

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 2 DECEMBER 1920

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

Report of the Royal Commission on Public Works on the proposed branch railway from the Mount Mulligan Railway to Wolfram Camp.

The Immigration Agent's report for the year 1919.

Report of the Marine Department for the year 1919-1920.

QUESTIONS.

FEES PAID TO THE HON. T. J. RYAN.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*) asked the Premier—

“What fees were paid, or are payable, to the Hon. T. J. Ryan in connection with the (a) stock embargo case; (b) Mooraberrie case?”

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

“(a) £841 14s. The accounts for this sum have been passed by the Imperial Government, and the money has been paid out of the Imperial Meat Fund. (b) This case was undertaken on behalf of the Imperial Government, and the question of cost* therefore is one as between that Government and Mr. Ryan. The Imperial Government recognises that position, and it is understood in communication with Mr. Ryan on the matter.”

SUPPLY OF STATUTES TO MEMBERS OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Mr. CORSER asked the Premier—

“1. Is it a fact that the practice of providing newly elected members of the Assembly with a set of Queensland statutes is to be discontinued?”

“2. If so, will he consider the question of reverting to the previous practice of providing sets of volumes?”

“3. Will he also issue instructions that members are to be provided from year to year with bound volumes of new statutes as they are issued?”

The PREMIER replied—

“1. Yes. The edition is almost exhausted, and it would be too costly to print a new edition.

“2. See answer to No. 1.

“3. Sessional Acts are provided for members.”

ADVANCES UNDER CO-OPERATIVE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND ADVANCES TO FARMERS ACT AMENDMENT ACT.

Mr. CORSER asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

“1. When an advance is made under the Co-operative Agricultural Production and Advances to Farmers Act Amendment Act of 1919, is it the practice of his department to take a stock mortgage over the stock or implements the borrowers own, in addition to those purchased with the advance made under the above Act? Is this contrary to the spirit of the Act?”

“2. If not, will he take the necessary action to correct the statement of the Secretary for Railways when electioneering at Gladstone, as published in the ‘Gladstone Observer’ of 21st July last, that the above Act enables the selector

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, 2 DECEMBER, 1920.

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

PAPERS.

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

Annual report of the Department of Agriculture and Stock for the year 1919-1920.

Twentieth annual report of the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations.

[*Hon. E. W. H. Fowles.*

to obtain a loan of £200 on the security of the actual stock purchased, though previously it was necessary to have some other security?"

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

"1 and 2. If the hon. gentleman will read the Act and the regulations thereunder, he will see that the security must be such as the Minister approves of."

AGREEMENT WITH COMMONWEALTH FOR SALE OF SUGAR CROP.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"In the event of the conference provided for in the agreement made with the Commonwealth for the sale of the Queensland sugar crop recommending an amendment of the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act, will there be an opportunity to make such recommendation law in time for it to apply to the next cane crop?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE replied—

"Yes."

FREE RAILWAY PASSES TO PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES.

Mr. SWAYNE asked the Attorney-General—

"1. If Mr. Pease, when contesting the Herbert by-election before he became a member of Parliament, was in possession of a free railway pass?"

"2. Were any of the other candidates, not at the time being members of Parliament, who contested Parliamentary elections during this year in the interests of the Government party, given railway passes or any other privilege not possessed by the general public?"

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J. Mullan, *Flinders*) replied—

"These questions should be addressed to the Secretary for Railways."

PRICES OBTAINED BY FARMERS FOR PRODUCE FROM BRISBANE MERCHANTS.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

"1. Does the buyer obtain farmers' produce from the Brisbane merchants on a fair percentage of profit, according to the Roma Street market reports?"

"2. Will he arrange for an officer of his department to advise the country newspapers daily where such papers are so published, and weekly in other cases, so that the man on the land may have an opportunity of securing the best price for his produce?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE replied—

"1. Inquiries will be made, and I would be glad to be furnished with any information on the subject.

"2. The suggestion is worthy of every consideration."

SUPPLIES OF SUGAR FOR MILLAQUIN REFINERY FROM NORTH QUEENSLAND.

Mr. CATTERMULL (*Musgrave*) asked the Premier—

"1. Has he received any reply from the Prime Minister of Australia regarding his inquiries re the shipping of raw sugar from North to Millaquin Refinery?"

"2. If not, will he take such steps as to ensure a supply of raw sugar to Millaquin Refinery, and so enable that refinery to continue working, and thus give employment to the workers in the Bundaberg district?"

The PREMIER replied—

"1 and 2. The hon. member for Bundaberg has been in continuous communication with the Government regarding the supply of raw sugar for Millaquin Refinery, and, as member for the district affected, will be advised of any information available."

WHEAT CROP—GOVERNMENT GUARANTEE.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*), without notice, asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

"Has his attention been drawn to the report of the interview that the members of the Wheat Board had with him, as reported in the 'Telegraph' of yesterday. The report reads—

'You want to know,' said Mr. Gillies, 'whether it is likely that the Government will be expected to pay anything over and above the guarantee of 8s. per bushel which we gave some time ago. My reply is that, in my opinion, under the present scheme the Government is absolutely relieved of any responsibility for its guarantee of 8s. per bushel. The decision of the recent conference of Premiers to fix 9s. per bushel as the price for fair average quality wheat for the current season has relieved the Queensland Government of any possible liability under its guarantee, the difference of 1s. per bushel being more than sufficient to pay the whole of the expenses of the pool and all other incidental expenses.'"

I feel quite sure—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I ask the question accordingly.

The PREMIER: The Minister for Agriculture happens to be absent from the Chamber just now, but I am sure the hon. member might be reassured in regard to the matter. The Minister informed me last night that what he intended to convey to the members of the Wheat Board—he was not quite accurately reported—was that the Government, although recognising its liability under the guarantee to the farmers, considers that there will be no necessity to make good to the board any cash payments in consequence of the price that has been fixed. There will be no attempt to repudiate the guarantee.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. H. BARNES: The Government still hold to the guarantee?

WELCOME TO HIS EXCELLENCY SIR MATTHEW NATHAN.

The PREMIER: I ask the permission of the House to move a motion without notice.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the Premier be allowed to move a motion without notice?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I move—That the following address be presented to the new Governor, Sir Matthew Nathan, on his arrival in Brisbane:—

“We, the members of the Queensland Legislative Assembly, in cordially welcoming Your Excellency, are confident that Your Excellency’s administration of affairs will be a source of happiness to yourself and benefit to the State, and we take advantage of your arrival amongst us to express, through Your Excellency, our continued loyalty to the Throne and Person of His Majesty the King.”

I think Queensland is to be congratulated on getting as Governor a gentleman of the standing and experience of Sir Matthew Nathan. He has had a long and distinguished career in the public service in various parts of the British Empire. I had the honour and privilege of meeting Sir Matthew Nathan in London during my recent visit to the old country, and I found him a most amiable gentleman, with an extensive knowledge and wide experience of both affairs and men. I am sure that he will soon become acquainted with the problems with which Queensland is faced, and that he will be in cordial and full sympathy with our people. I am certain that we shall have no occasion to regret the appointment of Sir Matthew Nathan as Governor of this State.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I have pleasure in seconding the motion of welcome moved by the Hon. the Premier to Sir Matthew Nathan, who is about to take up his duties as Governor of this State. I am sure that His Excellency’s administration of affairs will be beneficial to the State, and will do credit to His Excellency. I desire to join with the Premier in expressing our confidence in our new Governor, and our continued loyalty to the Throne and Person of His Majesty the King.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): I should like, on behalf of the National party, to say that we most sincerely endorse the sentiments expressed by the Premier, and seconded by the leader of the Opposition. I take it that we all realise that we are on common ground in this matter, and that there is a desire on the part of every member of the House to extend to His Excellency Sir Matthew Nathan a cordial welcome, and wish for him a happy time in this fair State of Queensland.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Question put and passed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. PEASE (*Herbert*): I ask the permission of the House to make a personal explanation.

[*Hon. E. G. Theodore.*

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. member be allowed to make a personal explanation?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. PEASE: I notice that the question set out in the notice-paper by Mr. Swayne, the hon. member for Mirani, contains a reflection on myself, and I desire certainly to repudiate that I would ask this Government, or any other Government, for any concession which was not allowed to anyone else. For the benefit of the small mind of the hon. member for Mirani, I desire to say—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. PEASE: It is such a trivial question. It may ease the hon. member’s burden to know that I paid the whole of my expenses—that is altogether and in the by-election—without any aid from the Government. The expenses were paid by myself and by those men who sent me here to represent them.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CONTROL OF AIR NAVIGATION BILL.

THIRD READING.

On the motion of the PREMIER, this Bill was read a third time and ordered to be forwarded to the Legislative Council, for their concurrence, by message in the usual form.

CHILLAGOE AND ETHERIDGE RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

The PREMIER moved—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Chillagoe and Etheridge Railways Act of 1918 in a certain particular.”

Mr. VOWLES: I would like the Premier to give us a little more explanation than we got yesterday as to what the intention is. We are quite in the dark at present.

*The PREMIER: The Act that we propose to amend imposes certain limitations upon the general manager of the Chillagoe works which have had the effect of restricting his operations and the usefulness of the enterprise. The Auditor-General calls attention to the limitation. On page 70 of his report he states—

“Section 6 (a) and (b) of the Chillagoe and Etheridge Railways Act of 1918 permits the general manager at Chillagoe to carry on the business of mining at the Einasleigh mine only. A number of other mining properties were acquired by the Act, but these propositions are mostly large ones and require financing. These leases have remained idle throughout the year, and there appears no alternative but for them to so remain until the abovementioned section of the Act is repealed or modified. The provisions of this section have been strictly complied with by the general manager.”

He also refers to the limitation with regard to the total amount of expenditure that can be incurred in the enterprise—a limitation

which, hon. members will remember, was placed in the Act by the Legislative Council—

“As already stated, the Act appropriates a sum not exceeding £100,000 towards defraying the initial cost of unwinding the Einasleigh mine, and reopening and recommending the work of the smelters, etc., and also states that no sum in excess of the said amount shall be appropriated except by resolution of both Houses of Parliament.”

Then the Auditor-General further remarks—

“The balance-sheet shows that at 30th June the indebtedness to the Treasury in that respect was £203,890 13s. 11d. This amount, which has been wholly charged to loan, includes both capital and working expenditure.”

The Auditor-General recognises that the report on the enterprise is very favourable. I think he recognises that it is impossible to carry on operations of such magnitude, where large purchases have to be made and work carried on, within the limit of £100,000. It is not only the capital expenditure which is necessary in order to start the works, but the enormous amount of money required as working expenses, for the purchase of ore, and the operations of the undertaking during the period from the start of the works until the metal is marketed. It would appear to be impossible for the Mines Department to carry on operations through the manager being restricted to the sum of £100,000. He has had to close the smelters, as Parliament was not sitting, and wait for the authority that is sought. There is no good reason for a limitation of that kind, and, as the amount required will be annually appropriated by Parliament on the Estimates, it is probably desirable to remove the limitation. The Auditor-General, on page 71 of his report, calls attention to certain factors which he states undoubtedly contributed to the success of the undertaking during the period under review. These are the factors, as he sets them forth—

“1. The low purchase cost, together with the moderate outlay incurred in placing the whole concern on a working basis.

“2. The organisation in respect to ore supplies and improvements effected in dealing with the same.

“3. The efficient administration in respect to labour.

“4. The effective costing system applied in the working of the concern.

“5. The satisfactory prices of metals during the period under review.

“6. The exceptional ability of the general manager.”

Those factors, I think, are sufficient, especially coming from the Auditor-General, to justify the action that is proposed to be taken, and it justifies the confidence which the Government feel in the general manager of the Chillagoe works.

Mr. VOWLES: I would like to point out to the Premier that the Auditor-General, in his concluding remarks, states as follows:—

“After a careful study of the balance-sheet and a general view of the whole position, I am of opinion that, provided metals maintain reasonable prices, and that the undertaking receives fair treatment, the Chillagoe proposition has every indication of proving a success.”

The whole business seems to be wrapped up in that. I think it would be as well, at this stage, if the Premier could give us some information as to whether the metals which are to be treated there maintain a reasonable price at the present time. I am under the impression that, as far as metals in that area are concerned, they cannot be worked under present prices with a reasonable margin of profit, with the exception of coal.

The PREMIER: What would you consider a reasonable price?

Mr. VOWLES: I do not know. I am under the impression, from what I know of mining generally, that the margin is very small, and it is a question whether the Government should take any further responsibility under these conditions.

The PREMIER: If metals did slump it would be impossible to carry on successfully an enterprise of that kind. I have no doubt that we should have to do what other metalliferous concerns do under such circumstances—that is, close down; but the price of metals, although they have suffered a set-back during the last few days, is by no means such as to make it unprofitable to work an operation of this kind. For instance, one or two furnaces at Chillagoe are run upon lead ore, and the price of lead, although it has suffered a set-back lately, is still a good one. Many years ago it was only £15 a ton, and it is £26 a ton now, which is not a bad price. I think copper has come down. It is quoted at something like £80 or £82 a ton. I do not know whether it would be profitable for Queensland to carry on smelting at £80 a ton, but the movements of the metal market indicate that the present slump is only temporary. If it continued, we would have to seriously consider the suspension of operations, as every other copper mining and smelting concern in the State would do. Probably we would not be able to carry on with copper under £80 a ton, but possibly at £80 a ton or over it might be possible to carry on.

Mr. TAYLOR (Windsor): We all recognise that to a large extent mining is a gamble, still I think the House as a whole is prepared to accept what the Auditor-General says in his report. The portions of it which I think will add to the value of the report more than any other part are on page 71, where he says—

“3. The efficient administration in respect to labour.

“4. The effective costing system applied in the working of the concern.

“5. The exceptional ability of the general manager.”

I feel satisfied that when the Auditor-General states that in his report we can take it for granted that the gentleman in charge of the operations at Chillagoe is a man we can place the utmost confidence in. We have embarked on this venture at Chillagoe, and we quite realise that the general manager there has a difficult task before him. I believe a million or two of money was lost up there before he took charge, and if he can possibly make a success of it it will be to his credit, and I think it is necessary that this amending Bill should be allowed to go through so that he may have an opportunity of testing those particular ventures.

Mr. Taylor.]

I feel satisfied that he is not going to waste money, and that he feels confident the venture is going to be a success.

Question put and passed.

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

FIRST READING.

The Bill was presented and read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

SUPPLY.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

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

Question—"That there be granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1920-1921, a sum not exceeding £300, to defray the salary of the aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Governor"—stated.

Mr. VOWLES: Last night the Treasurer delivered his Financial Statement to the Committee; but I think that if, instead of being intitled a "Financial Statement," it had been called the policy of the Minister and his colleagues in some future election, it would have been a more fitting title. It is full of Labour propaganda, and the Treasurer has departed altogether from the usual custom in regard to the Budget. The phraseology of this document savours very much of the phraseology of another document which was placed before this Chamber, some little time back, in the form of a Governor's Speech, and which was circulated broadcast at Government expense throughout the country for electioneering purposes. I would like to take you back to the time of the advent of the present Government to the Treasury benches, and to remind the Committee that the whole of the revenue received by the previous Government, apart from moneys received from Trust and Loan Fund, in 1914-1915, was the sum of £7,200,000. We find to-day, according to the estimate of the Treasurer, that it will require a sum of £12,182,000 to carry out the same services—that is, an additional £5,000,000 to carry out the identical services which were carried out in 1914-15, leaving a surplus. It is supposed that when the year's transactions are over there will be a credit balance of £11,388—that is, that the expenditure will be £12,170,000. Strange to say, those figures are based on an estimate of twelve months ago. Twelve months ago it was supposed that we would be able to receive £10,422,000 under the basis of land and income taxation and the general revenue received from other sources in the State.

At five minutes past 4 o'clock p.m.,

Mr. POLLOCK, one of the Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. VOWLES: Everybody was astonished to find that, after that estimate was made, the Government received a sum of £370,000 more than they expected. Notwithstanding that they received that huge additional revenue, they were able to show on the year's transactions a credit balance of only £26,833.

The same individuals, from whom [4 p.m.] was to be taken taxation to the extent of £10,422,000 in 1919-20, now have to find up to £12,182,000. The reason given for the expectation of this additional amount of money is that we are having bountiful seasons. I would like to

[*Mr. Taylor.*

remind this Committee that, when it was necessary in 1918-19 to agree to further taxation being imposed in the nature of supertaxation, the justification which the Treasurer at the time gave to this Chamber was that prices were abnormally high—people were having bountiful seasons. Surely the Government must realise there is a tremendous slump at present as far as produce is concerned. Wool is practically unsaleable, hides are virtually unsaleable, meat cannot be sold at any price approaching that which was being obtained when these impositions were made; and in many other directions there has been a curtailment more particularly, with the concurrence of this Government, in a department which they instituted limiting the profits which could be got by the various individuals who are called upon to find this money.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Their taxable income is increasing.

Mr. VOWLES: It may be in some directions. But it is not of general application. It was in respect of freights in particular that the additional money was levied upon the people, the justification being that we were having a splendid harvest, and could afford to bear this additional burden. Those conditions do not now obtain, and to take from the same individuals this large amount is going to impose a heavy burden upon them.

Before I go any further, I might give a little history of taxation during the last few years in Queensland. As far as I can see, every legitimate method of taxation has been exploited to the full, and during last year the Government, having no other reasonable legitimate means of obtaining money, resorted to repudiation and, to a certain extent, the confiscation of people's property in order to get money. I am referring to the amendment of the Land Act and its application to pastoral leases and grazing farms. During the present Government's occupancy of the Treasury benches, I would like to point out, the cost of living—which applies just as much to the producer as it does to the man in the city—has risen 94.6 per cent., according to the latest figures I have. The cost of his implements of trade has increased to a very large extent, and the freights on his produce have been raised by this Government.

The PREMIER: How much?

Mr. VOWLES: To a considerable extent. Freights were raised twice in one year.

The PREMIER: Are they high?

Mr. VOWLES: They are very high.

The PREMIER: Compared with what?

Mr. VOWLES: I have a comparison here. If you take a comparison of freights between Queensland and New South Wales you will find that, as far as wire and wire netting are concerned—which are very necessary on a farm to protect agricultural produce when a man is setting out to develop his farm—the rate is something like 9s. 7d. per 100 miles in New South Wales, and 22s. in Queensland. If you look at agricultural machinery you will find the figures are 22s. in New South Wales, and 44s. per 100 miles in Queensland. During the history of this Government, taxation has increased in Queensland to the extent of 123.4 per cent. In respect of income tax it has increased 160.9 per cent.; land taxation,

85.9 per cent.; stamps, 160.8 per cent.; and during that time the population has increased by only 7.3 per cent. It is a strange thing to me that the monthly or bi-monthly returns which are given from the Treasury disclose that notwithstanding the fact that we are having an increasing revenue during the past five months, the expenditure has exceeded our revenue to the extent of £171,000. There is no evidence of economy—merely a continuation of the mad career of the Government in their extravagance. We do not see any indication that there is going to be any change in their policy now. When this House met we were promised that, if the Opposition joined hands with the Government and assisted them, the Government was going to be run on better lines than in the past; but we find that there is the same old extravagance going on, and, notwithstanding the fact that it appears on the face of it in the Financial Statement that at the end of twelve months we are going to get into a financial morass, there is no desire, and apparently no intention, on the part of the Government to put a brake on the wheels.

The PREMIER: That is what you said last year, and we had a surplus.

Mr. VOWLES: If the Government had received last year only the amount of money they estimated they would receive when they placed the Estimates before the people, they would have had a deficit of over £750,000. It was the fact that they received £807,000 more than they expected that enabled them to show a surplus. That will give an idea of the basis they had in arriving at an estimate.

The TREASURER: To get all that money from the railways we had to spend more.

Mr. VOWLES: On the same basis they are going to extract from the people £800,000 more this year; which shows there could have been no method at all in arriving at the estimate they did. There is one matter I think is very serious, and I think the Treasurer should give some explanation to the House about it. A few sessions back this House consented to certain supertaxation being imposed in respect of land and income taxation. The Auditor-General pointed out to us that up to 30th June, when he made his report, the sum of £337,000 had been levied under that heading; and although the then Treasurer—the present Premier—told us it was going to be applied to a specific purpose—the liquidation of the previous year's deficit—it was merged into the consolidated revenue, and those deficits still stand. To-day the deficits amount to £550,000, and no provision whatsoever has been made for their liquidation. When you come to analyse the figures placed before this Committee you will find that, at the end of this financial year, we will still have that burden of £550,000, and we will also have that loan which was raised in England from the Bank of England recently, of £1,000,000, which has not been provided for. So we are faced with the position that, after 30th June, we will have £1,550,000 unprovided for.

The TREASURER: You have not read my tables.

Mr. VOWLES: I have read the tables, and I say that that is correct. There is no provision for those accumulated deficits, and there is no arrangement for the payment of that million of money. The only thing is

a pious hope by the Treasurer that when that loan matures it will be renewed on banking lines, whereby we will only be charged interest on a daily balance.

The TREASURER: Do you know how much of that loan we have spent?

Mr. VOWLES: I do not know. Perhaps, in talking about that loan I might as well refer to an article which appeared in London "Truth" of 6th October, 1920. It says—

"Last December Queensland issued a 6 per cent. loan in London for £2,000,000 at 98½, which then was considered very enormous terms. More recently she has tried to repeat this operation, and for this purpose the Prime Minister, Mr. Theodore, visited London, but the negotiations proved abortive, and it is understood that as a stopgap a temporary loan of £1,000,000 was obtained from the Bank of England. This was apparently compulsory, for between now and February 1 next the amount due for interest on Queensland Government loans is a little over £1,000,000, as will be gathered from the following summary."

Then it goes on to show that from 1st October, 1920, to 1st February, 1921, a sum of £1,029,671 for interest is payable in London in respect of loans. The article goes on to say—which we all, unfortunately, know to be true—

"In the next five years the colony will have to provide for the repayment of nearly twenty millions of money, an operation which will not be facilitated by legislation of the type of which Queensland has achieved an unenviable notoriety."

You will remember, Mr. Pollock, the hon. member for Burnett asked a question of the Treasurer some few weeks ago as follows:—

"1. What quotas of the £1,000,000 loan raised by Mr. Theodore in London through the Bank of England will be allocated—(a) for the payment of interest on current loans; (b) for other purposes?"

"2. What are the details of the proposed interest payments from the loan?"

"3. Will any portion of the £1,000,000 come to Queensland?"

"The TREASURER replied—

"1. (a) Nil; (b) the whole.

"2. No interest payments will be made from the loan.

"3. No."

I sincerely trust the replies as given by the Treasurer are correct. He went on to tell us it was necessary to have money lying in London in order to save exchange. We know that that is very desirable. But I would like to know what is the position of that million of money. What credit we have lying in London, and what amount has been absorbed in interest, or in what direction it has been absorbed. We have not got that information, and it is a strange thing that, when we are dealing with an important matter like the Budget, we should not be in possession of some of the most important reports. I refer particularly to the Auditor-General's report on State enterprises. There is a good deal of reference made to State enterprises in the Budget in the nature of political propaganda, and we are not in a position to criticise those enterprises, merely because of the fact that we

have not had an opportunity of inspecting those reports and seeing what they contain. If everything is fair and aboveboard, if these statements here are correct, why have we not got the criticism of the Auditor-General, so that we can at least verify them?

Mr. KIRWAN: I thought you only wanted the Auditor-General's report.

Mr. VOWLES: I want his report on State enterprises. A very big mouthful is made on this page of State enterprises, and I say that the class of criticism is quite foreign to the ordinary kind of Budget, and is in the nature of political propaganda. It makes one wonder why it is there, and what future event is forecasted. Is there in view an election, for which this is going to take the place of the Governor's Speech? The Treasurer starts by referring to "that very careful supervision which has been in evidence during the term of office of this Government." I am unable to see where that supervision has been exercised. We know that there has been undue and unwarranted interference in many of our departments, resulting in the resignation, in almost every instance, of the heads of all those State enterprises. The public and the Opposition begin to wonder why? They are curious to know why Mr. McGugan got out of the State stations, why Mr. Goodwyn left the State Insurance, why the manager of the butchers' shops was glad to get away, why in every direction responsible officers, whom we know are being unduly interfered with, are glad to get out.

The TREASURER: Who are they?

Mr. VOWLES: They are officers of certain departments who were placed in responsible positions. I say that this is the only evidence that we see of supervision, and we hold that it is interference, by men who do not know their business, with men who have been put in certain positions because they do know their business.

The TREASURER: One man who made a great song about it would have been sacked if he had not gone out.

Mr. CORSER: It is all very well to say that. You lost him.

The TREASURER: I will place the papers on the table.

Mr. VOWLES: I do not want to refer to individuals. There was certain unwarrantable interference with the State Produce Agency, because we find, instead of the manager signing circulars, the Treasurer signing them just prior to the election, and we also find cheques which would in the ordinary course have been signed by Mr. Howes being distributed right on the eve of an election signed by "J. A. Fihelly." These are the only evidence of this supervision, on which the Government are priding themselves.

Last year the railways gave an increase over the estimate of £563,496, and a large amount of that was absorbed in increased wages as the result of arbitration awards. There was a very big surplus, and it was rather a pity, to my mind, that that surplus was not judiciously used, because we find that when you come to sum up the affairs of the railways there are, during the time of this Government, accumulated deficits amounting to £4,924,547, after charging interest on capital and working expenses, as will be seen on page 55 of the Auditor-

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General's report, whilst last year alone the deficit was £1,229,579.

The TREASURER: There was a deficit under your Government.

Mr. VOWLES: Does not everybody in the street know that in 1914-15 the railways were paying £3 17s. 9d. per cent. over and above the cost of running them, and that that return dwindled to 13s. 1d. two years ago, and it was only by means of two increases of freights and fares during the last twelve months that they were able to earn £1 7s. 11d. per cent.? It was costing in interest charges on the whole of the railway works £4 1s. 9d. per cent., so that we are losing the difference between £1 7s. 11d. and £4 1s. 9d. on the whole of the money invested in the Railway Department. Another thing I may refer to whilst I am on the question of railways is something in the nature of a public enterprise, although it does not come under the State Enterprises Act. The hon. member says that with the exception of fish shops every enterprise has been a success.

The TREASURER: Every enterprise started by us.

Mr. VOWLES: We do not call the railways an enterprise. On page 60 of the Auditor-General's report you will find that in connection with the Construction Branch of the railways there are such things as provision stores, and those stores, which are for the benefit of the men working at construction, brought us in a loss of £2,418.

The PREMIER: They were established in the time of Mr. Paget.

Mr. VOWLES: It does not matter when they were established. The fact remains that this Government are continuing them, and continuing them at a loss. The loss on the Merinda-Bowen store amounted to no less a sum than £1,528.

The TREASURER: In the last year of your administration the loss was about £2,000.

Mr. VOWLES: These are the gentlemen who say they lead in all directions—who hand down to the public the statement that every undertaking they take in hand is a success, except the fish shops. Here I give an instance where they are running an enterprise in the Railway Department at a huge loss. On page 2 of the Financial Statement, in referring to the excess expenditure in comparison with the estimate, the Treasurer says—

"The total expenditure in excess of the estimate was mainly brought about by four departments—viz., Chief Secretary, Home Secretary, Treasury, and Railways. The Chief Secretary disbursed £61,000 more than was voted for the benefit of returned soldiers and members of expeditionary forces."

If you look at page 25 of the Auditor-General's report you will get some idea of how some of those moneys were expended, and I say that the way in which they are being used is becoming a public scandal. One of the items of expenditure is—

"Grant—Returned Soldiers and Sailors' Labour League, £1,000."

What parliamentary authority was there for that grant?

The TREASURER: We gave the Imperial League a grant.

Mr. VOWLES: The whole principle is wrong. The Government have no right to be giving public moneys away to any political institutions. Another item is—

"Gold medals for members of Land Settlement Committee and War Council Committee, £46 5s."

The TREASURER: All supporters of your party.

Mr. VOWLES: I do not care who they are. Another item is—

"Gold medals for members of the Anzac Cottage Committee, £16."

What authority is there for that expenditure? Some little time ago I brought before the House the case of two Imperial soldiers who were stranded in Brisbane, and kept here for months. I had personal interviews with the Premier and wrote him correspondence and sent those men to him.

The PREMIER: You admitted they were well treated.

Mr. VOWLES: I admit they were well treated to the extent of £406; but why were they kept here that length of time?

The PREMIER: What do you think we should have done?

Mr. VOWLES: They were kept here as a political advertisement, and got to sign certain letters which appeared during the election as evidence of the generosity of the Government—out of public money. I say that that expenditure could have been kept down very considerably, and those men could have been got away months before they were got away. They were first turned down absolutely.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. VOWLES: They were refused point blank.

The PREMIER: Oh no.

Mr. VOWLES: Oh yes, they were. I think I still have the correspondence, or I had. At any rate, I had interviews with the Premier and his Under Secretary and these men were turned down; but I brought up the matter in the House and because there was an opportunity of making political capital out of the matter it was done and they were paid. I notice also that the cost of insanity has gone up—that seems to be the general thing under Labour Government. There is £37,000 down for outdoor relief, but we know that that has expanded to the extent of £78,000.

The PREMIER: Do you suggest that we should cut that out?

Mr. VOWLES: I do not; but I say that it should be more judiciously used. I see many instances where people are living on that fund—people who will not take work.

Mr. GLEDSON: Do you know of any work for people now?

Mr. VOWLES: I know instances where men have been offered work and would not take it, although it was at fair wages, agreed to by the farmers in the country districts.

Mr. GLEDSON: What did you do with the unemployed deputation?

Mr. VOWLES: I told them I would do the only thing an Opposition member could do—that is, bring up their case in the House, but I was refused an opportunity to do so. The Government did nothing for them, and it would be interesting to know what they are doing for them now.

We find that the debit balance in the Trust Funds amounted on 30th June to £1,894,048. We would like to know the position to-day, and I trust the Treasurer will be able to give us further information on these items, and tell us what is proposed to be done with respect to these deficits in the future. I referred a little while ago to the Loan Fund Account. A little bit of political stuff comes in on this page on reference to the Premier's visit to England, when he made application for a £7,000,000 or £9,000,000 loan. It is claimed by the Treasurer that when the £2,000,000 loan was furnished in England in December last it was largely oversubscribed, and that the financial position of Queensland in that country was satisfactory. The suggestion is that because certain gentlemen went home to England, the minds of the financiers were poisoned and that that was the sole and only cause for Queensland's being refused money on the London market.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES: I hear the Premier say, "Hear, hear!" Did the Premier not say, I think at a dinner after he returned from England, that the Philp delegation was not the only thing that was against his getting money?

The PREMIER: Not the only thing. It was your political propaganda and newspaper propaganda as well.

Mr. VOWLES: When Mr. Ryan went home on the first occasion he paved the way for finance. He made a certain statement to the financiers in England. He committed himself to a certain promise in regard to legislation, and in my opinion that promise was not honoured by his successors.

The TREASURER: Incorrect.

Mr. VOWLES: On the occasion, I think, of a banquet at the Colonial Institute to Sir William MacGregor, he said the Labour Government did not know the meaning of repudiation, and that they did not know the meaning of confiscation. Yes, but what followed? On representation that certain things were to be done [4.30 p.m.] as regards legislation—that there was to be no confiscation and no repudiation—the financiers in England advanced the money to Queensland as they had done in the past. The loan was more than 100 per cent. oversubscribed; but what do we find when the Premier went on to the same market again after he had put on record his repudiatory legislation? We find that he was turned down. He was told to go home and study ordinary honesty, or his Government were told to study ordinary honesty, and yet they turn around and regret that certain individuals went home, as they were justly entitled to do, and represent what they considered to be an injustice to themselves—and he knows in his heart, and his supporters know in their hearts, and the public of Queensland showed that they were thoroughly awake to the situation by their votes at the last general election—they know very well that this story about the delegation was purely an election bogey. The Treasurer is reported to have said that he was not going to sell his birthright—that he was not going to crawl as regards what legislation his Government would introduce. We find from the words of one of

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his colleagues, now Agent-General in London—Mr. J. M. Hunter—that an offer to amend the legislation was made by the Premier, and when he had committed himself to a certain degree, then the financiers—the London Jews as he termed them—wanted to make their own terms.

The PREMIER: What do you say I called them?

Mr. VOWLES: You called them “London Jews.”

The PREMIER: No; I called them “the money lords.”

Mr. VOWLES: When he made that offer he agreed to sell his birthright in so far as democracy is concerned, and when they wanted him to go further still, he showed his teeth, and then the murder was out. As far as these matters are concerned, I think the real reason why Queensland is unfavourably considered on the London market to-day is: First of all because of the fact that there is insecurity here on account of the legislation which has been put on the statute-book—legislation of a class that does not exist in any other British community—that is the repudiation of existing contracts and confiscation. The stuffing of the Upper House in the way in which it was done was not likely to inspire confidence among the persons who were going to lend money to Queensland; the tinkering with the Constitution in every direction, the desire by hook or by crook to get control of the whole range of Government, whether rightly or wrongly, to bring about their own ends, did not inspire confidence; nor will it inspire confidence in the future. And a Government which is in power by virtue of the fact that the electorates of Queensland are in such a deplorable condition as regards representation as the present electorates are, and a Government which is sitting on the Treasury benches under false pretences—because it does not represent a majority of the people of Queensland—that Government can never inspire confidence until such time as there is a change, and that change will not be long. Until that change comes about, I say the financial position of Queensland will remain as it is to-day.

The TREASURER: How long do you say that will be?

Mr. VOWLES: If the hon. gentleman had the moral courage which a Government in the position in which they find themselves should have—a democratic or an alleged democratic Government representing a minority of the people—if they had the moral courage to do the right thing and go back to the people they would be sitting over here very quickly.

The TREASURER: We got more votes than your party did.

Mr. VOWLES: What do you call my party? The Opposition? We have heard that old story before, but in Parliament there are only two parties; there is the Government and the Opposition—(Government laughter)—and the Opposition have a very much larger number of votes than the Government has. The whole test of the last election was not as to whether the Government were one solid party and we were two divided parties; the question was as to whether their policy was acceptable to the people of Queensland, both in respect of their dealings with the finances and in respect of the methods under which they

managed those finances, and their general administration. They were “weighed in the balance and found wanting,” and if they had the courage a Government should have, they would resign and the hon. gentlemen opposite then would be sitting on this side of the House.

The TREASURER: Why have another expensive election?

Mr. VOWLES: That reminds me that the last election cost a sum of £30,000.

The TREASURER: No.

Mr. VOWLES: We have never been able to get the proper expenses of the conduct of the election. The previous election only cost £20,000, which was about £6,000 more than the 1914 election cost, but from what I can gather from the figures disclosed here, the last election cost £30,000. It will be interesting to know if the cost of that aeroplane was charged up in this £30,000. It would also be interesting to know whether that sum included the expenses of those gentlemen in the State Produce Agency who, during the previous election, visited my electorate at Government expense in motor cars, and who, in my tour round the country, I found up in the sugar areas with Government motor cars. It would be interesting to know whether these gentlemen were paid out of the £30,000 or whether their expenses were charged up to the departments—if that is so the cost of running the election was still greater—or whether we were relieving the Labour organisations of a considerable amount of their election expenses by permitting these individuals to be employed. The Government has saddled the producer with higher freights and higher fares. It is necessary to keep the high rates of income taxation and land taxation on these people, and yet the Government have money to burn for their own political purposes. But, surely the time has arrived when they can study some economy and try and relieve the burdens of taxation which the public have to bear! It is about time they commenced to practice what they have been preaching for many years. With reference to this compulsory Loan Bill, we discover from the Government that this measure is going to be dropped. I am very glad that it is going to be dropped. I would be very sorry to see Queensland have a blot on its statute-book, or another blot, and be the only State which, by compulsion, was going to take money from its citizens to be used for their own purposes. It has been stated in this House that the Federal Government introduced this principle. The Federal Government introduced it as a suggestion, but they did not put it into operation; and were it not for the pressure that has been brought to bear on this Government during the last few days we would have had that blot on our statute-book to-day. However, the money is available, and I think it is high time that the public should be let in the “know” as to the terms on which that money has been obtained, the duration of the loan, the rate of interest, and the general prospectus in connection with it.

Mr. KIRWAN: You will get that when the prospectus is issued.

Mr. VOWLES: Has it been issued? Or are they obtaining the balance of old loans? There is a matter of about £7,000,000 which the Government could raise under old Loan Acts.

Mr. KIRWAN: How much?

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Mr. VOWLES: £7,000,000.

Mr. KIRWAN: Where?

Mr. VOWLES: It is on the statute-book, but I question very much whether the Government could raise 7d., because the public have such an opinion of the Government that they would not lend them anything.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Will that inspire confidence?

Mr. VOWLES: I could not inspire confidence, because the Government come here and make certain promises, and the very next day they turn round and break them. We are told that—

“Our citizens must clearly and definitely understand that their obligations to the State must be respected.”

Is it not time that the Government realised that there are some obligations on the part of the Government to the citizens of the State. And it is about time that the citizens' rights were respected. I would ask the hon. gentleman to look at it from the other point of view. The Government has certain functions to perform. They are supposed to legislate decently, for a start, and without discrimination as to any class. They are supposed to administer the funds that they receive judiciously and economically, and—what is more important still—they are supposed to keep faith with the community. I could point out numerous instances where the Government have failed in every one of these matters, and those are the matters to which I refer, when I say the Government should keep faith with the citizens, and if they do so, there will be no occasion to warn the citizens as to what their duties are towards the State. On the question of State enterprises, as I said before, we have not got the very report, and the only one that would enable us to reasonably criticise this Budget. Why that is being delayed, we do not know, but there seems to be a good deal of mystery about these enterprises. There is only one that I know of that has been cleaned up, and if the Government's statements to-day in respect to State enterprises are the same as they were when we were dealing with the celebrated Mount Hutton purchase, then I am very sorry for them. It will be remembered that it took me about three years in questions to get the truth, or anything near the truth, in respect of the purchase, muster, and the handling of the stock on Mount Hutton. And what do we find? We find that that enterprise, which has been in the hands of the Government, approximately, for four years—that enterprise which Mr. Hardacre and Mr. J. M. Hunter, who were both Ministers at that time, told the public of Queensland was bringing in a profit of £35,000 to the people of Queensland—when that enterprise was balanced up, when the lease was sold, and all the assets were sold, and when the stock were cleaned up, we discovered there was a debit balance of about £5,000, instead of a credit of £35,000 and that debit balance would be greater still if 700 head of cattle, which the Auditor-General said are supposed to be on Lara Station, do not materialise. We do not know whether those 700 head of cattle have come to light or not. Does not all this show a want of ordinary business capacity? We have over £1,250,000 invested in these enterprises, and they need most cautious care, and not be subject to the

interference they have been subjected to in the past. Fancy a man being appointed against the wish of the general manager of stations to act as a stockman; a man who has been convicted of cattle-stealing. He was a friend of the Government's. When you have that sort of interference, can you expect the enterprise to prosper? Have we not seen in the past in the criticism of the Auditor-General, the loose way in which the State butchers' shops are managed. Do we not know that the fish shop is a public scandal and a public nuisance in one respect. When the hon. gentleman tells us that there is only a loss of £8,458 on the State fish shop, does he not know that not one penny interest has been charged against the business? Surely to goodness, that enterprise should have the interest on the £35,000—the purchasing price of the trawler—charged up against it? Look at the records in connection with the purchase of the trawler and of the “Douglas Mawson”? Do not the records look very suspicious on the face of them? Here was a boat which was purchased for a large sum over and above what it was purchased for a few months previously. We started to make inquiries, and found that what was known in the Railway Department was not known in the Cabinet. The then Treasurer said that he knew nothing about certain representations, and, after making inquiries, we found that it was known in the Railway Department that these representations had been made.

The PREMIER: It was not known to Ministers.

Mr. VOWLES: It was not known to Ministers, but it was known to officers in the Railway Department. A *bonâ fide* answer was not given in that matter; it was covered up. We find that that boat, which could have been bought for £10,000, after she was overhauled was purchased by the Government at a much larger figure. It is a remarkable thing that people can sell a thing to the Government for £19,000 which had been bought a few months before for £10,000, and was only sold for £10,000 on account of the shortage of shipping during the war.

The PREMIER: Do you want a Royal Commission on it?

Mr. VOWLES: I want the Premier to give us the truth when he is answering questions. We discover that the department denies any knowledge of the Premier's representations, and we subsequently find that all the time those documents are on record there, and the excuse is that they did not know, and that it was only known to the officers of the department.

The PREMIER: I said the offer was not made to the Government.

Mr. VOWLES: That is only burking the question. It was made to the Railway Department.

The PREMIER: Why have you not courage enough to make a charge?

Mr. VOWLES: Why don't you give a straightforward and honest answer to questions?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I would suggest that the hon. member should address the Chair.

Mr. VOWLES: I notice that the Babinda hotel has been a huge success this year, with a profit of £1,175. That is a bit better than

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£120 made on a turnover of £16,000. There is an item here of £2,567 in connection with the State Produce Agency, which I think should receive some criticism. If we look up the reports of the Auditor-General in the past we shall find that he complained that the manager of the Produce Agency was carrying on trade. That department was not instituted for the purpose of trading, but merely for the purpose of selling. I said on a previous occasion that, as far as the management and buying are concerned, it is all right as long as the venture turns out to be a success; but I have good reasons for believing that only quite recently the manager went into some ventures which were a huge failure, and the result is that he has been condemned. How can the Government commend him in one instance when he makes a profit and when there is a loss condemn him for it? We have good evidence during election time to show that if ever any profiteering went on in Queensland it was in connection with the State Produce Agency. Evidence was given during the time there was a big shortage of potatoes here that the State Produce Agency imported potatoes which made over 100 per cent. profit out of the Brisbane public, and that is one of the Government enterprises.

The TREASURER: We gave all the profit back to the suppliers. We made no profit.

Mr. VOWLES: Under the State Produce Agency Act the Government is compelled to give back all its profits to its clients, but it is only compelled to give profits which it makes out of commissions on their stuff, not profits which it makes from trading. I venture to say that the whole of the profits were not handed back, because it is only in this one year, on the eve of a general election, that the Government wakes up to the fact that the Act compels them to do this. Why did they not do this in previous years?

The TREASURER: All the profits have been handed back.

Mr. VOWLES: Do you really say that £2,000 is the whole of the profits since the State Produce Agency has been established?

The TREASURER: We do our work at half the usual cost.

Mr. VOWLES: I challenge the hon. gentleman to prove that he gave back the whole of the profits. He gave back £2,000, which could not have been the whole of the profits for last year, let alone past years.

The PREMIER: It must have been a successful undertaking, then.

Mr. VOWLES: I am very glad to see that the Government is dealing with afforestation. One of the biggest and most lasting assets of Queensland should be our forests. If only timber of certain dimensions is allowed to be cut down, and young timber is allowed to grow, we will have in course of time a standing asset to our credit, but I do not see how you are going to create an extensive asset like that, if you are going to convert it purely into a sawmilling business. I notice that most of the returned soldiers who are engaged in the department are being kept on. The Financial Statement states—

“For forestry work proper it has been found impossible to increase the votes, notwithstanding the urgency of the timber situation in Queensland. In order, however, to avoid retrenchment of the

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large number of returned soldiers now employed in forestry work, the Loan Estimates on this account have been increased from £20,000 to £65,000—”

That money has been expended merely for the purpose of giving those soldiers employment, but it is not coming from Queensland—

“which latter amount the Repatriation Department is pledged to provide under the terms of the Melbourne Repatriation Conference of Foresters of 1918, and the subsequent agreement entered into with this State.”

I think it would be very bad policy to deprive those returned soldiers of their employment, but if the work is not there for them to do, why continue them on in the forestry work, when you can put them in some other avenue where we will have something to show for the money expended.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you think there is anything better than reafforestation?

Mr. VOWLES: No, but you are only tinkering with it. According to your own statement, you have not got work for these men.

The PREMIER: Do you want us to spend more money?

Mr. VOWLES: You are compelled to spend up to £65,000. I want you to spend the money judiciously, and if the work is not there for these men to do to put them on to work in some other direction, so that you will have something to show for the money spent.

When we get on the subject of agriculture, we find that since the last general election, the Government has on every occasion been throwing bouquets to the farmer. The Financial Statement says—

“The last financial year was one of drought (though, perhaps, not quite so severe as that of 1918-1919), and, consequently, the rural community again suffered the trials and tribulations that they have hitherto borne with such splendid resignation. But, against these difficulties, the high price of fodder gave a modicum of relief for the more fortunate. The Government, with a full appreciation of the serious plight of those involved, on two occasions gave welcome assistance by the distribution of fodder and seed wheat to those who needed it, and who were unable to finance themselves. Further, aid was given towards the transport of starving stock to relief country.”

I looked up the returns, and I found that, as far as the distribution of fodder and seed wheat is concerned—fodder in particular—the Government made a start, and got the farmers' money in hand, and then for a long time the produce was held up in South Australia, with the result that when it arrived here it was not wanted.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed him under the Standing Orders.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I would like to publicly express my appreciation of the courtesy which the Treasurer showed me by forwarding me a copy of the Financial Statement some few hours before it was delivered. One criticises very frequently the actions of Ministers and others, and it is only fair that when a courtesy of that kind is extended

they should take the opportunity of expressing their appreciation of it. I want more particularly to go through the Financial Statement and the various details which have been referred to by the Treasurer in its delivery, and I frankly say that I desire to criticise to the fullest extent some of the utterances as they appear in the Statement. The very first sentence in the Statement is one that I am surprised the Treasurer put into it. It reads—

“In presenting this, my first Financial Statement, it affords me great pleasure to be able to say that the finances of the State continue to disclose that very careful supervision which has been in evidence during the term of office of this Government.”

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. W. H. BARNES: Could there ever have been such a travesty in connection with anything which was put into a Financial Statement, in view of the administration of the Government, their recklessness, and their total inability, as I shall show before I sit down, to deal with the finances of this great State? Never before since the establishment of this State have the finances been in the position they are in to-day.

The PREMIER: Yes, they are pretty healthy.

HON. W. H. BARNES: No, they are not healthy, as I shall be able to show. I am not here with the object of crying, as someone may say, “stinking fish,” but to point out what I believe is the condition of things to-day, and to strike a warning note, in the hope that even at this late hour the Premier and the Treasurer will take certain steps to remedy the condition of things as they exist in Queensland to-day. I shall show as I proceed that what is being proposed even at this juncture is only in the nature of plastering a sore, in the hope that, Micawber-like, something may turn up. But if we realise that there are difficulties ahead, what is the use of our trying to gloss them over, and saying that there are no difficulties? Let us look at what the Government have really been doing. It will be remembered that when we last had a Financial Statement before us, I took the opportunity of pointing out that I believed that the estimate would be very largely exceeded as far as last year was concerned. Many of us on this side believed that the proposed increased taxation was going to bring in a great deal more than the Treasurer said it was going to produce. We believed that the increased fares and freights, which very largely were being put on the producer, were going to bring in a great deal more revenue than was anticipated.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I venture to say that the Premier, who was then the Treasurer, must have believed that such would be the condition of things. What was the result of it? It will be seen at once by this statement that over the estimate the revenue was £870,943, and the expenditure [5 p.m.] £848,333. What a pickle we would have been in if it had not been for that fortunate circumstance? Did it indicate, as far as the Treasurer was concerned, that there was anything like a fair forecast of the finances of the State? Railways, income tax, and land tax receipts were in the main responsible for what happened. The people were being bled and bled, and bled again.

Mr. COLLINS: A few of them.

HON. W. H. BARNES: My friend does not care for the man who is toiling on the land. What does it matter to him?

Mr. COLLINS: That is too weak.

At five minutes past 5 o'clock p.m.,

Mr. SMITH resumed the chair.

HON. W. H. BARNES: It is not too weak. I ask, what did he care for others who were seeking to do their best to build up Queensland and who were being got at at every turn? There must be an end to that kind of thing. You cannot continue to bleed people without ruining not only the Government who do it, but the people from whom the money is sought to be obtained. Have not the Government already realised that position by saying that they are going to withdraw the compulsory Loan Bill? Have they not realised that if they seek to take money out of the pockets of the people, and use it for some other purpose, as far as commercial enterprises are concerned, they are going to kill the very life of the community? We have to give more and more encouragement to commercial enterprises. One of the banes of Queensland has been that there has been a withdrawal of encouragement in that particular regard, and people have been afraid to move because they have not known what the dictates would be, not of the Government themselves, but of the power behind which has said certain things have to be done.

Mr. BRENNAN: Your firm was not too frightened.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman does not know very much about my firm, apparently. All I can say is, we have abundant evidence that people are in a nervous state; and the Premier knows it, too. I want to congratulate him upon having the courage to withdraw it, notwithstanding the pressure we know was behind him, the threats that were behind him, and notwithstanding his own utterances.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Withdraw what?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I presume, if we are correctly informed by the Statement, that the compulsory Loan Bill is to be withdrawn.

The PREMIER: No, you were not informed in the Treasurer's Statement that the Bill would be withdrawn.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Shall I say we are informed in the Statement that it has been deferred? When the Premier returned from the old country, he made certain threats, and the London “Times” refers to the outbreak in this way—

“The latest speech of Mr. Theodore, the Premier of Queensland, published on another page, provides an instructive sequel to the abortive character of the loan negotiations he recently conducted in London. His assertions that the Queensland Government would raise before Christmas, a local loan of £2,000,000 out of the profits sent from Queensland to Great Britain and elsewhere, compulsion to be applied if necessary, and that not a penny would be paid in dividends to the capitalists in London if it was required for the development of Queensland, fully confirm the attitude of those on this side who declined to participate in any new loan to Queensland unless the Government consented first to abandon its repudiatory

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legislation in regard to the pastoral leases contract. Nothing more damaging to the credit of the State he controls than such a speech could well be imagined.

"It appears to be the deliberate intention of the Government to proceed with a policy of repudiation in a spirit of vengeance in the hope of compelling the recalcitrant capitalists to surrender.

"We can assure the people of Queensland that such policy will completely fail in its purpose."

I would like to point out that, in my judgment, the action of the Government in dealing as they have dealt with what is known as repudiatory legislation, has been against the Constitution Act. Section 40 of the Constitution Act says—

"The entire management and control of the waste lands belonging to the Crown in the said colony of Queensland, and also the appropriation of the gross proceeds of the sales of such lands, and of all other proceeds and revenues of the same, from whatever source arising within the said colony including all royalties, mines, and minerals shall be vested in the legislature of the said colony."

This is the portion I want to draw the attention of the Premier to—

"Provided that nothing herein contained shall affect or be construed to affect any contract or to prevent the fulfilment of any promise or engagement made by or on behalf of Her Majesty with respect to any lands situate within the said colony in cases where such contracts, promises, or engagements shall have been lawfully made before the time at which this Act shall take effect within this colony, nor to disturb nor in any way interfere with or prejudice any vested or other rights which have accrued or belonged to the licensed occupants or lessees of any Crown lands within or without the settled districts, under and by virtue of the Act of the Imperial Parliament passed in the ninth and tenth years of Her Majesty's reign, chapter one hundred and four, or of any order or orders of Her Majesty in Council issued in pursuance thereof."

The PREMIER: Do you say the leases were issued prior to that Act?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am not going to deal with that. (Government laughter.) I do say that a distinct contract had been made, and the Premier must know that the Government practically broke it.

The PREMIER: What was the contract?

HON. W. H. BARNES: It is just as well for us to get really at what the conditions are that are causing the embarrassment of Queensland to-day. The trouble in Queensland to-day is due to the fact that we are trying to patch a sore, and the sore is still there. I say, advisedly, there is not going to be any regular flow of money until we do the just thing by those people whom we have penalised, and by whom we have done the unjust thing. Notwithstanding that during five months £1,900,000 has been spent on Loan Account, what is the position to-day? Men are going about from house to house in almost a state of destitution, and the Government are patching the sore instead of rising to the occasion and doing what

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they have a right to do. I want to ask the Premier, is he not concerned about the workers of this community, who to-day are asking for bread and cannot get it—except, it may be, in some cases from the relief department? Is that in the interests of Queensland? Is it a fair thing?

The PREMIER: Do you want us to reduce the relief?

HON. W. H. BARNES: No, I do not. But I do say I want to do something better than that. I want to alter the conditions so that men will feel they are not having to take relief, but they are getting something in return for their labour. They would prefer that. The Premier knows that any man who is worthy the name of man prefers very much that he should not be put into the position into which the Government have absolutely driven him, and are driving him to-day. What is the position with regard to the amount spent in relief? The hon. gentleman has made reference to it. Look at it in the Auditor-General's report. An amount of £70,000 was spent in relief, against a small amount even two years ago. What does that indicate?

The PREMIER: Do you want us to reduce it?

HON. W. H. BARNES: No, I am not saying any needy person should be deprived of assistance, but I am saying that the Government should get some conception of their duty as a Government, and that they should rise to the occasion instead of playing off just one section of the community only. Ever since the Government have accepted office, they have failed to realise that they should legislate for the whole of the State and not a portion of it. That is where they have made a big mistake. In the wake of class legislation, there has been brought the trouble which we see upon us to-day.

The TREASURER: You are very gloomy.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am not. I want to try and arouse Ministers to a sense of their obligations. I want, so to speak, that the men who are out of work to-day shall find that the Government have risen to the occasion, and by a broad, comprehensive policy, are making it possible for the avenues of employment to be opened and not closed up.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You have no sympathy for the unemployed.

HON. W. H. BARNES: What! I had no sympathy for an unemployed Minister who had not a "screw" and they wanted an extra one. But I have deep sympathy for the man who wants work and cannot get it; and the Government are helping to block him getting it. The Treasurer, in his Financial Statement, made reference to the Closer Settlement Fund, and tried to drag in previous Governments. Is it not a fact that, admitting one or two estates such as Seaforth were not a success, more money was received from the estates as a whole, or in payments made in the direction of sales by those who bought them, than the estates themselves cost? The total purchase price was £1,955,060. The value of land sold—including the sale of timber and improvements—was £2,253,651. The Auditor-General on page 45 shows clearly that that is the position.

Now, I want, for a moment, specially to deal with the position of the Loan Fund. From my place in the House, I make this statement, that the Loan Fund has never been in the condition it is in to-day. The Treasurer must know that that is true.

The TREASURER: Never so well.

HON. W. H. BARNES: There are no evidences of that. There is abundant evidence in the hon. gentleman's own statement that such is not the case.

The TREASURER: Your own colleagues damaged it.

HON. W. H. BARNES: No, the men who went to London did not damage it, but the Premier himself did. He "queered the pitch," and the people behind him "queered the pitch," by the legislation which they passed.

The PREMIER: The "Saturday Review," the "Manchester Guardian," and the "Times" all said Sir Robert Philp "queered the pitch."

HON. W. H. BARNES: We know who "queered the pitch." It was the Premier himself who "queered the pitch," and made it impossible to get the money he otherwise would have got. Just look at the position! According to the Statement which has been placed in our hands, the balance to the credit of the Loan Fund at 30th June, 1918, was £1,919,453, at the same time in 1919 it had decreased to £1,398,388, and in 1920 to £769,912. And do not let us forget that, so far as I know, there is at the present moment £1,000,000 at call advanced by the Savings Bank. Not only so, but no provision has been made for the accumulated deficits of the Government. Is it not a fact that at the Queensland National Bank there is an overdraft of £540,000 in that particular connection? The Government cannot deny that that is the position. Let us look at some of the other statements made by the Treasurer. He says—

"In the light of the above, I think it will be generally admitted that had it not been for the mischievous meddling of a wealthy few who place party politics on a higher plane than the public weal our credit in London would have remained unimpaired, and the Premier would have had no difficulty in raising a loan at a reasonable price. I do not propose to resurrect the whole sorry story, with its disastrous consequences to the State, and will merely content myself by saying that we now find ourselves deprived for a time of the London market, and must, therefore, look nearer home for funds necessary to carry on urgent works which are defrayed from loan moneys."

That is only a red herring across the trail, something to try to blind the community, and to placate those men who feel that the Government have done them an injustice, something which the Government have produced at the present juncture, in the hope that they may be able to pacify not only their own followers—we know how their own followers have been fighting at the position in which they find themselves; has it not been said that one of them was proposing to go to his constituents?—but also others outside this House altogether.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The "Courier" said so.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: He said it himself.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member who makes that statement knows how true it is in reference to individual members who find themselves absolutely angered. The interfering in connection with the enterprises of the country has very largely brought about the condition of things. Has not the farmer been practically hobbled by the Government?

The PREMIER: In what way?

HON. W. H. BARNES: In every way. Take butter. When it was a legitimate thing to get a certain price, you know how they were hobbled. At every turn the Government have done all they possibly could to prove themselves anything but the friend of the farmers.

The PREMIER: What about the freights on farm produce?

HON. W. H. BARNES: They were put up, as other freights were put up, and the hon. member knows it. The question will be asked: "How is confidence to be restored in Queensland?" Queensland's trouble is that there is a want of confidence. Whether the Premier cares to admit it or not, people here and there are seeking to get out. (Government laughter.) Because they see it is better for them to go to a State like Victoria, that is being run by a Nationalist Government, with the lightest possible taxation, than to stay in Queensland and not know what is coming next.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL made an interjection with reference to the unemployed in Victoria.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I would like to know how many unemployed there are in Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You have no sympathy with them.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I have a great deal more sympathy with them than the hon. member who interjects, whose sympathy is in his mouth. The Government should remember that their functions should be national, and not sectional, that the aim of the Government should be to harness the industries of the State as far as possible, but not by taking charge of them. One of the greatest troubles is that the Government quietly show themselves sympathetic with men who want to upset law and order; the Government have proved themselves absolutely a sectional Government, without in any way realising the wide nature of the obligations which rest upon a Government.

The PREMIER: You do not mean that?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member knows that it is only a statement, but it is a statement that is absolutely correct. I want to draw attention to the estimates of the revenue for the year, to be found on page 11 of the Statement. It shows that the receipts from Income Tax are expected to be £2,100,000, which is £260,000 more than was estimated last year, and about £77,000 more than was received last year. I would like to ask where this money is expected to come from. Has a blue pencil been used in making up the forecast of expenditure and receipts? Has the Treasurer said, "We must make it look attractive," and has he used a pencil without deliberately going into the possibilities of receiving the amounts he has put down? Because it does seem to me

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that the Treasurer has been unduly optimistic.

The TREASURER: I have been a bit like you people—very conservative.

HON. W. H. BARNES: It is a wonderful thing for the hon. member to be anything of that kind. Land tax is estimated to produce £480,000, or £25,000 more than the estimate last year and about £21,000 more than was received last year.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The farmers are going to pay that.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I was coming to that. There will be some very sore hearts among the people when they realise where they are going to be taken. Many a small man says, "No more Labour. These people have never been friendly to us."

An HONOURABLE MEMBER interjected.

HON. W. H. BARNES: An hon. member interjects something about produce agents. I have no sympathy with any statement condemning the manager of the State Produce Agency. I have said that before, and I repeat it here. While I am on that subject I should like to ask a question or two. Speaking from memory I think that the returns as a result of sales for farmers amounted to £45,000. I am not sure of the figures. At 5 per cent. that means a return to the Agency of £2,250. How is that going to pay the expenses connected with the Produce Agency? How would it be possible for that agent to keep his place open if he did not trade?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You would like to see it closed up?

HON. W. H. BARNES: No, I have no desire to see it closed up. If the hon. member must have a reply, let me tell him that since the State Produce Agency opened my business has increased very considerably.

The TREASURER: So the State has not gone to the dogs? (Government laughter.)

HON. W. H. BARNES: So far as the State Produce Agency's getting hold of the people is concerned, the object has failed, because they have no confidence in the Government—not in the management, but in the Government. The land revenue is expected to be £1,447,500, or about £189,500 more than was received last year, last year's receipts being £218,258 less than the estimate. Then we are told that there is going to be no extra taxation. I can only say, "Thank goodness for that; thank goodness that, at least, we have the Government nailed to that." I am going to tell you how we have them nailed to it. During the election campaign they found that things were going so badly that they had to change their policy every week. First the Treasurer said that there was going to be more taxation. Then the Premier found that things were not going sweetly, and he said, "No more taxation," to save the situation. I am rather inclined to think that he did help to save it, although the ex-deputy leader—

The TREASURER: You are one yourself, you know.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Although the ex-deputy leader nearly landed them in the soup, for I think the advice that was given by the ex-deputy leader proved to be bad, and the Premier had to come and shoulder the blame. I want to ask the Committee to look at the taxation increases since 1914-15.

The TREASURER: That is better.

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HON. W. H. BARNES: Simply because hon. members do not like criticism. The revenue from direct taxation was £375,000 in 1914-15. In 1919-20 it had risen to £3,323,745, and now, although there is no new taxation, the Treasury estimates it to produce £3,341,000. The Auditor-General shows that in 1915-16 the revenue from direct taxation was £1,455,358. Mr. Smith, you will admit that they have been going the pace, although you are a supporter of the Government. I beg your pardon, but when you are out of the chair you will admit that they have been going the pace, and going it most effectively. I am sorry to say that from the State point of view it has been most unsatisfactory. The Auditor-General shows that the increase in income tax amounts to 163.9 per cent., on land tax 95.9 per cent., and on stamp duty 116.8 per cent. I direct attention for confirmation of these figures to page 6 of the Auditor-General's report. I am prepared to admit that stamp duty is an uncertain source of revenue, because so many things come along that may produce plenty of stamp duty or may not.

The TREASURER: People will not die to order.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Government are helping to make them die pretty fast. I refer here to a striking sentence on page 12 of the Treasurer's Statement. I do not know whether the Treasurer ought not to blush, for he was apparently responsible for putting in this—

"It is hoped that by close supervision and control of expenditure the Government will succeed in balancing the accounts."

The TREASURER: Do you not agree with us?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I would agree with it in the case of any ordinary Government, but what do we know about their close examination of the accounts, their ability to watch them in such a way that there will be no doubt about the result? Such a thing is impossible. May I remind the Treasurer of that delightful trip to America. I notice that there is on the front bench at the present moment a Minister who recently had a bit of a jazz at Townsville. (Laughter.)

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Look out I do not tell the Committee about some of the jazzes you had. (Laughter.)

HON. W. H. BARNES: I have already challenged the Treasurer to put on the table the expenses of my jazzes. I [5.30 p.m.] want to draw attention to the Auditor-General's report in another direction. We have heard something about Chillagoe to-day, and on page 65 of his report the Auditor-General has this statement—

"The papers received from the Treasury relative to the above, show that valuations of the Railways Rolling Stock and Equipment were made during January and February, 1919, by Messrs. Stokes and Chalmers, and are as follows:—

I will follow the Treasurer's good example and say the total is £505,590 10s. 1d. Then I notice there is a reference by Mr. Marshall, Under Secretary for Mines. In a letter to the Premier he says—

"Referring to your memorandum of the 23rd January last, relative to the

allocation of the proportions of purchase money for plant, buildings, and properties, Chillagoe Railway Purchase Act, I have the honour by direction to advise that the proposed allocations, as follows, were submitted to the manager of the smelters, who offers no further recommendation, and the Minister concurs therein."

The total was £40,000. That letter was submitted to the Commissioner for Railways, who, thereupon, communicated with the Under Secretary, Treasury, to the following effect:—

"With reference to the attached memo, dated 2nd March, from the Under Secretary, Mines Department, to the Premier, and to Mr. Theodore's minute of 3rd idem thereon, I am directed by the Commissioner to inform you that the allocation of £40,000 for mining assets under the Chillagoe Railway Purchase Act is accepted under protest, in as much as it means that the Capital Account of the Railway Department will be charged with £160,408 more than the valuation put upon the Chillagoe and Etheridge Railways by the valuers appointed for the purpose.

"I am, &c.,

"G. R. STEER, Secretary."

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Read page 66.

HON. W. H. BARNES: That has already been read this afternoon, but to please the hon. gentleman I will read Mr. Robertson's letter to the Premier on page 66, which reads as follows:—

"I beg to invite your attention to the accompanying correspondence relative to the revaluation of all the property acquired by the State under the authority of the above Act. Most of this correspondence eventuated during your absence abroad, and, as it must necessarily be embodied in my report to Parliament when dealing with the Chillagoe undertaking, I think it advisable that you should be made acquainted with the circumstances.

"It will be seen that the valuations of the various properties amount in the aggregate to only £540,580 10s. 1d., as against £701,000, the amount of the purchase money, leaving a difference of £160,409 9s. 11d., which the Treasury have arbitrarily debited to the Railway Capital Account."

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Read the Premier's reply.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman asked me to read page 66, and I read page 66.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You read the Premier's reply.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I will follow my own course. Mr. Robertson's letter continues—

"The Act in question authorised the Secretary for Railways to acquire for the State certain railways and properties for a sum not exceeding £701,000, and as soon as may be after the coming into operation of the Act, a revaluation of the property so acquired was to be made by a person appointed by the Minister, and that the purchase money

not exceeding £701,000, was to be allocated in proportion to the valuations so made, etc., etc. (vide section 5 of the Act).

"It would appear that the proper course as indicated by this Act, would have been to depute the whole of the revaluation to the same person who would allocate the full amount of the purchase money as appeared to him equitable. If you desire to make any comments in connection with this matter, I shall be glad if you will favour me with the same at your earliest convenience."

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Read the Premier's reply.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I will read the Premier's reply, and I hope the Premier will give me some little extension of time. The PREMIER: The Committee has that power.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Premier replied to the Auditor-General as follows:—

"I have the honour to inform you that the officers appointed to revalue the Chillagoe and Etheridge Railways adopted an arbitrary and unsound basis for their calculations. By taking the original cost of construction, incurred at a time when labour and material were obtainable at a much less rate than at the date of revaluation, and by writing off an unjustifiably high percentage for depreciation, they arrived at an estimate quite unwarranted by the circumstances.

"It is admitted that, if the present day cost of construction were taken as a basis, and the amount required to bring the existing railways up to Government standard were deducted, the difference would be greatly in excess of the sum debited to the railways by the Treasury.

"The difference of £160,409 9s. 11d. you refer to is accounted for by the Chillagoe Railway being revalued at £237,587 9s. 4d., whereas, in 1915, the then Commissioner, Mr. Evans, valued the Chillagoe Railway alone at £498,902, or £261,350 greater than the revaluators estimate. Account should also be taken of the fact that, in the three years which elapsed between Commissioner Evans's valuation, and the purchase of the line, the section of railway construction had very considerably increased.

"I consider the amount debited against the Chillagoe and Etheridge Railways is not greater than their actual value to the State. Not only were the railways purchased at a reasonable price, but their ownership and control by the Government are essential to the progress and development of a very considerable area of North Queensland.

"I have etc.,

"E. G. THEODORE."

The PREMIER: The Auditor-General's note immediately following is also pretty pertinent.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I want to be absolutely fair in reading what the Premier says. All the same I want to point out that as a matter of fact, the State should have been out to make the best bargain possible and they certainly should not have appointed

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valuers who said the property was worth so much and then practically have gone back on the valuers, and said to the Commissioner for Railways, "You must shoulder an additional amount of £160,000." No wonder that our railways do not pay under such conditions.

The PREMIER: Do you think that the valuation now debited against them is an unfair valuation?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I think that having appointed a certain gentleman—the Premier probably knows him, I do not—it was the Premier's duty to stand by the revaluation, or, if he thought it was wrong, to call for a fresh valuation.

The PREMIER: I suggested that, but the Auditor-General did not accept it.

HON. W. H. BARNES: What has happened? We find that the poor Railway Department, which certainly has improved a little during the last twelve months as a result of increased fares, etc., has been saddled with an amount of £160,000.

The PREMIER: It is a cheap railway.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Time will prove whether it is a cheap railway or not. At any rate, the Auditor-General very pertinently draws attention to a condition of things which was extraordinary. I want now to deal with the question of relief. I have already touched on this matter, but it should be recorded in the pages of "Hansard" to show how this Government, as a result of their failure to govern, are driving men and women to get relief. In 1918, the amount spent on relief was £9,152. In 1919 the amount was £26,412, and last year, up till 30th June, the expenditure in this connection was £78,859. I would like to know what our position will be if we go on at the same rate during the next six years? At the present rate it will not take very long before this Government, as a result of their attitude towards the men who are seeking work, will have to find pretty well half their revenue in order to provide food for the unemployed—not a very bright prospect. This is one of those factors which should cause the public to think. I want to read the criticisms of the Auditor-General on page 36 of his report in connection with the way in which the Relief Department has been administered. The Auditor-General says—

"The inspector who examined the books and accounts of this office on 11th May, 1920, reported a very unsatisfactory state of affairs. The stock book and rations issue books had not been posted for several months, while discrepancies occurred in several lines of stock—in some instances the differences being unduly large.

"The increasing nature of the store's operations render it all the more necessary that the stock records should be kept accurately and up to date, also that stocks be frequently tested by the officer in charge.

"The report was referred to the Home Secretary's Department for necessary action on 15th June, but so far this office has not been advised what has been done in the matter."

The HOME SECRETARY: They are having a complete reorganisation.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Not only do we find that relief, as a result of the Govern-

ment's inability to control the affairs of the State, has been growing to an alarming extent, but we find that even the office itself, up to a certain point, has been in an unsatisfactory position.

The HOME SECRETARY: Did no officer steal money while you were Treasurer?

HON. W. H. BARNES: Some officers did, but nothing like as many as have stolen since the hon. gentleman has had to do with the department. The Auditor-General shows that the earnings increases for the ten years' period from 1st July, 1910, to 30th June, 1920, was 112.11 per cent., and the expenditure increased by 205.70 per cent. for the five years' period from 1st July, 1915, to 30th June, 1920. The earnings increased by 29.44 per cent., and the expenditure by 80.02 per cent. The point I wish particularly to make is this: that apparently the Government are unable in any department to so control affairs as to put them on anything like what you might call commercial lines.

The PREMIER: Are you satisfied with the Estimates this year?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I shall have an opportunity of expressing my opinion of the Estimates when we come to them.

The PREMIER: You do not seem to be criticising the finances.

HON. W. H. BARNES: It must not be forgotten that fares and freights, too, have been increased. I pointed out a while ago how they bled the person who could not kick very much. Where people were scattered they tried to bleed them, but where you get congested areas, there was no attempt at raising freights, and no attempt at raising fares—not a bit of it. The Government were afraid to do it. The Loan Fund position is very unsatisfactory, and I want to draw attention to the statement made by the Treasurer last night, when summarising the position in connection with the Loan Fund, and I want to prove that the position of the Loan Fund is absolutely unsatisfactory. The hon. gentleman, on page 14 of his Statement, gave these figures: He said the cash balance on 1st July, 1920, was £760,912, temporary loan from Bank of England, £1,000,000. Altogether, the repayments to date amount to £150,000, and sale of debentures, £54,000. What is the position? That makes a total sum of £1,964,912. We have heard a great deal about the Government going to step in to exercise care and caution. To-day, the figures published show that, for the five months just ended, no less than £1,900,000 has been spent on Loan Account.

The PREMIER: Do you think we ought to stop it?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am not suggesting anything about that. The point I want to make is this: That, as a matter of fact, the Government, unless they have received something during the last few days, have not a brass farthing. I say that when the Government are out to square things, those things should be squared. From this Statement it is certain that any moneys the Treasurer had on the 30th June, at the end of November have all been exhausted. Look at the statement which is made with regard to the Bank of England. Has a State ever been put into such a humiliating position? The Treasurer says in his Statement—

"Whilst in London the Premier

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arranged with the governor of the Bank of England for a temporary loan of £1,000,000, to be available to the Agent-General in instalments, as required from time to time to meet the London payments."

The leader of the Opposition has already referred to that, but this is the point I want to make. The Treasurer says—

"We shall have to pay interest at the prevailing bank rate, which at present is 7 per cent., but only upon the amount of the loan outstanding from day to day. If at any time we are in a position to reduce the loan, we shall only pay interest upon the unpaid balance. Although the loan is repayable 1st July next, I am very hopeful that the bank may be prepared to allow each instalment to be treated as a loan for twelve months from the date of the advance. With this in view, the Treasury bills issued to the bank as security are being made out for a term of twelve months from the dates of the respective applications for advances; thus they will be available as a security, if necessary, beyond 1st July, 1921, without the need for the creation of new bills with consequent additional expense for stamp duty."

One can readily understand the position which the Premier found himself in in England, when he had to go to the Bank of England, and ask them to put out so much from time to time, in order to save the good name of the State. I am not blaming the Premier for doing it, because he was put against a stiff problem, but I am blaming the Premier to-day because he allowed things to get into that condition which he could have prevented. You will remember that in the Auditor-General's report for 1918-1919 he sounded a warning note, and said that it was time that we should stop and think, and see what we were coming to, but no notice was taken of that warning note. We went on drifting, and here we are to-day in a position which places us practically in the hands, it may be, of local people in order to give us money to carry on, unless the Treasurer or the Premier has some statement to make with regard to things that have occurred.

THE PREMIER: Did you not borrow £1,000,000 from Fisher in 1917?

HON. W. H. BARNES: That is perfectly correct; but do not forget that it was paid back before it was due, and that we were in a position to lend South Australia and Victoria moneys which we had to spare, and earn interest on them. That is the position we were in. The Treasury cannot deny it.

THE PREMIER: You paid £40,000 interest on surplus funds that were unemployed.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman said we needed money at one time, and now he says we had it to waste.

THE PREMIER: You had surplus funds to waste.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Those surplus funds were lent out from time to time as opportunity offered, and the Treasurer knows it; but the fact remains that we safeguarded the interests of the State. It must not be forgotten that the Loan Fund statement to which I have referred is a statement which will cause every Queenslanders to think and

wonder where we are going to drift to. The Treasurer, as far as we know, is proposing to raise a loan of £2,000,000. How far is that going to take us? It is not as if we had any reserve. We are spending at the rate of nearly £2,000,000 for five months, and the Treasurer tells us it is going to last us for a year. I will tell you what it is going to do. It is going to carry on the Government for a few months. I can imagine that they will probably be hurrying into recess, so that they may get away from the criticisms of the people, and the criticisms of their own supporters in Parliament, as well as from ourselves. I said it was no use touching a sore, and whether the hon. gentleman likes it or not, his clear duty as Premier is to face the difficulty as it is, and get at the cause of all the trouble, and then there will be prosperity in Queensland. What is the position with regard to maturing loans? If I remember rightly, there is no reference in the Statement to maturing loans, but if I am wrong the Treasurer will be able to correct me. In 1922 we have £2,000,000, and in 1924 another £13,000,000 maturing.

THE TREASURER: All built up by your Government?

HON. W. H. BARNES: It does not matter who built them up. The fact remains that the loan indebtedness of this great State has been added to by the present Government at a greater ratio than by any other Government which has held office in this State. We were told that a firm grip was going to be put on the finances, but there is no firm grip at all. It is a case of doing the best you can while things are as they are, and trusting to luck. That is financing, as known by the ex-deputy leader of the Government. As I said at the opening of my remarks, Queensland must be developed, and that is the line of Queensland's safety. It is not going to be developed by crying, "Want of confidence," as this Government is doing. I venture to say that there are people outside who would readily come into Queensland and start manufactures and other things if they felt there was going to be some security; but they know that there is no security. Not that the Government, perhaps, themselves would not give some security, but they are not in a position to give it, because the powers behind them will not allow them. There must be encouragement in the development of land, encouragement of people to go on the land, instead of driving them from it. From the way things are shaping, in the very near future, unless an alteration takes place in the Government of this country, you are going to have to pay people to keep them on the land, and if we do not have the land developed, we are not going to do what we ought to do in the interests of this great State.

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

Mr. MACGREGOR (*Merthyr*): I move—

"That the hon. member for Bulimba be granted an extension of time to finish his speech."

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to point out to the Committee that Standing Order 107, which deals with the time limit of speeches, makes provision for an extension of time in the House, but no such provision is

Mr. Smith.]

made with respect to Committee. It would appear that under the Standing Orders, Parliament considered it was desirable in some instances to grant an extension of time in the House, but did not make any provision for a similar extension of time in Committee. It is open to question whether such an extension can be given. However, there are cases on record of this being done, and I take it that the Committee should give an opinion on the matter, and I will therefore put the question to the Committee so that it can decide whether it is desirable that an extension should be granted to the hon. member. The question is—That the hon. member for Bulimba be granted an extension of time.

Question put and passed.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I want to thank the members of the Committee for their courtesy. I shall not encroach very much longer on their time. I want to call attention before I sit down to a paragraph in the Statement made by the Treasurer, in which he says—

“The idle talk—so fashionable to-day—that depicts the worker, in the field or factory, as an inherent loafer, while hailing him as a hero when on the battlefield, should be eschewed.”

Has not the hon. gentleman been guilty of practically playing up to class hatred? One of the troubles of Queensland to-day is the class hatred that has been created, and here a responsible Minister of the Crown puts into his Financial Statement at a critical time, when men should be joining hands rather than being rent asunder, with a view apparently of fostering in the minds and breasts of the people something which is going to make them feel that they must get further and further apart. One of the remedies for the condition of affairs in Queensland and Australia to-day is not to widen the breach between employer and employee, but to keep them together and make them feel that they have things in common. It may be co-operation, by giving the employees participation in profits; but any man who has the interests of Queensland at heart knows that we are not going to help Queensland by driving the people apart from each other, as evidently the Treasurer tried to do in that particular paragraph. The paragraph is one which I feel sure that the Treasurer in his calmer moments will regret that he has put into the Statement.

The TREASURER: It is quite true.

HON. W. H. BARNES: In closing, I want, with my final words, to urge the Government to look at the position from the broadest possible standpoint, and to remember that, after all, it is not a question of whether the Labour party or any other party are in power. Surely we can divest ourselves from that view. Is not the proper view which each one of us should have as citizens and custodians of this great State that we should help to build this great State, not on sectional lines, but on lines which will help the community and remove the difficulties which exist to-day and make the conditions better for the progress of our posterity in the days to come?

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): I would like to say a few words on this matter. Queensland, without doubt, is the most remarkable country in the world. We have scarcely one inhabitant to the square mile,

and we have a rent roll of £1,258,015, and yet with such a vast country we cannot make a living without borrowing.

(*Sitting suspended between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.*)

Mr. BEBBINGTON (continuing): I claim to have travelled over Queensland, and have a wider experience of it than any man in this House, or, perhaps, any man in Queensland. (Government laughter, and dissent.) I know something of the riches of Queensland, and what it can produce. We have a rent roll, independent of our lands and farms and grazing lands, of £1,258,105, including timber and that sort of thing. Yet the few people who are scattered over this large area cannot make a living without borrowing money. There is something sadly wrong. The Labour party used to have a plank—I think they have burnt it—to restrict borrowing. Their policy now is to borrow all they can, tax all they can, and spend all they can, in the hope that their friends will get some of it. They could not get through the lot of it without their friends being recompensed for their services. That is what is at the bottom of our present financial position.

The TREASURER: Are we spending too much?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Yes, the Government are spending too much, and they are spending it on wrong principles.

The TREASURER: In what way are we spending too much?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I say the Government are not getting value for their money, and they are paying for political services instead of for production. If we put this money into revenue-producing investments there would be no complaint whatever. I would like to see a return covering the last two years of the investments of borrowed money. It probably would not return 1 per cent.

The TREASURER: During the last few years we have borrowed less than your Government borrowed during their last term.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Last year the Government spent £11,000,000 of revenue and about £5,000,000 of borrowed money. I wonder how much of that £5,000,000 has been well spent and is revenue-producing? I am quite positive a lot of that money has been very badly invested, and that is the reason for the present financial position. The Government forget that our standard of living has to be paid for. They have forgotten to produce the wealth and pay for it. So far they have been living on borrowed money, and running into debt, and our standard of living has not been paid for. There must come a day of reckoning, and it is coming very fast. Let us go back to 9th September, 1913. Even as far back as that we could see that the socialist party were anxious to get into power, so that they could have the opportunity of taxing the producer. I will quote from the present Premier's speech on page 1239, vol. cxv., 1913. He said—

“In Queensland we have no land tax, and we could easily supplement our revenue by imposing such a tax, and thereby lessen the burden of interest which the general taxpayer has to pay, though a large number of them do not benefit to any extent by the expenditure of loan money.”

[*Mr. Smith.*

Here is proof that the socialist party have always been willing to sacrifice the producer in order to relieve the rich taxpayer. How is it that the questions which were submitted to the producers at the recent inquiry on dairy produce are not submitted to other business men? Why was the producer asked to give the price of his land when he bought it six years ago, and what it is worth now? Why are not these questions put to business men? They dare not do it. Has the price-fixer made any attempt to go into the business man's house, as he went into the farmer's? I was down at Coolangatta two or three weeks ago, and I found that the conditions are such in New South Wales that the farmers living within miles of the border on the Queensland side are carting their cream into New South Wales, because it is worth 4d. per lb. more to them there. Is that justice to our producers? What are the Government going to do? A few years ago Mr. Andrew Fisher said, "If we cannot get the judges to give us the verdict we want, we will find our own judges."

Mr. KIRWAN: Where did he say that? You cannot quote it.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I have not the slightest hesitation in saying the price fixers and everyone else give exactly the verdict the Government want. Hon. gentlemen know what happened in connection with the Cavas Fertiliser Company. They know what arrangements were made with the manager. They know about the occurrences at election time, when the manager used his car and everything else. The State Government, in the shape of the State Produce Agency, are being allowed 20 per cent. commission. Is not that profiteering? If there is profiteering in existence, are not the Government guilty of it? A few years ago the present Government said we had trusts and combines, and they were always talking about what they were going to do when they got on the other side—how they were going to slaughter the trusts and combines. They have been in about six years. Have they found one? (Government interjections.) The Minister says he saw one. What did he do when he saw it? He kept the address to himself. It does not do for his party to interfere with the trusts and combines, because they have too much interest in them. I contend that there should be an inquiry into the charging of 20 per cent. commission by the State Produce Agency. They have no right to charge 20 per cent. for handling the stuff, and 10 per cent. should be returned to the farmer. The highest commission that has ever been paid for handling produce was paid by the company I was represented in. We agreed with that, because it was not only commission but payment for services rendered. That company handled the whole of the stuff, cased it, sent it away, and were responsible for all debts, at a charge of $\frac{7}{8}$ per cent. Yet we have a Government agency taking 20 per cent. for handling stuff for the farmers—not on the farmers' behalf, but sold to the farmers. I am told that if an inquiry were held, and the same questions were submitted as the farmers had submitted to them the other day, it would be found that the fertiliser could be produced for £2 instead of £4 per ton. Following on the present Premier's anxiety in 1913 to bring in a land tax, we will see how taxation has been increased. It will not be a cause for wonder that the cost of living has

gone up when it is seen how the taxation has been increased. In 1914, before these gentlemen took over the reins of government, the income tax was £472,918, stamp duty £235,470, totalisator £27,003, and licenses £32,407. Here is an object-lesson. In 1920 the actual receipts, according to the Treasurer's statement, are, income tax £2,023,316. Compare that with £472,918. Then we come to the land tax. In 1914 there was no land tax, but last year the receipts from that source amounted to £459,183.

The TREASURER: Where was that £578,000 collected?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I will tell you before I have finished. Stamp duty produced last year £698,382, totalisator tax £55,791, licenses £36,068, or a total taxation of £3,323,745, an increase of £2,435,947. With an increase like that, can you wonder that the cost of living has gone up? Hon. members admit that the whole of the taxation must be placed on the consumer; they admitted that the other day. Down South recently a judge discovered that the business man put his taxation on to the goods he sells. What a wonderful thing for a learned judge to discover! Any Chinaman's son could tell you that; a labourer's child could tell you that. That is enough to shake our confidence in judges and a good many other learned men. Let us get to something practical. Let us get men who have to earn their living and know what the cost of a meal is, and what it means sometimes to go without it.

Now, take land tax. I have already referred to "Hansard" in which the Premier advocated a land tax to get at the rich landholder. In 1915 he said that they only wanted £150,000. He introduced his land tax very nicely; but I for one told him that he was imposing a tax that would bring in another £300,000. The very mild land tax, comparatively, brought in in that year £247,044; in 1917, £362,532; in 1918, £344,547; and in 1919—and here are the figures which I gave the other night and which the Minister said were incorrect—£578,253; and in 1920, £459,186, or a total class taxation from people who own land in five years of £1,991,562. Suppose that they take up the position that business men do pay part of it—suppose we say, which would not be true, that they paid it all—on their own showing that would be a cause of the high cost of living, because it stands to reason that business men must pay the land tax by adding it to the cost of the goods they sell. If you are going to inflict a tax of £10,000 or £20,000 on a big business man in the Valley, for instance, the fact remains that he must put it on to the goods he sells. What is the good of running away from the position and trying to pacify people by making them believe that you are only taxing rich people? These taxes have come back to the worker, who to-day is carrying £1,991,562 of land tax on his food-tuffs and other goods. The people who buy the goods have to pay it all, except what the farmers pay, who cannot pass it on. They are the only ones who cannot pass it on.

The PREMIER: Who pay the rates?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The householder, of course, pays the rates. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: Why do you not give him a vote?

Mr. Bebbington.]

Mr. BEBBINGTON: He has a vote; nothing can prevent his getting it. I want to point out one result of that taxation—namely, that houses to-day are being removed from the country into Brisbane. Two members of country electorates have come to Brisbane, and have been shown houses here that were removed from their electorates.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Who are they?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The houses were removed because the taxation on the land was so heavy, and the houses were practically worthless. The land is going out of cultivation, and the houses are being brought to Brisbane. Those houses came from two of the richest provinces in Queensland—the Lockyer and the Cunningham.

Now, we come to the increased railway freights. In 1914 the income from the railways was £3,675,562; in 1920, £4,936,496—an increase of £1,260,934. The fares and freights have gone up. On beef there were three rises, and on dairy produce one rise of 42 per cent. on one line. Can you wonder that the cost of living has gone up? What sort of reckless government—reckless expenditure—is this?

In 1914 the receipts from land revenue totalled £943,135. In 1920 the revenue was £1,258,015, an increase of £314,808. How was that increase made up? Partly by increased royalties on timber, which increased the cost of a worker's house. Those royalties rose from 2s. or 3s. per 100 feet to about 16s. or 17s.. Can you wonder that timber is dear when the timber merchant has to pay nearly £1 at the stump for what he used to get for 2s. 6d.? Can you wonder that the cost of building has gone up three times over? What is the result? The result is that a worker who had £600 or £700 in the Savings Bank five years ago finds that his savings are not worth half what they were when this Government came into power. I defy the Minister to say differently. I defy him to say that a worker's balance in the Savings Bank to-day is worth half what it was when his Government came into power. I know a man who intended to build a home. He had £500. I met him the other day, and he told me that he had not built it, and that he would want £1,200 to build the same house now. What is the reason for this reduced value of the sovereign? Borrowing; credit gone down, with the result that the purchasing power of the pound has gone to 13s. or less, with taxation added to it!

Then there is the annual interest that has to be paid. According to the Treasurer's own showing, the annual interest will be nearly £3,000,000. I have the figures somewhere, but I cannot put my hand on them just at the moment.

The TREASURER: That is the most accurate guess you have made to-night. (Laughter.)

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I have not made any guess before; I have given facts. (Hear, hear!) That is the only guess I have made, and the Treasurer admits that I have come very near it. The amount required for interest on the public debt in 1915 was £2,044,294. This year the Treasurer wants £2,978,644. Are we doing the right thing in handing down such a mortgage to young Queenslanders? It is all very well for politicians who can borrow this money and with

their friends have a good spree and carry on for some years, but it is the young Queenslanders who will have to carry the debt. They must remember that the interest for renewals is going to be considerably higher than on the original loans, and that this Government will hand down an annual interest Bill of between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000 to young Queenslanders. What would they think of a farmer who mortgaged his farm right up to the hilt and had a good spree year after year and then left it to his sons to pay for? That is exactly what is

going on now. The Government [7.30 p.m.] are having a good spree. They can carry on for a year or two; but the reckoning day is coming, and I want our young people to remember that that £3,500,000 will have to come out of industry before wages are paid, just as the farmer who mortgages his farm has to pay his interest before he can live. Those are facts. The Premier knows very well that all these things are a charge on industry. What is the reason for all this uncertainty? What is the reason for the present deplorable state of affairs? It can be summed up in one word—the Labour-Socialist platform.

The PREMIER: That is not one word.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If you want it in one word, I will give it to you—socialism. (Laughter.) That is the reason why the Premier could not borrow money in London. The money-lenders turned up their platform and saw that they wished to bring about a co-operative commonwealth and abolition of the private ownership of property. They said to him, "You ask us to lend you £9,000,000, and yet the platform behind your back is the abolition of private ownership." No wonder they want to have a voice in the legislation of Queensland. Is there any wonder that they wanted an understanding from the Premier that he was not going to bring in these planks of their platform and confiscation. There is only one remedy for all this—that is the policy the Country party, which is an Australian Labour policy of production.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Destruction.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It is not a policy of destruction. There is a policy of production and there is a socialistic policy of destruction, and that policy of destruction has brought us to the position we are in to-day. Our policy aims at dividing the results of their labour with the workers. Too long has the industrial worker had to divide the results of his labour with those parasites who will not work. We are going to put an end to that kind of thing. If you want the labourer to take his proper place and get what he earns, put this party over there. (Government laughter.) I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that in a very short time the workers of Queensland will demand that policy. They will see that there is nothing in socialism. If you trace socialism right to the very bottom, what have you got?

The TREASURER: Socialism. (Laughter.)

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Yes, and that is all. One of his own supporters has admitted that if you followed it out to the end you would have a nation whose richest citizen only owned the clothes he stood up in. Is that a good ideal to work for? Our policy means giving to the worker the full results of his labour, and we want the worker to own his

[Mr. Bebbington.]

own factory. We want him to own the means of production. We believe he has a right to it. We believe he has that spirit in him to-day which is creating a desire to get away from what our friends opposite call the "wage slave." When our party gets into power we will assist him to realise that ideal, assist him to own his own factories so that he may get the full results of his labour. We believe it is possible for every worker in Australia to become a manufacturer, but hon. members on the other side offer him his clothes and a tooth brush. Which will the worker take? Is it any wonder that the Labour party came back here with a minority of 20,000? The worker will speak with a great voice next time, and they will say we are going to have an Australian Labour policy; we will have no more of the foreign Labour policy. The socialist Labour policy to-day is a foreign policy. Something like 46,000 Australian lads have laid down their lives for an Australian policy. They purchased it with their blood, and they will get it.

* Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): I have read with considerable interest the Financial Statement as presented last night by the Treasurer, and I congratulate the hon. gentleman on the development of his faculties as a fiction writer, because, as a story, his Statement reads excellently, but as a solace to the hungry business man or taxpayer, who is looking for some relief from the onerous conditions under which he is labouring at the present moment, then it is a bitter pill of disappointment. There is one phrase that I purpose referring to as illustrating my point, and it is to be found in the second paragraph on page 4. It reads as follows:—

"However, with good seasons the recovery in Queensland is rapid, and we can, perhaps, derive some consolation from the fact that Providence has committed to our care a heritage whose potentialities, despite the momentary gloom occasioned by passing clouds, must eventually reflect in the prosperity of its citizens its own superb and illimitable possibilities."

A great effort. It is comforting to think that the Treasurer is beginning to look for relief from the trouble we are suffering at the present moment, to Queensland's good seasons rather than to Queensland's Labour Government. We have always argued that that is correct, that if we did rely on the seasons and look for relief in that direction we should get far better results than we have obtained from Queensland's Labour Government. The hon. gentleman says "Providence has committed to our care a heritage." I wonder if he means by that heritage the heritage the Labour party is passing down to posterity in Queensland to-day, a heritage of mismanagement; a heritage of misgovernment, and to place the blame for that on Providence is most unkind to say the least of it. The hon. gentleman talks about "The momentary gloom occasioned by passing clouds." I only wish the gloom were momentary, and again I say instead of attributing it to passing clouds, it could be more fairly attributed to the financial ineptitude of the Labour Government at the present moment. In this extravagant form of language the Treasurer tries to find some kind of solace and excuse for the position in which Queensland finds itself to-day. Further, it is comforting to know that the Treasurer finds some cause for

congratulation on the position in which Queensland finds herself to-day, but, as a man who is a serious student of the situation, when I remember that Queensland's credit is destroyed, that unemployment is rampant in our midst, that retrenchment has been put into operation, that taxation is so great that they dare not raise it, and that the railways under their management have lost an average of £1,000,000 per annum, I fail to see what cause for congratulation we can find in this state of affairs. I must admit that the Treasurer, in common with his colleagues, can find cause for congratulation, because they are the only members of the community which are better off to-day than they were five years ago, but so far as Queensland herself is concerned, I think there is no cause for congratulation whatsoever. I have always argued that the true evidence of Queensland's prosperity is to be found in the dissection of the figures which are presented to us each year by the Home Secretary, because there you see the results of the distress caused by unemployment and all those other social disorders which are a natural corollary of bad government, and it is significant that where, last year, £41,000 was paid in relief, they are making provision for an expenditure of £77,000 during the current year, clearly showing that they are anticipating that we are going to have something like 100 per cent. more relief needed in Queensland this year than was the case last year. We pass on to the question of State children, and we see the amount in this connection is to be increased from £167,000 to £214,000, so in spite of all the optimism, in spite of all the pious hopes with which the Treasurer surrounds his Financial Statement, we see him making greater provision for those who are the true sufferers from financial mismanagement. I am going to pass on and just call attention to the statements of Ministers during the recent election, and the subdued and temperate actions foreshadowed in the Financial Statement which the Treasurer put before us yesterday. We had the Premier, during election time, touring the country, disappointed in his aeroplane stunt, but touring the country by other means and spreading poison and venom in every possible direction, and telling the people he was going to seize dividends, he was going to force loans, he was going to raise taxation and make the people who represented the class that he says dared to interfere with his London mission squeal and suffer.

While that was being done the Nationalists and Farmers' representatives rightly argued that Queensland's reputation had been temporarily sacrificed on the altar of repudiation. Say what you like, the position in which we find ourselves to-day is solely attributable to that particular phase of our legislation which has, unfortunately, made its appearance quite recently in this State. That is evident from the Treasurer's own statement, because he says that in December last when the Labour Government circulated invitations for a loan of £2,000,000 there were over £4,000,000 offered, which is an amount 100 per cent. greater than was required, and he draws a comparison between that state of affairs and what we found six months later when it was impossible for the Premier to float any loan whatever. It is right and proper that we should at this stage examine the situation and cut out once and for all the ridiculous excuses which have

been advanced to explain that failure, and put in "Hansard" the true reasons which caused the disaster. The Premier knows that at election time it is necessary for him and his colleagues to have some kind of a catch cry which they can placard on the walls, and with which they can appeal to the imaginations of the people. They must catch hold of some little combination of words which will appeal to the sentiments and emotions of their followers, and which will prevent the electors from studying the real economic situation. And the one catch cry which they invented for this purpose at the last elections was the delegation which was sent to England. The Premier conceived the idea of misleading the people and making them believe that their destinies were disturbed by financial combinations in London. That was an error the effect of which will last for many years. It would have been far better and would have led to the Government being more highly thought of if they had admitted the real reason for their failure to float a loan, and endeavoured to put their house in order. I propose to read from "Hansard" for 1913, page 751. I do not want to be egotistical, but still I want to read the remarks I made in the debate on the land repudiation Act, which exactly outlined the reasons for the financial disaster which overtook Queensland some six months ago. These are the remarks I made on that occasion—

"The second feature—one which I must still impress upon this House—is this: Possibly, being of English origin and possibly being the youngest newchum in this House, and when in England having been associated very closely with financial circles, I am qualified to speak upon it. I do contend that if this measure becomes law it will have the most serious effect on the confidence and faith of the British investor in Queensland securities. I must stress that point, because the time is coming when we have to beseech—almost—a renewal of those loans which are falling due. At the present moment we are financing the State through the Commonwealth, so that it is the Commonwealth's reputation which is at stake, and not that of Queensland, but the time is coming when Queensland must stand on its own feet, and all these questions which are being asked by financial papers at home will be up against us and our credit. I propose just to read an extract from the 'Courier' of 1st July, which repeats an extract from the 'London Times'—

The 'London Times' in a financial comment on the Anglo-Australian banking financial resolution, considers it almost incredible that Queensland should proceed to such a proposal, which would destroy the faith of British investors in Queensland and Australia generally.

"Mr. Whitford: Lord Northcliffe.

"Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It does not matter whether it is Lord Northcliffe or anybody else. That is a very important paper whose financial criticism is valued at home, and if the impression gets abroad that Queensland is likely to repudiate or does repudiate its obligations it will most certainly have a most serious effect on our credit on the money

market at home. This is a point on which sufficient stress has not been laid, and I contend that if members opposite had a little more experience, especially of money matters and the financial markets, they would appreciate this point and take every care to see that the credit of Queensland was not imperilled.

"Mr. Brennan: You do not think of the lands held by the rich."

That is the usual kind of interjection we get from the hon. member for Toowoomba. I went on to say—

"It does not matter if the whole country were held by the rich. That does not justify us in repudiating our obligation. When hon. members have a little more experience and realise the importance of financial obligations they will appreciate fully the argument I am now advancing."

That is the argument which I advanced two years ago, and I think that every hon. member who studies this matter dispassionately must agree that that is absolutely and solely the rock upon which Queensland's credit has been split. The fact that hon. members seek to cast the blame in some other direction is only the farther evidence of their incapacity. The hon. member for Toowoomba is becoming as insistent in his interjections as he is in his notices to the Press of his charitable donations, and I would suggest to him that he should desist from those interjections. I would ask this question: Why is it that members opposite have changed their attitude of threats to an attitude of humble appeal? Is it repentance, or is it fear? I do not think that hon. members opposite are capable of any kind of repentance. I think it is fear that has caused them to change their attitude. They can see the signs of their downfall written on the wall, and they are probably consoling themselves with the fact that by drawing in their horns they may possibly get some kind of an extension of their occupation of the Treasury benches. I want to refer to this failure of their attempt at loan flotation in London from a different point of view from that taken by those who have discussed the question. It may not be an altogether unmixed blessing that the Premier was not successful on the London market.

I have already dealt with the cause of the failure, and in a few brief words I am going to deal with the effect. If £9,000,000 had been borrowed in London for the purposes which the Premier and his party had in mind, it would simply have meant that it would have imposed a further burden on the taxpayers of something like £600,000 per annum. That £9,000,000 would have been invested or spent in unproductive channels; it would have been spent, some £3,000,000 of it, in building a State iron and steel works, and another £3,000,000 would have been spent on a railway to the Upper Burnett district, both of which would have been unproductive for many years. I contend, therefore, that the expenditure of £9,000,000 in the directions indicated would have imposed a burden upon taxpayers of at least another £600,000 per annum. Another point I want to make is this, that one of the main causes for the high cost of living in Queensland to-day is the large expenditure of loan moneys in unproductive directions. If

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you spend money in directions which circulate money without creating production, or the proper proportion of production, it naturally follows that there is more money in circulation and less production on which to spend, and, therefore, the effect is an increase in the cost of living. I contend that, had the Government succeeded in raising their £9,000,000, it would have simply meant a large expenditure of loan money in unproductive directions. The circulation of this large sum of money would have resulted in an increase in the cost of living, because we would not have had, as its corollary, the necessary amount of increased production. Passing on, I contend also that it is not the right time to engage in big loan expenditure at the present moment in the building of large enterprises of this description, particularly by State Governments. My reasons for that are many. In the first place, money costs to-day almost twice as much in interest as it used to do. Further than that, money only goes in expenditures of that nature to about half the distance it used to go. Again, the labour value at the present moment is at its lowest ebb, and, therefore, I contend, that from all these points of view, it is undesirable for the State Government to embark on a big expenditure. I will deal at the latter end of my speech with the question as to what I mean when I state that the labour value is at its lowest ebb.

Passing on, I just want to remark that, in my judgment, this Government has been forced into a true conception of its duty—that is to govern, and not to trade—and I contend that by being forced to get out of the development of the State enterprises, as must be done by the curtailment of loan expenditure, it is going to leave the door open to private enterprise, which is the right means of developing Queensland. In support of my arguments, I want to read the words of Lord Macaulay which he uttered some half century ago, which seems to me to be particularly apt and applicable to our State affairs.

Mr. COLLINS: Was not that in a leading article in the "Brisbane Courier"?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It was, and if the hon. gentleman were to study the "Courier" a little more than he does, and abandon the "Standard" and the "Worker," probably his mind would expand. This is what Lord Macaulay said, as quoted in the "Brisbane Courier."

"More than half a century ago, Macaulay, referring to certain suggestions by Mr. Southey for Government interference said: 'It is not by the intermeddling of the omniscient and omnipotent State but by the prudence and energy of the people that the nation has hitherto been carried forward in civilisation; and it is to the same prudence and the same energy that we now look with comfort and good hope. Our rulers will best promote the improvement of the nation by strictly confining themselves to their own legitimate duties, by leaving capital to find its own lucrative course, commodities their fair price, industry and intelligence their natural reward, and by defending property, and by observing strict economy in every department of State.'

Macaulay must have had in his mind the

advent of Labour Government in Queensland when he wrote those words, and I am thankful that the "Courier" has put these very apt words before us, so that we may study them and benefit by them. I am going to pass on to another matter, which will, no doubt, be a very contentious one, and one which will probably call for a great deal of criticism from hon. members opposite. One of the main reasons why Queensland finds herself in the position she is in to-day is because of the creed of compulsion as practised by the Labour Government and the Labour party generally. Compulsion appears in practically every one of their actions, except as regards compulsion to defend one's country, and compulsion to work. (Government dissent.) Those are the two things that a man is not compelled to do, but compulsion in every other direction is vividly exemplified in every undertaking, and every method of progress which the Labour party adopts. Let me touch upon a few methods of compulsion which was practised in the Labour movement. In the first place, a man if he wishes to earn a crust is compelled to join a union. In the second place, after he has joined this union, he is compelled to subscribe to their funds, he is compelled to subscribe to their papers, he is compelled to subscribe whether he wants to or not, and he is compelled to accept—and this is the most significant phase of the whole matter—he is compelled to accept the same rate of wage as the men in the same calling as he is, whether he is more qualified, or as qualified as his colleague, or not. In that lies one of the great troubles with which we are faced to-day. These processes of compulsion are applied to the working men, and the working man is beginning to understand and wake up to the fact that in that cry of compulsion lies the opportunity for these gentlemen, these agitators and organisers who adorn our Government benches, to fatten and batten upon them. Another grave evil in Queensland to-day is the compulsion which has been recently applied to the sale of goods, and to the prices at which goods are to be sold. This interference with the liberty of the subject is having a most disastrous effect, and I think if any hon. member wanted to get evidence of that disastrous effect he has only to read the report of the Price Fixing Commissioner. That gentleman stated in his last report that after four months' operations he had saved to the consumers of Queensland a sum of £200,000.

The TREASURER: Hear, hear!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The Treasurer says "Hear, hear!" I will proceed to show him what a wonderful solace and comfort that has been to the working people. Two hundred thousand pounds in four months is equivalent to £12,500 per week, which, if spread over 700,000 people, amounts to exactly 4d. per head per week, and yet the Treasurer says "Hear, hear!" There is a monument to the ability of hon. gentlemen opposite to curtail prices and to kill the profiteer, whose efforts have resulted in the saving of 4d. per head per week to the pockets of the people of Queensland. I am going to show what the true effect of all that has been. The true effect has been this, that you can compel a man by legislation to sell his goods at a certain price, but you

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cannot compel a man to produce more goods to take the place of those he has sold, and any interference with the liberty of the subject in the matter of production and in the matter of the price which he has to realise for his goods, inevitably has the effect of curtailing production and making the position worse. Another effect which has evidently not occurred to hon. gentlemen opposite is this: If you attempt to fix the price of commodities, it stands to reason that a price which gives a living wage to the small storekeeper is going to give a huge profit to the large storekeeper. The big storekeeper sells a gross of an article where the small storekeeper only sells one packet of it, and it is quite obvious if you are going to fix a price at a certain figure which will permit a small storekeeper to live, you are going to make a huge profit for the big storekeeper. So, it stands to

[8 p.m.] reason that you are either going to make larger profits for the big storekeeper or you are going to drive the small storekeeper out of existence by the fixation of prices. These are arguments which any business man knows of. But they are not realised by hon. members opposite, who think they are possessed of all the business acumen that is necessary to conduct the country's affairs. They are evidences of the maladministration which we are now beginning to understand and appreciate, and which Queensland in the meantime is suffering from. I want to pass on and deal with the other compulsion—the fixation of rents. Hon. gentlemen opposite, except those who own houses—and there are a few—have probably been smiling at the wonderful effect on the community of this fixation of rents. They have thought "Here is this parasite of a landlord, this octopus of a landlord, finally brought to book and made to reduce his rents in keeping with the value of his property." What is the position? Houses are becoming more and more scarce from a rent point of view. You cannot force a man to let his house. What he is doing to-day is selling. He refuses to come under the compulsory clause of hon. gentlemen opposite. What would be the proper means of dealing with this situation? The trouble is there have not been sufficient houses to go round. If the Government had allowed freedom of action to those who looked for investments in property, it would have meant that we would have had more erected. By building more houses the ultimate result would be that we would have had more houses than tenants, and down would come the rents. Hon. gentlemen opposite do not understand that. They believe in the doctrine which compels a man who owns anything to disgorge or bow to their will, with the inevitable disaster.

I want now to refer to the doctrine which Nationalism believes in for dealing with this situation. I believe that when you indulge in destructive criticism it is quite right and proper that constructive proposals should be put in their place. I want now to deal with the proposals which we have for meeting the situation. In those proposals, in my opinion, lie the salvation of this country. The question of the cost of living, of loan expenditure, of loan redemption, of unemployment, of relief—all those problems which are worrying the Government would disappear if the doctrine we advance is adopted. That doctrine is

payment by results. Hon. gentlemen who occupy the Farmers' benches at the present moment are evidence of that doctrine, and the success of that doctrine. They stand or fall by the actual results of their labour, they are subjected to very much greater interference and greater troubles than Labour is, in the sense that they are subjected to the influences of the elements. All their efforts may be lost in a single day by storms and disturbances. But those gentlemen will go on plodding forward, quite content to secure payment by results. Any other attempt to advance Queensland, or Australia generally, on any other policy except that of payment by results is doomed to disaster. I am going to give a simple illustration in support of my contention. Although simple, it nevertheless is probably one which will illustrate my point pretty thoroughly. Assuming a man determines to erect ten shops of brick in a thoroughfare where he can find tenants to occupy them under the present system. He has to employ bricklayers at a fixed rate of wages, entirely independent of merit and ability. What happens? The first day these men go up on the job they probably concentrate their attention on their own work. At the end of the first day they look round—as any human being would—and compare the result of their day's labour with that of their next door neighbour. If the man who has laid more bricks than his next door neighbour considers for one moment, he argues with himself, "Why should I lay these additional bricks and only get the same results for my labour as my next door neighbour?" So it goes on. What happens on the second day? Those men are all laying bricks at the same rate. And what is that rate? It is the rate of the slowest man on the job. This is not a reflection upon the working man. I would do the same myself.

The TREASURER: You are always maligning the worker.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It is simply studying that element of human nature which gentlemen opposite seem to entirely disregard. Just as the speed of a fleet is determined by its slowest ship, so is the speed of those bricklayers determined by the slowest man on the job. Follow that out and what happens? Those shops take probably two months longer to build and the overhead charges are all the more by reason of the greater time taken in the building. Instead of costing, probably, £3,000 to build, they cost £10,000. The man who has built those shops looks for, say, 8 per cent. interest upon his money. Therefore, having cost £10,000 he wants £80 a year from those ten shops. Who pays that rent? The people who go into those shops and buy the goods that are for sale. And they wonder why the cost of living goes up. That applies to present-day methods suggested and preached by hon. members opposite. Now, I am going to show how we would proceed in the building of those shops, under the method that we suggest. We would say that a bricklayer is to have a basic wage and an additional payment on his results with a minimum task would be fixed for that bricklayer depending upon the average ability of the ordinary bricklayer. Then, what would happen? The bricklayer who, perhaps, is a little more energetic and a little more desirous of getting on would cease to take

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any interest in the methods and practices of his next-door neighbour. If that man on his left was prepared to stop in the gutter, there is nothing to prevent his so doing, because he is not dragging down the other man with him. He can stop there if he wishes. But the man who wants to get on—who wants to accumulate a few savings, who wants to build a home for himself—can go on concentrating his attention on his job, with the result that at the end of the day's work that man has probably laid some 200 more bricks than the man on his left, and he has the reward of his labour, the actual result of his production—not in the insane manner which hon. members opposite propose, by seizing the other fellow's property. Follow that through. These shops will probably take some two months less to build by reason of the greater rate at which these men are working. Therefore, the overhead charge will be less, and instead of those shops costing £10,000 they would cost £8,000. Then the 8 per cent. which the landlord is 'looking for would be only £64 a year, £16 a year less; which means all the less to the consumer, and down comes the cost of living. This might seem an elementary method of explaining my point, but I have come down to a kind of nursery rhyme in order to make hon. gentlemen opposite understand. I am sorry if I have wearied hon. gentlemen occupying the Opposition benches, but it was necessary to bring my example down to an elementary basis to allow hon. gentlemen opposite to comprehend. That is the proposal in a nutshell for which Nationalism stands, and intends to adopt. Let that be understood. And that is one of the reasons why Oxley nearly five times increased my majority at the last election. That is one of the reasons why, because of his non-fulfilment and non-practical policy, the hon. member for Toowoomba nearly lost the number of his mess. (Laughter.)

Mr. BRENNAN interjected.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The hon. member should just continue giving his potatoes to charity and advertising the fact. (Laughter.) The position in which Queensland finds itself to-day is the result of government by men who have no more respect for the credit of the country or for the security of contract than the highwayman has for the feelings of his victims. While hon. members opposite go on floundering and floundering, Queensland is gasping. The Premier smiles—possibly as he smiled when the aeroplane dropped him on Pimpama Island. (Laughter.) My simile is perfectly correct. The position to-day is that the Government have no more respect for the credit of Queensland and for the success of Queensland than a highwayman has for his victim. They go on threatening and seizing, and the sole reason they have changed their methods—and come down to a position of appealing to and of studying the feelings of the people of Queensland and the needs of business generally—is not because they wished to do so, but because they were forced into it.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. J. G. APPEL (*After*): With the exception of the hon. member for Toombul, I believe that I am the oldest native of this State, and the oldest member having a seat in this House—(Hear, hear!)—and, as one of the oldest natives of the State still living in Queensland, I naturally take the greatest interest in my native land, because

I have seen all the difficulties which it has had to encounter, and the troubles and tribulations which it has had to undergo. To-day I have no hesitation in saying that we have arrived at a crisis in our history.

Mr. COLLINS: The whole world has arrived at a crisis.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I am only dealing now with the condition of the State of Queensland. It is a question of whether we are to progress or whether we are to retrograde. The Financial Statement which was delivered by the Treasurer yesterday discloses a very serious condition of affairs. Coupled with the report of the Auditor-General, and the balances shown in the Treasurer's tables, it discloses the fact that, despite the immense increase in taxation, there has been a still greater increase in expenditure.

The TREASURER: Look at the Arbitration Court award and the increased cost of materials.

HON. J. G. APPEL: Unfortunately, the Arbitration Court awards have not been responsible for the position of affairs. The war had very little to do with State finance. That was a matter for the Commonwealth; and we all realise that and are quite prepared, as citizens of the Commonwealth, to bear any obligations which have been necessitated by the war. In view of the very heavy calls upon the Commonwealth, it should have been the duty of Ministers administering the affairs of the State of Queensland—I do not care what party they belong to—to exercise economy.

The TREASURER: You know we are not responsible for the increased cost of government.

HON. J. G. APPEL: Hon. gentlemen opposite have not been economical in their administration of the affairs of State. The increased wages are not responsible for the present state of affairs. It is not a mere question of increased wages; but, referring to wages, on looking back to Pugh's Almanac for 1877, I find that carpenters' wages then were 14s. per day, and the price of rump steak was 2½d. per lb. I venture to say that the conditions in 1877, with carpenters' wages at 14s. a day and rump steak at 2½d. a lb., were far better than the conditions which exist to-day.

Mr. COLLINS: In 1902 we had a poll tax.

HON. J. G. APPEL: And why shouldn't you have a poll tax? Why shouldn't you bear a portion of the expenditure that is necessary for the administration of the affairs of the State? The hon. member is one of these parasites who desire to have all the benefits of the State—everything that is going—without contributing one farthing to the expenditure that is necessary to ensure him the affluence which he enjoys to-day. I say that every member of the community should bear some proportion of the cost of government, however small it may be.

Mr. COLLINS: You are in favour of a poll tax.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I used to pay some attention to the interjections of the hon. member for Bowen, but having carefully considered his interjections, I have come to the conclusion that they are absolutely

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valueless, and that, the hon. member being simply a creature of caucus, they are not worth replying to. I must compliment the hon. member for Oxley on the excellent contribution he has made to the debate. There are one or two matters that I want to refer to, as this is one of the few occasions we have of discussing grievances. I am not a town member. My interests in the city of Brisbane now are a negligible quantity. I am a country member; all my interests are in the country. At the same time I realise that it should be, and must be, in the interests of every hon. member to have a concern in what affects our big centres of population. There is one matter I wish to bring before the House this evening—that is the Water and Sewerage Board. I had some little hand in connection with the inception of a water and sewerage scheme for Brisbane, the object of that being to preserve the health of the community who live in the capital city of Queensland.

In 1917, on page 1660 of "Hansard," I drew attention to certain matters in connection with the way in which the Water and Sewerage Board were carrying out their obligations, pointing out their absolute ineptitude—pointing out that they were wasting money—that contracts that had been made for £28 a foot were costing £80 a foot, and that in certain places, after having spent thousands of pounds, they were compelled to abandon the line and run a new line, and pointing out more particularly that at the outlet they were unable, owing to the conditions that existed, to carry out a low-level sewer, and they were going to have an open cut. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley, who is a member of the board, absolutely denied the statement that I have made, and, I think I am correct in stating, added that if I made the same statement outside, I would be liable to an action for slander. Yet to-day absolutely every fact which I stated has proved to be correct, is an absolute fact to-day, as it was a fact then. I think it is my duty, as one who is compelled to live for a certain part of the year in the city of Brisbane, to point out these facts, because they affect the conditions under which the workers of the State have to live. Furthermore, there is the fact that thousands—hundreds of thousands—of pounds are being wasted by the ineptitude of the present board. Any hon. member who has any doubt on this subject has only to read the assertions I made in 1917, and which to-day have been proved to be absolutely correct. What does that fact prove? Either an absolute neglect on the part of the members of the Water and Sewerage Board or that they did not concern themselves as to what the expenditure might be or what the effect might be on the members of the community who were concerned with the carrying out of the scheme.

The TREASURER: The hon. member for Fortitude Valley will reply to you.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I hope he will reply to the assertions which I made then, which are proved to-day—every one of them. Let him take every assertion which I made in 1917, and there is the report to-day which shows that every assertion which I made in 1917 is absolutely correct. I am going to say furthermore that shafts were sunk, and there is one in the neighbourhood of

Pinkenba into which thousands of pounds of machinery were broken up and dumped.

MR. WILSON: That is not true.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The hon. member denies it as a member of the board. He denies to-day what the board knew was a fact then, and I say that there have been thousands of pounds' worth of machinery dumped into shafts which are abandoned.

MR. WILSON: You must be charging the board on the previous Government's action, which you have some knowledge of.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The previous Government had nothing to do with it. The previous Government would not have permitted corruption of that kind. (Disorder.)

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Shame!

HON. J. G. APPEL: I say it is corruption, because it affects not only the health of the community, but also their pockets, and if their pockets are a mere nothing, I think of the health of the community. It is opportune to point this out. One member of the board said that 6 gallons of water per inhabitant per day would be sufficient to provide for the lavatory accommodation which it is proposed to establish, perhaps—under the present Administration—some twenty years hence. The thing is absolutely ridiculous. At any rate, I know that the average member of the community requires for sanitary purposes a very much greater amount than that. Hon. members on that side of the House pose as the guardians of the community who live in congested centres—as the opponents of slums. Well, I have found this out—and I speak as an old local authority man—that the owners of slums are in 99 per cent. of cases members of the caucus or caucus supporters—(Government interjections and disorder)—absolutely on every occasion, and the men who are the hardest landlords. The men who put in executions are the persons who support the caucus, or, in many instances, are men sitting on the caucus side of the House. (Government dissent.) That has been my experience. The men who charge exorbitant, usurious interest, the men who charge the highest rents and who have the most miserable slums in the community, are believers in and members of the caucus party. That has been my experience, and I speak from the experience of a man who has had twenty-four years of local government.

MR. WILSON interjected.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I will admit the hon. member for the Valley does not do it—that he is not in that category.

The TREASURER: Who is doing it?

HON. J. G. APPEL: Probably the Treasurer. (Laughter and disorder.)

The TREASURER: I say you deliberately lie over that.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The Treasurer is such a deliberate liar on every occasion that I take no notice of his assertion.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! order!

HON. J. G. APPEL: He called me a deliberate liar, and I called him a liar. When he withdraws his, I will withdraw mine. (Laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! order!

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MR. VOWLES: Why didn't you deal with the Treasurer? (Disorder.)

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! I would point out to the leader of the Opposition that it is highly disorderly to interject when the Chairman is on his feet—(Hear, hear!). And I would point out to the hon. member for Albert that the term he used is quite unparliamentary. He, as an experienced parliamentarian, knows that if an interjection is made to him which is offensive, the proper course for him to pursue is to call the attention of the Chairman to it and ask that it be withdrawn. That would be done in the ordinary course of events. I must, therefore, ask the hon. member to withdraw the statement he made.

HON. J. G. APPEL: It was said in the heat of the moment.

THE TREASURER: You made a charge. Be a man, and say you are right or wrong.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I am correct. (Loud laughter.) In view of the desire of the Chairman, I withdraw unreservedly, and I ask that the Treasurer be asked to withdraw his statement.

THE CHAIRMAN: I ask the Treasurer to withdraw the statement complained of.

THE TREASURER: In conformity with parliamentary practice, I will withdraw—

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Withdraw!

MR. VOWLES: Why don't you withdraw unreservedly?

THE TREASURER: You are not the Chairman. It cannot be expected that a member will sit down quietly when a charge is made which is absolutely incorrect, and is a silly, stupid charge.

THE CHAIRMAN: I point out that the hon. member for Albert has withdrawn.

THE TREASURER: Under those circumstances, I will withdraw.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would point out to the Treasurer, in connection with the remarks he has made, that if he feels aggrieved at any remarks passed by another hon. member, it is also his duty to call the Chairman's attention to the matter.

THE TREASURER: I thank you for the advice, and I am rather surprised you did not get up yourself. I withdraw.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I make no charge. (Interruption.)

THE CHAIRMAN: Order!

THE TREASURER: You did.

MR. VOWLES: He did not.

MR. WINSTANLEY: He did.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would request hon. members on my right to allow the hon. member for Albert to proceed with his speech. I also ask the hon. member to apply himself more closely to the subject under discussion, and not make personal allusions.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I do not desire to make any personal allusions. I can only trust that the Administration will cause the strictest inquiry to be made into this matter.

THE PREMIER: The Government of which you were a member approved of the plans.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I believe they did, but the matter was pointed out to the Water and Sewerage Board. I made reference to these matters in 1917, but they were absolutely denied. Of course, on that occasion I applied myself to the leader of the Government, who was then Treasurer, and asked him to inquire into these matters. He treated my request with contempt, as is evidenced by the condition which exists to-day.

THE PREMIER: I could not treat any suggestion from you seriously.

HON. J. G. APPEL: That may be, but I know I have often had to treat matters enacted by the leader of the Government very seriously, and so also, unfortunately, has a majority of the taxpayers of Queensland. I quite admit that, so far as the taxpayers of Queensland are concerned, the hon. gentleman does not treat them seriously. He regards them from a cynical standpoint. He does not regard them as being of any moment outside the amount which he extracts from their pockets. We do not expect to get any sympathy from the hon. gentleman. The Financial Statement, which was presented to the House yesterday, shows that the hon. gentleman knows the feeling which exists amongst the majority of the electors, otherwise we would not have had any indication that there was to be no further taxation. There would have been further taxation. We realise that.

THE PREMIER: Where would you cut down the Estimates?

HON. J. G. APPEL: There is nothing to save on any of the Estimates, but the whole point is this—from the time hon. gentlemen opposite took charge of the Treasury benches they have had to find positions for their supporters, whether their services were required or not. The whole of the departments have become congested with men who were not required. We find that to be the case in the Railway Department, because, although the mileage run was 1,000,000 less, there have been more than 4,000 men put on. When Ministers' unfortunate supporters required a position, they were sent round to the Railway Department, and the hon. gentleman who was then Minister for Railways put them on. We know that practically 25 per cent. of the engines are fit for the scrapheap, and we know that the necessary requirements in connection with the running staff have not been carried out.

THE TREASURER: You were one of the worst offenders in asking for concessions when I was in charge of the Railway Department.

HON. J. G. APPEL: Quite so. (Laughter.) Increased fares and freights had been put upon the producers, and they had not received the same convenience, because of the less mileage run; and why should they not ask for additional accommodation, which they did not receive?

MR. COLLINS: And no diamond rings on their fingers, either!

HON. J. G. APPEL: No, and you will never have any. (Laughter.) The hon. member for Oxley referred to the matter of—

THE TREASURER: Cement!

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HON. J. G. APPEL: He may have referred to that, but I say this to the Treasurer—that he never spent a pound in trying to give cement to the electors of the State. No, he was not such a fool. (Laughter.) Reference has been made to the condition that exists, so far as the workers of the State are concerned. I have never been engaged in any wholesale or retail business, as the whole of my time outside my profession has been spent as a primary producer.

The PREMIER: I thought you were the son of a miner.

HON. J. G. APPEL: My father was a miner in '52, but he was never engaged in the occupation of taking the miners down.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: That is where he differed from his son.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I have never been a hypocritical lay preacher.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Neither have I.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

HON. J. G. APPEL: I have always been honest. It has always been my opinion that merit should receive a greater amount of reward, but I realise that the policy of the Labour party is to put the man who does the best work on the same level as the man who does the least work. I know that that is the result of unionism. I have discussed this question on different occasions, and have pointed out that under present conditions the most expert man receives only the reward of the least expert man. I contend that every man who desires to improve his condition, and improve and develop the country, should receive assistance from the State. Only the other night we heard members talking about the men who have blazed the track, and assisted in the development of Queensland, but when those men have attained a certain position, they are regarded as enemies by the caucus, which has reduced the State to a sinecure. Why, members over there have to do exactly what they are told to do: they are not free agents. The moment a member on that side acts as a free agent, out he goes, and he knows it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

HON. J. G. APPEL: This is one of the opportunities when we are allowed to discuss matters which are of general moment, not only to this Assembly, but also to the community generally. Is not the right to work inherent in every man? Why should a man have to go before a union and be poll-taxed—be required to pay an entrance fee to join the union—before he is allowed the right to work?

The PREMIER: Have you been poll-taxed?

HON. J. G. APPEL: They have pretty well struck me blind.

At fifteen minutes to 9 o'clock p.m.,

Mr. KIRWAN relieved the Chairman in the chair.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I ask what right has any Administration to say to a man that before he can exercise the right to work, which is inherent in him, he must pay a poll tax?

Mr. COLLINS: What about the lawyers' union?

[Hon. J. G. Appel.]

HON. J. G. APPEL: The test of admission to the lawyers' union is by examination. The test of entrance into a union is a "pull" by the men who run the Trades Hall. We often find that when a workman is required where experience and expertness should be the test, the most inexpert workman is sent to the job, because "pull" is the test. It seems extraordinary that, notwithstanding that a man has an inherent right to work, the party who claim to be democratic support a policy which says that before a man can exercise his right to work, he must pay an entrance fee and join a union, and after that pay a fortnightly or weekly fee. Where does that money go? Hon. members know where it goes—to support the aristocrats of a little junta who live in luxury, and never publish a balance-sheet.

Mr. COLLINS: That is not true; prove your case.

HON. J. G. APPEL: Where is their balance-sheet, then? I asked for the balance-sheet of the big strike in Brisbane, but never saw it, nor did any other member of the community ever see it. Of course, the leader of the Government laughs at my remarks, but he is one of the men who probably benefits by the non-publication of that balance-sheet.

The PREMIER: Try and be serious.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I am discussing this matter seriously, and you know that what I am stating is an absolute fact. I notice that the Treasurer is very optimistic so far as the renewal of the loans are concerned. I can only hope that, by honest administration, there will be a restoration of confidence in the affairs of Queensland. As I have said on different occasions, I believe that there is no State which has greater potentialities than Queensland; but there has never been a more inept Administration than that which is now administering the affairs of the State. However, the Financial Statement shows that there is a certain amount of repentance on the part of the Government. I quite admit that it will be a very difficult matter in some of the departments to reduce expenditure. Take the Home Department, which is a growing department; with the policy which has been adopted by every Administration the expenditure has increased. I want to refer to the growth in the amount of relief which is being given.

The TREASURER: Do you object to that?

HON. J. G. APPEL: The majority of the men who are receiving relief to-day do not take it willingly; but they have been reduced to such a position that they have to ask for assistance, because, owing to the action of the present Government it is not possible to obtain work. The trouble we are up against is that members of the Legislature, who should be sympathetic with the unemployed, are not so. I take it that we are all genuinely desirous of seeing the credit of the State restored. I have no doubt that, in view of the fact that compulsion is not to be resorted to, loan money will be available. Even though we may not agree with the policy of the Government, we know that the State is in a secure position as regards its assets. We may object to the Administration, but we know that, if it was a question

of the State going down for want of money, the members of the community who could afford to invest would be prepared to invest in Queensland State debentures. I can state that for myself. I only wish I had considerably more to invest in State debentures, although I cannot agree with the financial administration of those who are in command of the Treasury benches. Our aim and object must be to so administer the affairs of the State that progress and financial prosperity will be brought about. I quite realise that, in view of the stringent financial conditions, the position is a difficult one. I am not here to say that, if another Administration were in power, there would be no unemployed, because even in Victoria, where they have a Nationalist Government—

The PREMIER: They are in a dreadful condition.

HON. J. G. APPEL: No, they are not in a dreadful condition.

The PREMIER: They have 4,000 unemployed.

HON. J. G. APPEL: They have 12,000 in New South Wales, and I have no doubt that in Queensland, with our smaller population, we have 12,000 also. (Government dissent.) There are many ways in which economy might be exercised.

The PREMIER: In what way?

HON. J. G. APPEL: We say that you should do without an additional Minister, which means an additional expenditure of £35,000 a year. (Government laughter.) It is all very well to laugh. The expense of the Mines Department, which is a small department, runs into something like £30,000 or £35,000 per annum. I realise that Ministers have no sympathy for the unemployed.

Mr. COLLINS: That is not true.

HON. J. G. APPEL: They have made use of them, and will continue to make use of them. Mr. Moroney, the secretary of the Queensland Railwaymen's Union, said they have tasted the power and the emoluments of office, and will crawl in the gutter to hold them. They have no sympathy with the unemployed on the railways; but members on this side have sympathy with the unemployed, and we are desirous of finding a means by which the problem can be solved. We are only too anxious to assist the Government, and members on this side who are in a position to give employment to members of the community are only too pleased to do so with the object of solving the difficulty, particularly at the present time of the year. It does not matter to hon. gentlemen on the Treasury benches whether there are from 1,000 to 5,000 unfortunate men walking about the country or in Brisbane, some of them with families, asking for food or having to go for the relief which is doled out to them by the Home Department. It does not appeal to hon. members opposite. They are happy and contented. They are living in luxury. They are employing no one; they have no taxes to pay.

The TREASURER: What about the slums?

HON. J. G. APPEL: I dare say the hon. gentleman is probably interested in some of the slums. I am not, and never have been, but probably he is. However, [9 p.m.] that is not the point. I am sorry the hon. gentleman has interjected. I know certain wealthy men who pro-

fect Labour politics, and have a hide like a cuttlefish, who are responsible, and try to put it on "the other fellow." As I have already said, 90 per cent. of the owners of slums in Brisbane and other places are supporters of the Labour party.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: You do not believe that.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I do, because I know it is a fact. They hide it under their Labour politics.

The TREASURER: Why don't you make that charge outside?

HON. J. G. APPEL: Why does not the hon. gentleman make charges outside? He charged after the Prince, didn't he? (Loud laughter.) I do not blame him for that. I was rather pleased to see he made such an exhibition of loyalty, which quite accorded with my own ideas. (Laughter and disorder.) The hon. member for Bowen was only too glad to go to the banquet and lap up everything that was to be eaten and drunk there. (Renewed disorder.) I thought the Treasurer did the right thing. I hold him in higher esteem and think more of him, since he exhibited his loyalty on that occasion, than I did before. But, in other matters, he is only the slave of the caucus and has to do what he is told. (Government laughter.) I notice the taxation per head of population has increased to such an extent that in 1919-20 it was £14 6s. 10d. It seems a very large sum.

The TREASURER: The combined taxation of State and Commonwealth is less than the taxation of New Zealand.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The hon. gentleman does not give us the incidence of taxation in New Zealand.

The TREASURER: I will give it to you.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I hope the hon. gentleman will before the debate is closed. I was dealing with the facts disclosed by his Statement that the taxation per capita for last financial year was £14 6s. 10d. Unfortunately, it shows an absolute ineptitude in connection with the management of finances that the expenditure exceeds that and amounts to the sum of £15 10s. 9d. I have sat on the Treasury benches when hon. gentlemen who are now occupying those benches sat on this side of the House. Today the Railway Department is over £1,000,000 per annum to the bad. You, Mr. Kirwan, will recollect the occasion when you stated in opposition that you knew how £500,000 could be saved on the annual expenditure of that department.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: What a mean advantage! You are hitting a man when he is down.

HON. J. G. APPEL: No, I am not. I have no doubt that if Ministers had taken the advice of the Chairman in connection with that department it would not have been £1,500,000 to the bad, but probably £1,500,000 to the good. I know the Chairman was honest when he stated that, because he had practical knowledge. I have no doubt he could give particulars of the direction in which the money could be saved. The record of the caucus party is the same in all the Australian States. When they sit in opposition they object to the expenditure of members sitting on the other side of the House.

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No sooner do they obtain possession of the Treasury benches than an orgy of expenditure takes place—as it took place in Queensland, as it is taking place in New South Wales to-day, as it took place in South Australia and Western Australia. But there comes an end. I know if the leader of the Government were permitted to exercise his own discretion he would not have permitted this state of affairs to have occurred. The hon. gentleman knows there is no royal method of finance, but you can arrive at a limit of taxation. I take it from the Treasurer's Statement that he realises to-day he has arrived at a limit of taxation, and now it is a question of whether hon. gentlemen have the courage to pursue a policy by which, in exercising care in the finances of the State, they may be able to restore our financial credit. In that pamphlet in which he was associated with the Treasurer, the Premier stated that household finance is the same as public finance—that if a man is in receipt of £3 a week and expends £4 a week he is on the road to bankruptcy. I take it that the hon. gentlemen who evolved that were honest in doing so. I only ask them to be honest to-day and to regulate the finances of the State so that their expenditure may be within their revenue. After all is said and done, the majority of members of the community, whatever their political opinions may be, desire to see the State progress. It does not matter what Administration may be in power, the community has to bear the burden of taxation; but the majority of them ask that the affairs of State shall be honestly carried out and that efficiency may be observed in the conduct of our affairs.

*Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): I have read the Financial Statement delivered by the Treasurer, and I am quite sure from what aspect it will be viewed by the people of Queensland. I think it would be an excellent thing if the same procedure were adopted in connection with it that was pursued in connection with the Speech delivered by the Lieutenant-Governor prior to the last elections—if it were sent all over the country. I note particularly that in the second last paragraph of the Financial Statement the Treasurer uses these words—

“I repeat, however, that I personally have no fears for the future. I am sure we will successfully combat temporary embarrassments, and by the time normal conditions again obtain we will have discovered within ourselves a wider sympathy and more substantial self-reliance than that to which we previously had attained.”

The sentiment is excellent. Unfortunately, the old adage, “A leopard cannot change his spots”—but remains blotched for ever and of the same pattern—is proved by the result of the financing of the last five months. We have seen that for the five months ended 30th November the expenditure exceeded the revenue by £170,760. We find from the Financial Statement that the gambling has increased. It is proposed to gamble during the present financial year with an anticipated revenue of £388,257. It is proposed, in the face of that, to spend £903,702. That alone would condemn any financial institution, to say nothing of the Government of Queensland, who represent a minority of the electors, and we, as representing a majority of the

[*Hon. J. G. Appel.*

electors, find it our duty to stand up and express our opinions on the subject.

Mr. RIORDAN: You have only twelve or thirteen in your party.

Mr. KERR: There is more sense in the twelve or thirteen members of this party than we hear from the whole of the other side. Most of the revenue that comes into this grand State of ours is no credit to the present Government. It comes in in a natural way. It comes in in such a way as this: Land revenue, including timber royalties, survey fees, and rents. Then we have mining receipts, rent of leaseholds, coal licenses, and royalties. We have another natural avenue—our railways. But we have an unnatural avenue—income tax, land tax, and other taxes. Most of these things are excessive in the way of taxation—so excessive that this State stands entirely alone in the Commonwealth. In fact, our taxation under these heads is four times as heavy as in one other State in the Commonwealth.

Mr. GLEDSON: Give us some figures.

Mr. KERR: I will give some figures which will show that the poor working man, who has been banded from one to the other on the other side, who are filled up with the doctrine of class consciousness, is thought a great deal more of on this side of the House than he is on the other. I say without hesitation that I am going to submit a constructive policy which demands attention at the present moment. If I cannot put forward a constructive policy, I do not intend to submit a destructive one. I will show how the policy of the Government is responsible for the unemployment that exists to-day and for the high cost of living which so seriously affects the working man, whom I represent in a large majority.

Mr. COLLINS: The war had a destructive effect, and that is responsible for the high cost of living.

Mr. KERR: Hon. members opposite took no part in the war except a destructive part in trying to make the Huns successful. Had they come forward when they were asked to assist, we would have been in a better position at an earlier stage of the war, and our position would have been much better to-day.

In regard to the surplus of £26,000 which is alleged to have existed at the end of the last financial year, let me remind hon. members that in 1916-17 there was a deficit of £253,493 8s 10d.; in 1917-18 there was a deficit of £409,451 13s. 5d.; and in 1918-19 there was a deficit of £171,988 3s. Of that amount the deficit for 1916-17 has been provided for, but the deficit for the two succeeding years, amounting to £581,000, has not yet been provided for, and I ask, would any financial institution, having previous deficits amounting to £581,000, say that they had a surplus of £26,000? I say that the statement is absolutely outrageous from a common-sense business point of view.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: You have got a lot to learn yet.

Mr. KERR: The hon. member cannot teach me anything, although he has been here for years and years.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: You must be dull if you cannot be taught.

Mr. KERR: I am not as dull as the hon. member. I come here to expound a constructive policy instead of making a circus of myself and trying to criticise other people. I believe that Queensland has reached the present financial crisis wholly and solely because of the stagnation which exists in our industries. I notice that an amount of £77,128 was expended last year for outdoor relief. That item is going to get a good deal of criticism. It is absolutely essential that, if conditions are to improve, work must be provided.

Mr. GLEDSON: Do you know what they are paying in Victoria now?

Mr. KERR: I will show what they are paying in the hon. member's district in a minute or two, and I will tell him why they are paying it. They are paying it because the existing industries are being crippled, and I will quote figures to prove my statement. If we only had a few more industries, we could absorb in those industries men who have no trades and who are out of work to-day. On my own employment book I have between sixty-five and seventy-five names of men who are looking for a job. I am trying hard, day in, day out, from early in the morning until this House meets to get these men jobs, but I find I am unable to do so for the reason that the industries are being crippled. I am in favour of co-operation at the right time. Co-partnership and co-operation are things I will expound to this House at the proper time. Just now our industries are in such a bad position that they want building up, and if I had my way I would reduce the tax paid by them on a basis to be worked out or wipe it out altogether and let money come in and create employment. This relief would not be necessary if we had industries. People decry the private employer. In my opinion, Queensland is not a country of idle rich. There are no men in Queensland going about with their pockets bulging with money. Practically every pound that the employer has in Queensland to-day is put out and is creating employment—creating things for export, providing employment, creating foodstuffs, and decreasing the high cost of living. Think of it, you Labour men, who stand for the working man, and just get away from the idea of communism. That is what has throttled Russia. That is the doctrine of Leninism.

Mr. COLLINS: He is a greater man than you, at any rate.

Mr. KERR: I do not think he is. (Laughter.) Lenin is a man who has taken his country to ruin—Lenin, whom hon. members opposite hold up as being a man, is the man who put into a pool the women-folk of Russia. (Government interjection.)

Mr. COLLINS: Would you stand for a Czar?

Mr. KERR: I stand not for that sort of thing. I stand for a sound and solid policy which is not destructive. I want to quote figures showing the monthly average number of families—able-bodied men and other adults—who were in receipt of relief in the metropolitan area in the years given—

“1916-1917, 54 families (33 able-bodied men, 91 adults); 1917-1918, 50 families (30 able-bodied men, 90 adults); 1918-1919, 130 families (138 able-bodied men,

284 adults); 1919-1920, 232 families (231 able-bodied men, 503 adults).”

Mr. COLLINS: What are you trying to prove?

Mr. KERR: I am going to prove in a few minutes that this expenditure of money should be unnecessary. That the people receive rations on account of the taxation of industry. I will now quote a few figures relating to country districts, and giving the numbers of persons who received relief—

“Bundaberg, 2,524 residents and 1,162 travellers (previous year, 416 residents, 259 travellers); Ingham, 17 residents and 1,400 travellers (previous year, 165 travellers); Ipswich, 290 residents and 1,355 travellers (previous year, 113 residents, 810 travellers).”

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: What did the Tories do for them?

Mr. KERR: We are out to help these men and create industries to give them a job. No sympathy is extended to the unemployed on the other side. I have letters in my pocket now from men who have been in the Railway Department since 1914, who were junior clerks, who had passed the examination and the medical examination, and were placed on the permanent staff since that year. I have letters signed by the secretary to the Commissioner for Railways, telling them that they finished on Christmas Eve, the 24th December. If any member wants to see that letter, I will show him one.

Mr. COLLINS: You said “letters.”

Mr. KERR: I shall also show him letters. These are some more figures from country districts—

“Marvborough, 1,120 residents and 1,314 travellers (previous year, 253 residents, 1,256 travellers); Townsville, 5,539 residents and 56 travellers (previous year, 1,193 residents, 55 travellers).”

I am going to prove my point that these rations are issued for the reason that employment is not being provided, because of the killing of industry.

Mr. BRENNAN: Which industry?

Mr. KERR: I shall not hesitate to tell the hon. member for Toowoomba what it is, and I shall quote, first of all, a statement by his leader—

“We want to have a programme which will lead to the utilisation of our raw material.”

If that is not industry, tell me what is. Now, I will quote to the hon. member for Toowoomba the things we require, and which to-day we are importing, seeing that I have been asked for them—

“Preserved fish, meats, milk and cream, confectionery, hops, mustard, pickles and sauces, coffee and chicory, tea, oils, fats, waxes, machinery, cement, stoneware, jewellery, fancy goods, drugs, chemicals, ales and beer, tobacco, hides, copra, apparel, textiles, paints, varnish, india-rubber goods, earthenware, china, paper, stationery, optical surgical instruments, and fertilisers.”

And thousands of other things which could be produced and manufactured in Queensland.

Mr. GLEDSON: Is that the ration list you are reading out?

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Mr. KERR: You will know more about the ration list when I have finished. I am going to show what this business of a twisted idea of socialism on the other side means. I firmly believe that members opposite are twisted. I believe they are led by one man. They have no idea whatsoever of their own, and, because of that, we have a party of men with an idea which is misleading the country and carrying the country on to—shall I say—practically absolute ruin. I want to quote Knibbs' Bulletin No. 30, page 14, dated June, 1920, which is as follows:—

“Manufacturing Industries—Comparison and Progress of Factories, giving Wages and Number of Hands Employed.”

	1916.		
	Qld.	N.S.W.	Vic.
Factories	1,782	5,210	5,413
Wages	£4,181,254	£13,413,845	£11,036,345
Employees	39,983	116,401	113,834
	1917.		
Factories	1,793	5,356	5,445
Wages	£4,879,940	£14,381,309	£11,835,517
Employees	40,446	117,997	116,970
	1918.		
Factories	1,778	5,414	5,627
Wages	£5,121,188	£14,701,255	£12,502,601
Employees	40,990	120,554	118,241

I am going to show the crux of the whole thing, and I am going to show that the industries of Queensland have dropped down an abyss. This return shows—

	Qld.	N.S.W.	Vic.
That in 1917, factories increased by	... 11	... 146	... 32
That in 1918, factories increased by	... —	... 58	... 182
That in 1918, factories decreased by	... 15	—	—
In 1917, amount of wages paid increased in Queensland by £698,686; in New South Wales, £972,464; in Victoria, £797,172.			
In 1918, amount of wages paid increased in Queensland by £241,248; in New South Wales, £341,946; in Victoria, £669,084.			

Before I give further figures I want to emphasise the very harsh conditions that exist in Queensland to-day in regard to unemployment. I have shown that the factories have decreased; I have shown that the wages have decreased in this State as compared with increases in the other States. In 1917 the additional hands employed in Queensland totalled 463; the additional hands employed in New South Wales totalled 1,596; and in Victoria, 3,136. In 1918 they increased in Queensland by 544; in New South Wales by 2,557; and in Victoria by 1,271. I say without fear of contradiction that that position of affairs shows that the high taxation in this State is retarding industry. If we could only get men to come along and invest in factories, we would soon absorb the unemployed. Our industries in this State should be progressing, as we require exports and not imports. We can only export if we are in a position to compete with other countries, and we must import those things which we cannot produce ourselves. I will quote now from Knibbs,

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page 17, Bulletin No. 30, showing the exports from different States in Australia. They are as follows:—

	“Exports.”		
	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld.
	£	£	£
“14-15	28,106,971	12,349,662	13,015,484
19-20	54,698,571	42,953,749	14,403,972”

I wish to mark these figures with indelible ink on the minds of the people of Queensland, and wish to emblazon them on the minds of the Government, if their minds are not too full of socialistic ideas; I want to point out that these figures show that in six years the increases in the three States mentioned were as follow:—New South Wales £26,591,600, Victoria £30,604,087, and Queensland £1,383,488. We find, as against an increase of thirty odd million in one State, twenty odd million in another State, our exports in Queensland increased by just over a million. This position has been brought about by heavy taxation and the damnable Government that conducts our affairs. The evidence I have adduced is sufficient to condemn any party or any men congregated together for any purpose, more especially for the purpose of governing a vast, healthy, and vibrating State like the State of Queensland.

Question put and passed.

At twenty minutes to 10 o'clock,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported progress, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again on Monday next.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

ARRIVAL OF HIS EXCELLENCY SIR MATTHEW NATHAN.

The PREMIER: I move—That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday next.

Question put and passed.

OFFICIALS IN PARLIAMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

RETURNED FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Council returning this Bill without amendment.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I move that the House do now adjourn. In accordance with a suggestion from members on both sides of the House, we shall not meet to-morrow. Ministers desire to meet His Excellency, who will arrive in Brisbane to-morrow, and to entertain His Excellency at Parliament House, so that it will be inconvenient for them to meet the House after dinner. An adjournment over to-morrow will also meet the convenience of those country members who desire to go to their homes. On Monday next we shall go on with the Chillagoe and Etheridge Railways Act Amendment Bill and the Local Authorities Act Amendment Bill.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at fifteen minutes to 10 o'clock p.m.