

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Council**

**TUESDAY, 25 OCTOBER 1921**

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**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.**

TUESDAY, 25 OCTOBER, 1921.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN (Hon. T. Nevitt) took the chair at 4.30 p.m.

**PAPER.**

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

Report upon the Government central sugar-mills for the year 1920-1921.

**AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS.**

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN announced that he had received from the Auditor-General—

1. Report on the accounts of the central sugar-mills under Government control, and self-controlled mills indebted to the Treasury, for the year 1920-1921.
2. Interim report on State enterprises for the year 1920-1921.

Ordered to be printed.

**JOINT COMMITTEES.****CONTINUATION DURING RECESS.**

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones) moved—

“1. That, in the opinion of this Council, it is desirable that the members constituting, respectively, the Joint Library Committee, the Joint Refreshment Rooms Committee, and the Joint Buildings Committee should continue to control, during the recess, the several matters committed to their charge as such committees during the session.

“2. That the above resolution be forwarded to the Legislative Assembly, by message, inviting their concurrence therein.”

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I would like the Minister to explain the object in passing a resolution of this kind to-day. I understand

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

we are going to get our walking ticket to-morrow or the next day; so what is the good of appointing committees for the recess?

HON. W. J. DUNSTAN: You are going to vote for that Bill?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I am going to vote against it. I am surprised at it.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: You are disappointed.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I am surprised it has not come before the Council before this, or before the people, at any rate. We know the Bill to abolish the Legislative Council is going to be carried. We cannot do otherwise than pass it here.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: Only fifteen of your supporters voted against it in the Lower House.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I admit I got a shock. One of the most astonishing things, to my mind, is that the Country party should have voted for the abolition of the Council and the constitution of a single Chamber for the Parliament of Queensland. I certainly thought they would have supported the Nationalist party in that direction.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Why don't you put the Government out?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I have heard it said that a Minister told a friend of his that if the Opposition had been anything but consummate fools they would have got them out long ago.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am sure I did not say anything so silly.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: If the cap fits, wear it. I did not mention your name.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Why insinuate?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I am not insinuating. I am saying what a Minister said, and probably it is what all of them think.

HON. W. R. CRAMPTON: Your leader said worse than that.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You are the "would-be leader" on that side, and the "can't-be leader." I am trying to get an idea from the Minister as to how these committees, when appointed, are going to act during the recess if they have no status. I notice we are supposed to retain certain of our privileges, and is it to be one of our privileges to come here and attend meetings, although the Council is abolished? I am not going to lose by the abolition of this Council, but the people of Queensland will feel the loss before they are very much older. I would like the Minister to tell us what is the good of this motion under the circumstances. Seeing that we are going to be wiped out this week, what is the good of allowing members to nominally act on those committees during the recess?

HON. P. J. LEAHY: It seems to me that the reason why we are asked to deal with this motion now is that at the time the Hon. Mr. Jones gave notice of this motion the Government had not decided to bring in a Bill to abolish the Legislative Council. That Bill has evidently been an afterthought. Probably it is owing to pressure brought to bear on the Government by the recent Labour Conference held in Brisbane, and the Hon. Mr. Jones, having given notice of this motion, naturally he means to proceed with it. There may be another explanation also. It may be

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that the Hon. Mr. Jones is not sure of his followers, and has some doubts as to whether the Bill to abolish the Legislative Council will become law. Under the circumstances, he is quite in order in bringing forward this motion. No doubt he could postpone it until after the fate of the Bill to abolish the Council is known. But that is a matter for himself. In reply to the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn with regard to the Country party, I think, without intending it, that the hon. gentleman did the Country party an injustice. If I have drawn a right conclusion from the reports in the morning papers regarding the attitude of the Country party, it is this: though the Country party favour the abolition of this Chamber in consequence of it no longer being an impartial Chamber such as it was some few years ago—though they favour that, they do not favour a single-Chamber form of Government. I assume that from the speeches I have read, as I have not had a conversation with any member of Parliament on the subject. From the speeches I have read, I take those speeches to mean that they voted to abolish this Chamber with a view to having a second Chamber of some sort—presumably an elective Chamber. Understanding that, I thought it my duty to put that explanation before the Chamber.

HON. R. BEDFORD: I do not see why all this bother is made about these two motions, which are generally necessary. If this Council does not get abolished these motions are perfectly in order and perfectly sensible. In any case, if the abolition comes, the present members of the Council will have all the more reason to be represented on the Library Committee, because they will have more time to read; and it is very necessary that they should read sufficiently to educate themselves to that point which would have saved the extinction of this Council, which is to be abolished on account of the general ignorance on the other side. So far as the objection to representation on the Refreshment Room Committee is concerned, I know many hon. gentlemen will feel their departure from this Chamber so much that they will probably have more reason for representation on that committee than ever before. In any case, the abolition of this Council is not legal until it is assented to, and I think His Majesty the King, having had sufficient good sense to send for me twice, will have sufficient good sense to postpone it for some time. (Laughter.)

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: Both hon. gentlemen who have spoken in opposition to this motion are anticipating legislation. These committees are formed and charged with certain duties, and hon. gentlemen must be acquainted with the rights and privileges pertaining to hon. members of this Council, and the committees must carry out their duties until the Council is constitutionally abolished. Hon. gentlemen opposite have anticipated legislation in this discussion, and they know that it is only a quibble.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: I am not opposing the motion.

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: The motion is absolutely necessary, as the Council will not be abolished until it is constitutionally abolished.

HON. T. L. JONES: The discussion shows the necessity for abolishing it.

Question put and passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 3.

FIRST READING.

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

SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—

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

The Bill really is a formal measure, and was passed through the Assembly with little or no discussion. This is the usual Appropriation Bill brought in at the conclusion of each session of Parliament. The various amounts are to be found in clauses 1, 2, and 4. It is not necessary for me to read them. The amounts are also provided for in the Estimates which were passed by the Legislative Assembly.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: We may be an expiring House, but I must say I never saw a final Appropriation Bill of the session put before the Chamber with so little explanation.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Treasurer in the Assembly on the second reading merely said, “I beg to move—That the Bill be now read a second time.”

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: That just reminds me that the Minister, when speaking on the second reading, said that the Bill was passed through the Assembly with little or no discussion. That was because they took good care on the Government side of the House that there should be no discussion, and the “gag” was used most extensively.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN: Order!

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: These are tremendous accounts, and it is not enough that this Council be informed that the Bill is only a formal one, and that it passed through the Assembly with practically no discussion. The Assembly has been considering these amounts for the last three or four weeks, and, therefore, every item has been gone into very fully.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You know that we have not the power to amend it.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Can we not discuss it? We will not be here long apparently if the hon. gentleman has his way. Surely, we can say a few words. The amounts, I say, are very large and are quite in keeping with the extravagance that the Government have displayed during the last six years, and are further proof of the incompetent way in which they have carried on the business of the country. We, unfortunately, have not been able to get the Auditor-General's report on the State enterprises for last year, but I have just looked through his interim report, which shows that last year there was a decrease in loan indebtedness of £11,255. In 1920 the total amount was £1,288,423, and last year it was reduced to £1,277,168, but that is in the Loan Fund only. Trust Funds show a very different tale. We find that the debit balance there on the 30th June, 1920, was £202,380, and that it increased last year to £587,654, showing an increase of £374,000 odd on the general working account. He goes on to say—

“Considering the very marked increase (£385,274) in the indebtedness during the

past year in the Trust Funds and working accounts, and the financial position of the State enterprises generally, it is questionable whether, under these circumstances, it is prudent to continue the practice of charging interest and redemption and thereby benefiting consolidated revenue and Loan Funds at the expense of the Trust Fund, especially as from present indications it would appear unlikely that, within the next few years at least, the enterprises collectively will be in a position to meet the interest charges in addition to working expenses.”

The Auditor-General goes on to say—

“In view of the large amount of public money (£1,864,822) involved it is regretted that circumstances, over which I can exercise no control, have arisen that will delay for nearly a year the publication of the detailed report on the accounts of the State enterprises referred to herein.”

That is the Auditor-General's regret—that we will have to wait for nearly a year before we know whether or not the State enterprises are paying. At present we do not know whether any of them are paying, but we have a shrewd suspicion that not one of them is paying except the State butchers' shops.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: Your whole political propaganda is one of suspicion.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Do you call it suspicion that Chillagoe should lose £47,000 last year, especially in view of the fact that when the Chillagoe Bill passed through the Council, the Minister said definitely that the proposition would not be carried on if it was not a profitable one.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: You would prefer to have them closed down like Mount Morgan?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The Mount Morgan affair is a standing disgrace to those who advised the men to go out.

HON. R. J. CARROLL: They were locked out.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The company offered to lose 25 per cent.—

HON. R. J. CARROLL: They did not.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: If the men would accept a reduction in their wages of 20 per cent.

HON. R. J. CARROLL: They would not give a guarantee under those circumstances.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: These unfortunate miners are kept out through the bad advice of those responsible.

HON. R. J. CARROLL: Your troubles about those unfortunate men!

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You sit here and draw your good salary and advise the unfortunate miners to go out. If they continued to work they would, at least, have had a reasonable living; they would get what the industry could pay them.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: We know what your estimate of “a reasonable living” in the past has been.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It was something on which they could live, and live well.

HON. E. J. HANSON: You brought them down to 4s. a day.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: No, I did not.

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HON. J. S. COLLINGS: Lengthsmen were brought down to 5s. per day under your regime.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: They never were.

HON. W. R. CRAMPTON: If the hon. member will look at page 5, paragraph (f), line 15, it will cheer him up.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: We find that last year the Government spent altogether £21,500,000. What is the result? Fifteen thousand unemployed at the present time.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Look at the unemployment in Melbourne.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I am talking of Queensland, where last year, with three times the income we had in 1911 and 1912, we spent £120,000 for poor relief, and that in a splendid country like this, with good seasons and a revenue of £12,000,000.

HON. R. SUMNER: Can you suggest a remedy?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It is not for me to suggest one.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: What salary will you take as dictator of Queensland?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The salary the hon. gentleman would get would not be worth much if he got what he was worth. However, I do not think it is of much use saying anything further on this matter, because, although we have had very good discussions on financial questions lately, things are no better and the Government seem determined to go on in the same way. I repeat that the present Bill is an example of what the Government are doing in the way of financing. They are still going on with excessive expenditure, and the last three months' returns show that there is a deficit so far this year of £464,000, and no arrangements have been made to meet it. What they will do in the future I do not know; but I am certainly not very hopeful that when we have only a single Chamber the position of Queensland will be very bright, because the Government then can go on just as they like. They can spend what they like, bring in what legislation they like, extend the term of their existence as many years as they like, and practically dictate to Queensland as long as they want to.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Even with this Council in existence the Government can do what they like.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Yes, because of the unwarranted swamping of this Council by their supporters.

HON. H. G. MCPHAIL: How many men of Labour tendencies were nominated by past Governments?

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: About thirty have been nominated by the present Government. I say the country will be in a far worse position under a single Chamber Legislature than it is even now, and we can only hope that the people, before it is too late, will rise up, hold meetings, and represent things in such a way to the Hon. Mr. Bedford's friends that the Royal assent will not be given to the Bill. On the figures which we have received this session so far, and especially those which indicate the deficit, I look forward not very hopefully to the condition of Queensland during the next two or three years.

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

HON. R. BEDFORD: The statements made by the hon. gentleman who has just sat down show nothing much to cavil at, except the generally foolish idea—if I may be permitted to put it that way without being rude—that this Council represents the only legislation which should be passed in Queensland. No matter what the other House may do, it represents directly the people, and this Council represents nothing. So far as the general objection to State enterprises is concerned, one must recognise that many of these things have not yet had a fair trial. We saw the other day that the arsenic mine really has proved an oblique contribution to the destruction of prickly-pear. The Government are not responsible at all for the fall in copper, which has tremendously affected the position at Chillagoe. In any case, the Government will be doing the right thing, even if they remove the tremendous benefit of our masterly advice, in the direction of daring to get money and daring to spend it wisely and well.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Do you call it wisely and well now?

HON. R. BEDFORD: Certainly, I do. I say that no man can say that the expenditure on Bowen has been a wrong or wasteful expenditure, seeing that a sufficient time has to elapse between the mining and

[5 p.m.] the marketing of the coal. In

any case, for about fifty years prior to Labour rule, all these things were left in the hands of private enterprise, which could not take up the matter of steel manufacture in any part of Australia; and the Government, in doing these things, have been laying down works which must be reproductive in the future.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Private enterprise have it in Newcastle.

HON. R. BEDFORD: Yes, but at the end of sixty years. While in Queensland practically the same results could have been attained in the way of coal, Queensland did not have the huge iron deposits as at Newcastle. We are practically forced to the position of opening up coal for steel smelters, because, without such smelters, the coal supplies are useless. It is no good opening up coalmines in Queensland for Australian consumption, unless there be some steelworks to use the coal. It is no good, for instance, opening up the Styx River and Bowen propositions unless we have the means for selling the coal overseas. And now that it will be found that Great Britain is bankrupt after paying the war debt it must be seen that the Government of this State acted wisely in going to America for money, and Queensland will be well advised to make America its place of sale for copper or coal, so long as it gets the benefit of the exchange. Seeing the bad year Australia has gone through, nobody can carp at a Government for finally arranging to open a new money market, and which proposes to do well as the result of its borrowing.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: At tremendous interest.

HON. R. BEDFORD: It will work out at 5½ per cent., and probably less.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Parliament has been sitting between forty and forty-five days. It met on the 9th August, and probably will rise at the end of this week. Surely, no one can contend that Parliament, faced with the difficulties that we all recognise exist in Queensland to-day, is doing its

duty to the people of Queensland by wholly considering the welfare of Queensland for three months out of twelve—and those twelve months the most critical in the history of the State. I say nothing about the trifling things the Government are drawing their salaries for, and working, probably, in a legislative way for only a quarter of a year. Those are minor points to which attention need not be drawn, but I speak rather of the bigger considerations—namely, that Parliament is rising after three months' hurried legislation, and giving an opportunity in the next nine months of the year for Ministers to be away in other places in Australia, or in Europe, and give the Government practically a free hand to spend £9,000,000 of revenue, without any check, and if they overrun the constable simply come along with another ratifying Bill, some time next July or August. I consider that the policy of holding Parliament for merely three months of the time like the present, cannot but be disastrous to the State, if we take our duties seriously. There are questions of finance before Queensland at the present day; questions of industrial dislocation. There is also the question of unemployment. There is the big question, too, of necessary immigration, and the big question of exploiting overseas markets, or furnishing ourselves with all the information we can get. There is another big question of our relations as a State with the Federal Parliament. That matter must be dealt with at the Premiers' Conference. What light, leading, or instruction has the Parliament of Queensland given to the Premier or its representatives at this conference when the different boundaries between Federal and State jurisdiction will be carefully set out? These are questions that are right in front of us. Even if we are blindfolded, and in the dark, we must stumble over them. We propose to call Parliament together for three months, and rise at the end of next week, and not meet again, probably, till next August. Surely, that is a state of things not satisfactory to the vast majority of the electors, who look to their representatives to face resolutely the difficult questions that are in front of us here. It is not a question of thirty-five votes to thirty-four. It is a question of those who have the time or the capacity to face such questions. If necessary, they should have a round table conference. At a time like this it would be a good thing if the people, the captains of industry, and so on, all came together in a round-table conference to discuss these difficulties. That is a sensible thing. The people look to Parliament to do that. They look to the representatives here, and in the other place, to do that. But instead of that we are simply treated to a three months' hurried session, and ill-digested legislation has been rushed through within the last twenty-four hours, simply to rise at the end of the week. What for? Why is the work of Parliament being curtailed? Probably it is because of the Premiers' Conference.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: And you would refuse to give the Premier a pair.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: If it is because of the Premiers' Conference, why not adjourn Parliament for a fortnight or three weeks, and meet again? I do not know of any year at all in which Parliament has ostensibly done so little work, and justified itself in so small a way to those people who

sent them here. We have had simply three months' legislation, and some of the poorest legislation, merely touching the fringe of things. They do not attempt to deal with the industrial difficulties we have to-day. We simply have one or two odds and ends, a "Slaughter the Judges Bill," and so on—Bills that the country could well do without. Where have we got any Unemployment Insurance Bill, for instance? Where have we got any of the modern representative legislative measures that you find, even in New Zealand, just across the waters? Where have you got any resolute tackling of our problems to-day? We are simply running the State in a peculiar fashion, and those who are steering it do not seem to care whether it will end up on the rocks, in a lucky haven, or be a derelict on the ocean. The lethargy which is manifest in high places with regard to the real welfare of the State has penetrated and filtered down, until people say it is no use, and we do not know where we are going to end up. Fortunately, however, there are gleams of hope on the horizon, and one of these is that outside business men seem to be taking a live interest in the welfare of the country. From their own patriotic point of view, they see a crisis ahead, and are not prepared to dance on the brink of the grave. I think, if we realise for a moment, that just in one hour's time this House is asked to pass £9,000,000, to give the Government a blank cheque—at any rate, the most unchecked control over the finances of the State for the next nine months—I think the 400,000 electors outside, on recognising that the Bill was doing such a thing, would be up in arms. It is because the electors do not know the facts, that there is no general uprising.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It was discussed for seventeen days in the other place.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: As a matter of fact, how was it rushed through? The Bill was gagged continuously in the other place. It could have been discussed seventeen months, so great is its field for discussion. Unfortunately, in different directions outside, there is gradually being forced home the fact that Queensland is in a desperate condition at the present time. Parliament should attend to its duties and face the condition of things, instead of having a Government that was only living on a one majority. Present party politics should be thrown to the winds. But what do they do? Simply hang to a crumbling majority, and try to escape from the storm. Surely, that is not courageous or patriotic! I am sure, although there is an element of gambling and comic opera in the present situation, that no hon. gentleman in this Chamber is satisfied with the present condition of things. Anyone that is satisfied with the present condition of things is either a lunatic, or else he does not know. Everyone is dissatisfied. The people outside are dissatisfied.

HON. A. HINCHCLIFFE: Does that apply only to Queensland?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No, but it applies with greater emphasis to Queensland than Victoria.

HON. A. HINCHCLIFFE: Or Australia?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: It applies to a certain extent to New South Wales, although they had not reached the limit of tomfoolery there. We have slipped back

*Hon. E. W. H. Fowles.]*

probably a quarter of a century in the last six years.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: More than that.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: It will take us ten years to pick up again, we have got such a set back. During the war, everybody was infected with the microbe of expenditure; they thought the war was going on, and that the war expenditure would go on, but that has collapsed. There is very little money, and the Government cannot borrow much more. They know that in Queensland they have reached the limit of taxation, and they dare not put on another penny in taxation to-day, as, if they did, industries would fall on every hand. We have reached the breaking point of taxation here, but they have not reached it yet in any other State. We must face these things; but what are the Government doing? They are simply bringing in the usual Appropriation Bill at the end of the session, and saying, "Give us £9,000,000 and £7,000,000 from Loan and Trust Funds, and shut up shop." If we can anticipate legislation, I might say that they are not quite sure that an Appropriation Bill would be legal if it were not passed by both Houses, and so they bring in this Bill before the proposed Abolition Bill. They want the assistance of this Council to pass the Appropriation Bill. The Bill is brought in by a minority Government, as far as the votes of the electors are concerned, but not with regard to the number of constituencies; they have a very slender majority as far as the votes of members go.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Only one.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: It could not be less. A minority Government ask the country to give them £9,000,000 to do just what they like with in the next nine months.

Hon. H. G. MCPHAIL: If you take up that attitude, why do you not ask the Hughes Government to resign, because they are a minority Government?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: I am not in the Commonwealth Parliament. On page 5 of the Bill, there are estimates of expenditure for the continuance of the Council next year. There is £15,420 put down to defray salaries and contingencies in connection with the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly, jointly, and £1,920 for salaries and contingencies in connection with the Legislative Council.

Hon. T. L. JONES: It is there if it should be required.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Here, in a Bill which precedes a "slaughter" Bill, are the estimates for the continuance of this Council. It is inconsistent on the part of the Government to provide in one breath money for the continuance of the Council, and in the next breath to bring in a Bill to abolish the Council.

Hon. W. F. FINLAYSON: What method would you suggest?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: I would suggest that, if they were in earnest about the abolition of the Council, the Government ought to have brought that Bill in as one of their first measures three months ago, and, secondly, that on a big question like that they ought to have consulted the people of Queensland. The two Houses have been the treasured possession of the people of Queensland for over half a century, and this Government, in its dying hours, with a slender

majority of one member, and a minority of 20,000 odd votes, try to rush through in twenty-four hours a Bill cutting the Constitution in two, and abolishing this Chamber. That is desperate work; it is the work of a lightning-change artist, but not of a statesman. It took a thousand years to build up the British Constitution, on which our State is founded, and now they wish to lay it in the dust in an hour. It can be easily seen that it might take a score of workmen a year or two to build a magnificent warehouse that a child could burn down in a night.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: This is a party of destruction. They are carrying out their policy.

Hon. T. L. JONES: There were only fifteen votes in the Assembly in favour of the retention of the Council.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: That was only a catch division. On a big question like the radical reform of the Constitution, surely the people of Queensland should be consulted, especially by a party who are crying out from the housetops, "Consult the people." On a vital question like that, they ought to carry out their professions, and consult the people. It would only cost £12,000 or £14,000 for a referendum like that. Surely, the Constitution is worth that to the people of Queensland. At the last minute, a Bill is going to be brought in—probably it will not see the light of day in this Chamber—but it is supposed that a Bill will be brought in robbing the people of Queensland of their Constitution. I have not the slightest doubt that, if a referendum was taken to-day, the people would vote for a continuance of the two Houses, and a reconstitution of the Council.

Hon. T. L. JONES: There was a majority of nine on the second reading of the Bill in the Assembly.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: That is for the purpose of abolishing the Council, as at present constituted; it is not a vote against the bicameral system. However, I do not wish to anticipate any discussion that may take place on the Bill for the abolition of the Council, if it ever comes before the Council. It does not seem to be wise government of the State for Parliament to run away from its duty for nine months of the year—to a hurried session, and then, at the end of three months, go into recess, and spend £9,000,000 of ordinary revenue. That does not seem to be the act of a statesman or a patriot, but to be the act of those who are afraid to go on much longer in the daylight of Parliament, and who wish to retreat into recess, if possible, where they can be left undisturbed for another eight or nine months. I do not wish to attribute motives, but that does not seem to be a wise thing to do in the face of the many difficulties which confront Queensland at the present time.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: I do not desire to make more than a few brief remarks in connection with this Bill. One wonders why, at this early stage, we are asked to pass an Appropriation Bill covering a large expenditure. This session opened at a very late date—some time in August—and why is it that the Government intend to adjourn before the end of the present month? I may be told that the Premier and his colleagues desire to go to the Melbourne conference. If so, there is nothing easier than to adjourn the other Chamber for a week or two, so as to enable the Premier to go down

to the conference, and then finish the business in the ordinary way, and end the session at the usual time early in December. Why is this Bill brought before us at this stage, granting supply to the end of July next? The only conclusion I can come to is that the Government know that they have not the confidence of the country, because they are in a minority of 20,000 votes in the State, and have only a majority of one member.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: They have a majority of nine on the Bill for the abolition of the Council.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: I am told that there is a majority of nine on that Bill, but hon. gentlemen know that that was not a vote of confidence in the Government, but a vote of no confidence in the men who have been put into this Chamber the last year or two.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: Why limit it to the men of the last year or two?

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Because we never had a similar vote prior to the Hon. Mr. Collings coming into the Chamber. In all general matters, the Government is hanging on by the slender majority of one. They know that, if this session were to run its ordinary course, they would, in all probability, be defeated. This Government profess to believe in the principles of democracy, though they know that a majority of 20,000 voters in Queensland are against them, and that they hold office practically on sufferance; they know that that support cannot be continued for long. The Government are, therefore, rushing into the safe haven of recess. They bring in this Bill in which, in addition to supply of £9,000,000, they are asking for, there is provision for raising loans, making a total of £16,000,000 odd. We are asked to vote this huge sum of money in the course of a few minutes, but we have had no adequate explanation from the Minister as to the necessity for this huge amount. When we are voting a large sum of money like this, it is not too much to ask as to how the Government have expended previous sums of money which the Council has authorised, both from revenue and loan funds. What do we find? I do not think there is one single State enterprise, with the possible exception of the State hotel, and the railway refreshment-rooms—and I am not certain about them—which has paid. We know that the Government mining schemes have resulted in a huge loss.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: And every private company is saying the same thing now.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: We know that the State fish shop has resulted in a loss. We know that the State mills, for the whole period since the Government started them, show a loss.

HON. T. L. JONES: There was a profit last year.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: I am taking the whole period, and on the whole period they show a loss. Then we come to the State stations. The loss on them is simply colossal.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: The pastoralists all show losses, too.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: The cattle men are making a loss this year, but there is no loss on capital. They acquired their properties at much lower rates than the Government

acquired theirs. I think it may be said, on the evidence we have, that the cattle men are making losses, though I am pleased to say the price of wool has gone up recently and is likely to keep very high, and I [5.30 p.m.] hope that the wool industry will be on a sound basis for the future. The cattle men are making losses, but not huge losses. There is a loss in running their properties, but the position with regard to the State cattle stations is quite different. They not only made large losses in the revenue and expenditure account, but there has been a tremendous depreciation in the value of their properties.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: As represented by the fall in prices.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: Not altogether. I happened to be chairman of the Select Committee appointed by this Council which some four years ago investigated the whole of these State enterprises. The inquiry took something like six weeks, and the report is available to any hon. gentleman who wants to see it. I have a very clear recollection of the evidence taken at that inquiry, and the evidence showed that, generally speaking, the Government gave too much for all these properties that they acquired—both timber mills and cattle stations. It was shown that in many cases they bought properties on what is known as a book muster, and that the number of stock they paid for was not on the property. I was told to-day by a reliable man, who owns a property adjoining one of the Government stations, that they are thousands and thousands of cattle short.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: I bet the people who sold those properties always voted for the Nationalists.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: That is not the point at all. The Government paid too much for the properties, and in many cases the numbers, when a bangtail muster was made, did not come up to the book muster.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: It shows the honour of your political friends.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: It does not do anything of the kind. A book muster is an honest muster as far as it goes.

HON. T. L. JONES: Are stations not always sold on a book muster?

HON. P. J. LEAHY: They are not always sold on a book muster. As a matter of fact, any competent man in these days, unless he has some reliable information, will not buy on a book muster. Stations are bought on a bangtail muster, and then only after a very thorough inspection of the property by a competent man. The evidence given before this Select Committee showed that in some cases the inspection of these stations lasted only for a few days, and it was absolutely impossible for any man, no matter how competent he might have been, to form any estimate of the number of cattle on the runs in the time, and yet the Government bought them for huge sums, and without exaggerating the matter in any way, these stations are not only run at a great annual loss, but the properties are not worth half the amount they paid for them. I could refer to every one of the State enterprises, and there is the same tale to tell.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: Not with every one.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: There is but one exception, and that in regard to the State

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hotel, and probably anyone could make a success of that. When we find a Government with such an alarming record of incompetency and extravagance, are we justified in voting this huge sum of money? I know at the present time we are weak in numbers and we have not the power to alter the Bill. It reminds me of the lines in Ulysses—

“Made weak by time and fate,  
But strong in will.”

If it rested with me I should make some very material reductions in the Bill. However, we have no power to do that, and all any hon. gentleman can do now is to point out the position the country is drifting into, and what the result will be if the Government continue their course of unbridled extravagance.

Question put and passed.

#### COMMITTEE.

(*Hon. L. McDonald, Acting Chairman, in the chair.*)

Clauses 1 to 8, schedule, and preamble put and passed.

The Council resumed.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

The report was adopted.

#### THIRD READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES, the Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be returned to the Legislative Assembly by message in the usual form.

### INFANT LIFE PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

#### COMMITTEE.

(*Hon. L. McDonald, Acting Chairman, in the chair.*)

Clauses 1 to 3, put and passed.

Clause 4—*Adoption of infants*—

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES said this was the weak point in the Bill. As the clause stood, the parent of a child could make arrangements for its adoption, at the age of three years or even at a tender age, and the person who had adopted the child might maintain and educate that child and lavish a good deal of affection on it, and then, when the child was fourteen years of age, or a little older, the parents suddenly became resurrected, and claimed the child, taking it away and putting it to work, and would be able to snap their fingers at the foster-parents who for five, or ten, or twelve years had spent a good deal on the child.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Does not this clause obviate that?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Not sufficiently. That was an injustice which did not happen every day, but it did happen sometimes.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Does not subclause (4) cover that?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No. He thought there ought to be appended to the schedule a form of adoption. He suggested that in subclause (5), after the words “the Governor in Council may in his discretion” there should be added the words “upon such terms as the Governor in Council thinks just.” The clause did not make provision for the fixing of any terms, and did not say

that the child could not be recaptured, so to speak, by its parents.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Will not the adoption prevent that?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: No; it would not override the law.

HON. G. PAGE-HANIFY: Then, the Bill is not worth the paper it is written on?

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES said it should be made quite clear that if the parents wished to regain possession of the child, they should reimburse the foster-parents. A foster-parent might spend £1 per week for ten years upon a child and then have it taken from him without any recompense whatever, apart from the despatch done to his affections.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN thought the suggestion of the Hon. Mr. Fowles was reasonable, and one which the Minister should accept. Why not insert the words “on such terms as he may think fit”?

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: I think that is implied.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Well, why not insert it, so as to make sure.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Act has been very well thought-out by those who have the administration of it.

Question put and passed.

Clause 5—*Amendment of section 16*—

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES said this clause also was defective. However, it seemed to be hopeless to suggest amendments. Those who might remain in the court during the hearing of a case were—“the adjudicating magistrate, an authorised officer of the State Children Department, the officers of the court, a member of the Police Force, the complainant and defendant and their respective barristers and solicitors, the mother or sister or other relative or friend of the complainant, if desired by such complainant, any person being examined as a witness, and the mother or sister or female friend of any female witness, if desired by such witness whilst being examined.” Surely, that was wrong. If the mother or sister of any female witness might remain in court if desired by the witness, why was not the matter put plainly. The words did not convey what he understood the intention was. This would be the law then: that the mother or sister, if desired by such witness while being examined, might remain throughout the proceedings.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: There is no very great harm done if that is the worst in it.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: They might as well have it right as wrong. The real meaning was that the mother or sister should only remain there at the request of the witness, and during the time that such witness was being examined. The clause also was not definite in regard to the exclusion of the Press. What was there to prevent any shorthand writer from taking a note of the proceedings under the guise of being a friend of the child? Surely the hon. gentleman could see that.

HON. J. S. COLLINGS: We are quite satisfied with it.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6—*Amendment of section 17*—put and passed.

The Council resumed.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

The report was adopted.

[*Hon. P. J. Leahy.*]

THIRD READING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—

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

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: If the Government wish to prohibit the publication of any of the depositions, I would ask the hon. gentleman to consider an amendment to clause 5, because the clause at present does not prohibit the publication of depositions.

Hon. J. S. COLLINGS: The Press are not allowed there at all.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: What is there to prevent a solicitor's clerk from taking shorthand notes while the proceedings are on and taking them outside?

Hon. J. S. COLLINGS: He would only do it once. The magistrate would prevent it.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: How can the magistrate prevent it? As a matter of fact, the lawyer's clerk takes down a longhand report of all the evidence.

Hon. J. S. COLLINGS: Anyway, you are out of order.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Not at all. You can mention anything on the third reading. It is never too late to mend. If the Government wish to prohibit the publication of depositions they should amend the clause.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES, the Bill was passed, and ordered to be returned to the Legislative Assembly by message in the usual form.

MINERS' HOMESTEAD PERPETUAL LEASES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

FIRST READING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to present a Bill to amend the Miners' Homestead Perpetual Leases Act of 1913 in certain particulars. I desire to get the Bill through all its stages to-night, for the reason that it is a non-contentious measure, and the Standing Orders have been suspended to allow Bills to pass all stages in one day. I beg to move—

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

Question put and passed.

SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—

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

It is a short Bill of three clauses.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: What is it all about?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: If the hon. gentleman will give me the opportunity, I will explain the provisions of the Bill. Although this is a very small Bill, from a mining point of view it is very important. It is well known that we are establishing three coalmines—at Bowen, Baralaba, and Styx River; and, under the perpetual lease system of selecting land under the Lands Department, it is not possible for the Mines Department to mine for coal under the lease. In other words, if we establish a town at these places under the Land Act,

and mine for coal under the areas of township allotments, we would need to pay royalty for that coal. In my opinion there has been too much of that kind of thing in the past—the State giving away something it has to buy back. We have a Miners' Homestead Perpetual Leases Act, and under that Act the Mines Department has a right to mine on the town allotments. The coal is the property of the State.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: That is only when you have perpetual leases.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Just so; that is the main provision of the Bill. Under the Act also, a person must be a bonâ fide resident of a field before he can apply for land as a miners' homestead. It is not possible to establish a town if you confine the applications to these few persons at present resident on the field. Take the Bowen coalfield, where there is likely to be a large town. Therefore, this Bill proposes to broaden the other Act and make it possible for people other than residents on these coalfields to become applicants for township allotments under the Miners' Homestead Perpetual Leases Act. That, I think, is a wise provision. Business men will, no doubt, want to establish businesses at these places, and at present they would be debarred from taking up an allotment under our Act, and the only alternative is that we establish a town under the Lands Act. And if we establish a town under the Lands Act we would not be able to mine for coal. I propose to make these purely mining towns. The Bowen township has been surveyed for some time. A proper town has been laid out and surveyed on model and modern lines. There is a clause in this Bill to make provision for reserving certain sections of that town or other towns for the miners employed in the mines, so that they will have priority in certain sections. Not an individual priority of application, but certain sections will be reserved and set aside for applicants who are employed in the mine. I think that is a very wise provision. Not the whole of the township, but we will take half a dozen sections, if half a dozen sections will satisfy the employees at the present time, and they will get priority as employees in the mine.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Do you propose to take away the coal rights from men who now have them legally?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No; they have no coal rights. I want to avoid giving away coal rights which belong to the State. There are coal seams 5½ miles long along the North Coast line between Mackay and Rockhampton. I took an option of that property, and we completed the purchase about a fortnight ago. We were compelled to buy for the State that which was required for the State. It was only a small area. We want to avoid that sort of thing at Baralaba and Styx River, where we have large areas reserved for the State to be worked for the State. And we also want to give to people who wish to establish businesses at those places an opportunity of selecting land, whether they are residents of the fields or not, which they cannot do at the present time, and to reserve certain allotments for the miners, who will get priority as employees.

I think the Bill is an admirable measure; it will be welcomed by many business people who desire to take up allotments at these various towns, and be very acceptable to the

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miners who work on the field. If there are any points in the Bill which are not clear to hon. gentlemen, as the Bill has only been circulated to-night, I will not be [7.30 p.m.] opposed to postponing the Committee stage of the Bill until to-morrow or a future day, but preferably to-morrow. I have much pleasure in moving—  
“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The suggestion of the Minister that the Committee stage be deferred till to-morrow is a good one, as we have only just seen the Bill. I am sure that hon. gentlemen will only be too glad to assist in passing a measure which will enable any of these coalfields to be settled permanently, and give everybody an opportunity of taking a lease, particularly those who are prepared to carry out the conditions of the leases. The Minister said that some of the blocks are to be reserved for miners only who are working there. Will the lease have a condition that the miner has to be continuously employed as a miner, and that his lease will be forfeited as soon as he ceases to be a miner?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No, it will not.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Suppose he goes to work for a week, he is a miner, and he can sell the lease at a profit and clear out. I am sure that is not intended. It seems to me that the lease should provide that the man who is getting a preference as a miner should continue to be a miner while he holds the lease; otherwise there is no point in it. The privilege will soon be availed of by the general public, who will be only too willing to traffic in these things. A man may be a miner for a few days, and then sell; and somebody who is not a miner will get a preference which he should not get. It seems to me that that might easily happen.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We only reserve a few sections just to meet the requirements of the field.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Directly a miner takes up a block, he will probably have the right to transfer. Would you restrict him from transferring to anyone else but a miner, or has he merely to get the preference because he has worked there a week or two, and can then pass it on to somebody else? That is a point that might be looked into by the Minister, and precaution taken either in the lease or regulations to prevent it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I think we can overcome that. He must be a *bonâ fide* miner.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Only at the time he takes up. He will be given preference, and he need not be a perpetual miner.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Then you take away his rights. You must compel him to always work for us, or otherwise he will lose his home.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Or sell to a *bonâ fide* miner.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: In the original Act, they have to be *bonâ fide* miners and reside on the land.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Here he does not do any improvements.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Oh, yes; that is one of the conditions.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: If you make it a requirement that he shall spend a certain

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amount of money and do certain work on it, that will even it up.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is the condition at present.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: We shall be only too glad to see these fields successful, and to give everybody an opportunity of taking up the allotments.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I would point out that this Bill proposes to amend the Perpetual Leases Act, under which the minimum lease is 20 acres. No miner in a mining town wants 20 acres to live on; all he wants is about four allotments, probably.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: This is a mining township. I am only referring to an acre as the maximum. The allotments are all surveyed in  $\frac{1}{4}$ -acre blocks.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: Where are the conditions with regard to improvements in a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -acre block? How can a man improve it except by putting a house on it? Under the original Act the Minister says there are conditions of improvement.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes; conditions of residence.

HON. E. W. H. FOWLES: I find there are conditions of improvements with regard to leases in sections 20 and 21 of the original Act, but where are the conditions of improvement for  $\frac{1}{4}$ -acre blocks? There is nothing to prevent a man going up there and earning his wages in the mine for a fortnight, and taking up his  $\frac{1}{4}$ -acre block and selling it to any Dick, Tom, or Harry that comes along. It is an open invitation to dummyping. The mistake about this little amending measure is that it is drafted on to a Perpetual Leases Act which deals with larger areas of land.

Question put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I move—

“That the consideration of the Bill in Committee stand an Order of the Day for to-morrow.”

I am quite willing to take the Committee stage of the Bill to-morrow. Hon. gentlemen will have an opportunity of comparing the Bill with the original Act. The Bill has been drafted a few days, and it was printed to-night.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Whose recommendation is it?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: My own recommendation. When hon. gentlemen compare this Bill with the principal Act they will find it is quite all right, and will overcome the difficulty I mentioned on the second reading. We will go on with the Committee stage to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

## FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT.

### RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

On the Order of the Day being called for the resumption of the debate on the Hon. Mr. Fowles's motion with reference to the financial administration of the Government—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES said: I desire to say a word or two on this motion in reply to some of the misstatements of hon. members opposite. The motion really falls

into two parts—that the people be more fully informed concerning certain alleged facts; and that, in view of those facts, the people be given an opportunity to determine certain things. I think the motion fails miserably in both points. Hon. gentlemen opposite desire that the people should be given an opportunity, as the motion says, to determine certain things—to determine, I suppose, the fate or otherwise of this Government.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Yes, a referendum on the abolition of the Council, for instance.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We were fresh from the people twelve months from to-day.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You were 20,000 votes behind.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We are the strongest party in the Assembly. We have a majority there.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: A majority of one.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They have a majority of nine on the first plank of the Labour platform—the abolition of the Council. The Hon. Mr. Fowles's motion is not altogether fair to the Government, nor to the Auditor-General. For instance, it reads—

“That the people of Queensland be more fully informed concerning the following alarming facts as disclosed in the Auditor-General's report for the financial year 1920-1921.”

Then it goes on to paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), and so on. To a person outside it would look as if these words were used by the Auditor-General, and were contained in his report. It certainly reads that way.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Are they not all fair deductions?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No. The hon. gentleman has certainly taken some of the figures from the Auditor-General's report, but the comments are his own. The motion contains the following expressions:—

“Alarming facts.”

“Gallopings increases.”

“Burdens imposed on the people.”

“A perpetual millstone fastened around the necks of the electors.”

“Forced by this Government.”

“An annual staggering burden.”

“Threatening the solvency of the State.”

“Wrested from the people's pockets.”

“Wrung from the people to bolster up costly State enterprises.”

“An insidious and unnecessary super-tax.”

“Political interference.”

“A colossal sink.”

“By which non-paying propositions are purchased on certain terms by the Government, and after being temporarily run at a loss then fall bankrupt is a disastrous policy.”

“Manipulated.”

“Dishonest statement.”

Owing to the clever way in which this motion is worded, it would read as if these remarks were contained in the Auditor-General's report. That is what I object to.

It is unfair, not only to the Government—that, after all, is not of very great concern—but it is certainly unfair to the Auditor-General. This Council requires strict proof of some of these allegations, and the hon. gentleman, in his three hours' speech, has given no proof at all. I will take, first of all, my own department—the Mines Department. The Hon. Mr. Hawthorn, the Hon. Mr. Fowles, and other hon. gentlemen who have spoken on this motion quoted, not from the Auditor-General's report, but from the “Courier” leading article of 5th October.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I do not think I have spoken on this motion at all.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Even to-day, on another question, the hon. gentleman dragged in the enterprises controlled by myself as Secretary for Mines.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I read the Auditor-General's report.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman read the “Courier” article of 5th October, 1921.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I did not.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I intend to read it, too, and I also intend to read the Auditor-General's report. The “Courier” says—

“The arsenic mine at Jibbenbar shows a loss of £46,800.”

To put it as mildly as one can possibly do, that is certainly a deliberate untruth, and hon. gentlemen repeated it. Hon. members in the Assembly have taken this article and quoted it as coming from the Auditor-General. In his report, the Auditor-General does not say anything of the kind.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Do you say that I said that?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I say it has been said in this Council. The hon. gentleman said there was a loss on every mining enterprise controlled by the department. That is not so.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It is so. You are speaking in generalities now.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am going to quote from the Auditor-General's report, and we do not mind saying what the loss is.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: What did you do with the loss on Warra?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The loss on Warra is not as stated, either. Hon. gentlemen know very well that the Auditor-General, in his report, shows that over £7,000 worth of material and plant have been sold from Warra, which makes up the greater part of the loss in connection with that mine, and the loss is much under £20,000. Yet hon. gentlemen in this Chamber say that the loss on Warra was £47,000, and the “Courier” said the loss on the arsenic mine at Jibbenbar is £46,800. What the Auditor-General says is—

“The expenditure during the year amounted to £18,524 9s. 7d., making a total expenditure of £58,108 14s. 10d. since the commencement of operations in February, 1918. The collections from inception amount to £11,305 18s. 9d., leaving a net balance of £46,802 16s. 1d.”

On the other side of the column hon. gentlemen will see assets such as buildings, stores

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and tools, machinery and plant, mine development, horses, harness, motor-cars and motor-lorries, fuel and timber, office furniture, sundry debtors, ore on hand, arsenic on hand, and "Loss for current year, £4,797 8s. 9d." I want to remind hon. gentlemen that we are the only department that has taken one step towards the eradication of prickly-pear in this State.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: That is perfect nonsense.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Who put Roberts on at Dulacca?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It failed.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: He tried to do something, and he was given every encouragement.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: If hon. gentlemen read the paper this morning they will see what a valuable product we are producing at Jibbenbar. With the exception of a few tons, we are the only people in Australia who have arsenic to supply to the people. The loss in connection with Jibbenbar is £4,797, and the Auditor-General says—

"The loss incurred during the year is chiefly due to the fact that the arsenic ordered prior to 31st December, 1920, was sold at £23 per ton, when required for prickly-pear destruction, and £25 per ton for other purposes."

The Mines Department sells it to the Lands Department at £23 per ton, and the Lands Department sells it to the selectors for £10 per ton. Had we sold the number of tons we produced at the lowest quoted market price during last year, we would have made a profit of £10,000 or £12,000, as against a loss of £4,797.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: If you had done differently you would be a different Government.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We gave it to the selector for £10 per ton.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You only supplied 136 tons at that price.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman knows we supplied a great deal more than that. We sold it for the purpose of destroying prickly-pear and for other purposes.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You sold more to outside people than you sold to selectors.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: White arsenic on the 5th October (this month) was quoted in Melbourne at £80 per ton, and grey arsenic, which we produce, is quoted at £62 per ton, and in Sydney at £65; and the day before yesterday, in order to keep faith with the prickly-pear selectors of this State, I refused an order for 20 tons of arsenic at £50 per ton on rails Stanthorpe. In spite of that, we give it to the selector at £10 per ton.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: That was bad business.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We do that, instead of employing the roundabout method of saving to the prickly-pear selector, "If you buy our arsenic at £60 per ton, we will give you a bonus of £50 per ton." If we adopted that method we would get the kudos of giving a bonus to the selector

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of £50 per ton on every ton of arsenic supplied.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: The arsenic mine is shut up now.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We are not producing this month, because we are renovating the plant. I want to show how unfair it is for a leading journal in this State to say deliberately that there is a big loss.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: Is that the question before the Council?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: If the hon. gentleman does not like it, he can go away and leave the Council. He is not here very often.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: It is like your impertinence. You are talking about something that has nothing to do with the motion at all.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: If the hon. gentleman will read the motion, he will find that it is comprehensive enough to deal with anything. I want to emphasise that the Auditor-General has pointed out that the loss on the arsenic mine was not £46,800, as stated by the "Courier," but £4,700, and that loss is due to the fact that the Government sold the product to the selectors at a ridiculously low cost. We are keeping our compact with the selectors, and we are doing that because we are desirous of doing something towards eradicating prickly-pear from our lands.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You have not done away with the debit of £46,802 which the Auditor-General shows.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman should go out there and see the valuable plant we have up there. I know we put £5 5s. 9d. per ton on every ton of arsenic we produce to allow for depreciation on the mine, and, although we know that mine will probably have a life of 100 years, we intend to have the capital cost written off in ten years.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: The Auditor-General says no interest has been charged. Is that true or not true?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The same argument has been advanced against the Baralaba State Coalmine, and against the Styx River Coalmine. They say there is a loss of £13,000 on the Baralaba State Coalmine. That is not so. The loss, since the productive stage was reached, is only £1,387. I admit there should not have been a loss at all, and there will not be a loss at the end of this financial year.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Is the coal any good for railway purposes?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is certainly good, but it is not the best. It is better than the Ipswich coal, but it is not as good as the Styx River nor as good as Bowen coal. It is better in one respect than the Blair Athol coal: it will do more work than the Blair Athol coal, but it is not so easy to fire. The loss on Baralaba is £1,387 5s. 10d., not £13,000, as stated in the other House and as stated in the leading article in the "Courier." Probably there should not be a loss at all. There has been an expenditure of £3,457 in prospecting operations.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Which is written off.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes, and any company engaged in the mining industry very often has to spend a lot of money before they get any return, and our mine has just now reached its producing stage. Since the 30th June this year we have been showing a profit of [8 p.m.] 1s. 7d. per ton on Baralaba coal.

On the Styx River, it has been stated, there has been a loss of £7,000. The Auditor-General's report does not say that.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The Auditor-General says you paid no interest on Baralaba State Coalmine. When you talk of a loss you do not treat the matter properly. If people had not to pay interest it often would be a different proposition for them.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is another question. The Auditor-General, referring to the Styx River report, does not say a word about interest.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Yes, he does.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: You have not read the Auditor-General's report on your own mine.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: There was a loss of £6,799 on the Styx River, but the difference in the sales of coal and the actual working expenses is only £342. Look at the amount of prospecting and developmental work done. The whole sum total of the matter is that hon. gentlemen opposite do not understand mining enterprises, or they would know that when you engage in such enterprises you do not often get the return in the first year of your operations to meet all the expenditure.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: You engaged in an undertaking which cost £5,700, and you could have obtained the same information by putting down a bore costing £300.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I want to point out that this means that there was a loss of only £200 or £300. In the case of the arsenic mine also, this is explained in the Auditor-General's report why there was a loss. There is no more profitable enterprise in this State had we sold the product at market values, which we could easily have done. The hon. gentleman also dealt with the Railways Department.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Will you prove that there is a surplus now?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No; I am not going to attempt that. I can prove that this Government in 1915 passed an Act repealing the Railways Guarantee Act of 1895.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: That was a party question at the elections.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I say we repealed that Act, and thereby had to forego an indebtedness on railways constructed amounting to £57,214 in 1912-1913, £83,400 in 1913-1914, and £79,734 in 1914-1915. There was an annual loss of £120,000 for 1915-1916, £191,000 for 1916-1917, £296,000 for 1917-1918, £345,000 for 1918-1919, £350,000 for 1919-1920, and £354,000 for 1920-1921. There is a simple way of making railways pay, and hon. gentlemen opposite know that.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: What is it?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: To raise fares and freights.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: You would kill business if you did that. If tramways fares were increased to 1s., nobody would travel by them.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They would travel just the same; they are forced to travel, except on very short sections. What happened when the prices of admission to theatres and picture shows were increased? Did they lose patronage because of it? Not at all.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Yes; they had to close one in Queen street.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I repeat there is only one way to make railways pay, and that is to increase fares and freights.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Not at all.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We have the greatest mileage in the Commonwealth, and especially when you compare populations.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: And the greatest loss and inefficiency.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No. We have in very many instances cheaper fares and freights, even compared with the railways of America.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: You have lost £6,000,000 in six years.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Personally, I think railway fares and freights should be reviewed and some of the anomalies corrected, so that we may have more uniform charges. I believe there are very many anomalies and they are very difficult to correct. It would be quite a big contract, and if we attempted to raise fares substantially hon. gentlemen opposite would be the first to cry out.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You would be stopping production.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Hon. gentlemen know very well that no country, no young country like this, can expect its railways to pay directly. I say they do pay now indirectly. When we took office we paid our workmen higher wages. They were sweated under our predecessors.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: They were more contented than they are now.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I remember leading a deputation to the Minister for Railways asking for a paltry increase of 6d. per day for the lengthsmen and construction workers, who were then getting 6s. per day.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Six shillings then would go further than 15s. now.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Possibly it will be necessary to increase fares and freights unless our population increases materially. We build many railways that cannot possibly be expected to pay. I venture this opinion: That if the railway is extended to the Northern Burnett, that beautiful area of good land of which we have heard so much, the railway will not pay for some considerable time. I think the Commissioner estimates that there will be a loss. The Under Secretary for Lands was questioned regarding the matter, and he stated that the increase to the Lands Department revenue would more than pay for the loss on the railway. That is the case with many of our lines in Queensland, and that is why I say that the railways pay indirectly.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: Only three out of seventy-two sections of our railways are paying.

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The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Possibly. One of the best paying lines last year, I think, was the Chillagoe line; also another mining line between Cloncurry and Townsville.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You cannot say they are paying now?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No, because of the low state of the metal market, which is causing companies to close down. I believe that, in a country like Queensland, we must be prepared to build railways without the hope of immediate direct payment, so as to encourage settlement. Hon. gentlemen opposite also made reference to the loss on Chillagoe Works, which was quoted at £47,000. That is stated in the Auditor-General's report.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Did you not tell us that you would not work it unless it was a paying proposition?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The loss would be greater now.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: You jeered because the Chillagoe Company could not make it pay.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We made it pay in the first few months, but this House prevented our having it for two years when copper was high priced.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You know you caused a delay in this House.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman knows that we purchased Chillagoe when copper was selling at a high price. Machinery had to be renovated, but nevertheless we made a profit for a few months; then the bottom fell out of the metals market, and we show a loss like other mining concerns do because of the absurdly low price of copper.

Hon. A. H. PARNELL: You made a better bargain by waiting.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The price at which it was first offered was not acceptable to the Government. Anyhow, we are responsible for the employment of over 1,000 men at Chillagoe. I ask—Is it not better to keep them employed?

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: And you will still keep on, notwithstanding the loss?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The opinion is that copper must go down to the level of the cheapest producing country. The price of copper is £88 10s., and bullion is worth £88 per ton—a difference of only 10s.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Would it not be better to sell at that price and lose only 10s. per ton and get the cash?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No; the interest per annum could not possibly be more than £6 per ton, and we should be very much disappointed if there is not a rise of £5 per ton in the price of copper within the next three months.

Hon. W. J. DUNSTAN: The fact that Mount Morgan is attempting to reopen the matter shows that they are quite satisfied of that.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I say that the Government is right in holding the copper and in keeping Chillagoe open in anticipation of a speedy return to a reasonable price for copper. I think, eventually,

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we shall be able to prove that is a very wise action. I believe the Mount Morgan Company could have done the same. I have no desire to speak longer on this motion. I have quite a lot of notes here on many other matters. I simply rise to correct the leading article in the "Courier."

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I do not think you have corrected them.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am sure I have. When a paper publishes a bold statement that the loss was £47,000, whereas the loss was only £4,000, it is either a typographical error or a deliberate misstatement. I have proved also that a profit would have been made on the enterprise but for our keen desire to help those people on the land who, unfortunately, have received a legacy from previous Governments.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: In speaking on this matter, I do not intend to make a second reading speech. In reality, there is nothing to reply to, because, since we had the pleasure of listening to the Minister, from the time he first entered the House right up to the present time, he has made statements of a similar kind—that there were never losses of any kind made on the mines, and that he prophesied that next year there would be a profit. The Minister touched upon the copper mine and also upon the arsenic mine, but he did not tell us anything about those other State enterprises on which there have been such huge losses. But Mr. Fowles, in his motion, does not refer to the losses of the Minister for Mines alone, but to losses on the whole of the Government's enterprises, and he quotes the Auditor-General's report in corroboration of his statements.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: His figures on the soldiers' settlements are £2,000 out.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: I will make a suggestion, and that is, that if Mr. Fowles misstated anything contained in that report, that the Government should do the same as it did with the Governor's Speech last year and send broadcast amongst the people 400,000 copies of the Auditor-General's report.

Hon. W. J. DUNSTAN: Your leaders are crying economy.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: We have no leaders. Every man is a law unto himself, which is more than can be said by hon. gentlemen opposite. If that document were sent out in the numbers I mentioned, the electors would be in a position to form their own conclusions. Coming to the arsenic mine, according to the Minister the loss was £50 per ton by supplying 136 tons to farmers for the destruction of prickly-pear. Supposing his statement were true, it would only amount to about £7,000. And if the interest were charged up, it would be found that the whole transaction would not show a profit.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Can't you give us credit for giving the selectors arsenic at £10 per ton when the market price was £70 per ton?

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: I am giving you credit for £50 per ton. The Minister did not tell us anything at all about the failure of his Government to clear prickly-pear on Crown land. The pear on Crown land is one of the worst menaces Queensland has got today. I do not say the pear is the biggest pest; I think the Government is. I remember the

growing statements the Minister made when he tried to get the Council to pass the Chillingoe Bill. He prophesied wonderful things. The Council put a limit as regards the amount he could spend, and he now says if they had not put on that limit he could have made huge profits. As a matter of fact, he disregarded that limit and spent just as much money as he wished, so that the action of the Council was not responsible if he did not turn out a large quantity of copper. Take a comprehensive survey of the whole of the State enterprises. It can be said, without contradiction, that few or any of the State enterprises have been run without a loss. Look at the huge loss on the fishshops and in connection with the fish trawler from down South—bought at a huge price and now rotting somewhere. Look at the "Douglas Mawson." Look at everything the Government has undertaken in the way of State enterprises—the meatshops, for instance. The Government is running them at a loss. The Charleville shops have been running at huge losses; but in order to cover the losses the Government sold a large number of cattle to the Charleville State butcher shops, who sold them to a New South Wales buyer and made a profit of £4 per head. This is how they bolster up their State enterprises. There is the huge sum of money which they received from the Federal Government and credited it to the butcher shops in Brisbane, and in this way covered up their losses. We remember also when Parliament introduced the Bill to enable a State Produce Agency to be established what a great advantage it was going to be, and how the Government was going to make a profit. What do we find? Why, a huge loss on last year's transactions! Coming to the railways, the Minister did not tell us that to-day there were employed on the railways 3,000 or 4,000 more persons than were employed at the time this Government came into office. It would be just as well if you took these men out of the service and gave them a perpetual holiday on full salaries. These railways were a paying asset before this Government came into power. The railway charges were reasonable, the employees were contented, production was increasing, and the service was not overmanned. Since the Government came into office it has put on thousands of men who were not wanted in the railways and who are lost to production. But it is the same in every State enterprise. The fact remains that, whenever the blighting hand of this Government has been laid on any industry, no matter how profitable that industry is, the profit vanishes. If it should be the misfortune of this country for the Government to continue as it has during the past year or two, I think everything indicates that we shall reach a condition when it will be questionable whether we shall be able to pay the interest on our public debt. We must not overlook the fact that we are constantly adding to our interest bill every year and production is not increasing. The taxpayer is burdened with a large sum of money each year to make up the deficiency on these things and the railways have gone to the bad to such an extent that in a year or two the people of Queensland would be better off if they owned no railways at all. The crying need of this country—not only of Queensland, but of all the States—is more production.

Hon. T. L. JONES: You cannot sell what you produce now.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: You must produce the right thing. The hon. gentleman knows perfectly well that if the farmers produced more than they do now they could sell it.

Hon. T. L. JONES: What about the meatworks?

HON. P. J. LEAHY: We know that if we produce more wool we can sell it. It is impossible for us to continue as at present with the ever-increasing burden [8.30 p.m.] of interest on our public debt.

We find that there is a tendency for the people of Australia to flock to the cities. I say that the community is becoming demoralised—that this condition of things is affecting all classes of the community. We have a larger number of unemployed than we have had for years before. Carpenters, bricklayers, and other workers are walking the streets.

Hon. T. L. JONES: You have them in every country in the world.

HON. P. J. LEAHY: There is some excuse for it in other countries, but we have not suffered from the war as other countries have. I do not remember any previous occasion when there were so many men who wanted work and could not get it. The fact of the Government remaining in power is adding to the unemployment. Anyone, with the exception of a Labour fanatic, knows that there will be no prosperity in Queensland as long as the present Government hold the reins of office.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

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

## CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

### FIRST READING.

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

### SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: This is a Bill to amend the Constitution of Queensland by abolishing the Legislative Council.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: In defiance of the vote of the people—the last act of a dying Government.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I have very much pleasure in introducing the Bill in this Council. For many years prior to coming here I advocated the abolition of the Legislative Council, for the reason that I have been personally opposed to the bicameral system. I believe in one branch of the Legislature only; that is, the branch elected directly by the people. I believe that the bicameral system of Government is unsound in principle, undemocratic, and is not representative of the people.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: All the civilised world agrees with it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Since I have been here, my opinion in favour of the

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unicameral system of Government has been very much strengthened. I am not going to say that the ability in this House is less than that in the Legislative Assembly, or that the debating power of this House is not just as strong as the debating power in the Legislative Assembly; neither am I going to say that the tone of debate in the Legislative Council is not equal to, or is in any way inferior to, the tone of debate in the Legislative Assembly. I am not approaching this question from a personal standpoint; neither do we do so as a Government. We attack the system, and that is characteristic of this Government right through the piece.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: A destructive Government from beginning to end.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am opposed to the bicameral form of Government, and I go so far as to say that, in my opinion, the Federal Senate is a useless institution and a useless branch of the Legislature, although it is elected on a broad franchise. I have been here for five years in this Chamber as the representative of the Government, and this is the third occasion I have had the pleasure of introducing this Bill. Hon. gentlemen opposite know that I introduced the Bill on two previous occasions—in October, 1917, and again in October, 1918. When we introduced it on a previous occasion hon. gentlemen opposite were in a position to defeat the measure. I was tempted to go right through with the measure to-night, and force it to a division in the early hours of the morning, but it will not be necessary to do so.

I was prompted to do that because, when I introduced the Bill in 1918, and sought to postpone the Order of the Day for the second reading, so as to move the second reading of the Bill on the following day, as I was rather indisposed, the temporary leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn, objected to my doing so, and I was not allowed, by the brutal majority that hon. members opposite had, to even alter the Order of the Day. Further than that, when we moved the adjournment of the debate on that occasion, after the Hon. Mr. Hawthorn had moved an amendment on the Bill, hon. gentlemen opposite opposed the adjournment of the debate, and forced us to a division and defeated us, and we had to go on. Hon. members opposite moved an amendment with something like thirteen clauses, which had not been circulated, and we had not had time to peruse it. The Hon. Mr. T. L. Jones rose to the occasion that night, and made the speech which was necessary in order to get the adjournment. Hon. gentlemen opposite have asked me to agree to an adjournment of the debate after I have made my speech, so that they can prepare their speeches, and go on with the second reading to-morrow. We are reasonable, and we are not—because we have a majority—going to force the Bill through to-night. We are going to be more reasonable than hon. members opposite were when they had a majority. They showed me no consideration in this matter; but two wrongs do not make a right. We on this side are going to be reasonable, and to yield to the wishes of hon. members opposite, so that they may be able to advance their arguments to-morrow in favour of the retention of the Council.

Hon. J. S. COLLINGS: They will be able to get instructions from the "Courier."

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The SECRETARY FOR MINES: When I introduced this Bill three years ago, the principal argument that we advanced in favour of the abolition of the Council was that the Council was an obstructive Chamber and a clog on the wheels of progress; and, as hon. gentlemen know, on very many occasions our legislation was either thrown out or mutilated to such an extent that, when it went back to the Minister in the Assembly, he did not know it; it was unrecognisable. To-day we attack it from a different point of view. We attacked it two or three years ago because it was an obstructive Upper House, and interfered with the rights of the people's representatives. To-day we advocate the abolition of the Council because of its uselessness. As a legislative nominee Chamber, it is either obstructive or it is useless. Until we had a majority here, it was obstructive, and now that we have a majority here it is useless. I am not saying that with any desire to cast a reflection on hon. gentlemen on the other side of the Chamber; but I do say that we, on this side, are more truly representative of the people than hon. gentlemen opposite, for the reason that they have been appointed by Administrations in the past which have been defeated by the people—by Governments which have been long out of touch with the ideas of the people, and which have lost the confidence of the people—while we on this side are appointed by the elected representatives of the people.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: In a minority of 20,000 votes.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Although everyone on this side is opposed to the bicameral system of Government, we have more right here than hon. gentlemen opposite. We are more truly representative of the people, because we were appointed by the Administration which has been newly elected by the people. I was showing what took place before we had a majority on this side of this Council; and, Mr. President, I will remember the time, before you came here, when I stood alone on this side of the Council—I will remember calling for a division, and there was nobody to vote with me. Things have certainly changed since then. Before we had a majority in this Chamber, appointed by the Government, hon. gentlemen opposite constituted themselves the real Opposition to the Government, and proof of that is found in the fact that Bills that passed the Legislative Assembly in one hour—Bills that passed through their Committee stage sometimes in less than twenty minutes—took as long as three weeks to go through this Chamber; and the Hon. Mr. O'Shea will bear me out in regard to the number of sittings that were occupied in discussing the Committee stage of the Wages Bill, and the number of days we were discussing the Stamp Bill and the Probate and Succession Duties Act Amendment Bill.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: You admitted yourself that here was the best criticism and the best work.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It proves that hon. gentlemen opposite constituted themselves the real Opposition to the Government. When the Government in the late T. J. Ryan's time had a majority of fifteen, this Council—to again prove their obstructive tactics—moved 406 amendments in Bills in the year 1918, as against 109 moved in the Legislative Assembly. It certainly

proves what an awful task I had here, as leader of the House, to contend with hon. gentlemen opposite, and I never want to go through it again. Last session and this session hon. gentlemen opposite have only been responsible for moving one amendment, and that was moved the other day.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: I moved three amendments to-night, and you would not accept one of them.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman moved one amendment on clause 4 of a Bill which was practically the whole essence of the Bill. That amendment was moved because they had neglected to divide on the second reading of the Bill. A few years ago, hon. members opposite constituted themselves the opposition to the Government, and it is admitted that the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly was probably weak in that respect. They knew that the brutal force was with hon. gentlemen in this Council, and they used it to a greater extent than ever I used it here as the representative of the Government. Hon. gentlemen know that.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Why don't you try a referendum of the people on this Bill?

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: You are dodging the referendum.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am not dodging the referendum. I have never been afraid of trusting the people. I have been defeated. I am not that kind of politician who stoops to seek popularity, anyhow. I have been defeated by the people as many times as I have been elected, and sometimes I have been just as proud of my defeat as if I had been elected. I do not think anything of a man who stoops to popularity. In reply to the Hon. Mr. Fowles, I want to say that immediately after the referendum was taken—hon. gentlemen know that the reason why it was not carried was because of the legal action taken against the Government.

Hon. E. W. H. FOWLES: The people did not agree with your policy.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: After all, I think we should be a little in advance of the people, and it is the tendency of the people always to leave things as they are. They are not so desirous of changing, and they certainly, at the present time, are not desirous of changing this Government. Immediately after that referendum was taken in May of the year 1917, the Ryan Administration was returned to power with a larger majority than ever. That was the year we were returned with forty-eight members in a House of seventy-two. We went to the country, and hon. gentlemen opposite forced us to make the question of abolition an issue of the election. I could quote from every speech of prominent members of the party to show that that is so.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Tell us about last year's election and your defeat by 20,000 votes in the country.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I was a candidate at the last election, and was defeated at the polls. Anyhow, my party had so much confidence in me that they thought I was of some value, and I accepted this nominated position that I am going to vote against to-night. We went to the

country in 1917, and we were returned with a bigger majority than ever.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: Are you prepared to put this question to the country?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Government have been re-elected on two occasions with the abolition of the Legislative Council in the forefront of their platform. I am sure hon. gentlemen have read the Bill, and there is no need to make a long speech on it. I made a speech of over an hour and a-half on a previous occasion on this Bill, when I quoted very many constitutional authorities. There is no need to do that to-night. We can quote countries in the world where they have only one Chamber. Only two States in Canada have two Chambers; but hon. gentlemen cannot get away from this fact: That we in Australia are suffering from too much government. If hon. gentlemen want to know my position on the matter, I say straight out that I believe in one National Parliament. We have too many Legislatures in Australia—too much conflict of legislation, and no one can say by any stretch of imagination that this Council is in any way a check on hasty legislation. The number of times that a Bill has to be dealt with in the Legislative Assembly gives ample opportunity for discussion. Hon. gentlemen know that the forms of Parliament provide that before a Bill can be passed it must be put before the members of the Legislative Assembly about half a dozen different times.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: And they "gag" them through.

Hon. J. S. COLLINGS: Who invented the "gag"?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It makes one wonder if we are not an obsolete people when we move a Bill "be now read a first time." Then "That the Bill be printed," when it has been printed. All these motions give an opportunity for discussion, so that the argument as regards this Chamber being necessary as a check on hasty legislation falls flat, and hon. gentlemen opposite have proved that it is not a revisory Chamber by the fact that they have never attempted, since we have had a majority on this side, to move an amendment.

Hon. T. J. O'SHEA: Because you would not accept a single one.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman who interjects took a leading part in the debates in this Council, and I know hon. gentlemen opposite used to divide the work, whereas it all fell on the one pair of shoulders on this side, but since we have had a majority here it has very rarely happened that amendments have been moved. That proves there is no desire on the part of hon. members opposite to use this branch of the Legislature as a revisory Chamber. It is useless for me to argue this matter. The people's Chamber have passed this Bill in one division by 46 to 17; by 51 to 15 on another division; and on another occasion by 39 to 9; always with a majority of not less than nine on this measure, and we are going to pass it here to-morrow with a very substantial majority.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: You will have a fresh Upper House in two years, and a better House than you have now.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Some hon. gentlemen on the other side, no doubt,

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will advocate, rather than see the Council abolished altogether, an elective Chamber, on what they would term a property franchise, in order to protect the vested interests of property, but every Labour representative in this Council is in favour of its abolition, and, personally, I am pleased to see that the Legislative Assembly have deleted that clause with reference to a revisory committee, which, I think, is quite unnecessary. We say that this Council has certainly outlived its usefulness. We say it is not representative of the people, and we say that the people should govern directly through their elected representatives. That is the attitude of this party.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: They govern through the caucus.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That old bogey is dead long ago. I am quite sincere when I say I am very pleased to have had the pleasure—and, I may say, honour—of introducing this Bill on two previous occasions, and I am very sincere when I say it is a great pleasure to me to introduce it on the occasion on which it is going to be carried and put into effect. I believe the people should govern, not by a nominee Chamber, not by those who are here to represent vested interests, appointed by the dead hand of the past, but should be governed through their elected representatives; and the members of the Assembly can claim that they are truly representative of the people. The people have the right to turn them out if they do not like them, and put in a new Government if the Government is not giving them satisfaction. I will content myself with moving—

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

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

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

#### SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—

“That the Council, at its rising, do adjourn until 3.30 p.m. to-morrow.”

I want hon. gentlemen to note the time, and that it is an hour earlier than usual.

Question put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I beg to move—

“That the Council do now adjourn.”

The first business to-morrow will be the Constitution Act Amendment Bill, to be followed by the Miners' Homestead Perpetual Leases Act Amendment Bill in Committee, and then the Bills as they come from the Assembly.

Hon. P. J. LEAHY: Does it not strike the Minister that it is an absurdity, now that the Council is virtually abolished, to proceed with other business? If this Council is to be abolished, would it not be the proper course to pass all the other business of the session, and then when that business is passed, deal with the Bill to abolish the Council? It seems to me absurd virtually to decide to abolish the Council, and then to go on with the business as usual.

Question put and passed.

The Council adjourned at 9 p.m.

[Hon. A. J. Jones.]