Joint Library Committee; Mr. Speaker, Mr. Corser, and Mr. Kirwan to be members of the Joint Committee for the management of the Refreshment Rooms; Mr. Speaker, Mr. Petric, and Mr. Payne to be members of the Joint Committee for the management and superintendence of the Parliamentary Buildings.

“ Legislative Assembly Chamber.

“ Brisbane, 19th August, 1920.”

LIQUOR ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

RETURNED FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt from the Legislative Council of a message returning this Bill without amendment.

At twenty-one minutes past 3 o'clock a.m.,

The SPEAKER: I shall resume the chair when the bells are rung.

The bells were rung at twenty-three minutes to 4 o'clock a.m., and the Speaker resumed the chair.

APPROPRIATION BILL.

RETURNED FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt from the Legislative Council of a message returning this Bill without amendment.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

The ACTING PREMIER: I beg to move—

“ That the House, at its rising, do adjourn till 10th September.”

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at twenty minutes to 4 o'clock a.m.