

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 12 JULY 1922

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Growers' Association, whereby that association guarantees a minimum price of 1s. 6d. per lb. (sea freights and insurance payable by the association) for cotton lint of good quality, for five years from 1st January, 1920, will he extend the State's guarantee to growers of 5½d. per lb. for seed cotton, which is made possible by the above arrangement?

"2. As the present State's guarantee of 5½d. per lb. for seed cotton, which terminates on 30th June, 1923, is to no small extent responsible for the increased acreage devoted to cotton-growing in Queensland, and as an extension of such guarantee, by safeguarding the interests of the growers, would result in an extraordinary increase in cotton cultivation in this State, will he, at the earliest possible opportunity, give to the growers an assurance that an extension of the present State guarantee for a further period will be made?"

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

"1. The Queensland Government's guarantee of 5½d. per lb. was made before, and is quite independent of, the agreement with the British Cotton Growing Association, whose risk was limited to £10,000, which limit has already been reached.

"2. The future policy of the Government respecting the cotton-growing industry will be made known at the proper time."

WEDNESDAY, 12 JULY, 1912.

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Bertram, *Marce*), took the chair at 3.30 p.m.

QUESTIONS.

REORGANISATION OF STATE FISHERY DEPARTMENT.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*), in the absence of Mr. Petrie (*Toombul*), asked the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises—

"In order to place the State Fishery Department on a more satisfactory basis, so as to ensure all classes of the community getting fish at a reasonable rate, also to give the Government a return on the money invested, will he consult with the Trade Commissioner with a view of reorganising this industry, by giving him the necessary power to dispose of the buildings, machinery, trawler, nets, &c., that are not required, and adopting some better and cheaper method of handling and disposing of fish than that now in vogue, at the same time ensuring to the fishermen of Queensland a fair return for their fish?"

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) replied—

"Before the expiry of the agreement with the Fishermen's Co-operative Company in September, the matters raised in this question will be fully considered. I will be very pleased to receive any suggestions that the hon. member may have to make in regard thereto."

CONTINUATION OF STATE GUARANTEE TO COTTON-GROWERS.

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

"1. In view of the arrangement made between the Agent-General (on behalf of the State) and the British Cotton

[*Mr. Vowles.*

STATE BORROWING AND LOAN EXPENDITURE SINCE 1ST JULY, 1915.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*) asked the Treasurer—

"1. What is the total amount borrowed by the State on loan account since 1st July, 1915?"

"2. Apart from railway construction and the erection of buildings for school and other public purposes, how has this money been expended? Will he supply information as to the various items, excepting those already mentioned?"

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore) replied—

"1 and 2. The information is contained in the Treasurer's annual statement of the public accounts. This statement is embodied in the annual report of the Auditor-General, and is, therefore, available to the hon. member."

MUNGANA MINES LIMITED AND COMPANIES ACT.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*) asked the Attorney-General—

"1. Irrespective of the fact that he has stated if a company has failed in certain particulars to comply with the Companies Act, such Acts providing a remedy independently of Government intervention, will he furnish a complete list of shareholders, past and present, of the late Mungana Mines Limited to date of Government purchase, seeing that such a list is unobtainable in accordance with the laws of the State?"

"2. From what fund was the £40,000 purchase price paid or proposed to be paid?"

"3. Has he investigated the fact—if it is a fact—that, in accordance with such Companies Acts, a dereliction of duty would occur if such shareholders' list is unobtainable in the usual way?"

"4. If he has investigated, what is the result? If not, will he do so?"

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

"1. If the hon. member reads the Companies Acts he will find that the Government as such has no particular authority to compel a list of shareholders to be furnished. The Acts invest every person in the community with the same authorities in this regard. There is nothing to prevent the hon. member from exercising these authorities.

"2. This question should be addressed to the Hon. the Minister for Mines.

"3 and 4. The hon. member will find the answers to these questions in the Companies Acts."

DISCHARGED STATE CHILDREN.

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

"1. What number of children (a) under ten years of age, (b) over ten and under fourteen, have been discharged as State children during the half-year ended 31st December, 1922, and the half-year ended 30th June, 1922?"

"2. What was the saving to the department?"

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

"1. Children under fourteen years are not discharged except in cases where it is found that they are not entitled to State aid.

"2. There is no saving to the department, as the vote is for children who are entitled to State aid."

AMERICAN DOLLAR LOANS.

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

"Will he furnish the House with particulars as to—(a) The amount realised in pound sterling on the two loans floated by his Government in New York? (b) The latest available market price of the loans? (c) The amounts, if any, that have been repurchased in accordance with the Sinking Fund conditions?"

The TREASURER replied—

"(a) £5,139,387; (b) first loan—108½ buyer, 109½ seller; second loan—101 buyer, 101½ seller; (c) nil."

NON-ATTENDANCE OF SOUTH BRISBANE FIRE BRIGADE AT FIRE AT MOOROOKA.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*) asked the Home Secretary—

"1. Is he aware that on Friday, 7th July, at about 11.45 p.m., a fire broke out in a private residence close to the Ipswich road at Moorooka, unfortunately resulting in the complete destruction of the house and contents and loss of the occupier's life?"

"2. That the station-mistress communicated three times by telephone with the

South Brisbane Fire Brigade Station informing them that there was a man in the burning house, but it is stated that they refused to come out?"

"3. Will he give the official reasons for such purported refusal, and the actual position in regard to fire brigade service in the Stephens Shire area?"

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

"1, 2, and 3. Acting under the authority given him under the Fire Brigades Acts, the chief officer of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade instructed B Station (South Brisbane) not to turn out to the fire reported at Moorooka, which was 2½ miles distant from the boundary of the district of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Board. The chief officer has power to take the metropolitan fire service, under certain statutory conditions, outside the area. The initiative for the provision of a local service is generally taken by the people themselves, through their local authority, but the provision is, like all services, governed by considerations of practicality and cost."

HAMILTON COLD STORES.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowoong*) asked the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises—

"1. When does he anticipate the Hamilton Cold Stores will be ready for occupation?"

"2. What has been the cost of railway siding, buildings, wharves, and machinery to date?"

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH replied—

"1. (a) Portion will be ready for occupation December, 1922; (b) the whole, twelve months later.

"2. (a) Cost of railway siding to 30th June, £14,975; (b) cost of buildings, including corkboard, £73,160; (c) cost of wharves, £31,110; (d) cost of machinery, £23,253; total, £142,498."

AMOUNT PAID FOR IMPORTED FRUIT PULP.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*), in the absence of Mr. Sizer (*Yundah*) asked the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises—

"What amount of cash was paid for fruit pulp imported from the Southern States during the period 1st July, 1921, to 30th June, 1922, such cash being at market prices ruling at the time?"

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH replied—

"No cash was paid; payments were made by cheque. Details of our activities will be given in the reports of the Auditor-General and Trade Commissioner."

PAPER.

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

Report of the Police Investment Board for the year ended 31st December, 1921.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.

The PREMIER: I beg to move—

"That the Standing Orders Committee for the present session consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, Mr.

King, Mr. Vowles, Mr. Moore, Mr. Gilday, Mr. Ferricks, and the mover, and that the said Committee have leave to sit during any adjournment of the House."

Question put and passed.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.

The PREMIER: I beg to move—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the printing to be executed by order of the House; and for the purpose of selecting and arranging for printing returns and papers presented in pursuance of motions made by members. That such Committee consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Kirwan, Mr. Barber, Mr. Gledson, Mr. T. R. Roberts, Mr. Brennan, and Mr. Swayne."

Question put and passed.

LIBRARY, REFRESHMENT ROOMS, AND PARLIAMENTARY BUILDINGS COMMITTEES.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.

The PREMIER: I beg to move—

"That the Library, Refreshment Rooms, and Parliamentary Buildings Committees for the present session be constituted as follow:—Library: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Dunstan, Mr. Ephinstone, Mr. Collins, Mr. Macgregor, Mr. Pease, and Mr. Green. Refreshment Rooms: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Kirwan, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Corser, Mr. Maxwell, and Mr. King. Parliamentary Buildings: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Payne, Mr. Stopford, Mr. Kerr, Mr. Petrie, Mr. Morgan, and the mover."

Question put and passed.

BRISBANE TRAMWAY TRUST BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. Kirwan, Brisbane, in the chair.*)

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. W. McCormack, *Chairman*), in moving—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to provide for the acquisition, construction, management, and working of tramways in Brisbane."

said: At this stage I will be as brief as possible in giving the Committee a general outline of the Bill. I think it is hardly fair to ask me to go further than that, because I intend to deal at great length with the matter on the second reading. There are lots of things which hon. members are not acquainted with in connection with the proposal to take over and run the trams by a trust, so I hope they will accept a brief outline of the Bill at this stage. It is proposed to constitute a trust representing the local authorities in what will be known as the tramway area of Brisbane. The trust will consist of six members elected by the local authorities, and these local authorities will be divided into three districts, for the purposes of representation. The districts will comprise Brisbane,

South Brisbane, and adjoining councils, and the balance of the councils which are in the tramway area. Each of those three districts will have two representatives elected by the local authorities. The remaining two representatives will be elected by the Governor in Council, and one of these two will be the chairman of the trust. The Government representation will last until the trust is clear of the guarantee given by the Government for the money to be paid for the purchase of the tramways. The method of selecting the representatives is laid down in the Bill. The members of the different local authorities concerned will meet together and they, and not the people themselves, will elect the representatives by ballot. The second portion of the Bill deals with the acquisition of the tramway system as it stands. I do not propose to go into this matter now, because it is a matter that requires a great deal of explanation. The tramways will be paid for either in cash or on terms. The decision as to the amount of compensation to be paid will be a matter for the tribunal. The tribunal will be that which was arranged for in the original Tramways Act. There is to be no departure from the original Act so far as any rights of the company are concerned. Under this Bill the compensation will be based on the rights or powers which the company have in the original Act. The Act of 1920 is repealed. The Supreme Court will be the authority to decide whether the Land Court or some other tribunal is the proper authority to deal with the question of compensation. A Sinking Fund will be established over a number of years to repay money borrowed by the trust. The trust will have power to appoint a general manager, to whom we are giving great powers. He will have nothing whatever to do with the policy of the trust, but will have full control of the administrative side of the undertaking, with complete power over the running of the tramways and the employees, including their engagement and dismissal.

Mr. KERR: Who will decide the question of extensions?

The HOME SECRETARY: That is a matter which I will deal with on the second reading. It will be much better for me then to deal with the question fully and frankly from every point of view. The employees will have the right of appeal against the decision of the manager to a board constituted on exactly the same lines as the Railway Appeal Board. The rest of the Bill deals really with machinery matters—a mass of detail setting out, of course, the proper powers and authorities of the trust. The government of their internal affairs is set out fully so that the trust will not be seeking information from other bodies as to exactly where their powers lie. It is provided, among other things, how they shall keep their accounts and prepare their balance-sheets. In fact, everything that could possibly be thought of has been embodied in the Bill to make it really a charter for the control of this important public utility. Provision is made for the borrowing of money on debentures, as is the case with the City Council, for the purpose of making extensions.

We have also provided for setting up an advisory board almost immediately to frame a general scheme for extensions. That board will take into consideration the growing districts of Brisbane, the available land, and the

[*Hon. W. McCormack.*]

opportunities for building, and town planning generally, so that we shall have a general scheme laid out for the trust—not exactly a scheme for them to follow, but a general outline so that we shall have some continuity of policy, in order that, for instance, we shall not have tramways running beside railway lines, and we shall have some idea as to the direction in which extensions are going to be built. I think that is a good idea, and it is following out the scheme of town planning. There is a good deal of detail in the Bill, but at this stage I do not propose to deal with it, nor do I intend to argue any of the questions involved in the measure.

Mr. KING: Is the Bill the same as the confidential Bill that was circulated?

The HOME SECRETARY: Not quite. There are some material alterations.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I suppose this is the most important matter that has come before the Chamber for some time. There may be some very admirable features in the Bill, but one of the first essentials in discussing the matter is whether it is likely to be a financial success or not. Before we consent to the desirability of introducing a Bill to provide for the acquisition, construction, etc., of the tramways, the matter should have the very serious consideration of every member. This should not, in any shape or form, be a party measure. There should not be anything in the Bill which will have a tendency to saddle the people of the metropolitan area with the burdensome charge of carrying on what may prove to be a losing proposition.

The HOME SECRETARY: Wait until you hear me relate the history of the present company, and the money they have made.

Mr. TAYLOR: No doubt, the present company have done remarkably well for quite a number of years.

The HOME SECRETARY: Better than that.

Mr. TAYLOR: I consider that the present Government have done remarkably badly so far as the tramways are concerned. It is nearly two years since they stated they were going to acquire the trams. They have practically prevented their extension into quite a number of areas by the ineptitude they have shown in dealing with the matter. The consequence is that the trams two years ago were a better proposition than they are to-day. It would be interesting to know whether it is the intention of the Government to compel the local authorities to take over the trams whether they desire to do so or not. We know that very great advances have been made in other modes of traction during recent years, and there is quite a diversity of opinion as to what is going to be the best method of transporting people in the various cities and towns in the future. From what we know of the Bill at present, it is not one which, I consider, should commend itself to this Chamber.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I want to lodge a protest against the Bill having been made available to the public before members of this House saw it. I know that certain individuals have had the Bill for the purpose of inspecting it, and were able to tell me what is contained in it. I think that, as leader of the Opposition, I should be one of the first persons to get a copy of it.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES: From a country point of view, I look at it in this way—that a large sum of money will be required to acquire this undertaking.

The HOME SECRETARY: Why not wait and argue the question on the second reading?

Mr. VOWLES: It is not desirable that it should be done at all. There are many other directions in which that money could be utilised in developing the State.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES: You do not hear many complaints from the public regarding the present conditions. A certain amount of money has to be found which could be used in other directions, and which would give employment in the creation of new works instead of being applied to the carrying on of something which we already have.

The HOME SECRETARY: Do you ever ride on the trams? Have you any conception of what the people have to put up with?

Mr. VOWLES: Through the inaction of the Government, the company were left in the position that they could not make extensions; nor were they prepared to put fresh capital into the plant because the position was so indefinite. This Government have held off for two years. The question crops up occasionally at election time.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is one year; 20th September last year was the date when we could have taken them over.

Mr. VOWLES: The company would have carried out extensions.

The HOME SECRETARY: They would not.

Mr. VOWLES: The Government are asking the local authorities to take over a "pig in a poke"—an unknown liability. Surely, before this trust is created, it should be determined what is the amount of liabilities the trust will have to undertake.

The HOME SECRETARY: How can they determine that?

Mr. VOWLES: The value of the goodwill and of the plant could very easily have been determined by this time if the Government had gone the right way about it. The ratepayers in the various areas, apparently, are not going to be asked for their consent to this transaction. One of the underlying principles of the Local Authorities Act is that, where money is to be borrowed, the people who have to carry the burden—if there is going to be a loss—have the right to say "yea" or "nay." I understand that that democratic principle is going to be departed from in this case, and that this undertaking is going to be thrust upon them whether they like it or not. That being so, I think it is desirable that we should not consent to the Bill, and I object to it for the reasons I have already enunciated.

Mr. KING (*Logan*): I believe in local government being controlled by local authorities, but, as the chairman of one of the local authorities vitally concerned, I must enter my protest against the Bill. I think that is the feeling of every local authority affected by the Bill.

The HOME SECRETARY: That was not the opinion of the combined local authorities.

Mr. KING: I do not think that the Home Secretary has the combined opinion of the local authorities.

The HOME SECRETARY: I had on the night of the conference.

Mr. King

Mr. KING: The hon. gentleman admitted that the Bill has been materially altered from the confidential Bill which was considered by the local authorities.

The HOME SECRETARY: Materially altered in connection with matters that the local authorities have no concern with.

Mr. KING: The local authorities are very materially concerned with the whole of the Bill. As the leader of the Opposition stated, the local authorities are asked to buy a pig in a poke.

The HOME SECRETARY: Why did a previous Government, of which you were a follower, make provision for a local authority to take over the tramways?

Mr. KING: That is the cry that comes every time from the present Government. They blame the present members of the Opposition for all the sins of previous Governments. I ask the hon. gentleman to acquit me of any dereliction of duty on the part of past Governments. The local authorities do not know the price they will have to pay. They do not know the value of the assets of the Tramways Company, and possibly there will be an expensive law suit carried to the Privy Council at the end of the whole matter. I asked that the report of the valuers appointed by the Government to value the assets of the Tramways Company should be laid on the table of this House, and I was told that for obvious reasons this could not be done. Then I asked if the report would be available to hon. members, and the Home Secretary referred me to his reply to the previous question.

The HOME SECRETARY: You would be the first to cry out if we allowed papers dealing with private transactions to be placed on the table of the House.

Mr. KING: Where a party is being forced into a bargain, that party at least expects to be told what it will have to pay in connection with that bargain.

The HOME SECRETARY: Is it not the proper function of the court to decide?

Mr. KING: Of course it is. Why should the local authorities be forced into this business when they do not know the liability that they will have to face?

The HOME SECRETARY: Every Government from 1862 onwards has dealt with the tramways as purely a local authority matter.

Mr. KING: If the Government are going to foist a large undertaking on to the local authorities, the least they can do is to ask the local authorities if they are willing to sanction it. In 1920 the Government passed a Bill compulsorily to acquire

[4 p.m.] the Brisbane Tramways. Since then they have had a valuation made of the assets of the company, and there is only one conclusion to come to. It is not the proposition the Government thought it was, and, to save themselves, they are going to bump it on to the local authorities. The Government will not tell us anything about it; but, when they took up the position that they were going compulsorily to acquire the trams, they said, "Before we do that, we will provide in the Bill for an inspection and full inquiry into the assets, so that we shall know what we shall have to pay." What they demanded for themselves in the Act of 1920 they

refuse now to the local authorities. In 1920 the present Home Secretary, as reported on page 3338 of "Hansard," vol. cxxxiv., moved an amendment, reading—

"For the purpose of ascertaining the cost of construction, maintenance, or repair, or the value of the said tramway, or any part thereof, and for that purpose may enter into or upon any office or premises of the company, and the company shall provide all reasonable facilities for such entry and inspection, and they and every officer of the company shall furnish to any such person so appointed all such information in their power as may be reasonably required of them; any person who acts in contravention of this section shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred pounds and to a daily penalty not exceeding ten pounds."

The HOME SECRETARY: And you want me to put their valuation on the table of the House?

Mr. KING: You took the right to find out what the value of the property was before the Government took it over, but you will not concede that right to the local authorities. All we ask is for the report of the conference, and the hon. gentleman will not give us that information. The people will have to find a very large amount before they can take over these assets, and the business will probably be run at a loss. The net income of the Brisbane Tramways Company last year was probably £160,000. If you capitalise that at 8 per cent., it comes to about £2,000,000. We shall have to pay £2,000,000 at least, and probably £3,000,000, before we shall be able to take over the trams.

The HOME SECRETARY: Oh!

Mr. KING: I venture to say that not a single member on the Government side of the House knows where this is going to end.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is the goodwill basis you are quoting. That is not the actual value.

Mr. KING: I am taking the capitalised value on the net return for the year, which is a fair thing.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is the goodwill value.

Mr. KING: I say advisedly that I do not think the tramways will be run with as great success as they have been run by the Tramways Company. Our experience of the past has been that such things are not run so successfully by boards or trusts as by private enterprises. That means that there will probably be a heavy loss on the year's transactions. Who is going to make up that loss? Will the Government come to our assistance and make up the deficiency? No. Supposing the trust attempt to increase the fares, is it not likely that the Commissioner of Prices will refuse to allow the fares to be increased.

The HOME SECRETARY: No, he will not.

Mr. KING: You have come to a different conclusion now. Of course circumstances alter cases. If the Price Fixing Commissioner does intervene, and he says, "You are not going to raise fares," what is going to be the result?

The PREMIER: Had you not better wait till you see the Bill?

[*Mr. King.*]

Mr. KING: It seems to me that there is going to be a loss, which will have to be made up by precepts, and that is going to fall on the local authorities; it is not going to be made up by the electors, but by the unfortunate ratepayers.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): Viewing the introduction of this measure from the broad point of view of a citizen of the State—not as the representative of a country district—I say that it seems a shame that at a time like this, when so many industries and so many institutions established by the present Government are starving for the want of funds, the Government should come along with a proposal to acquire the Brisbane trams, which at present are being run successfully, and which generally are acceptable and satisfactory to the community that use them.

The HOME SECRETARY: Are they?

Mr. CORSER: Yes, generally speaking, and more so than the Sydney trams, which are run by the Government of that State. The Brisbane Tramways Company, during the last few years, have not increased their fares, but we know that the State-run trams in New South Wales have not only increased their fares but have run their service at a loss. The Minister raised the point that the Tramways Company have made huge profits. It is to their credit if such an institution has been able to make profits during the term of the present Government. If they are making these great profits, they are the one and only institution in the State that is making a profit; and that is probably one of the reasons why the Government want to jump on them now and acquire the tramways. It is the policy and desire of the Country party to make it possible right throughout the State of Queensland for companies to make money under sound regulation and control.

The HOME SECRETARY: Do you want the companies that handle your farmers' products to make profits?

Mr. CORSER: The wish of the Home Secretary, no doubt, would be so; but we are out to protect the users of the Brisbane tramways. We want to see proprietary concerns and utilities similar to the Brisbane tramways prosperous and allowed to control their own affairs. The tramways are a great convenience to the people in the metropolitan area, and we have had established very recently by this Government a Main Roads Board to provide roads to enable the country people to get their produce to market.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in order in discussing the question of the Main Roads Board. The scope of the motion is very limited, and I would ask the hon. member to keep to it.

Mr. CORSER: The money that will be required to acquire the trams could be used for the benefit of the country by such institutions as the Main Roads Board. They are starving for the want of funds.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is not true.

Mr. CORSER: It is true. The Government are always prepared to find money to acquire something that is successful; but when we see an industry down and practically out, they are not so willing to come forward with their funds and say to that industry, "Here are funds to see you through." But they have funds when they

want to acquire something that is carrying on successfully.

The HOME SECRETARY: Will you stop if I say that the Government are not going to find the money?

Mr. CORSER: No; the taxpayers will have to find it.

The HOME SECRETARY: They will not.

Mr. CORSER: Debentures will have to be found, and whatever money is found, interest will have to be paid on it. It is a shame, with our railways in the state they are at present, that the Government should come forward with a proposal to acquire the Brisbane tramways and place them in the same position as the railways.

Mr. KERR (*Knoggera*): For a couple of years I have been endeavouring to get travelling facilities for some 6,000 or 7,000 people living in the metropolitan area, being in my electorate. I am going to record my complaint against the attitude of the Government in proposing to place this heavy taxation on the local authorities by the method which they are adopting, because it means that any deficits under the proposed tramway trust will have to be met by property owners, who are ratepayers. It is getting back again to the principle of one class in the community bearing all the taxes, while another section, irrespective of the fact that they utilise the tramways, will go free. We are to have a trust composed of eight members, and an Advisory Board, which will be another board to make more jobs for supporters of the Government, and there will be various other things connected with the trust; whereas, the trams are now controlled by one managing director in Brisbane and three directors in London, and they have been able to show a fair amount of profit.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes, by making two people stand where one person has a seat. That is how they make their profits.

Mr. KERR: That is not correct. They have made their profits through the population increasing.

The HOME SECRETARY: And by not increasing the number of cars.

Mr. KERR: The receipts during the last few years have jumped from £260,000 to nearly £600,000. That is where they make their profits, and not as pointed out by the Home Secretary. I would not oppose this measure if there were no other alternative; but there is an alternative. The company were prepared not long ago to build extensions, the work on which would have absorbed practically every unemployed man in Brisbane. Mr. Badger, the managing director, told me personally that, if I could secure for him an Order in Council, he would build those extensions at once. That is a direct refutation of what the Home Secretary has said. In the face of that, the Government say that the company have been squeezing the public all the time. I am glad that the Government have seen fit to repeal the Act they passed in 1920. At the time it was introduced, we on this side stated that there was a large amount of confiscation about it.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member will not discuss that question before the Committee. The motion is very specific, and I would ask him to keep to the point.

Mr. KERR: This matter would not have been mentioned by me if it had not been mentioned by the Home Secretary. If the

Mr. Kerr.]

hon. gentleman is entitled to mention these things, so are we.

The HOME SECRETARY: You will not get any more information from me.

Mr. KERR: I am going to point out at a later stage that the representation on this trust is not in accordance with the principles of the Labour party. Here again the Government are jumping step by step in devious ways to try to secure votes at the next elections. They propose that the members of the local authorities shall elect two representatives from certain defined districts, and I understand from the Home Secretary that the Government are basing the representation on the valuation of the property.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member is not going to discuss the details of the Bill, which are not before the Committee.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member has a copy of the Bill.

Mr. KERR: I have not got a copy of the Bill; they have not been given out to hon. members. I hope the Home Secretary will be prepared to accept an amendment in connection with this principle of representation. It should be on the population basis, and not on the number of dwellings.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The HOME SECRETARY: Will you be surprised if I tell you that it is on that basis?

Mr. KERR: That does not appear from the scope of the Bill the hon. gentleman first brought in. I sincerely hope that the Bill will be withdrawn, and that a conference will be held between the parties immediately. There is no reason why we should not have competition in regard to the extensions. If the present company are not prepared to go on with extensions, other companies should be allowed to do so, because it will be a paying proposition. This Bill should not be passed, because it will stifle private enterprise, which we so much desire in this country. I hope to bring up many other points on the second reading and Committee stages, but I hope that the Bill will not go so far as that, and that some other alternative will be found.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Balimba*): I think that there is not a member of the Committee who will not come to the conclusion that it is necessary that there should be extensions of the tramways.

The HOME SECRETARY: Hear, hear; and more cars, too.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The points I want to raise are as to whether the time has not arrived when, before any further action is taken, we should make inquiries to find out whether we are doing the best thing in the interest of the ratepayers—because they are the people upon whom the burden is going to fall—by suggesting the purchase of the trams, or whether further inquiries should be made to see if conditions have so changed in regard to the means of traction that it would be better to do something else at very much less cost to the community. This motion deals with the acquisition of the tramways, and we have been led to believe that there is a difference between the Tramways Company's valuation and the Government's valuation. Some of us who have occupied positions on the opposite side of the House know that there is a great deal of legal business involved in this matter, which may mean no end of trouble and very great expense when we

have to face it. The question of goodwill was incidentally raised this afternoon. The acquisition provided for in this motion seems to me to be a factor which should make us hesitate before we proceed any further. The Tramways Company assert that they are sure that the Bill giving them their charter provided for goodwill. Whether the Minister likes to admit it or not, this motion practically means a leap in the dark so far as the local authorities are concerned.

The HOME SECRETARY: There are just as many lawyers who say that there is no goodwill as there are who say there is a goodwill.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Who is going to pay the bill in connection with the litigation that is bound to take place? When the Premier met a number of local authorities, one of which I was a representative, he said that the local authorities would have to pay. We are asked to agree to an unknown amount.

The HOME SECRETARY: Who else but the people using the trams should bear the burden?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am glad the hon. gentleman has raised that point. How is it that the Government suddenly backed down from their former policy of acquiring the trams, and now say, "We are going to put it on the other fellow"? What has brought about that condition of things? Although I have no authority for saying it, I should not be surprised to find that the report of the value of the assets of the company has made the Government hesitate.

The HOME SECRETARY: No.

HON. W. H. BARNES: And their present professed generosity to the local authorities has been brought about because they argue in this way: "We have touched so many things which have been failures, and this is going to be one, so let the other fellow pay for it."

The HOME SECRETARY: Do you know that you agreed to a Bill to repudiate the company's rights?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am not going to be sidetracked by any remark from the hon. gentleman.

The HOME SECRETARY: You were a member of the Cabinet which agreed to a Bill to repudiate the company's rights.

HON. W. H. BARNES: While I believe it is necessary that there should be tram extensions, still we have no right to put a burden upon the people, and we have the right, as business men sitting in this Committee, to know what we are going to do in this regard.

Mr. BRENNAN: Would you allow the present company to keep the trams?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman is always chattering. He should reserve his chattering for another occasion. (Laughter.) This proposal is surrounded by many difficulties. Quite recently, as the Minister knows, they contemplated in Newcastle substituting electrified trams for the steam trams, and a report was brought in dealing with the proposal. I quite admit that there were two sets of conditions set out in that report, but it was finally stated that probably the tramways would have to make way for some other means of locomotion which would be less costly to the ratepayers and more advantageous to the people.

The HOME SECRETARY: In Newcastle it cost £250,000 for a system to transport 40,000

[*Mr. Kerr.*]

passengers a day, but in Brisbane it cost £1,500,000 for a system to transport the Brisbane traffic every day.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman is trying to sidetrack the question. We know that conditions are always changing, and it is the duty of the Government at this stage to make all inquiries and see that there is not going to be handed over to the local authorities something that is going to be very costly and that will finally land the local authorities in financial trouble. The hon. gentleman in his remarks this afternoon said that it might be the Supreme Court or the Land Court that would have to deal with this matter; but that is not going to be the final stage. Has the hon. gentleman ever heard of an appeal? Do we know where we are going to end in this matter? I venture to say that a large amount of money will be involved.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Any individual citizen can go to the Privy Council any day, and individual citizens do go to the Privy Council.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Do they go to the Privy Council for nothing?

THE HOME SECRETARY: It is not a very costly proceeding.

HON. W. H. BARNES: It is not very costly when it is the other fellow who has to pay.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Any citizen has a right to go to the Privy Council now.

HON. W. H. BARNES: So he should have that right. In this instance, however, the Government do not wish to take the responsibility of taking over the trams.

THE HOME SECRETARY: You made arrangements for a Bill to take them over yourself.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman is always trotting out something like that.

THE HOME SECRETARY: I have your Bill here. It has got your name, "W. H. Barnes," on it. (Government laughter.)

HON. W. H. BARNES: It is a very good name.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. W. H. BARNES: One thing is certain—that, whilst the metropolis and the suburbs are asking for more extensions, we have a right, as the real custodians of the people in this House, to find out where we are going. We should ask ourselves to-day if we are doing the best thing in the interests of the community by doing something we do not know the end of at all in order to relieve the Government of the responsibility of a policy which they took on themselves.

THE HOME SECRETARY: You want the Country party to protect your friends.

MR. SIZER (*Nudah*): I have no hesitation in saying that everyone in the metropolitan area agrees that some further facilities will have to be provided to improve the tramway system in Brisbane. Everyone will agree that there is some need for an increased number of cars to handle the rush traffic, but we also all agree that there is no tram system in the world that can handle rush traffic without making some of the people stand.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SIZER: It is admitted by everyone who visits this city that, generally speaking, the Brisbane tramway system is equal to

any tramway system in the Commonwealth, and compares favourably with any tramway system in the world.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Give us your authority for saying that.

MR. SIZER: The hon. gentleman knows it as well as I do, because he must have seen it in his travels. I am sure that we do not see any more overcrowding in Brisbane during the rush traffic than we see in the rush traffic in the busy hours in Sydney.

THE HOME SECRETARY: You are quite wrong. They carry more than twice as many passengers on the cars in Brisbane as they do in Sydney.

MR. SIZER: I admit that during the last two years there has been some cause for complaint, but that is not the fault of the Tramways Company. I ask hon. members opposite if they were interested in a concern, and a Bill was introduced in Parliament which threatened to confiscate that concern, and then it hung fire for some time while they were waiting for the sentence to be pronounced, as it were, would they put further money into it?

THE HOME SECRETARY: There is no confiscation about it.

MR. SIZER: Would hon. members interested in such a concern make any improvement in the service in any shape or form under the circumstances I have just described?

MR. PETRIE: Hear, hear! That is the point.

MR. SIZER: The Government have told the Tramways Company that they are going to do something with the trams. The Brisbane Tramways Company know the record of the Government, and they do not feel confident that, if they put any new money into the business, they will get a good return for it when the time comes for making a valuation. The hardships which the people of Brisbane have had to put up with during the last few years have been entirely due to the inactivity of the Government either in acquiring the trams or making some definite arrangement with the Tramways Company.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Do you know the proposal of the Tramways Company?

MR. SIZER: I am not concerned about their proposal.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Why don't you wait until you hear it read, and see if it was possible to go on with such a proposal?

MR. SIZER: I am not concerned about that.

THE HOME SECRETARY: You want to give in to the company, no matter how they treat the people of Brisbane.

MR. SIZER: Everyone knows perfectly well that we have ample need for railway extensions in various parts of the country, and any money that we have possibly got to spare can be spent better in other directions than in acquiring the Brisbane trams. We have a company which is giving fairly good service at the present time. I admit that during the last two years there has been some cause for complaint, but the company are not responsible for that. Hon. gentlemen opposite are solely responsible for that. We have a tramway system now which is fulfilling all requirements, and can be improved

Mr. Sizer.]

if an arrangement is made with the company.

The HOME SECRETARY: On their terms.

Mr. SIZER: It is true that they want an extension of their lease.

The HOME SECRETARY: Would it not be wise to see the terms first?

Mr. SIZER: I do not think that the company would be unreasonable.

The HOME SECRETARY: Mr. Debnam turned them down, and the hon. member for Bulimba also turned them down.

Mr. KING: The Coorparoo Shire Council did not turn them down.

The HOME SECRETARY: You did not make them repair the road between the rails.

Mr. SIZER: My idea is that we should see if some arrangement cannot be made with the Tramways Company. If the Government have got £2,000,000 to spend, it can be better spent in other directions.

At 4.30 p.m.,

The SPEAKER resumed the chair.

The CHAIRMAN reported progress.

Further consideration stood an Order of the Day for a later hour of the day, under the provisions of Standing Order No. 17.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. FRY (*Koröpa*), continuing his speech, which was interrupted the previous evening by the application of Standing Order No. 17, said: Last night I was dealing with the statement made by the Premier in his speech last Wednesday. These are the words he used—

“So far as the manufacturing industries are concerned, the margin of profits, after allowing for wages, fuel, and cost of materials for the year 1920-21 shows, in the case of New South Wales, 12.11 per cent.; in the case of Victoria, 16.03 per cent.; and in the case of Queensland, which is the largest margin of all, it is given as 23.67 per cent. In South Australia the margin is only 10.79 per cent.—only half what it is in Queensland.”

That statement raises a question on which quite a lot of debate can be hinged with a great deal of benefit to the Chamber, and perhaps improvement in the government of the State. If the margin of profit, after allowing for wages, fuel, and cost of material, was higher in Queensland in 1920-21 so far as the manufacturing industries are concerned than it was in New South Wales, Victoria, or South Australia, how comes it that there are fewer industries in Queensland to-day than in 1901?

There are perhaps three reasons—

(1) The overhead charges exclusive of wages, fuel, and cost of material, are greater in Queensland than in any other State.

(2) Taxation, including retrospective and super tax, is heavier.

(3) The Government policy and irritation methods make success of manufacturing industries very doubtful and unprofitable.

These are three reasons which can be advanced to explain why industries are not being established here. I would like to ask the Premier whether he can answer why factories are not being established in Queens-

[*Mr. Sizer.*

land to manufacture the requirements of the people of the State. Following on that question is the further question—also a pertinent one—Why is Queensland purchasing large quantities of manufactured articles from the Southern States? The hon. member for Rockhampton told us that we are importing thousands of pounds' worth of agricultural implements from the South. What is the reason for that? If the margin of profit is so great as the Premier says, surely that is a fact to which he should devote his attention. It is reasonable to assume that the Premier has not stated the case fairly, or if he has that the surplus profit has been absorbed by taxation, and the Government's administrative acts and confiscatory methods have made manufacturers content to remain out of Queensland, and send their products into the State, which means correspondingly less employment for Queensland workmen.

Now let us turn to taxation. The direct taxation in Queensland has trebled itself since this Government came into office. In 1914-15 it was approximately £900,000; in 1920-21 it was approximately £3,600,000. It must be remembered that industry foots this bill, whether it be the farming industry or the manufacturing industry, and that there is a limit to what industry can stand. That limit has been passed in many cases. We have also to remember that every penny taken from industry by extortionate taxation means the retarding of development.

Now let us turn to the following official figures of the Commonwealth Statistician regarding depression in Queensland, published by him to show the taxation per head in the several States—

	1916.	1921.
	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>
Victoria	29 3	48 10
West Australia	25 8	57 4
Tasmania	28 3	66 10
South Australia	31 11	65 2
New South Wales	32 4	70 4
Queensland	42 9	95 10

The following figures, also from the Commonwealth Statistician, indicate the decrease in employment in factories in Queensland, as distinguished from the increases in all the other States:—

	1915.	1920.	Increase.
New South Wales ..	116,611	144,454	27,843
Victoria	113,824	136,522	22,698
South Australia ..	25,466	29,442	3,976
Tasmania	8,420	10,016	1,596
West Australia ..	14,631	15,409	778
Queensland	42,079	40,891	Decrease, 1,188

The following table, giving the unemployment per 1,000 workers, is also to the disadvantage of Queensland:—

	Dec., 1912.	June, 1920.	June, 1921.
West Australia ..	58	34	85
South Australia ..	51	41	91
Victoria	67	56	98
Tasmania	34	24	103
New South Wales ..	50	55	135
Queensland	46	130	218

The increase in Queensland was twice as high as in any other State, except New South Wales; and New South Wales in 1921 had a Labour Government. At the same time the unemployment in Queensland per 1,000 workers was much higher than that of New South Wales. These figures all bear on the statement of the Premier, and call for some further explanation from him.

If we delve further into this question we find that Queensland is exporting more raw materials to-day than New South Wales or Victoria, and manufacturing less, as the following figures will show:—

OVERSEA EXPORTS.		
	1919-20.	1920-21.
	£	£
New South Wales ..	55,000,000	52,000,000
Victoria ..	43,000,000	34,000,000
Queensland ..	14,000,000	15,000,000

New South Wales and Victoria have encouraged the establishment of secondary industries and are now manufacturing the raw material. Queensland, however, appears to be content to export raw material and to buy it back at a price including manufacturer's costs and profits.

Mr. KIRWAN: That is not the explanation, and well you know it. You are entirely wrong.

Mr. FRY: We are trying to analyse the position, to see why there are not manufacturers in Queensland to-day, and why we are importing things which we should manufacture.

Mr. HARTLEY: What is your explanation? You have not got one. You don't know anything about it.

Mr. FRY: I am replying to the Premier. Either the Premier did not state the case fairly, or else manufacturers prefer to remain out of Queensland, establish industries in other States, and send their manufactured articles into Queensland. That seems to be a reasonable conclusion. We cannot expect the Government to give us any enlightenment on the question. If we refer to the record of the Government so far as industry is concerned, we get the impression that they are really at sea when it comes to managing anything in the shape of industry. Let us refer to the Auditor-General's report on State enterprises for the year ended 30th June, 1921. We find that, with the exception of the State Insurance Office, which is not classed as a State enterprise, the only paying concerns are the State hotel at Babiada, which made a profit of £1,066, or an accumulated profit in four years of £2,505; and the railway refreshment-rooms, which made a profit of £6,853. Sawmills made a profit of £4,348.

In the railways the loss for the year ending 30th June, 1921, was £1,739,475, making the loss in seven years approximately £8,000,000.

In the butchery and meat business the loss was £13,123, and it is now in a much worse position.

The State fish business showed a loss of £9,808, and is now totally insolvent.

The State stations showed a loss of £194,148, and are now £250,000 to the bad.

The State cannery showed a loss of £29,742, and is now in a worse position.

The State Produce Agency showed a loss of £27,734, and is still losing heavily. Not only that, but they exported damaged grain

from Queensland and spoilt the good name of Queensland as a wheat-exporting State.

The State trawler cost £32,000; the loss on working was £13,792, and the cost to the State at 30th June, 1921, was £45,792. Further losses have been incurred, and the vessel now carries a "For sale" notice.

The steamer "Douglas Mawson" was purchased for coastal trading purposes; it cost, in 1921, £19,645; the loss on working was £10,656; the cost to the State at 30th June, 1921, was £30,301, and it is now ticketed "For sale."

The State arsenic mine at Jibbenbar has had spent on it £58,000, and the loss to 30th June, 1921, on working was £7,249.

The Bowen State coalmine cost £41,654, and had not arrived at the producing stage on 30th June, 1921.

The Baralaba State coalmine was indebted to the Treasury at 30th June, 1921, in the sum of £13,398, and showed a loss on that date of £1,337.

The Styx River State coalmine owed the Treasury at 30th June, 1921, £7,699. The total expenditure on the mine was £14,305, and the total collections £6,606.

The Venus battery at Charters Towers showed an expenditure exceeding collections of £2,259.

The Bamford battery had a total net cost to 30th June, 1921, of £13,285, and the loss on working has been £4,049.

The Kidston battery cost to 30th June, 1921, £4,362, and the construction has not been completed.

The Roma oil bore cost to 30th June, 1921, £29,951, and is not in working order.

The State iron and steel works expenditure was, at 30th June, 1921, £16,286, and the proposal was not proceeded with.

The Warra State coalmine showed a loss to 30th June, 1921, of £39,286, and is now closed down.

The State smelters at Chillagoe show a loss at 30th June, 1921, of £48,075, on a capital expenditure of £292,212.

The Irvinebank State treatment works show a total loss at 30th June, 1921, of £28,950.

The Irvinebank State store had a loss to 30th June, 1921, of £472.

In regard to the forty-nine motor-cars, the Government refuse to divulge any information, but we can safely estimate the loss to 30th June, 1921, at £50,000. World tours, State banquets, Ministers' travelling expenses are considered a social success, but are a financial loss to the State of many thousands of pounds. The Government have played the part of the spendthrift in general finance. A comparison of the figures on 30th June, 1915, when the Government came into office, with later figures, will prove what I say. If the profits made on industry are larger in Queensland than in other States, why are the State enterprises not paying and more factories being established?

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

Mr. CONROY (*Maranoa*): I have listened very attentively to the remarks made by hon. members, particularly in connection with the agricultural policy enunciated by the Premier. That policy is recognised throughout Queensland as a splendid one in the interests of the farmers.

Mr. BRAND: They have not seen the Bill yet.

Mr. Conroy.]

Mr. CONROY: I am speaking about the Premier's speech. Hon. members on the other side have endeavoured to take away the credit which is due to the Premier in connection with this agricultural policy. They do not find anything at all wrong with the policy; the only trouble with them is, that it has been propounded by the Premier of a Labour Government, and will be placed on the statute-book by that Government. Hon. members opposite wish to infer that this Government for a long time have not realised the wants of the farmers. Since the Government came into office, a great many measures of benefit to the farmers have been placed upon the statute-book. It would take too long to enumerate them all. Let me mention a few—Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act; Sugar Acquisition Act; Act embodying repeal of the railway guarantee; Wheat Pool Act; Advances to Settlers Act; Co-operative Agricultural Production Act; Main Roads Board Act; Income Tax Act Amendment Act giving relief to settlers; as well as Acts of administration in regard to cotton cultivation, in providing cold storage for farmers' produce, in the giving of drought-time assistance, and in affording relief to settlers on repurchased estates.

Mr. BRAND: And the acquisition of butter.

Mr. CONROY: That only goes to show that the Government have always studied the interests of the farmers. I am pleased to notice that amongst the Bills enumerated in the Governor's Speech is the Primary Producers' Organisation Bill, and that it is first on the list for consideration. The hon. member for Nanango stated that right throughout the length and breadth of the State soldier settlements had been conducted in a most disgraceful manner, but his statement was not backed up by any records or facts. The hon. member for Murilla also commented upon soldier settlements, and mentioned the Mount Hutton Settlement. Neither the hon. member for Nanango nor the hon. member for Murilla has ever seen the Mount Hutton Settlement. I doubt whether the hon. member for Nanango knows where Mount Hutton is. The hon. member for Murilla may, but he certainly has not visited the place. A good many comments in connection with soldier settlements have been made which are not borne out by facts. Mr. Hunter, member of the House of Representatives for Maranoa, also made a statement in reference to the soldier settlement at Mount Hutton. Mr. Hunter paid a very short visit to the settlement, being there barely two days, and on his return to Toowoomba was interviewed by a representative of the "Daily Mail," and made a statement which appeared in that paper on 31st May last, with this heading in very large type—

"GRAVE COMPLAINTS.

"CONDITIONS AT MOUNT HUTTON."

Mr. Hunter stated that he wished it to be understood that he was not out to make any political capital, as the matter was too important to be associated with politics; but, at the same time, it was absolutely necessary for the public generally to know the true facts of the settlement. He made these statements—

"1. The railway runs through the narrowest part, and only a few miles of settlement are near the line.

"2. The country can only be described as fair to good cattle country.

"3. The areas range from 280 acres to 1,220 acres.

"4. Some portions have already been deserted.

"5. The men were advanced £625, and it was clearly laid down how it was to be spent.

"6. That the settlers had little or no option in purchase of stock.

"7. That several of the men said something about a second loan which was promised them.

"8. That several of the settlers are now receiving demands for payment of interest and redemption."

Mr. Armstrong, who is a returned soldier, and has occupied the position of supervisor on the Mount Hutton Soldier Settlement for two years, replied in the "Daily Mail" on the 9th June last as follows:—

"Mr. Hunter's remarks call for little comment, as they are not based on facts, and are the result of a two days' visit to an area of country 26 miles by 40 miles. Mr. Hunter did not interview 20 per cent. of the soldier settlers, and did not see more than 10 per cent. of the country, but in reply, I will deal with Mr. Hunter's criticism in detail as follows:—

1. The railway runs through narrowest part, and only a few miles of settlement is near the line. Soldiers are settled all over Mount Hutton and Euthulla resumptions, and are not confined to one particular portion, there being more soldiers settled outside small area which Mr. Hunter mentions than are settled in it.

2. The country can only be described as fair to good cattle country. Agricultural experts and farmers classify it as good agricultural land throughout. The recent published reports of Dr. Jensen, Government Geologist, and the crops grown on area bear this out.

3. The areas range from 280 acres to 1,220 acres. Can Mr. Hunter name one soldier settler who holds much less than 640 acres? The average acreage held is 1,230 acres, about twelve hold 640-acre blocks, and some have 2,560 acres.

4. A few portions have been deserted. There have been about twelve surrenders on Mount Hutton of men who selected, but this is only to be expected. There are bound to be a few persons take up land who find the life unsuitable.

5. Advances of £625. Clearly laid down how this should be spent. Mr. Hunter is misinformed. Reference to the Soldier Settlement Act would have shown him his error. The Act specifies the maximum amount which may be advanced for specific purposes, but does not lay down that amount has to be spent in specified manner, i.e., if settler elected to spend less than £200 allowed on house, he could use money so saved for ringbarking, clearing, etc. A visit to settlers' blocks would also have shown Mr. Hunter his mistake.

6. Settlers informed Mr. Hunter they had little or no option in purchase of stock. Settlers had a free hand in this

[Mr. Conroy.

matter. Can Mr. Hunter name one settler who was forced to take stock he did not approve of?

7. Promised second loan: This is through Agricultural Bank, and the leaflet states a further advance of £700 may be made for approved improvements at the rate of 15s. in the £1. As settlers have already had an advance of £625 £1 for £1. some of which does not go into improvements of a permanent nature, he would naturally have to do a lot of further improving to his holding to bring it up to value, before he would be eligible for this further advance. Mr. Hunter makes no mention of advance of £200 from Agriculture Department for purchase of dairy stock, to which settlers are eligible, and which many of them have received, making their total advances to between £625 and £825. Mr. Hunter was either ignorant of this or refrained from mentioning it.

8. Payment of interest: Interest is now being claimed on advance and redemption on short period loans for purchase of tools, implements, and stock. Does Mr. Hunter imagine it would be a good policy to lend money on these items over a period of forty years?

"ONLY A CURSORY GLANCE.

"From the foregoing it will be seen that Mr. Hunter has either been misinformed, or has deliberately overlooked facts. He has only had a cursory glance at the settlement, and did not interview more than 20 per cent. of the soldier settlers. There are numbers of settlers who are satisfied that with ordinary seasons and a fair price for their produce they will do all right. I am satisfied that if settlers carry on dairying and go in for growing fodder and cotton, and for pig-raising, they will make a good living on Mount Hutton. Is Mr. Hunter aware that there are over 200 civilian settlers in this area holding, in most cases, the same amount of land as the soldiers. These men started with very little capital, some of them having none, and have had to depend on the Agricultural Bank and the Department of Agriculture for advances, which are not nearly so liberal as the advance made to soldiers. These civilian settlers all appear to be making a living and are satisfied with future prospects, and if these men can make a living on Mount Hutton, so can soldier settlers.

"Destructive criticism of this nature made by persons not aware of facts is injuring Australia to-day, and is to be deplored, especially when it is made by a public man. How can immigrants be attracted to Australia when statements like this appear in our daily Press?"

The statement made by Mr. Hunter occupied a very prominent place in the "Daily Mail," and was republished in the "Western Star," a newspaper which has a very large circulation in the Maranoa district. Up to the present time Mr. Armstrong's reply to Mr. Hunter's statement has not appeared in the latter paper. To be fair to the "Western Star" in connection with the matter, I may say that, although Mr. Hunter's statement appeared in a very prominent place in the

"Daily Mail," the reply by Mr. Armstrong did not occupy nearly so prominent a place, and probably it was overlooked by the "Western Star." On 21st Feb- [5 p.m.] ruary, 1922, about three months prior to the statement made by Mr. Hunter, the following article appeared in the "Daily Mail":—

"AT MOUNT HUTTON.

"SOLDIER SETTLEMENT PROGRESS.

"Mount Hutton closer settlement area, comprising about 700,000 acres, lies 50 miles north from Roma, on the Orallo-Injune Creek Railway. This area originally comprised Mount Hutton station, and lies between the Main Range and Carnarvon Range. It was resumed in 1918, and opened for closer settlement in blocks ranging from 640 acres to 1,280 acres, a portion of the area being reserved for soldier settlement purposes.

"The first body of settlers took up residence in July, 1919, and since that date settlement has gradually extended, and at the present time there are approximately 350 settlers in the area, including 120 soldiers. Many of these men have their wives and families with them, and there is an estimated total population in the area of 700.

"Railway extension to Injune Creek was completed in August, 1920, and since that date the district has quickly developed. There are now approximately 250 suppliers of cream to the Roma Co-operative Dairy Company, forwarding about 1,500 cans of cream per month, and this industry is extending. Compared with January, 1920, this is a wonderful development, as on that date there were only about twenty suppliers.

"The area is watered by Injune, Bluey, Oakey, Horse, Highland Plain, Hutton, and Eurumba creeks, all of which have numerous permanent holes. Ten sub-artesian bores have also been sunk on the area, six of which are equipped with pumping plants, and others are to be equipped shortly.

"Given two or three more good seasons to enable settlers to satisfactorily establish themselves, there should be a big agricultural future before this district, as it has an average rainfall of 21 in.: and it is blessed with a variety of first-class soils, ranging from deep black to light sandy loam, much of it comprising belah and brigalow scrubs, capable of growing any class of cereal crop. Agriculture is in its infancy here, and it is only now that settlers are beginning to turn their attention to this source of wealth production. Experiments carried out show what the district will do: wheat, oats, barley, maize, potatoes, cotton, Sudan grass, and feterita have all been successfully grown on a small scale by different settlers. Vegetables grow to perfection. Two or three orchards of citrus and stone fruits have been planted, and trees are growing exceptionally well. Some peaches were grown this year by Mr. G. R. Adeock, being the first crop from trees planted in 1919, and these would compare favourably for size and flavour with peaches grown anywhere in Queensland. Having the soils and rainfall, the district is bound to become a big wheat-growing centre in the course of a few years."

Mr. Conroy.]

In further support of that, at the Roma show, held on 16th and 17th May last, there was a splendid non-competitive exhibit from the soldier settlement at Mount Hutton. This exhibit consisted of fodder crops, such as sorghum, Rhodes grass, maize, vegetables, cotton, and other crops. There was also a sample of coal taken from a seam 12 feet thick and 40 feet from the surface. The "Western Star" commented on this exhibit in the following terms—

"This exhibit was evidence of the industry of the new settlers, and justified the confidence that this settlement is going to be a very big asset to the district."

Destructive criticism such as that indulged in by Mr. Hunter, as well as the remarks of the hon. member for Nanango, are harmful to Queensland, and are not fair to this Government, because the remarks are not true. Neither is it fair criticism to the soldiers who are endeavouring to make a living on the settlement, or to the civilians settled on Mount Hutton. I notice in the Governor's Speech it is stated—

"There will also be ample opportunities for the small cotton-cultivator on the three million acres which my advisers are making available for farming in the Burnett and Callide districts. In addition to these areas there are over a million acres of other Crown land to be similarly dealt with. In all cases the Lands Department is taking the indispensable legal steps preparatory to resumption, as well as conducting the necessary surveys."

I am pleased to see that the Government are proceeding with their land settlement scheme, and in this connection I desire to mention the splendid agricultural land in the Maranoa district along the railway line. I particularly refer to Mount Abundance, Bindango, Eureka, and Amby Downs stations. Mount Abundance consists of 153,512 acres of freehold land, and 64,320 acres of leasehold. Bindango consists of 48,992 acres of freehold land, and 15,306 of leasehold. Eureka consists of 52,306 acres of freehold, and 13,760 acres of leasehold. Amby Downs consists of 34,818 acres of freehold, and 15,320 acres of leasehold. The whole of this is first-class agricultural land, and the most remote portion of it is not more than twenty miles from the railway line at the outside. The average rainfall for forty-eight years, taking Roma as a guide—because this land is situated within a few miles of Roma—is 24.93 inches. I quite realise that on account of such a large area of this country being freehold—239,623 acres—there is a difficulty confronting the Government in resuming the land without placing a very heavy burden on the settler. I feel sure, however, that the Government are sincere in their land settlement policy, and I sincerely hope that this difficulty will be overcome, and that the whole of this land, or at least a very large portion of it, will, in the very near future, be resumed and thrown open for settlement.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Have you any idea of the value under the Land Tax Act?

Mr. CONROY: I am not sure of the value, but I think it would be about 30s. an acre.

Reference is also made in the Speech to the question of education, and I would like to take this opportunity of congratulating the Secretary for Public Instruction upon introducing the system of education by cor-

respondence. As a country member, I realise the great disabilities under which settlers in outside districts have to suffer in the matter of obtaining primary education for their children. I know the Department are doing everything possible in this connection, and where there are sufficient children a school is erected and a teacher supplied; but in very far distant places the number of children is not large enough to warrant the erection of a school, and in such places the system of teaching by correspondence will fill a very long-felt want. Only on Friday last I received a letter from a man whose children are being taught by correspondence. There is no school within miles of where he resides. Of course, the children receive a certain amount of instruction from the itinerant teacher, but the itinerant teacher has to travel over a very large area, and it is often months between his visits. This man informed me that his children are making very good progress under the correspondence system, and he is very pleased indeed.

Mention is also made in the Speech of a Health Act Amendment Bill, which will contain provisions dealing with sewerage and drainage, and I am very hopeful that the Bill will enable the municipalities in small country towns to overcome the great difficulties they labour under at present in the matter of sewerage and drainage. I have had some experience in municipal matters, and I know the trouble in country towns in connection with drainage and sewerage. If this Bill will enable the small country municipalities to get over that difficulty, it will have a very beneficial effect.

Mr. KING: It was the present Government which made the water-table sewers.

Mr. CONROY: They have now seen the error of their ways.

Mr. KING: I hope so.

Mr. CONROY: There is no doubt, as the hon. member says, that that has been the trouble in the small country towns. Under the interpretation section of the present Health Act a drain is a sewer. Small country towns are, in consequence, unable to comply with the regulations under the Health Act, as it would be impossible for them to provide a good drainage system like a large city or town. I am very hopeful that, when the Bill comes before the House, this difficulty with which country municipalities have to contend with regard to drainage will be overcome.

Mr. GREEN (*Townsville*): At the outset of my remarks I would like to refer to the great loss which Queensland has sustained by the death of one who for so many years represented an electorate in this House, both as a member, Minister, and Premier of the State, one who was the soul of honour, and loyal to the Empire to which we belong, and one who faithfully served his constituency and the people of this great State with distinction, and loved it and desired that it should progress and be honoured and respected—I refer to the late Sir Robert Philp. (Hear, hear!) I think it is only right, as member for the constituency that he represented so long, that I should pay a tribute to his memory, and to the work that he has done in connection with this State in the past. (Hear, hear!)

I carefully listened to the Address in Reply while it was being so ably read by His

[Mr. Conroy.]

Excellency the Governor. I have considered it from every aspect, and have listened attentively to the remarks of both Government and Opposition members. I am surprised that such a programme should have been placed before the House by a Labour Government. It makes one feel that the Government are turning from their old friends and are seeking to be the friends of those whom they injured so much in days gone by. But I am convinced that it is only electioneering propaganda—that it is simply placed before the House and the country in order that it may have a great deal of weight at the general election, which will take place within the next few months. I remember a Minister of the Crown once remarking to me that for the first two sessions of Parliament it did not matter what you placed before the House, but that, as political strategy, you should bring forward during the last session a very attractive programme which would impress the electors. The Government on this occasion have adopted that method, and have put this Speech forward, with the various measures mentioned in it, as a vote-catching programme for the coming elections. A short time ago the distracted people at Einasleigh, when their machinery was pulled down and sent to other fields, remarked, on seeing some of the machinery going away, "Ted's circus is moving on." It appears to me that, with this programme, "Ted's circus is moving on" very quickly to an election campaign. This is but the advance agent of that circus which is going to be played in order to attract the votes of the people. But I am quite sure that the sword of Damocles—which has been hanging over the Ministry's head during the past two years, and which manifested itself in such an unmistakable manner at the last election in the vote of the people rejecting the present Administration—who, although they have a majority in the House, represent only a minority of the people—will shortly fall, and bring calamity to the Administration. The disillusioned and disappointed people of Queensland will see that the string is cut and that the sword falls upon the Government and destroys them. The Government appear to-day in quite a new role as the farmers' friends. We were told by the last speaker what wonderful things the Labour party have done for the farmers in the past. During the period I have been in the House I have failed to see that the Government have done very much for the farmers, but, naturally, the farmers' votes are worth getting. The working men of the cities have now found out that the Government have fooled them, and they have become disillusioned in regard to the glorious Eldorado that they were led to expect. We now find the Government turning to the farmers, fearing that, if they do not get help from the farmers in the coming elections, they will fail. Many hon. members opposite, when challenged as to what the Government have done for the farmers in the past, have retorted, "What have other Administrations done during the fifty years they were in power?" I would point out that the other Administrations which were in power in Queensland for fifty years did practically everything to bring Queensland into a prosperous condition. They built those immense lengths of railway lines.

Mr. DASH: Yes, and put a guarantee on the people.

Mr. GREEN: No; they built lines from the coast into the interior, and thus decentralised to a great extent the trade of Queensland. Not only did they do that, but they practically made all the harbours on the coast of Queensland. What has this Government done to improve the harbours since they came into power? Past Governments built up the cities and developed the country by these great lengths of railway. Hon. members opposite tell us of certain lines which have been built in some electorates by the present Government, but they are only small lines when compared with the immense lines constructed by past Administrations. Private enterprise has also gone hand in hand with the work of Administrations in the past, and a great part of our prosperity to-day is due to the assistance of private enterprise. If it had not been for private enterprise in building sugar-mills and tramways and in other directions, the State would have been stagnant, and there would have been very little for this Government to exist on.

Speaking of "The Producers' Review," the Premier said—

"It is broad-minded enough to accept assistance and co-operation in carrying out a policy for the farmers of Queensland, no matter from what quarter that policy emanates, so long as those who advance it are sincere in their desire to carry it out."

Now I want to be honest and straight in connection with this matter. I am not a primary producer, and I have never pretended to be one—

Mr. BRENNAN: You are a middleman.

Mr. GREEN: But I hold that the primary producer is the backbone of this country. Unless we assist the primary producer, then all our industries, all our railways, and all our waterside workers will suffer, and there will be stagnation and unemployment. Every member, every person who is interested in this State and who has the welfare of the State at heart, whether he represents a city or a country constituency, must see that justice is done to the primary producer, or the effect of it will be felt in every part of the State. We must see that the primary producer gets every assistance in order to enable him to carry out the great work he is engaged in. Therefore, if the Secretary for Agriculture and the Government bring forward any measure for the benefit of the primary producers, I can say, in the words of the Premier, that I am broad-minded enough to assist in putting it into force. But if there are any traps in this legislation, as we have noticed in legislation introduced previously, I do not intend to assist the Government in trapping the farmers in any scheme of socialisation. My contention is that the Premier must be quite honest in this matter. He cannot serve two masters. He must "either hate the one and love the other, or he must love one and despise the other." Which master is he going to serve? Does he stand for the socialisation of industry and everything else, or is he going to stand for those who believe in private profit and wealth, and private success and co-operation? Is he going to stand up for communism and socialism? The Premier should be absolutely honest, and let us know exactly the position in which he stands. He should not try to trap the farmers and producers into any scheme for the socialisation of the primary

Mr. Green.

products of this State, and the socialisation of the farms and industries which for many years past have been striving for success.

Mr. COLLINS: And socialise the shops later on.

Mr. GREEN: It is like the story of the "Tale of a Tub," by Swift—

"Seamen have a custom when they meet a whale to fling him out a tub by way of amusement to divert him from laying violent hands upon the ship."

The Premier and his motley crew of seamen throw to the whale—who are the primary producers—the tub, which is the Government programme. Let us see how the legislation and administration of this Government have had the effect of destroying the primary producers of this State. First of all, we had the repudiation of leases. There is no question that the landowners have been oppressed by this Government. By their repudiatory legislation the Government have done great injury to this great State, and they have brought many, including the small pastoralists and selectors, almost to the verge of ruin. I can give actual figures regarding those who occupy pastoral lands to show what they suffered by this legislation.

At 5.25 p.m.,

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*) drew attention to the state of the House.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: You should keep a House.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member's friends are not much interested in his speech.

Quorum formed.

Mr. GREEN: The hon. member's friends were engaged in Committee in analysing certain legislation that this Government are hurriedly bringing before this House. I was just giving some instances to show how the repudiation of the leases of the pastoralists acted upon the selectors and pastoralists. One selector in North Queensland has 40,000 acres of land. This year he will have 100 cattle to sell. The price he will get will not be more than £4 per head, which will mean an income of £400. The rent extorted from him by the Government amounts to £300, which, with £50 for rates, make £350 for taxation out of his income of £400. That leaves him £50 to carry on his selection and sustain himself and his family. Another pastoral lessee, who is in practically the same position, with a fair amount of land, will have 100 head of cattle to sell, returning him £400. Under the repudiation clauses of the Government's legislation which increased the rent almost 100 per cent., his rent amounts to £200 per annum. His rates amount to £30, leaving him a balance of £170 on which to carry on. That is one effect of the repudiatory legislation of the Government. Besides the increases in the rentals, the increase in the railway freights is another penalty imposed on the primary producer right throughout the State. In addition to the oppressive taxation which grinds them down, they have these other penalties, which are doing more to injure this industry than anything else, and are doing more to cause unemployment than anything else. It is all caused by the administration of the present Government. Then we have the fixing of the prices of products. We know that, when the farmer was in the position to get a fair recompense for his work and make up for some of the losses which he sustained during the drought and in other ways, the Price-fixing Commissioner came in and prevented him from obtaining

a just reward for his labour. The price was fixed and the farmer could get no more than that, whereas we contend that he should get the world's parity price. The Government fixed the prices of the products of the dairy farmer as a sop to the city workers. The result of this kind of policy has been to bring unemployment and distress into the homes of the city workers as well as into the homes of those whose products they seized. We know that the leasehold legislation of the Government has prevented settlement. In a great State like Queensland we should allow the farmers to own the land, because, when they realise that they are developing their own property, they will improve it and will greatly develop the State, and that will bring prosperity to the State as a whole.

Mr. PORTLOCK: The freehold policy has not developed the land along the North Coast.

Mr. GREEN: I would like to read the objective, from the platform of the Labour party, which was carried at the Australian Labour Conference sitting in Brisbane on 12th October, 1921—

"The socialisation of industry, production, distribution, and exchange by—

1. Utilisation of industrial and parliamentary machinery.
2. Organisation.
3. Nationalisation of industries, etc."

Mr. COLLINS: You are not quoting it correctly.

Mr. GREEN: In the face of that, are the Government sincere in proposing to pass a measure for the benefit of the farmers of this State? There is a sinister intention behind it. I feel sure that members sitting on this side of the House will be [5.30 p.m.] in a position to show the sinister movement behind the legislation submitted to the House this session, not only to the farmers but to all the people of Queensland. That is the policy of the Labour Government, though the Premier will not admit it, and though he refuses to answer a straightforward question concerning it. In his policy speech some years ago he said—

"Our political programme is stated in the plainest of terms, and our election promises are consistent with the principles of that programme, and we make every effort to carry them into effect."

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Quite true.

Mr. GREEN: I am quite sure it is quite true. It only bears out what I have already said—that this programme is introduced to catch votes at the next election, simply to sidetrack the electors, and is a sinister movement to gull the farmers and lead them to destruction rather than to help them.

Right throughout the Premier's speech and in speeches of other members opposite, references have been made to the present prosperity, as they term it, of this great State of Queensland. The Premier alluded to it when he said—

"To take another item to show the prosperity which exists in Queensland." And also when he told us—

"The figures I have quoted give an indication of the prosperity of the State." Yet it is only a few days since he was painting a doleful picture of the finances of Queensland, and saying that great care would have to be taken in administration if the State is to weather the storm and save itself from financial destruction. It does

[Mr. Green.

seem surprising to me that, in the face of the actions of the Government during the last twelve months or two years, the Premier can get up and talk of the prosperity that exists in Queensland. I would like the hon. gentleman to ask the man in the street—the man who is unemployed, the man who is living on doles, the man in any one of these homes where there is distress on account of unemployment—I wonder what he would tell the Premier about the present prosperity of the State! I would like to ask the Premier whether the decreased railway earnings and the deficiency on the railway system indicate that prosperity exists in every part? We have it plainly indicated that the deficiency to a large extent is due to decreased railway earnings, and we know that that is so to a large extent of North Queensland. And yet the Premier and others talk about the prosperity that exists in Queensland. I would also ask why deflation, why retrenchment, why lengthened hours for public servants, why reduced wages, why many other devices are being resorted to by Ministers controlling the various departments to save expenditure on the public service? These are the true index of the prosperity or otherwise of the State of Queensland; there is no better way to ascertain whether Queensland is prosperous or not than by looking at these facts.

The Premier pointed out three different things in support of his statement regarding the prosperity of Queensland. In the first place, he referred to the margin of profits in manufacturing industries, which he said were higher in Queensland than in any other State. I am very much surprised that the Premier of a Labour Government should point to the high profits obtained in manufacturing industries by so-called capitalists in order to substantiate his argument as to the prosperity of Queensland. Apart from that, whilst those figures may appear significant, nevertheless, if you put against those profits the excessive taxation which we have to pay in Queensland, they will be considerably reduced, and it will be found that we are in a far worse position than the people in any other State.

The Premier also said that Queensland is the only State in the Commonwealth which shows an increase in overseas exports. To substantiate that argument, the hon. gentleman picked out one year—last year—in which the favourable position of Queensland was largely due to the export of wool. Previously the wool used to go to New South Wales, and in the Commonwealth statistics was credited to New South Wales rather than to Queensland. I have gone back further, and taken five years to give a fair aggregate to show the position of Queensland as compared with the other States. I find from "Knibbs" that the increase in the various States during those five years were—

South Australia ...	200 per cent.
Western Australia ...	150 per cent.
Victoria ...	143 per cent.
Tasmania ...	117 per cent.
Queensland ...	87 per cent.
New South Wales ...	30 per cent.

Queensland is the second lowest on the list—Queensland the richest State of all—the State that produces, or should produce, more primary products than any other! Her increase in five years is less than half that of South Australia, with a smaller population.

Another argument which the Premier made in support of his assumption of the prosperity of Queensland, and to refute a statement made by the hon. member for Oxley, was that there was more actual unemployment to-day in Victoria than in Queensland. He carefully avoided saying that the population of Victoria was twice that of Queensland. According to the latest "Knibbs" returns, the percentages of unemployment in the various States during the last quarter of 1921 are—

Victoria ...	5.9 per cent.
South Australia ...	6.1 per cent.
Western Australia ...	8 per cent.
Queensland ...	11.3 per cent.
New South Wales ...	11.9 per cent.
Tasmania ...	16.7 per cent.

There also the statement of the Premier is refuted by actual figures, from which it will be seen that Queensland has almost twice the unemployment of Victoria in proportion to her population.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Absolute nonsense!

Mr. GREEN: The Premier also said—

"I consider that the greatest amount of prosperity in a country is disclosed by the Savings Bank deposits."

There I differ from the hon. gentleman. I hold that Savings Bank deposits do not indicate the prosperity of the State. My contention is that, if the people have confidence in a State, and in the stability and prosperity of a State, they will not hoard their money as Savings Bank deposits, but will invest them in industries and other activities which will give them a greater return on their money.

Mr. KIRWAN: If there is no money in the banks, how can they invest it?

Mr. GREEN: My contention is that the people who have money will invest it if they are sure of the prosperity of the State in which they live.

I want, also, to refer to the statement of the Premier—that direct taxation is not paid by the whole of the community. Surely the hon. gentleman has a short memory regarding that circular which he issued some years ago, when he said that it was the producer and the worker who suffered because of the burden of taxation resting upon the people of the State! I would also refer him to the following resolution which was carried by the Australian Labour party in Melbourne on 19th September, 1921—

"After discussing the Budget proposals, the central executive of the Australian Labour party agreed to the following motion:—That this executive condemns the new taxation proposals of the Federal Government as a cold-blooded attempt to balance the excessive expenditure by placing oppressive burdens on the shoulders of the people."

Who are "the people?" Those gentlemen would admit, if they were not playing a political game, that the burden of taxation does rest heavily upon the people as a whole. We stand here and say that it does rest on the shoulders of the workers and of every individual in this great State; that excessive taxation ties up industry, retards development, and prevents employment being given to workers, resulting in their being thrown on the unemployed market and in bringing

Mr. Green.]

distress and want into their homes. In view of that resolution, it will be interesting to analyse upon whom the burden of excessive taxation in Queensland rests. We are told over and over again that the land tax is not paid by the farmer or the small man—that it is the big man who has city properties and other large areas who pays it. Our returns show that 24,639 persons pay land tax. Of that number, 14,342 pay land tax on values below £500; 4,675 pay on land valued below £1,000; and 3,029 on land valued below £2,000. That is, out of 24,639 persons, there are 22,243 who pay the tax on land below the value of £2,000; while the balance of 2,596 persons pay it on land valued at over £2,000.

Mr. COLLINS: Tell us the amount of taxation they pay.

Mr. GREEN: That makes no difference at all. A small tax on a small individual is, perhaps, a heavier burden and penalty than a heavy tax on another individual.

Then let us look at the income tax. There are 29,093 persons who pay income tax. Of those, public servants number 5,653, and employees 10,333, a total of 15,986, or more than half of the number paying the tax.

Mr. COLLINS: Give us the amount they pay.

Mr. GREEN: Business people number 5,699; primary producers 3,900; industries 342—making a total of 25,907—and leaving only 3,191 who are evidently capitalists or men of independent means, and men who cannot be classed as "workers" under the new definition given by the Premier. I want to point out what that increased taxation means to those people, compared with the year 1916-1917. Many speakers have told us that the position we are in at the present time is due to the aftermath of the war. Personally, I consider it is the aftermath of the dreadful financial administration of the present Government. The war had been in progress for two years in 1916-17. In the intervening period, the population has increased by 10.5 per cent; but the income tax has increased by 218.7 per cent., and now falls on the shoulders of the employees of this State.

Mr. HARTLEY: It does not; it falls on the big, wealthy men, who have the money and would not fight for it.

Mr. GREEN: It falls largely on the shoulders of employees of this State. The land tax increased by 23.4 per cent. When this Administration came into power, there was no land tax; the whole of it has been imposed by them. The totalisator tax has increased by 43.4 per cent., the stamp duty by 105.7 per cent., and licenses by 2.6 per cent. The total direct taxation at the present time in Queensland reaches the immense figure of £7,592,642, which has to be borne by the small population of this State.

Let us look at these taxation figures from the point of view of the population. Victoria, with over 1,500,000 people, has direct taxation amounting to £3,646,833; whereas Queensland, with only half that population, has placed practically the same amount of direct taxation on its people. How can any industry progress with such a burden as that resting upon it? Is it to be wondered at that industries are not started; that there is no employment found for those who are unemployed at the present time, when industries are penalised to such an extent? Is it to be

wondered at, when primary producers have to carry such a burden, that they are unable to develop and employ the surplus labour of the State? South Australia, with practically two-thirds the population of Queensland, its direct taxation has placed upon its people a charge of only £1,622,077. My content on is, that the position Queensland is in at the present time is due largely to the fact that we are so greatly oppressed by the burden of taxation, due chiefly to the "Queenslandmania" exhibited by this Administration during the past seven years. They are now endeavouring to make amends for their past misdeeds, but I am afraid that, so far as the people of the State are concerned, it is too late, and they are going quickly to their doom.

Let us now look at the public debt. In Queensland it has increased from 1915 to 1921, by 41 per cent.; whilst in New South Wales it has increased only 23 per cent.; in Victoria by 35 per cent.; in South Australia 39 per cent.; Western Australia 32 per cent.; and Tasmania 42 per cent. Queensland is in the van and leading the way in this respect. The public debt per head in the different States is—

	£
New South Wales	78
Victoria	61
Queensland	104
South Australia	94
Tasmania	84
Western Australia	124

The Labour Administration in Western Australia was responsible for the large amount in that State.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. gentleman has exhausted the time allowed him under the Standing Orders.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Queenton*): I have listened with a good deal of attention to the speech made by the hon. member for Townsville, in which he charged the Government with window dressing, and with having sinister motives, and I have concluded that everything he said was distorted, or he was not giving the whole truth.

Mr. KERR: They are Knibbs's figures.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The hon. member only quoted those figures that suited his own purpose, and he kept the others in the background, which is tantamount to telling a half truth, and we are told that—

"A lie that is half the truth is often the blackest of lies."

The hon. member claimed that everything that had been done in this State prior to the advent of the present Government was done by the Liberal Government, and referred to the railways and the development work that had taken place. He then went on to say that there were 5,000 miles of railway constructed in the State. The effect of this construction of those railways has really not been to develop the State for the benefit of the whole of the people, but for the benefit of the few. These 5,000 miles of railways have enhanced the value of the land wherever the lines have been constructed.

Mr. KERR: Do you think the Queensland railways are well set out?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: If they are not well set out, previous Governments are responsible. The construction of the railways has not resulted in the development of land where they have been so constructed, and it has helped the land speculator, and the land jobber

[Mr. Green.

infinitely more than the people as a whole. We need not go very far for an example. There is any amount of splendid land, and nobody can deny it, along the North Coast Railway and other railway lines, which is undeveloped. It is as Nature left it and as man found it when he first came into Queensland. In many instances it was acquired for a mere song, and the people who possess it stick to it and keep it out of use, and do not allow anyone else to use it. Along the North Coast line people have taken up land at the present time, and in order to get to that land they have to go through private lands owned by other people for which they want anything from £10 to £20 per acre, and on which there is still standing scrub. Again, there is a railway line from Melbourne Street to Manly, a distance of twelve miles, with a train service day and night, carrying passenger, cattle, and other traffic, and yet the line is not a paying concern. Why? For the reason that it cost more to resume the private land along that railway than it costs to make the railway, and on which cost, until eternity, interest has to be paid. By the resumption of these lands, in addition to the enhanced value given to other owners of land, a handful of people have benefited by the construction of the railways, and have been enabled to sit down and have an income for which they have never given any return.

Mr. KERR: The price of resumption is not part of the capital cost of the railway.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Of course it is.

Mr. KERR: It is nothing of the kind.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: It is charged to the railway.

Mr. KERR: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I am surprised at an ex-employee of the Railway Department like the hon. member for Enoggera making a statement like that. The price of resumption is added to the capital cost of a railway, on which interest has to be paid until redemption. This state of things does not apply to this line only, but to a number of other lines. Although there are nearly 6,000 miles of railway now constructed in Queensland, there is less than an average of 200 acres of land under cultivation for every mile of railway constructed.

Mr. EDWARDS: Your Government is largely responsible for that.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: There are about 26,000,000 acres of private land in Queensland at the present time, and not 1,000,000 acres under cultivation. Millions of pounds have been spent on the construction of railways, but the State as a whole has never got sufficient return for the expenditure of that money. That is what hon. members opposite stand for. They stand for being able to make money out of freehold land instead of putting it to use and getting some return from it. They are not concerned as to whom they make the money out of so long as they get it. That is what is taking place in Queensland at the present time.

The hon. member for Townsville took exception to the efforts made by this Government to compel people who act the deg-in-the-manger to use the land or let somebody else use it. That has had some effect, but it has not had the effect that many people thought it would have in that particular direction. The bedrock question in Queensland at the present time is the land question. Some

people, when they get hold of land, do not cultivate it, but hold it for speculation, in anticipation of enhanced values. They do not make any use of it. There can be no gainsaying that fact.

The hon. member for Townsville also dealt with land taxation and income taxation, and quoted figures, but he did not quote the amount that was paid. Anyone who knows anything about land taxation, knows that the city pays infinitely more than the country in land taxation. The land taxation on a quarter acre city allotment in Brisbane is more than the tax on any 100-acre farm in the country. The cities have to pay the land tax.

Mr. VOWLES: They can pass it on, but the farmer cannot.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: If a distortion of fact of that kind is fair, I do not know what is unfair.

A great deal has been said during this debate about socialisation. I well remember that, when nationalisation became the objective of the Labour party, the very same statements were made. The supporters of hon. members opposite went about quietly telling everybody that nationalisation meant that their homes and their farms would be taken from them. But the people are not easily scared and upset by that kind of thing.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Give us a definition of what socialisation means.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Scarecrows are taken little notice of, especially when put up by an hon. member like the hon. member for Drayton. Something has been said about the unemployed. The great bulk of the unemployed are disappearing through the Government finding them work, and that is what really troubles hon. members opposite. They are out to exploit the unemployed and make them a stalking-horse to use against the Government. If hon. members opposite can find anything that will be useful as a stick to beat the Government, it is good enough for them to use. The unemployed are disappearing, and it is rather a remarkable fact that the people who talk about the unemployed object to them having something to eat. I should like to occupy a further quarter of an hour in dealing with the statements made by the hon. member for Townsville, but, as forty minutes is the time allowed on the Address in Reply, I will now deal with matters which are of much more importance.

I listened with a great deal of interest to the Governor's Speech, and I am sure every member of this House did the same. His Excellency is to be commended for his energy in travelling throughout the length and breadth of this State, and for the

[7 p.m.] efforts he has made to come into close contact with people following various avocations in life, and to learn from personal experience how they live and move and have their being in parts of the State long distances from the metropolis. Everywhere, so far as I can gather, he created a very fine impression in the minds of the people he talked to, and his conduct, sympathy, kindly consideration, and helpful words have given them the impression that he is deeply interested in their welfare and wellbeing. Wherever he has been the people who have expressed an opinion about him have always said that he was well worth meeting, well worth listening to, and really interested in this great State of ours. It

Mr. Winstanley.]

seems to me, in the words of Tennayson, that—

“He bears without abuse the grand old name of gentleman.”

I think both the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply are to be commended for the way in which they made their speeches and stated their cases. The hon. member for Oxley expressed his very deep sympathy with the mover of the Address in Reply, but it struck me before the hon. member had gone very far that the mover of the Address in Reply was not in any need of sympathy. If anybody needed sympathy it was the hon. member for Oxley, for the simple reason that he filled about five pages of “Hansard” and took up practically half the time allowed him for his speech in replying to and endeavouring to refute the statements made by the hon. member for Leichhardt, and he did not succeed very well after all.

The question of cotton-growing was mentioned in the Speech, and has been mentioned by most hon. members who have spoken on the Address in Reply. Cotton was grown in Charters Towers nearly twenty years ago. At that time an association was formed there called the “Cotton Growers’ Association,” and quite a number of business people interested themselves in getting a number of selectors outside who were dairying and grazing to plant from 10 to 30 acres of cotton. They did so, and proved very conclusively that an excellent cotton fibre could be grown; but the help and sympathy they got at that time were such that they were not encouraged to go on. There was no guarantee from the Government of the day, and the Government did not do anything to assist in the marketing of the crop. The consequence was that, after the cotton had been grown and sent down here, the result to the grower amounted to only 3d. or 3½d. per lb. for seed cotton, which, after paying for picking, did not leave the growers a sufficiently large margin to encourage them to continue to produce cotton. However, the experiment went to show that cotton of a very fine quality can be produced prolifically in the Charters Towers district, and if there had been anything in the shape of a guarantee as there is at the present time, I am quite satisfied that that district would have been a large cotton-growing centre at the present. However, small areas have been planted from time to time, and quite a number of settlers have cotton growing there now. At the present time the people in Charters Towers are celebrating their jubilee, and among the exhibits at the show is a very fine display of cotton produced from a plot on the Burdekin, and although it has not been very well cultivated, there is a very fine crop of cotton there. There is an abundance of suitable land in the district. The climate is suitable, and the rainfall is such that cotton of a very fine quality will grow, so I am hopeful that, with the help and assistance the Government are giving, cotton will be one of the things that will help to revive Charters Towers. A good deal has been said in reference to the Government, and hon. members opposite do not seem to be prepared to give them credit for anything they have done. As a matter of fact, there would have been little or no cotton grown in Queensland during the past two years had it not been for the guarantee given by the Government. Not only did the Government give a guarantee,

[Mr. Winstanley.

but the Department of Agriculture undertook to take charge of the cotton in Brisbane, gin it for the growers, place it on the market, and then hand back to the growers any surplus over and above the advance that was made when the cotton was received. The Department of Agriculture are to be commended for what they have done in this direction. An expert from the department is going to Charters Towers to confer with the people there, give what instruction he can, and give them the assistance and encouragement which they need to set them going in this industry. I was more than surprised at the remarks of the hon. member for Windsor, because, as a general rule, the hon. member is very straightforward and fair. But in this particular instance he practically refused to concede that the Government had done anything to give encouragement in the growing of cotton, although the facts are dead against him. In this connection the hon. member for Oxley had something to say. The hon. member said he did not know if he were talking to anyone who came from where the cotton-mills exist in Lancashire; and if the other things he said during his speech are no more reliable than what he said about the manufacture of cotton, then not much importance can be attached to his remarks. I do not want to misquote the hon. member or misinterpret what he said, so perhaps I had better quote from his speech. He said—

“I do not know if any hon. member opposite has ever visited the Lancashire mills, but I can tell this House that the manufacturers as a rule each handle one length of staple in the process of manufacture. All their looms and machinery are set to handle that particular staple, and they will not buy any cotton that does not come up to that standard.”

I say without any hesitation that that is absolute rubbish. It is not common sense. If he had said that they were made to deal with one quality there might have been some truth in the statement, because it is well known that the machines on which they spin the coarser cottons for sheeting and similar material are different to those which are required for the finer fabrics. It so happens that I have lived in the cotton-manufacturing districts in Lancashire and have been through the mills. It is absolute nonsense to say that they cannot spin anything but one length of fibre. What they want is a long fibre, because a long fibre will spin a finer and stronger thread than a short one. Common sense shows anyone that, without being an expert. Whilst at the present time there may be quite a number of varieties of cotton grown in Queensland, the Department of Agriculture is doing its best both to prevent diseases being introduced, to get the best cotton that can be produced, to get a long staple cotton, and supply the growers in the varying districts with the best variety of seed that can be obtained. I am satisfied that in this direction the Department of Agriculture is doing good work, and I believe that, under fair and average conditions, there is a future for cotton growing in Queensland. I read a statement in the paper this morning that the output of cotton this year is something like 520,000 bales less than the output last year. It is well known that, from various causes, cotton production has fallen off, particularly in the United States. Queensland cotton, as compared with the bulk of the American cotton, is just like

scoured wool compared with greasy wool. American cotton is nearly always dirty, and oftentimes exporters from America have been charged with putting dirt into it to make it weigh heavier, because it is sold by weight. There can be no question about the quality of the cotton produced in Queensland. I notice in this morning's "Daily Mail" that in Lismore action is being taken by the municipal council in regard to cotton manufacture. They say that they have been in communication with a firm of English manufacturers, who have offered to build spinning mills and weaving sheds and bring expert workers out to train local labour. The probabilities are that, if it can be shown that cotton can be grown in large quantities in the Commonwealth, we may see great developments in that direction. If English manufacturers are as anxious as they have led us to believe they are to purchase their raw material within the Empire, instead of having to depend on foreign countries, as they had to do during the war much to their disadvantage, I feel sure something will be done to encourage cotton production in Queensland. I am glad to think that some of the places that have been lagging behind are going to be benefited. Charters Towers has been a prosperous mining centre in the past, and has helped the State along in various crises and times of distress. Some £27,000,000 worth of gold has been produced there, but that has become practically a thing of the past; and, if something in this direction will help other industries to keep the town going, it will be advantageous not only to Charters Towers, but to other parts of the State.

I have previously touched on the question of unemployment. It is rather remarkable that, while hon. members opposite take every opportunity that presents itself to try and sheet home the blame for unemployment to the Government, their friend, the Prime Minister of Australia, William Morris Hughes, has been going through Queensland and other parts of the Commonwealth stating that the depression which exists in Australia is due to causes over which no politicians or Government have any control. He said it was due to world-wide causes, and was the aftermath of the war, and that no Government could solve the unemployment problem in a moment's time. It seems rather a strange thing that, while he is saying that over the rest of the Commonwealth, hon. members opposite are trying to put the blame on this Government. He also went on to say that, in spite of the depression which exists, the people in Australia are better off than those in any other country of the world. I certainly think that is true—I am prepared to give Mr. Hughes credit when credit is due—because, while we have suffered and are suffering at the present time, and are all anxious to see a better state of affairs brought about, it is well known that the conditions under which we labour in this State are due to causes over which no Government have any control. Everybody knows, for instance, that, if men worked for nothing in the mining industry, there is no market at the present time for metals. Those are things over which we have no control. It is stated to be the duty of the Opposition to oppose and discredit the Government in everything they propose. They have tried, but have not succeeded. There can be no question that during the past few months the Government have done something

very tangible to reduce unemployment in this State. They have found work for hundreds of men, our seasonal industries have also started work, and the unemployed are disappearing very fast. In spite of what may be said as to there being thousands of unemployed in Queensland, it is well known that the unemployed have been for some time a diminishing quantity. The Government have left no stone unturned to bring about this improvement.

Something has been said in reference to our exports, and in this direction the workers generally are often blamed and their faults pointed out with regard to their inefficiency and lack of interest in their work. It is perhaps as well to remind hon. members opposite that the employers are by no means free from fault in this direction. In reference to our export trade, there is a great deal of room for greater efficiency in regard to the preparation of the goods that we want to export. Visitors from Java and Singapore—and Trade Commissioners over there are supposed to advise Governments in the Commonwealth on these matters—have time after time pointed out that Australian exporters, immediately there is a demand for their goods, have begun to take advantage—and sometimes a mean advantage—of their customers, by sending them goods which are not up to sample. They submit a sample, but, when they execute the order, the goods are a long way below sample. The goods they send are not put up in an attractive way, and the consequence is that they fail when they have to compete with the outside world, and get away from the shelter of the Australian tariff and stand on their merits, and sell their goods on quality and good appearance, or not sell at all. It is well known that we can manufacture quite a number of things that we are not manufacturing at the present time except for show purposes. During the last week or two we have seen a number of Australian products displayed in shop windows in the city. I saw a letter in the paper, written by a gentleman who stated that he went into one of the shops to buy one of the articles exposed for sale, but, when he got into the shop, he was told it was not for sale, and that it had practically only been made for show. Unless we can manufacture articles in sufficient quantities to supply people who want them, there is not much good in making them. If they are only to be made to advertise and show what can be made, but are not for sale, it is of very little use. I certainly think there is room for improvement in this direction, and, if Australia is ever going to become an exporter of other things besides meat, wool, butter, and cheese, they will have to take up the same stand as the exporters of those things have taken up, and see that the quality of the goods they offer is quite up to sample. If they look after the quality of the goods, there is not the slightest doubt that they will find customers. There are big markets within easy distance of Australia if we only supply the right goods, and of the right quality.

I listened with a good deal of interest to the various statements made in reference to the Government's efforts on behalf of the primary producers. We hear a lot about the advocates for the primary producer on the other side, but some of them seem to think there is only one class of primary

Mr. Winstanley.]

producer. Most of them refer to the farmer only, and some of them refer only to the dairy farmer as the only primary producer. My contention is that the primary producers cover a wider sphere in Queensland than the farmers. The miner is just as much a primary producer as the farmer.

Mr. FRY: We all know that, and we have always said so.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: You have done nothing of the kind. There is no hope of members who talk like that ever sitting on this side of the House, because they only represent a section of the community, and not a very big section at that. The hon. member for Bowen has often pointed out that the sugar-growers represent a large number of the people of the State, and yet nothing is said in their advocacy by hon. members opposite for the sugar-growers. It has often puzzled me why hon. members opposite misrepresent the Government's attitude in this direction. The hon. member for Drayton set out to damn the scheme proposed by the Government for the benefit of the primary producers; but, like the prophet of old, he set out to curse, but remained to bless. In spite of what the hon. member says, he knows that a number of his own supporters have a feeling that there is something in the Government scheme, and that is why they favour it. The hon. member for Drayton wants to be in the position, if the scheme is a success, of being able to say, "I did it," or "I was one of those who instituted it." The hon. gentleman states that he suggested the idea, when the question of fixing the price of the farmers' products was being discussed; but, although he suggested that, it had no more affinity and no more connection with the Government scheme than it had with the coming eclipse. The hon. gentleman wants to be able to say, "I propounded the idea," and, if the scheme is a success, he wants to claim credit for it. If, however, the scheme fails, the hon. member wants to be in a position to say, "Didn't I tell you it would be a failure?" or "Didn't I tell you not to have anything to do with it at all?" The hon. member cannot have it both ways.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If you are not going to influence the prices, you will not do any good for the farmer.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: As a matter of fact, the farmers themselves will have to decide whether the scheme is going to be a success or whether it will fail. The responsibility will be on their shoulders. The Government will do all they can to help the farmer, but the responsibility must rest on the farmers themselves, and they must be prepared to do things that sometimes they are not ready to do now. No one will question the fact that the farmers, as a general rule, by their surroundings, their environment, and their isolation, because of the difficulties under which they labour, and because they are misled by the hon. member for Drayton, are not easy to organise, and not always ready to do the things they should.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: They feed you too cheaply.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: However desirous the farmers may be to treat these questions as non-political, the hon. member for Drayton and others make it a political question. If the hon. member for Drayton and other hon. members of the Country party had the interests of the country at heart, they would

say that this should not be a political question, because the interests of the country are greater than politics. If they put their prejudices on one side for the time being and supported the scheme whole-heartedly, then it could be made a success. Hon. members opposite have taken up the position of the Pharisees of old, who said, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" But a lot of good has come out of Nazareth, and a lot of good things have come from the Labour party. It was contemptible to hear an hon. member say that the Government had a sinister motive behind the scheme. To suggest a sinister motive is most contemptible.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: That was because of your past political actions.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: It is much better to oppose a thing right out than try to discredit it by saying that there is something sinister in the proposal. To do it in that way is one of the most discreditable things a man can do, particularly when it comes from a man who pretends to be a strong and loyal advocate for the class he represents. The hon. member for Drayton and others might ponder over the attitude they have taken up. I am glad to notice that the Government recognise that, if any lasting reform is to come, it will be through the boys and girls, and through the agricultural education which is being given to them. I was pleased to see reference made to it in the Governor's Speech, because it is from that source that good will come in the very near future. There is no question about it that this Government have spent more money upon technical education and agricultural education than any other Government that ever existed in this State, but hon. members opposite are not prepared to give us credit for anything at all. I want to make reference to something that was said this afternoon about the losses the Government made in their various transactions. One example that was put forward will be sufficient to show that they were all wrong and quite misleading.

Mr. FLETCHER: It was absolutely correct.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It was quite wrong.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The hon. member said that the Government purchased a battery on Charters Towers for £2,100, and that they practically lost £2,100 over it. As a matter of fact, the engine and boilers can be sold for £2,000 any day in the week.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We were offered £3,000 the week after we bought it.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: That battery has enabled quite a number of people to go out prospecting, and to get their ore crushed in Charters Towers. It is the only battery working on Charters Towers, and it still keeps the place as a mining field. One can only come to the conclusion that these statements are put forward carelessly and with indifference, but the Government need not be afraid of anything that is put forward by the Opposition.

Mr. FLETCHER (*Port Curtis*): On behalf of the people of Port Curtis, I should like to express appreciation of the visit of His Excellency to that district. I think that the people throughout all Queensland are appreciative of the great work His Excellency has done in travelling throughout the land gaining first-hand information as to the resources and possibilities of the country and learning the conditions under which the people live and meeting the people person-

[*Mr. Winstanley.*]

ally. The Imperial Government showed unerring judgment in selecting His Excellency as Governor of this State. He is a great power for good in the [7.30 p.m.] land, and I think that not only is he an excellent Governor, but he is also of considerable assistance to the Administration.

I should also like to supplement the remarks of the hon. member for Townsville upon the great loss the State suffered in the death of Sir Robert Philp. No more honourable, no more patriotic, or genuine, or sincere man ever occupied a seat in this House.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. KIRWAN: At any rate, he stuck to his principles—I will say that for him.

MR. FLETCHER: He did a great deal for this country in an honest, unostentatious manner, and, having known him well, I say that I do not think there has ever been any worthier or better citizen of this State than Sir Robert Philp. The State can ill afford to lose such a citizen.

The Premier the other night said that we had a great heritage. Undoubtedly we have. What we make of it, and what our destiny is to be, depend upon the energy and the wisdom we display. For "As we sow, so shall we reap"; and this applies to the State just as it does to the individual. Production and population are the two great vital factors in our progress. They are the gateways to our prosperity, and the fortifications for safeguarding and defending the White Australia policy.

Let me deal with production first. In referring to production in England, we would think of manufacturing and industrial affairs. In Queensland, when we speak of production, we mean primary production, because this is essentially a primary producing country, and therefore it is our bounden duty to assist the primary producers in every practical way, because, unless they are prosperous and thriving, it is quite apparent that we, as a State, cannot get very far ahead. If the farmers and primary producers are successful, that success is reflected throughout the rest of the community. Production creates wealth, and it is from wealth that all our blessings flow. All our humanitarian legislation, our good wages, our good living and working conditions—all these come from wealth, and the greater our wealth the better can be these conditions of life. Therefore, if we can assist the farmers, it is undoubtedly our duty to do so in every sound and practicable way. When the Premier outlined his agricultural proposals at Laidley, it was seen that the scheme was really the collection of progress or producers' associations, converging into district councils and then converging into the main council, and I said then that I thought the scheme an excellent system of organisation. The fundamental principles are good, and I have advised the farmers to join up with the scheme, because I believe that it may be conducive of a great deal of good. How it will develop and what the outcome of it will be is quite another matter, and I do not want to deal with that now. There are, no doubt, motives and details that will have to be examined. I have no fear that the primary producers of Queensland will be gulled into voting for the Government because they have introduced this proposal, when they have their own representatives here to look after their interests. I do not

think for a moment that the position will be affected; the farmers have too much common sense. However, I shall have an opportunity of dealing with this question on the second reading of the Bill, and I do not propose to deal with it further now.

In fertility and productivity I think this State far surpasses any other in the Commonwealth. From Cape York right to the Southern border the land can be advantageously used for some purpose or another. The great natural richness of the soil and our great resources in production have allowed this Government, with all their bad administration, to carry on. It is the great natural wealth of the country that has enabled us to carry on notwithstanding the prodigious waste and extravagance of the Government. The loss of money that has been thrown away is colossal, and still we are able to carry on. But there must be a temporary financial depression coming, because it is quite impossible for so much money to be wasted and so much to be spent unproductively without its being felt, and the Premier knows that that time is approaching. We cannot get away from it. If we had had good administration, with our wonderful resources, what a wonderful position we could have been in to-day! Consider what our great resources are in primary production—sugar, wool, meat, butter, wheat, cotton, fruit, and all other agricultural products, and timber, and our great mineral resources, and what wealth they produce. It is because of these great assets that the country has lived despite the Government. It is a beneficent Providence that is responsible, and no credit is due to the Government, as the Premier would have us believe. I wish to deal with these products one by one, taking sugar first.

What a wonderful asset it is, when you think that we are practically the producers of all the sugar consumed in Australia. And the fact that it is all consumed in Australia is a very great advantage, in comparison with other products, because it means that you can control it from the grower to the consumer, giving a fair deal to all. It is much easier of stabilisation than any other product, and it is the stabilisation of our primary industries that we have to aim at. Therefore, when we have one industry which it is fairly easy to stabilise, it is our bounden duty to see it done; only foolish people would contend otherwise. When you see the comparative ease with which the sugar industry can be stabilised, I do not doubt for a single moment the future of the industry; and, if the agreement is not renewed—I think it will be—something else will have to be done to put the growers on very much the same parity they enjoy to-day, because it is impossible for us, as a primary producing country, from a White Australia point of view alone, to allow it to fail. When you think of the wealth that Queensland is producing in this way alone, you see the great asset it is; and as the population and the production of the Commonwealth grow, so shall we increase our production.

Then, wool. We produce wool of a quality unsurpassed in the world, and the industry can be greatly advanced still. The first session I was here I outlined a drought-resistance scheme for application to Central and North-west Queensland which would be of immense advantage to the State. I still say that that scheme is absolutely practicable,

Mr. Fletcher.]

but it would have to be started on a small beginning and built up. It is absolutely necessary that we should lay the foundations of a drought-resistance scheme if we are ever to carry a big population. What remarkable natural reserves and resources! I do not wish to reiterate what I said when I outlined the proposition, but I repeat that there are great possibilities in the idea.

On this subject, too, I want to say something about the dingo pest. This is a matter that has been neglected. We are paying £1 a head for dingo scalps, and yet they are increasing instead of decreasing. There are many tracts of land on which at one time sheep were produced, but which are now devoted to the raising of cattle solely on account of the dingo pest. I suggest that the Government offer a prize for the best scheme for their eradication, because I have heard of many excellent schemes from people in the West who have practical knowledge of dealing with this menace, and it is quite possible that by this means a very efficient scheme might be brought to light. The destruction of our sheep by dingoes is very considerable, and the evil has also the effect that it stops people from extending into the remoter parts of the State for the purposes of sheep production.

And then there is cotton. Queensland is eminently suited for cotton-growing—more suitable than any other State, whilst it has been proved most conclusively that we can grow cotton equal to any cotton produced in any other part of the world. It is to be hoped that the guarantee will be renewed, but even if it is not renewed, with all the information that has come to us from all sources—and most reliable sources, too—it looks as if, with the great shortage of cotton throughout the world, Queensland is going to benefit exceedingly. The Government take credit for having done something in regard to cotton. I say they could not have done very much less. The Cotton Growers' Association in England guaranteed £10,000, and the Government accepted it, and guaranteed a price of 5½d. per lb. That has been exhausted, and the Government probably will lose a sum of money on the cotton which is now being produced. That money has been excellently spent in giving a start to a new industry. We want to do more on those lines, such as, by giving a subsidy of 1d. per lb. on the export of all frozen pork or bacon, to give an impetus to the pig-raising industry. In regard to cotton, the disabilities to which the hon. member for Oxley referred at the ginnyer, and other disadvantages under which growers are labouring, will be removed when we get into our stride. The farmers have not yet learnt the best methods of production, and neither have we perfected our arrangements yet. I have no doubt we shall build up a very much better product as we go along.

In dealing with unemployment, we have endeavoured to meet the situation by the payment of doles, which amounted last year to the sum of £174,000. In a young, productive State like this, there should be no unemployment. It is not right to go on paying those doles when there is a way out of it.

The HOME SECRETARY: Tell us the way out.

Mr. FLETCHER: I will tell the hon. gentleman a way out, if he has the ability and the energy to take advantage of it. Select from the unemployed all the men who are in

[Mr. Fletcher.

any way suitable; take them to the big areas which are available around Clermont, and put them to cotton-growing. You cannot give them farms and ask them to start by themselves, as they do not understand farming. You must have supervisors and organisers and a big man at the head of affairs, and organise it like an army. You will have all the men growing cotton on behalf of the Government. Possibly, it will be an expensive way of growing cotton; but you will be teaching those men, and great numbers of them can take up that land as they learn something about its culture. I am quite sure the Government would not lose on the proposition. How much better would it be to spend money in that way than to go on paying doles? It is humiliating for any Government to pay doles in a country like this. In the time of the Roman Empire, when Julius Cæsar came back after visiting Gaul, after the civil war, he found the army had been disbanded outside Rome, and the soldiers were receiving doles of corn. He stopped it at once, took them into the country, and started new provinces by settling the men on the land. That is what you want to do to-day, and cotton furnishes the opportunity.

The HOME SECRETARY: What happened to Julius Cæsar might happen to me, too. (Laughter.)

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not think it would, but I am quite sure the hon. gentleman can do as I suggest, if he has the necessary energy and ability. You must have splendid organisers to control the scheme. That would be the secret of its success, and you would be giving the unemployed a fresh chance in life.

The butter industry is another wonderful natural advantage we possess. The climate here is better than the climate in any other State for the production of butter, and it is one of our finest industries. But I think it can be improved in many ways. The herds require to be improved; transit facilities must be made easier, cream-testing arrangements made adequate; and drought-resisting schemes instituted in the localities where that can be done. This organisation which the Government have inaugurated is going to be helpful to the dairy farmers in this respect, if conducted and controlled properly.

The HOME SECRETARY: Do you really believe that, at any given moment, when there is dislocation in the meat or mining industry, the Government can solve those problems by putting people on to cotton farms?

Mr. FLETCHER: You can, if you have the imagination and the ability to do it.

The fruit industry is another which is of importance to Queensland. We can grow any tropical or other kind of fruit here. Unfortunately, great numbers of soldier settlers have been settled on fruitgrowing farms on inferior country. The Beerburum land cost £35 an acre, and when it was cleared it was found to be the poorest land in the State. There are about 400 settlers there to-day, and hundreds have given up in despair. Others, having spent their £625, are just eking out an existence, waiting for the time to come when they shall have to abandon those farms. The Land Settlement Committee were a body of inefficient and incompetent men, or they would not have agreed to put those settlers there, when there was so much wonderfully fine, productive land on which they could have settled them. The men at Beerburum have no alternative but to grow pineapples, and, if

there is a glut of pineapples, they are doomed. We must have mixed farming—some other alternative to fall back upon. A board consisting of the most capable and experienced men should be appointed immediately. The secret of success lies in the class of men you appoint to the board. The board must go round the settlements, and put them on a sound foundation, so that the men will have a chance to make good. Even if £1,000,000 or £1,500,000 has to be written off, it would be infinitely better to write it off now and start afresh. It is heartbreaking for those men to go on as they are doing.

The meat industry to-day is in a parlous state, and is a practical illustration of what would happen if all our primary production fell into the same state. We would have no income; we would have no wealth; we would not be able to pay our way. We are absolutely dependent upon our primary production. It is a difficult matter to remedy the state of affairs existing in the cattle industry. Possibly, we might get some form of preference in England by asking the British Government to restrict the importation of foreign meat to two-thirds, to give Empire-grown meat a chance. We can reduce costs as much as possible. In the Argentine the other day they reduced the rents on the grazing rights by 50 per cent. In Queensland we increase them by 50 per cent., and make them retrospective for six years—a most iniquitous thing. Hundreds of small men have to pay those retrospective rents, and are not able to do it. I know men who owe the money and cannot possibly pay it. The Government are not responsible for the fall in the price of cattle. It is a very good illustration of the fact that we depend on the law of supply and demand; but when the supply overtakes the demand you have trouble. The Imperial Government should give Empire preference; we gave them preference, and they should help us. I think, also, it would be a good thing if the Government gave a subsidy of 1d. per lb. for any meat that is chilled and arrives in England in a chilled condition. That would be an inducement to men to go to the expense and trouble of trying to take the meat home in a chilled condition. If the Government had to spend £5,000,000 in the granting of subsidies in respect of chilled meat and pork, and other new industries, it would pay in the revenue that would be produced, and the men that could be settled. I have outlined some of our principal primary industries, and the great wealth they produced, which enables us to carry on, and which would enable us to do wonderful things, if we had the necessary vision and energy.

Now, as regards the second great factor—population. We have 1,000,000,000 coloured people encircling the northern part of Australia; yet this country has an area of nearly 800,000 square miles with a population of only about 800,000, or one to the square mile. The natural increases of the population and the natural inflow into Australia are not sufficient. The population is not increasing fast enough. If these 1,000,000,000 people in the East should become westernised and modernised like the Japanese have become during the last twenty-five years, and they start to expand and look to Australia, they will see that Queensland—the most northern State—is empty. Quite naturally they might want to come here. Mr. Hughes stated that our best defence is to people the land. We should be

doing something, and not talking about it. The Premier stated in his speech the other night that we should increase the population of the State, but nothing has been done by the present Government in regard to immigration. It is said that we have unemployed here to settle on the land. Well, the Government are incompetent if they cannot deal with the unemployed. If we want to help the country forward, it is absolutely necessary that we should get as many immigrants as possible to come here. If the Government had the statesmanlike qualities to see things as they should see them, they could remove the difficulties in the way; but they just go serenely along and do not try to overcome any difficulties at all. In the Governor's speech there is a paragraph on immigration stating that this Government is "zealously co-operating with the Commonwealth Government but" All the words after the word "but" absolutely disqualify what is said about "zealously co-operating." Really nothing is being done at all. When the Premier was at the Premiers' Conference in Melbourne last October, he was absolutely silent on the question, notwithstanding that it was one of the big matters that was debated there. The Premiers of Western Australia, South Australia, and even New South Wales had some suggestions to make and some concrete proposals to put forward.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is untrue.

MR. FLETCHER: Although proposals were made whereby the British Government and the Commonwealth and the different States were going to share the cost of bringing out immigrants, the Premier of Queensland was absolutely silent. He has said that the lands in the Upper Burnett are for our own settlers, but how long is it going to take to settle those lands if we are going to depend on our own settlers? It will take years and years and years, and in the meantime the country's population is not increasing. The reason why the Burnett scheme has been delayed so long is simply because the Premier would not agree to immigrants coming there, and the Prime Minister would not agree to finance the undertaking for domestic settlement. It was outside his province.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Nothing of the kind.

MR. FLETCHER: It is absolutely correct. The Government could have got the money long ago if they had brought forward a sound immigration scheme, but nothing was done. It is quite likely, if big schemes were developed, that you could not get sufficient immigrants from Great Britain. There are some people who say we should only go to Britain for our immigrants; but we cannot afford to do that only; we cannot wait. We should take immigrants of a suitable character from the Continent of Europe. We have many group settlements here of men from Continental countries who are excellent settlers in every respect. In my district there are many German settlers, and, although we fought Germany during the war—for which those men are not responsible—they have proved themselves excellent Australians, and are bringing up their children as excellent young Australians. I might refer to the settlement at Baffle Creek, where the settlers came ten years ago.

MR. BRENNAN: Don't smooch for their votes.

Mr. Fletcher.]

Mr. FLETCHER: I am not. They fought through the greatest hardships and disabilities and won through, and they are in a fairly comfortable position to-day. These settlers went through difficulties that many English settlers and even settlers in this country would not have tackled. They settle down in group settlements far more readily than other persons. These people are good Australians and come under the British flag; and if we treat the people from the Continent with fairness, equality, and justice, they will appreciate the British Empire. We cannot depend entirely on Britain, but must go to the Continent as well for our immigrants. It is by increasing our population that we are going to overcome our difficulties and reduce our burdens. Production and population are the means by which taxation can be reduced and the railways made to pay.

Mr. PEASE: Why is your party complaining about the Italians coming here?

Mr. FLETCHER: They are not complaining. It is quite possible that we shall have to do something in regard to the creation of new States before long, not merely by making speeches, but by earnestly considering the matter and doing something. We have an enormous area in Queensland, and by governing it from one corner we cannot get the development that we should. When you think of how America has developed by its division into small States, one sees the possibilities in the creation of new States in Queensland. We have good harbours along the Queensland coast, with railways running inland from those ports, so that the State could easily be cut up into three States. I think that this is bound to come. But we shall have first to put our own house in order, and place our finances on a real sound and solid basis before we attempt anything of the sort. The New States movement will have to come. In Central Queensland we have the city of Gladstone with its port, the second best in Australia, and one of the very best in the world, and it is possible on its foreshores to build up a very fine city. It possesses the best climate along the whole of the Queensland coast, and it would be a splendid place to build up a capital for Central Queensland and to build up manufacturing interests. The fact that the legislation of Queensland is carried out from this little corner is out of all proportion. Take the Gulf country to which the hon. member for Burke referred. The Gregory and Nicholson Rivers are perennial streams, and settlement is possible along their banks. If we had a new State in the North, with the hon. member for Townsville at its head, probably he would develop and settle the Gregory River country. I hope the suggestions I have made will receive the earnest consideration of the Government, and that they will do something practical, especially in regard to unemployment.

Mr. KIRWAN (*Brisbane*): I have listened with a great deal of attention to the speeches delivered by hon. members opposite.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Pure rubbish.

Mr. KIRWAN: Hon. members opposite are past-masters in the art of decrying this State. I listened with feelings of regret this afternoon, as an Australian, to the hon. member for Townsville engaged in a campaign of slander and deliberate misrepresentation of the actual position of this State.

[*Mr. Fletcher.*

The SPEAKER: Order!

[8 p.m.]

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Don't say that again.

Mr. KIRWAN: I will say it again.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in order in accusing an hon. member of deliberate misrepresentation.

Mr. KIRWAN: I defer to your ruling, Mr. Speaker, and withdraw. I put it down to his want of knowledge, which should certainly not characterise an hon. member occupying his position. If the statements made by the hon. member are correct, one would expect to find him selling out his vast line of business, and getting down to New South Wales, where his friends have recently got the reins of government, or going to Victoria, where his party have been in power during the whole of the political history of Australia. But, instead of doing that, I am informed, on the most reliable authority, the hon. member has extensively extended his business operations, and has put a great deal of fresh capital into it.

Mr. BRENNAN: He has bought six new shops.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: He is a good business man.

Mr. KIRWAN: The programme outlined in the Governor's Speech is a varied and comprehensive one. Reference has been made already by hon. members to the Bill dealing with one of the important primary industries of the State—that is agriculture. It is rather strange to see a party which alleges that the Bills which have been outlined by the Premier are practically an embodiment of their policy, offering strenuous opposition to them. The worst they can allege is that there is no business in the proposals of the Government. The position that they regret is that at last there is a party holding the reins of government in Queensland who are prepared to carry out their policy. I have a recollection of hon. members who sat as members of the Country Liberal party behind the Denham-Barnes Administration pretending to be the primary producers of this State, and the farmers in particular, that they exercised a wonderful influence over the deliberations of that Cabinet and the laying down of their policy so far as their legislative programme was concerned. I remember also the introduction the Sugar Cane Prices Board Bill and I recollect that Bill going to its second reading. I have a distinct recollection of the then Opposition—the Labour party—offering to sit all night to put that Bill through, and every hon. member representing the Country Liberal party voting to throw the Bill into the waste-paper basket, and leave the canegrowers of Queensland to their fate.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: You are incorrect.

Mr. KIRWAN: I am absolutely correct. I remember distinctly the ex-Premier of this State—the late lamented T. J. Ryan—rising in his place and offering to sit here all night, and the hon. member for Drayton, the late hon. member for Mirani, and the hon. member for Burrum—Lieutenant-Colonel Rankin—voting in a division to throw the Bill into the waste-paper basket so that they could go home. I have a distinct recollection of the attitude adopted by hon. members opposite when their friends next door cut out the main principles of the Stock and Station Agents' Produce Bill—a Bill which was introduced for the purpose of protecting the primary producers.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: What good is it now you have got it?

Mr. KIRWAN: The Bill was brought back to this Chamber and thrown into the waste-paper basket by the Government at that time, and the country Liberal members had not sufficient influence to insist on those two measures going through. Now that this Government are going on with their programme, so far as the agricultural industry is concerned, and in view of what they have done for the sugar industry, I think the primary producers of this State have got faith in them; and, if we can take any notice of the statements made by hon. members opposite, the thing that is troubling them is that this Government are going on with their programme. The hon. member for Drayton and a few more on the Opposition benches, when this Government puts its policy into operation will, like Othello, find their occupation gone.

The Speech also makes reference to a Commission Agents Bill. That is a Bill that has been asked for by the firms of this city who are interested in that class of business. They are anxious and desirous that the public should be protected, and members of the reputable firms of this city have no objection to the provisions which will find a place in that Bill.

As a metropolitan member, I am very pleased that the Government are determined to do something in connection with the Brisbane tramways. I am not going to discuss the Bill here or the principles that have been outlined. I prefer to have that until the second reading of the Bill is before the House, and its provisions have been fully explained by the Minister in charge.

The promised Bill to amend the Workers' Compensation Act is another illustration of the desire of this Government to do something to assist a large body of men who are engaged in an occupation which, unfortunately, wrecks their health and makes considerable inroads on their capacity to earn a livelihood for those who are dependent upon them. The Government are out to see that if men sacrifice their health and strength in following the occupation of a miner, their children, at any rate, shall be protected to the extent of being guaranteed that which is necessary to provide them with a reasonable education, so that, when they are thrown out on the world, they may start the battle of life without a handicap as compared with children more fortunately circumstanced.

The Secretary for Public Lands is to be congratulated on the position that he has taken up and the policy that he has persistently advocated in reference to forestry conservation, and I am pleased to see that a Forestry Bill is to be introduced. Those of us who have studied this question as it affects other countries of the world, know that there is much to be done, and whether the Minister's term of office be long or short—I trust it will be a lengthy one—it will be said to his credit that he is the Minister who laid broad and deep the foundation upon which the Forestry Bill was based, and on which forestry conservation in this State was actually established.

The hon. member for Toowong last evening complained bitterly about what he termed the deliberate misrepresentations of hon. members on this side regarding the party opposite. Imagine hon. members opposite complaining about misrepresentation, deliberate or otherwise! Let us hark back to the war. Let us remember when hon. members

opposite said that members of the Labour party were disloyalists; that we were traitors, and that we were in receipt of German gold. All these things were alleged against us, and hon. members opposite claimed to be pure, thoroughbred patriots. Now, when they get a dose of their own criticism, they are not game to stand up to it. Those men who hurled these insinuations about members of this party being engaged in these deep-laid schemes ought not to complain when they get back—not innocents, not untrue accusations—but statements founded on the deliberations at their own conferences. At any rate, I can admire Brigadier-General Thompson for his courage in standing by the statement which he deliberately made at one conference. He said in effect—

“At any rate, I am not going to tone that down. I stand for the policy I have outlined.”

That is the policy that has recently been put into operation on the Rand by the Union Government of South Africa.

Mr. FLETCHER: Do you stand for your policy?

Mr. KIRWAN: I stand for the policy of this party.

Mr. VOWLES: Socialism!

Mr. BRENNAN: Communism—the farmers do, too.

Mr. KIRWAN: I want to call particular attention to the respective parties, and I want to quote, as a witness, a journal published in Queensland, which cannot by any stretch of imagination be accused of pro-Labour sympathy. The Brisbane “Sun,” after the “No-confidence” debate was concluded last year, made this remarkable comment—

“Towering over the Opposition leaders in debate were the Government champions”

“In Queensland to-day we are forced unwillingly to assert that the Opposition lacks leadership. It is standardised mediocrity. They have no leader who is as imposing or as powerful as the Premier, and the leader counts more than anyone else in saving his army from decimation.”

In fact, I might read a very apt description which was given of them by the present political high priest Caiaphas of their party—I refer to the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth. He described the party opposite in 1914 as—

“A mixed and worried crowd of derelicts sitting on a raft in mid-ocean, speaking all languages and only agreeing on one thing—that they must not be knocked off the raft. . . . They have no common ideals, no great principles which can bind them together. . . . They are men who have gained what notoriety they now possess through their strenuous denunciation in the past of what they now espouse. . . . They are not politically alive. They are like a shipwrecked sailor on a hencoop.”

Hon. members opposite are the lineal descendants of their predecessors. They have a great deal to say about communism and socialism. I venture to say that, if an examination paper were set by one of the University professors with two simple questions—“What is communism?” and “What is socialism?”—there is not a member of the

Mr. Kirwan.]

Opposition who would get 5 per cent. of the marks. One hon. member opposite said that the Labour party believes in the socialisation of industry. Another hon. member immediately followed him and talked about communism. Anybody who has studied political economy—anybody who has studied the great writers on those two important subjects—knows that they differ entirely, and that a man can be a socialist without being a communist, and that a communist is a man who decries socialism and has no time for it. But the statements of the hon. member for Oxley and other hon. members who shriek about communism, and who trust and hope that now—not by appealing to the sound judgment or good sense or the reasoning faculties of the majority of the electors, but by raising some bogey—they will possibly secure possession of the Treasury benches, remind me of a lecture delivered by Mr. T. A. Seymour, M.A., of the Queensland University, under the auspices of the Brisbane Chamber of Commerce, and reported in the "Daily Mail" of 27th July, 1920. The report states—

"FEARS OF SOCIALISM.

"Many of our people, in all classes of society, through the lack of early training, through the thwarting of the normal and proper development of their personalities, have become the prey of abnormal and neurotic fears. I have conversed, for example, with wealthy men in this and other cities who, whatever the subject, however appropriate or inappropriate the reference, kept harking back to the fear of socialism and extortionate taxation. Their souls were no longer free; they lived in the thralls of vague terrors, as infantile in this as is the savage who hides so cravenly from the menace of the wind."

I want to make particular reference to a point raised by the hon. member for Toowoomba in the course of his speech. Dealing with the criticisms of hon. members opposite against the Governor's Speech and against the policy of this party, he made particular reference to the attitude of the Melbourne daily papers to the farmers' appeals for a wheat pool, or other measures which would enable them to get something in the shape of a fair return for their produce. Strange to say, the same attitude was adopted by the Melbourne leading journals towards the Farmers' Party there by referring to these schemes as something akin to syndicalism. The Melbourne "Argus," which is ultra-Tory, and perhaps one of the most reactionary papers published in Australia, referred to the suggestion regarding the farmers' application for a wheat pool as bordering on sovietism. I am pointing out that, so far as the opponents of reform are concerned, their tactics are the same, whether they were opposing the demand for the abolition of slavery in America, or opposing the introduction of that great Reform Bill which did so much to spread political liberty in England—I refer to the Reform Bill in England of 1832—or whether they are opposing the Labour party in Queensland to-day, who are endeavouring honestly to place their policy and principles before the people of Queensland. The same old tactics of misrepresentation, the same old tactics of appealing to the fears of the people and not to their judgment, are adopted. The hon. member for Oxley, after referring in a rather sneering manner to the speech of the mover

[Mr. Kirwan.

of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, devoted half an hour to answering it. The hon. member, in the course of his speech, wanted to know what the Government had done to encourage investors in Queensland. He took up the cry which has been taken up by the Opposition, both in this House and outside, through the organs which espouse their cause, that, as a result of the policy of this Government, investors are fighting shy of Queensland, and that, generally speaking, the State is not making that progress which would be made if hon. members opposite were in possession of the Treasury benches. The strange thing about it is that not one of them believes those statements, and neither do their followers. Going down Elizabeth street the other day I looked up at the business which is run by the hon. member for Oxley, and I wish him every success. I was glad to know that he does not believe in the "stinking fish" attitude that he takes up on the Opposition bench here. What did I see on his premises? The notice, "Removing shortly to larger premises." (Government laughter.) The hon. member gets up on the front Opposition bench—the latest acquisition to the Country party—and tells hon. members of this Chamber and the public, through "Hansard" and the Press, that the State is being ruined, and yet he has done so well in his short time in Elizabeth street that he is compelled to seek premises across the road, twice the size of his previous premises, in order to deal with his increasing trade. I have no doubt when the Labour Government comes back after the next election the hon. member will have to put up a three- or four-storey building to accommodate his increased trade. The hon. member for Townsville indulged in the same tirade. I have looked up the Townsville "Bulletin" of the 7th instant, and I discovered that the Townsville Show was a record so far as attendance was concerned, the largest concourse ever seen in the show-grounds in Townsville being seen there, notwithstanding the depression in the mining industry, and in spite of the fact that we have had a Labour Government in power for seven years.

Mr. GREEN: They cheered up because they have got a new member.

Mr. KIRWAN: I want to deal with the position as far as the introduction of new capital into this State is concerned, and to show that, notwithstanding the attitude taken up by the Opposition, the people who have money to speculate for investment, and who are out to look for good security, are operating largely in Queensland to-day. I find that the Melbourne "Age" states—

"In Melbourne it is noted that there is a resumption of investing in Queensland securities, and this is taken as an indication of confidence in a turn of State politics which will result in Parliament being less hostile to capital than it has been in recent years."

In the "Daily Mail" of 10th March last I find this statement—

"BUILDING REVIVAL.

"MORE PROPOSALS.

"BIG CITY STRUCTURES.

"These operations are not by any means confined to firms with their headquarters in Queensland. Organisations with their head offices in Sydney and

Melbourne are even more active in their enterprises for embarking in business in Brisbane. . . .”

Mr. G. M. Dash, who is well known by virtue of his connection with the successful flotation of the war loans in the past for the Commonwealth, has, on behalf of a Southern syndicate, offered the sum of £50,000 for the Queensland Deposit Bank. That goes to prove that the gentlemen who have that money to invest in Queensland are prepared to buy outright one of the most successful banks in Queensland in connection with the business transactions which that bank is noted for.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: They think there is going to be a change of Government.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. gentleman always comes in with that old hackneyed phrase. He told us two years ago that there was going to be a change of Government, and he told us six years ago that there was going to be a change of Government, but the Government still stays here, and so far as the people in the South are concerned, notwithstanding the fact that hon. members opposite are continually decrying this State, we find the people from the Southern States are inclined to spend their money in Queensland. Mr. T. C. Beirne is recognised as one of the shrewdest business men in this State, if not in the Commonwealth. Quite recently he converted his drapery business into a company with a capital of £1,000,000. What are they doing just adjacent to Mr. Beirne's premises in the Valley? They are erecting an up-to-date theatre there. Will any hon. member tell me that these people expect anything but success in their new ventures? I was walking along Wickham street the other day, and I was pleased to see a new firm had come into my electorate—Messrs. Barnes, Limited. (Laughter.) I noticed that they have built a most imposing structure there on the most up-to-date principles. All the windows were resplendent with all the latest fashions for ladies and gentlemen, who were invited to come in and buy from the immense stocks inside. Does any hon. gentleman wish to tell me that the firm of Barnes, Limited, composed of very shrewd business men, who know the value of every shilling and every pound-note, start in business in the Valley, fill their premises with large quantities of goods, and employ a highly efficient staff of assistants to whom they have to pay the award rate of wages, just for the fun of the thing?

Mr. BIENNAN: Are you being paid for booming them? (Laughter.)

Mr. KIRWAN: The firm of Barnes, Limited, are quite welcome to any boom that I give them this evening. I am pleased to see them starting business in Brisbane, despite the tactics of the Opposition, and despite the statements made by hon. members opposite. I am pleased to see them sink their money in Queensland, even although there is a Labour Government in power.

Mr. G. I. BARNES: We have also to consider the conditions.

Mr. KIRWAN: It goes to show that some people did not do too badly out of the war. I have an extract here from the "Daily Mail" of 11th April, 1922. Mr. T. C. Beirne, one of the members of the Queensland local board of the Australian Mutual Provident

Society, in speaking at the annual meeting of the society held in Sydney, said, in reference to the business in Queensland—

“The Queensland branch has put up a very good record, our new business for the ordinary department having again exceeded the million, and that for the industrial department being a record for the branch, while our net increase to business in force was extremely good. There are now on the Queensland register 34,885 policies for over £11,750,000 (exclusive of bonus additions) in the ordinary department, and 26,346 policies for over £1,000,000 in the industrial department. The average rate of interest on our investments continues to improve, and the expenses of management are at the same satisfactory rate as the previous year's. We are very proud of our results, and can safely say that no other financial institution is in a better position. As regards our mortgages, only one small amount of £17 was in arrear at 31st December last, and not only has this been paid, but the mortgagor has also reduced his indebtedness for principal by £140.”

I want to know whether, if a large business concern like the Australian Mutual Provident Society, with its ramifications throughout Queensland, dealing with all classes of people, whether they be artisans, rich pastoralists, or successful business men, can send their representative down to Sydney to report such successful business as that in Queensland, it does not show that there is undoubted prosperity in this State, even although a Labour Government is in power? With regard to the city of Brisbane, I have no hesitation in saying that Brisbane is a great deal better off to-day after seven years of Labour Government than it was in 1902, when there was no Labour Government in power. I well remember in 1902, when Finney's removed from their old building at the corner of Adelaide and Edward streets into their new premises. At that time anyone could have obtained a shop or an office in Finney's "Big Block" at the corner of those streets. If anyone went there to-day he would have no chance whatever of getting an office of any description, because they are all occupied. If anyone goes along Wickham street, Brunswick street, Adelaide street, or Creek street they will find all sorts of businesses being conducted successfully, although they pay high rents, high municipal rates, and heavy taxation to the Government. Does it not show that they must be having a good turnover, and must be doing a good business? I find in the "Daily Mail" of 2nd June last a special article dealing with the trade revival in Queensland. It referred to the fact that there was a bright outlook, that money was plentiful, and that consumption had increased by 25 per cent. In the "Daily Mail" of 24th February, 1922, further evidence of a revival in the building trade is given in the number of projects now in hand in Brisbane. Messrs. Alfred Shaw and Co. are erecting large up-to-date offices in Creek street at a cost of £20,000. Queensland Motors Ltd., Ford agents for Queensland, recently purchased a site at the corner of Adelaide and Creek streets at a cost of £14,000, upon which it is proposed to erect a building of five stories and a basement including 100 offices, and a garden café on the roof designed on the lines of Farmers

Mr. Kirwan.]

Ltd., Sydney. The Australian Temperance and General Life Assurance Society, Ltd., are now erecting, at a cost of £100,000, an up-to-date structure of nine stories high, at the corner of Queen and Albert streets. According to the "Daily Mail" of 13th April, Mr. A. C. Byerley, sole proprietor of the A.C.B. Drapers, has just returned from Rockhampton, where he has recently purchased the well-known drapery business of Messrs. Harris (Rockhampton) Ltd., which is recognised as the most modern store in Queensland north of Brisbane, representing a capital value of over £80,000, which may be considered a record deal in retail business for this State. The well-known A.C.B. drapery establishment in the Valley has only been in business since the Labour Government took over the reins of government in Queensland, and has made several additions to its Valley premises, and is now extending its operations to Rockhampton. That is an indication of the prosperity of Queensland, when Mr. Byerley, who started in a small way in 1915, can pay that large sum for a business in Rockhampton. Messrs. Annand Bros., of Toowoomba, have taken over the premises lately occupied by Sherwin and Co., drapers, A. Gaydon, saddler, and Andrews, dentist (says the "Courier" of 20th March, 1922), and have made extensive alterations. The result is that the block will be one of the finest in Toowoomba, having a window display frontage of 175 feet to Ruthven and Russell streets. Messrs. Wildman Bros., iron merchants, are adding considerably to their premises at Ann street, Valley (says the "Daily Mail" of 30th March, 1922), and extending them back 100 feet from the original building to a laneway. Two factors have induced this step. The first was that the volume of business has so increased that it was found imperative to enlarge the building, and the second was that they have decided to engage in the manufacture of galvanised iron goods on a large scale. No less than four insurance companies have opened business in Queensland during the last twelve months, one of them—the Queensland Probate Insurance Company, with a capital of £500,000, with the following directors:—Messrs. E. J. Shaw, E. T. Garbutt, Townsville; C. Bowdler, Toowoomba; J. A. Lucas, Central District; and Virgil L. Power, Brisbane. They are all good Nationalists. I understand—I am doubtful about one—Mr. Bowdler. But whether he is a Nationalist or not, he is a man I have the highest regard for, and I am prepared to shake hands with him, because I believe he is an honest man. Mr. Garbutt is a well-known Nationalist in Townsville. We know that the Australian Probate Company opened business in Queensland quite recently, and last year one of the leading banks in the South bought the Bank of Queensland, lock, stock, and barrel. The investors in Victoria were quite prepared and ready to buy out that banking business, and the extraordinary thing about it is that the chairman of directors of the Bank of Queensland was one of the notorious Philip delegation that went to Great Britain. We know that two of our leading boarding-houses quite adjacent to Parliament House—I refer to Menzies and to Harris Court—were bought by Southern speculators, and the hon. member for Toowoomba and other local painters and decorators have earned a considerable amount of money in putting them in good order in their usual

[Mr. Kirwan.

up-to-date fashion. (Hear, hear! and laughter.) When these investors from the South are prepared to spend their money in Brisbane, they must feel that the investment is safe, although there is a Labour Government in power.

And I remember reading with some astonishment a statement made by the hon. member for Drayton, who said he came from Melbourne in the train with a gentleman who was going to purchase Menzies. If the information he gave to that gentleman was on the lines he takes when he writes to the daily papers, all I can say is that I would not be surprised if the prospective investor got out of the train coming down the Range. I find also in the "Daily Mail" of the 8th of this month an advertisement by the Western Australian Insurance Company, Limited, who have opened business here. We have heard a great deal this evening—at least I in my position as Chairman of Committees had to listen to a great deal—about the Brisbane Tramways Company. I find that for June last the receipts of that company were £49,239 9s. 3d., as compared with £46,356 19s. 11d. in June of last year, an increase of over £2,000 for one month. Does that show that the position is bad in Queensland? Then I find this in the "Telegraph" of 11th February last—

"The December, 1921, quarterly averages within Queensland of the Queensland National Bank, Limited, are interesting because of the marked growth of nearly £360,000 in the deposits, as compared with the average for the September quarter."

I want to point out, too, that those were not fixed deposits.

The hon. member for Kurilpa this afternoon attempted to offer a rather ingenious explanation of the rise in the exports from Queensland, as compared with other States. Now, if the statement made by hon. members on the Opposition benches were correct, we should expect a decrease in exports, in view of the fact that the Government are alleged, by the application of their policy, to have had a detrimental effect on the production of primary products. Yet the hon. member was prepared to quote figures showing that the only State with an increase was Queensland. I say that, when you are exporting more than you are importing, you are in a better position financially, just as a business firm with a cash turnover greater than its liabilities is certainly showing an improved condition.

The hon. member for Oxley last year made a statement here with the usual confidence that characterises statements made by him, although, in view of the fact that he has lately thrown overboard the political principles that were responsible for returning him, it is rather doubtful whether we should continue to give the same amount of attention to his statements. The statement that I refer to shows how far he is astray on the important question of the credit of Queensland. Speaking in the Legislative Assembly on 18th August, 1921, he declared—

"Any man who reasonably faces the situation must admit that all evidence of confidence (in the Government) has completely gone. . . . You have heard of what is called the Repudiation Act. I say that that has got to be removed from the statute-book before the credit of Queensland can be re-established."

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. KIRWAN: Absolutely untrue! The Government were able to go to America and raise a loan, and, if they were to go on the London market to-morrow, they would get another loan. This statement was made by no less a person than the chairman of a very important British mission that came here, Major Belcher, and I am satisfied that that gentleman, holding the high and important and responsible position he does, would not make it unless he was sure of the position. Another gentleman who recently came to this State—a gentleman who is going to take up a position as a distinguished Anglican divine—I refer to Bishop Davies—made a statement to a similar effect, which is worth quoting. Interviewed by the "Daily Mail" on 25th March last, he said—

"I suppose there are people in Queensland who think that their State will not be able to borrow money again from the financial sources in Great Britain. I would like to disabuse that view.

"I discussed the question of Queensland's future relationship with the British financiers with the senior partner of a firm of stockbrokers, and he told me that investors certainly favoured colonial stocks for investment. The outcome of my conversation with the stockbroker is the belief that there will be no difficulty experienced in connection with borrowing money in Britain if this State wants it. But, of course, it has to be borne in mind that I speak as a layman."

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: What about the delegation?

Mr. KIRWAN: The Philp delegation blocked the borrowing for the time being, but, when the London investor discovered that he was likely to have a competitor in the American market, he very soon climbed down. That was due to the fact that our Premier had the courage to stand up to him, and not adopt the attitude which hon. members opposite would have adopted if they were spoken to. They would have said, "Yes; what do you want? If you want this Act repealed, it will be repealed," just as when they brought in their amendment of the Land Act, and Mr. Denham was approached by the representatives of the pastoralists and told, "You must not pass this Bill; it is no good to us," he and his Cabinet, including the hon. member for Bulimba, threw out the Bill and brought in something else.

The leader of the Nationalist party the other evening, in reply to an interjection by me, said that his party never believed in black labour. In connection with that, I would like to make this statement. This party can claim to be the pioneers of well-known principles that have become accepted principles, and part and parcel of present-day politics. I refer to adult suffrage, to old-age pensions, to the Commonwealth Bank, to the White Australia policy.

HON. W. H. BARNES: You did not bring in the old-age pensions.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member sat behind the Government which opposed, on every Thursday afternoon for ten long years, the application of the principle of old-age pensions. I did not say we brought in old-age pensions; I said we advocated the principle. I think my words were—"Hansard" will prove it—that we were the pioneers of these measures. I remember the time when we stood up in this State and

said white men could do the work in North Queensland, and we were laughed at. Hon. members opposite said, "It is impossible; it cannot be done." Do you mean to tell me that people of the British race, who are noted for their colonising efforts in all parts of the habitable globe, cannot colonise North Queensland? We know they have been able to do it.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Not a man in this House has advocated black labour.

Mr. KIRWAN: And I hope that the electors will continue to wipe out every man who gets up, or who has ever got up, and said that the kanaka or some other introduction from Asia, or some other part of the coloured world, is capable of doing the work that they say white men cannot do. It is a wonder that Sir Henry Barwell, who is so fond of advocating black labour, did not want to fight the war with black labour. It is common knowledge that, when a war is to be fought, what were contemptuously described in the American slave States as "white trash" are good enough. They do not depend on black labour to fight for their dollars and their dividends, their ranches and their capital. Then they ask the white man to go out and fight for them. But at a conference in Melbourne no longer ago than 1907, at which Queensland was represented by Miss Ogg, Mrs. Hatton, Mrs. Mitchell, Mrs. Leslie Corrie, Miss Dewing, Mrs. Wilmore, Mrs. Thompson, and Mrs. Chataway, the following resolution was unanimously passed in favour of black labour:—

"That, while the conference approves of the principle of a white Australia from the racial point of view, it considers that the importation of coloured labour is necessary for the development of the tropical territory."

And I might, if time permitted, quote extensively from the remarks of those ladies, who said that since the kanaka had left North Queensland it was not safe for the maids to go out, that no white man could take his eyes off his children, and that the men who followed the occupation of cancutters and harvesters were mostly ex-criminals. That is the class of statement which was made by representatives of the Nationalist party, as late as 1907, and which would be made again were it not for the force of public opinion.

THE SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed under the Standing Orders.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): At the risk of following in the steps of another hon. member who has spoken to-night, I would like to take the opportunity of saying how much I, personally, regret the death of the late Sir Robert Philp. Sir Robert Philp was my first political chief. I can only say that there never was one who had a greater interest in Queensland, who showed greater devotion to Queensland, and who had his heart absolutely with the people. Notwithstanding the criticisms that may have been levelled against him, Robert Philp was a white man—one who helped to build up this country and who did his best for his country.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. W. H. BARNES: It would be difficult to follow all the remarks of the hon. gentleman who has just resumed his seat; but one would be very much wanting in

Hon. W. H. Barnes.]

appreciation if he did not thank the hon. member for his cheap advertisement. There is no doubt the hon. member has gone out of his way—and, really, it seems to me to be heaping coals of fire on our heads—to give a cheap advertisement to a very distinguished firm in the Valley and elsewhere. Apparently, he is out to boom that particular business. (Laughter.)

Mr. KIRWAN: If I call round, will I get a new hat? (Laughter.)

HON. W. H. BARNES: If I might be allowed to answer that interjection, I will say I am just afraid the hon. member's head would be too big. (Renewed laughter.) I remember seeing something in one of the Melbourne papers some time ago to the effect that, since a certain politician got into politics, there was not a hat manufactured which was big enough for him. I am afraid no hat could be procured that would be big enough for the hon. gentleman. The hon. member for Queenon to-night challenged a statement which was made by the hon. member for Kurilpa with regard to the Venus mine.

Mr. WELLINGTON: There is no mine of that name.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I should have said the Venus battery.

At 8.45 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Kirwan, *Brisbane*) relieved the Speaker in the chair.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am quoting from the Auditor-General's report for 1921, page 70—

“Venus battery, Charters Towers—

The excess of working expenses over revenue since inception (August, 1919) was £216 1s. 8d. Charges written off as irrecoverable amounted to £175 5s. 9d., and the excess of expenditure over collection at 30th June, 1921, was £2,259 14s. 1d.”

Mr. WINSTANLEY: He quoted that as a loss.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman is trying to back out of his statement. It is due to the hon. member for Kurilpa to correct a statement which was incorrectly made to this House.

During this debate, some hon. members—especially on this side of the House—have been charged with not dealing with the Governor's Speech. If that were a fact—and it is not a fact—it would be due to just one thing—that the points which were emphasised particularly in the Speech were non-contentious, whilst anything which was of a contentious nature was clearly left out. I want to congratulate the Premier on having successfully put on one side those things to which we took great exception only twelve months ago, and on his having quietly seen that they were excluded from the Governor's Speech.

He and other speakers have emphasised the fact that cotton-growing has been re-established in Queensland. Any man who is interested in Queensland cannot feel anything but pleased at the fact that considerable quantities of cotton are now leaving the Central and other districts. I want to draw attention to the fact that there was a time when cotton was grown very freely, more particularly in the Ipswich and West Moreton districts. The only reason why its cultivation had to be abandoned was that the world's market was not sufficiently good. At that time there was quite a number of gin-eries in Ipswich, which was noted for the cotton it produced. Someone remarked just

[*Hon. W. H. Barnes.*

now that in those days there was no benevolent Government to deal with it. There was a benevolent Government dealing with it. That Government again and again not only saw to the growing of cotton, but, as this House is well aware, gave assistance to the industry.

HON. J. G. APPEL: We gave a bonus.

HON. W. H. BARNES: A bonus was given in connection with the manufacture of cotton goods for more years than one. One is glad to know that in this great State cotton-growing is likely to be established on a fresh and firm basis. We can only say, “Good luck!” to the men who are engaged in the industry.

Again and again, reference to some important items in connection with the advancement of the State has been omitted from the Governor's Speech. Some reference has been made to land settlement, particularly to land settlement in the Burnett district, as the result of the construction of a certain railway. But the hon. gentleman who leads the Government failed to take action in a certain direction, and that action should be taken throughout Queensland. You are never going to have settlement to the extent you ought to have in Queensland until the Government—who, by the way, in their own private dealings practise it—provide freehold for those who are taking up the lands of the State. In connection with immigration for the purpose of settlement in the Upper Burnett district, the Premier has practically asserted again and again that he does not want immigrants. He says there are people unemployed in this State, and he knows that an election is pending, and he wants to get land in the Burnett and other districts filled up so that he may, if possible, secure seats in that manner. He is making the mistake of his life. The people will not vote for him. There is an old rhyme which says:—

“When the devil was sick,

The devil a saint would be.

When the devil got well,

The devil a saint was he.”

I am not suggesting that the Premier is a devil; I am only using that as a simile. I would ask the hon. gentleman to take his mind back to a time not very long ago when a certain Bill was laid upon the table of this House. When the hon. gentleman contemplated bringing in that Bill he met the farmers in conference in his suave manner and said, “Let bygones be bygones! Forget all our past actions towards the producer and the man on the land!” The hon. gentleman knows that the industrial centres have absolutely lost confidence in him as chief, and he has now to go baiting—and he is baiting very skilfully—in order to capture the vote of the farmers.

The HOME SECRETARY: You have not been able to capture them.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The farmers remember how their butter and other things have been dealt with, and no matter how the Premier may change his attitude towards the farmers, there has been no real repentance on his part. He now comes along and wants to make the public of Queensland believe that, notwithstanding what might be said by the hon. member for Brisbane, the chief object of the Government is to push forward a policy, if they are allowed to carry it out, which has even got beyond the Premier, and which will have the effect of wrecking Queensland.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Nonsense!

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member for Kurilpa and other hon. members have shown what that policy is. It will be reported in "Hansard," and will show clearly that the power behind it is the power which has wrecked Russia. We know how great that influence has been throughout Australia. A message was sent from an Australian Trades and Labour Council to the strikers in South Africa sympathising with the men who had tried to wreck the South African Union.

MR. COLLINS: What rot!

HON. W. H. BARNES: It is not rot, but a fact. I believe that in Australia there was a bond of sympathy with those men in South Africa, and if it had not been for the awful position which existed in connection with the change of Government in New South Wales, the same policy was going to be adopted in that State and throughout Australia generally.

The hon. member for Herbert referred to the sugar industry.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He knows something about it, too.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I know something about it also. This Government, since their accession to office, have not built a single sugar-mill.

MR. PEASE: You would not allow us. (Opposition laughter.)

HON. W. H. BARNES: I was responsible for the contracts that were entered into in connection with the erection of the South Johnstone and Babinda mills.

THE HOME SECRETARY: You were not responsible. The Commission which inspected the localities recommended their erection.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman is quibbling. A Bill was brought in by me authorising the erection of two mills. Certain sites were advocated in certain districts, and the Commission took them in a certain order, and they were built in that order.

THE PREMIER: They selected the wrong site for the South Johnstone Mill.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I rejoice in having a very wide outlook in connection with Queensland, and no man has a right to be associated with the public life of the State unless he takes a wide outlook. I would remind the hon. member for Bowen that, when there was trouble with Mr. Drysdale with regard to a certain contract, or failure to sign an agreement, I left this House while it was in session to go North, and I succeeded in getting from Mr. Drysdale a very big refund for that particular district.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Private enterprise does rob the farmers then?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I have known other people who do not believe in private enterprise who have robbed people. I am not saying whom—I am speaking broadly.

THE HOME SECRETARY: By the produce merchants in Brisbane?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman wants to be personal. The Government have been running a similar business, and have made a tremendous loss in doing so. I am amazed at the hon. member for Herbert getting figures from the Auditor-General's report and quoting just those which suited him, and leaving other figures unquoted. The hon. member stated that the railway receipts in 1920-21, as compared with 1916-17, had increased by 39 per cent., but he failed to mention that the receipts from taxation

had increased during the same period by 135.5 per cent. He ignored that because it was not convenient to let the public know the true position. No man has a right, if he desires to quote a chain of figures, to omit figures which have a very great bearing on the question. Yet the

[9 p.m.] hon. member for Herbert did it.

Then he side-tracked the excessive taxation by taking us away to the old country and quoting the taxation in Great Britain. Is that a fair comparison? Great Britain had to bear a very big part of the expenditure in connection with the war, and they had to do a great deal of financing.

MR. PEASE: So did the Commonwealth.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Is it a fair thing, therefore, to compare the taxation in Great Britain with the taxation here? The hon. member must have been very hard put to it when he had to adopt those tactics, and the surprising part was that it appeared that someone—the hon. member no doubt had been most studious—had carefully collated the figures he quoted.

MR. PEASE: I will debate the question of taxation with you any day.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member would rush in where "fools fear to tread." (Laughter.)

THE HOME SECRETARY: Why eliminate the angels altogether? (Renewed laughter.)

HON. W. H. BARNES: I wish to draw attention to the question of relief. What has been the argument used largely by the Premier in connection with relief? I am absolutely in accord with the policy that any man who is willing to work and cannot get it should be protected and should be provided with the necessities of life. I say that emphatically; but I make another statement; that a man employed is infinitely better than an unemployed man. The last figures that have been given to this House show that an amount of £174,000 was spent on relief during the financial year ended 30th June, 1922. When this Government took office the sum spent in relief, by reason of the fact that there was employment for men, amounted to about £10,000 per annum. And yet this Government, notwithstanding that the promise of the Secretary for Mines at Paddington was, "Put me in, and in two months there will be no unemployed"—

THE SECRETARY FOR MINES: I never said that?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I will leave out the words "Put me in." At any rate, the inference was "Put me in," if the words were not actually used. The hon. gentleman said that in two months after the election there would be no unemployed in Queensland. How has that promise been carried out? It seems to me that the unemployed are now just cast into the basket or on to the industrial scrap heap, and we find a Labour Premier refusing, during the last few days, if he was correctly reported, to meet some of the men and discuss some matters connected with their own labour. If that had been done by an hon. member sitting on this side of the House as a member of the Government, the Premier and the whole of his followers, if they were in opposition, would have denounced such action. But the Premier is looking very worried, and it seems to me that he is between two fires and scarcely knows what to do. Someone said to me to-day that they thought he was going to make a jump soon.

Hon. W. H. Barnes.]

There is another phase of the public life of Queensland that I want to bring before this House and the country. When the Government first got into office, when they appealed to the people on the bread and butter question, they said, "We do not believe in increasing the public debt." What is the position now? At the end of June, 1921, the public debt had been increased to £80,382,000. It has grown by £30,000,000 during the time they have been in office, they have been to "Brother Jonathan" since, and probably the amount has run up to £90,000,000. It is getting on that way. And then what did they do in regard to the very best asset that Queensland had—the State Savings Bank? Their account was overdrawn, and they gave a promissory note or issued debentures, so that they could wipe out the overdraft in connection with it. That added to the public debt. This Government gave away the best asset that Queensland had so far as development is concerned, as the Savings Bank had to do with workers' dwellings, with advances to farmers, and with other things which certainly have been most beneficial in the uplifting of the State.

Sometimes on this side we are told that we have no sympathy with the man on the land, and I want to hark back to that. Who were the men who had to do with the establishment of the great dairying industry? I remember what men like A. J. Thynne, Hume Black, and others did for the dairying industry. There were other men also, who are not here to-night, and who have been sometimes defamed—men like a former Premier, Mr. Denham—who had to do with the establishment of butter factories. Someone will, no doubt, ask what they got out of it. I hold that one of the banes in connection with public life in Queensland is due to the Government denouncing men for coming here and engaging in enterprise. Yet, even they seem to be changing their coat; because there is no doubt that in connection with the cotton industry they are encouraging private enterprise to some extent. Those are the men who have had to do with this enterprise. Some men may retaliate that they are getting something out of it. Not a brass farthing! Happily 98 per cent. of the butter factories are co-operative, and the cheese factories too; and the Government know it. Notwithstanding the fact that the farmers have been handicapped in every direction, they have been superior to the handicap, and they have progressed by co-operating. I am a believer in co-operation, and I charge the Government with trying to widen the breach between employer and employee. I do not think you are ever going to build up a great Queensland by widening the breach and by making men feel one is the enemy of the other.

At 9.20 p.m.,

The SPEAKER resumed the chair.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I ask what the Government have done? Before they came into office, they used to get up on the soap-boxes outside and advocate doing away with men who have capital. Now they have created an instrument which they cannot control. As a Nationalist member, I say that the great aim of a man in public life should be to bring people together, and not to widen the breach. That is our duty. I have nothing to say in favour of the employer who does not do the fair thing by his employee; nor have I anything to say in favour of the man who does not do his

[Hon. W. H. Barnes.

job right. But the aim should be to bring in a scheme by which employees will participate in the profits made. That is a very much wider and better policy than the one that has been adopted. We have had other figures quoted by the Government. Let me refer to the railway earnings. Who built the railways?

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: The navvies built them.

HON. W. H. BARNES: But who initiated the great scheme for building railways in Queensland? It certainly was not this Government, nor was it done at their instigation. The railway policy was laid by Governments that preceded the present Government. Let me show the terrible mess they have made of the position. In 1915 the revenue from taxation in the State was £1 8s. 2d. per head, and in 1921 it was £4 19s. 9d. I wish to draw attention to the way the railways have gone to pieces, and to what other States have done in connection with their railways. Let me show briefly the position with regard to Queensland. The deficiency in connection with Queensland at the end of 1920, and for that year, was £1,299,000. In New South Wales it was £105,322; in Victoria, £346,039; in South Australia, £84,016; in Western Australia, £425,511; and in Tasmania, £102,324. Let me draw attention to another phase of the position that exists in Queensland to-day. In 1915 the net profit on the railways was £3 10s. 5d. per cent.; in 1919 it was 18s. per cent.; and in 1920, £1 7s. 11d. per cent.

MR. RIORDAN: How does the mileage compare with that of the other States?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member will have an opportunity of comparing the mileage. Anyone knows that the mileage in Queensland is greater than in the other States. The present Government are not responsible for that; but there is one thing they are responsible for up to a certain point, and that is the increase in fares and freights. These people, who profess to be the friends of the farmers, at a certain period increased the fares and freights. I am prepared to admit that they have said, "We are very sorry indeed, but we are angling for the farmers' votes, and we are now going to give them a rebate to tide them over." The Premier failed to advise us as to his policy towards the primary producers in the future to the fullest extent.

Then, we have the hon. member for Herbert telling us that in Victoria a rental of £3 10s. per month was obtained for a building that cost £100. The navvies had to pay it.

MR. PEASE: Quite right.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am glad the hon. member has made that statement. I was told in one of the departments the other day that a water closet with two seats cost £120, and the hon. member has the audacity to come along and tell us, in connection with a place where brick buildings are mainly constructed, that a building costing £100 was rented for £3 10s. per month. What kind of building could be erected for £100. I want to bring before the House and the public the fact that the adult franchise and the women's franchise, which hon. members opposite boast about so much, were not introduced by a Labour Government. Who was responsible for the Workers' Dwellings Act—one of the grandest measures that has been passed in this State?

If hon. members opposite will turn up the comments of Mr. Lesina—then a member of the Labour party—at the time that Bill was introduced, they will see that Mr. Lesina distinctly stated that he did not believe in freehold, but only in leasehold. I said a little while ago that hon. members on the other side only believe in leasehold when it belongs to the other fellow; they believe in freehold when buying for themselves. We were entirely responsible for the Workers' Dwellings Act. Who were responsible for the eight-hour day and old-age pensions? The hon. member for Brisbane said, "We did it."

Mr. KIRWAN: I did not say you advocated it—you opposed it.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I never opposed it. The Government want to claim everything that is good and disclaim everything that is bad and pass it on to the other fellow; but the public are all wide awake and will not allow it. Who were responsible for the introduction of the itinerant teachers? The party on this side. We know exactly the position. This country wants to build up along the lines, not of harassing and humbugging people who are prepared to come here, and then, when they come here, breaking their contracts. The country should be built up by a policy which will widen and open the doors to men to come in and assist in its development. I ask if one of the greatest dangers to Queensland is not the sparse population we have in the North? I have nothing to say against the men who are coming in now; but it is very regrettable to find that gradually men of our own kith and kin are being shoved out from the sugar industry; and the aim of any Government should be to adopt a policy which will help in the development of this great State, and encouragement for our own people to come. If the money which is being put into—I was going to use the term "bogus enterprises"—at any rate, enterprises that cannot possibly pay—the State stations, the State fish industry, and other things which have proved gigantic failures—had been spent in adopting scientific methods in dealing with some of the waste lands adjacent to our railways and near to our cities, the Government would have been doing a very great deal more for Queensland; but they have not pursued a policy of that kind. The Government have been absolutely sectional in the policy they have been pursuing. I know a man who belonged to the Packers' Union, and I have a sworn letter from him. He left Brisbane for Goondiwindi. He came back here and wanted to get employment. Objection was taken by the union to his employment, and he applied for admission to the Storemen and Packer's Union and was refused admission.

Mr. WELLINGTON: That is not true.

HON. W. H. BARNES: It is the absolute truth. I can show the letter, and anyone can see if it is correct or not. That is going on in many walks of life in Queensland. In connection with a great State like this, if any man wants work, he ought to be allowed to work without interference and without being hounded to death. (Hear, hear!) This man has four little children. That sort of thing is only in keeping with the policy which this Government have always pursued. A question was asked the Home Secretary to-day in connection with another matter, and he sidetracked it. Have you noticed that nearly

all the questions put to the Government since we assembled here this session have been sidetracked, especially if they are of a vital nature? No information was given regarding the imports from the South. We were told that we could get the information from somewhere else.

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

Mr. DASH (*Mundingburra*): I listened very attentively to the remarks of the hon. member for Bulimba, and I noticed that he talked about the workers in the sugar industry. He was very much concerned about the Australians being pushed out of employment by other people. I want to remind him that only last year several employers in North Queensland had to be prosecuted for employing coloured aliens not in conformity with the award. It is as well to remind the hon. gentleman of that.

Mr. FLETCHER: What about the coloured people on the State stations?

Mr. PEASE: He is talking about Chinamen and Hindoos.

* Mr. DASH: The hon. member for Brisbane, in speaking to-night, stated that the people who support hon. members opposite are still hankering to employ coloured aliens. If you look in the "Industrial Gazette," you will see where they were prosecuted for employing these men. I listened attentively when His Excellency read his Speech to the House, and I noticed that he made reference to the Chillagoe smelters. The Opposition made a great noise because the Government carried on the Chillagoe smelters and employed a large number of men, whereas the deficit would have been much greater if these men had been turned out of employment. We know that the pastoralists approached the Government for a reduction in the freights on the railways in the North. Mr. Crowther, the General Traffic Manager in Townsville, in his report stated that the North Queensland railways were carrying stock to the meat-works at a loss. The "Townsville Bulletin," which is always up against this Government, made reference to this, and said that, even if the Government are carrying the cattle at a loss, it is a benefit to the State, because it is finding employment for a large number of men in the meat industry. That paper also congratulated the general manager in Townsville for the way in which he dealt with the matter. There is a great deal of disturbance amongst the Opposition because of the agricultural policy which is going to be introduced by this Government. They seem to think that they are going to lose a lot of support from the farmers, and say that the Primary Producers' Organisation Bill has been introduced for that purpose. If they study the Bill closely, they will see that it keeps pretty well away from politics. If members of the Opposition will only treat the Bill in the way in which it should be treated, I am satisfied that it will be of much benefit to the farmers and the farming industry, and also to other agricultural industries. With regard to the completion of the North Coast Railway, we know that this Government have done more towards completing it than any other Government, yet last year, when the Treasurer introduced a Bill to raise loan money for the purpose of completing that railway and other public works, we

Mr. Dash.]

found the Opposition to a man opposing the Bill. They stonewalled it all night, and it had to be put through under the closure.

I see there is going to be a Bill introduced to amend the Health Act. No doubt, it will be of great importance. The farmers are always crying out about their products, and I hope there will be something in that Bill to protect the farmers' cheese, because there is a great longing on the part of hon. members opposite to get into the Country party, and I hope something will be done to look after the farmers' interests and see that their cheese and butter is safe from those rodents which we have knocking around.

We find that something is going to be done towards establishing maternity wards in the hospitals, and also baby clinics. I hope the Home Secretary will not overlook North Queensland when dealing with these matters, because in the North we are not so favourably situated as they are in the South in regard to these homes.

There is also the question of developing the coalmines and supplying coal to the whole of North Queensland. I hope consideration will be given to Townsville when exporting coal, because we have the railways there, and a harbour that can take any sized vessel at the jetty. We can also load those boats equally as well as any other port in Queensland, and I hope, therefore, that Townsville will not be overlooked.

I would like to deal with some of the statements made by our opponents during the last few months, especially those dealing with the electoral rolls. We hear it stated from time to time that the Government have more names on the roll than is necessary, and that some people cannot be found in the electorates for which they are enrolled. I want to say there is an active campaign going on in connection with the Northern Country party, as they were termed, but they have changed their name again to the Queensland Country party.

Mr. GREEN: They have not changed their name.

Mr. DASH: We see that the leader of the Northern Country party has now joined the Country party. I do not know whether the hon. member for Kennedy has joined as well, or whether he still remains in the Northern Country party. Some time ago circulars were sent out to different electors in the North, and we find that they are very far-reaching in their effect. If there is any suggestion about unfair dealing with the electoral rolls, we find it in one of these circulars. It is just as well that the people of Queensland should know the nature of some of the circulars that have been sent out. I have one here dated 22nd May, 1922. It has on it the name of Mr. H. G. Bradley, organising secretary of the Northern Country party, and the words "Head Office, Townsville." This circular is addressed to Mr. Mortimer A. Sturgess, of Hamilton street, Melton Hill, and reads—

"Dear Sir.—As your names had not been altered from Mitchell street, yours and Mrs. Sturgess's names were automatically transferred to the new electorate of Kennedy. Every effort seems to be made to hurt Mr. Green's candidature, and everybody interested in his return requires to keep this office up with any information that makes for the increase

[Mr. Dash.

of our friends and the decrease on the roll of our opponents."

The Northern Country party have been accusing the Labour party of unfair tactics with regard to the rolls, but we find here that they sent out a circular stating that the object is to try to deplete the roll of the names of the opponents of the Northern Country party and increase the names of their supporters. Then it goes on to say—

"You are due to make yours and Mrs. Sturgess's enrolments for Townsville, so I have filled in claim cards so far as I am able, and the "X" indicates where you need to reply. I would like you to return these to this office so that we can check our rolls accordingly.

"I hope things are going A1 with you.

"Yours faithfully,

"R. INGHAM, Roll Officer."

That is some of the matter that is being sent out by what is known as the Northern Country party, although they change their name so often that it is hard to say what they are called at any given time.

The members of the Opposition were good enough to quote the platform and policy of the Australian Labour party. No member of this party has any objection to their doing that, because we have it published, week in and week out, in all the Labour [9.30 p.m.] papers of Queensland. But it is just as well that we should hear something of what the employers' associations are doing in Queensland in regard to the industrial worker, who, no doubt, has had a pretty bad spin during the last few years, although that is not due to any misdeeds of the Government. This Government have tried hard to solve the problem of the unemployed, and only quite recently we were able to relieve a great deal of distress by starting public works, including the railways in the Burnett and the completion of the North Coast Railway. Members of the Opposition seem only just now to have discovered that there are unemployed in Queensland, and they accuse the Government of doing nothing but giving what they call doles to them. Over 3,000 men have come to Queensland from the other States during the last few months and been registered as unemployed. Queensland had pretty well solved the question of the unemployed so far as her own people were concerned, but the dispute in the pastoral industry of New South Wales and Victoria has sent hundreds of men here, and no doubt, if that dispute continues, we shall have a great many more coming here and probably taking the work that the men of Queensland should have got. Great encouragement is lent to that kind of thing by the employers of this State, because during the last few years they have successfully attempted to send to other States for their labour. When the work commences in the shearing and sugar industries, very many men from other States get work that local residents should get. We know that quite recently there has been a big influx of Italians into North Queensland, which has put quite a number of residents there out of employment. These are some of the problems that the Government will have to face in the very near future.

Mr. J. JONES: Do they prefer the Italians?

Mr. DASH: The employers seem to foster them and give them work in preference to

residents of North Queensland. I want to remind the hon. member, since he has interjected, that employers in the North gave employment to a large number of coloured aliens and were prosecuted because they were not paying them in accordance with the award. I hope that, when the sugar agreement is extended, some provision will be made, if the people of Australia are to pay for the protection of the farmer in the industry, to see that white men get employment.

Mr. CATTERMULL: How many coloured aliens are employed?

Mr. DASH: I told hon. members last year the number who had permits. Coloured aliens to the number of something like 1,500 got permits from the Denham Government in their last session, and lawyers and agents were making anything from £1 to £10 a head droving them in before the time expired. That may be news to the hon. member, but it is correct. The employers' federation, when they met quite recently, recognised that the industrial worker was waking up in the matter of organisation and endeavouring to put into operation the principle of one big union of industrial workers, and they realised that, if they allowed them to become organised in that way, it would be a factor in dealing with their condition. The employers' federation is one big union, founded pretty well on the same lines as the Primary Producers' Organisation Bill now introduced. The employers have their sectional conferences, and when they come to Brisbane to deal with the policy to defeat this Government and the workers, they proposed to strike a levy. The Opposition raise a cry about the Australian Workers' Union striking a levy on their members for papers and so forth, yet we find that they are striking levies on themselves—very forcibly, too—to build up a fund with which they can attack the workers. At that conference, they decided to impose a boycott on those persons who were not prepared to come into the organisation. They proposed that, if some of the employers who were not members sent down for certain articles, they would be politely told that they were not in stock, and so they would soon wake up and get into the association. They talk about this Government bowing to outside dictation, but we find that the employers made this proposal as one of the objects of the fund—

"1. Testing the legality of any Act, proclamation, regulation, or Order of the Federal or Queensland Parliament, or of any rule or by-law of any corporation, in either case of common application."

That is what they are concerned about more than anything else. They realise that the organisation of the worker is going to be a big factor in improving his position, and they are setting out to combat him; but the harder they attack him the harder he will fight to retain his rights. I give the unionists every credit for putting up a fight against this Government or any other Government who may attack any rights they think they are entitled to.

Mr. CATTERMULL: Or a reduction of wages?

Mr. DASH: Or a reduction of wages, either. Another object is—

"4. Compensating and indemnifying members wholly or in part against loss arising from strikes, cessation of work, or organised interference with their business, in so far as such may be deemed by

the directors to be in the common interest of employers.

"5. Any work in the common interest of employers directly or indirectly connected with the above."

Now we will get down to what some of the prominent advocates of the employers' federation have to say. Not only do they object to the workers forming a big union, but they also want a big union themselves. Mr. Bowen—the Secretary for Public Works received a copy of what took place, which it is just as well to get into "Hansard"—said—

"To try to carry on an Employers' Federation without every other organisation being actual members of it, I question very much whether the federation could do any good. If the master builders or the master painters or any other organisation stand out and say that they will only come in when they are attacked, I think the result would be chaos. I think that you will never do any good. We want one big union to meet the employees. If you don't have it to-day it will be forced on you. It is better to do it voluntarily than to be rushed into it just like you were in 1912. We were glad to get together then. We had them here on their hands and knees with 'Please, help us.' We did not have to do all the work then. They said, 'You make the bullets and we will fire them.'"

The hon. member for Toowong, at that meeting, had this to say—

"Mr. Edkins told us that we wanted an army for defence and not defiance. I am not too sure that the time has not arrived when we have got to attack."

If the industrial worker wants anything plainer than that, I do not know what he wants. Here is an organisation stating that they want to get together to make an attack on the worker. There is no doubt they will make an attack. Mr. Bowen is a very able advocate in the Industrial Arbitration Court, and he realises that it is very difficult to beat the arguments of the workers, so he wants to see the Arbitration Court wiped out. This is what he had to say—

"It is my opinion that arbitration is not going to last very long. We are going to be thrown back again on the same old thing—gloves off, and the stronger man wins. The idea of the insurance company is to strengthen the weakest link; and the weak link is the small employer."

We know that the Arbitration Court stands between the employers and the workers. If that court were wiped out and it were left to the employees and the employers to make their own terms, we know what the basic wage would be. In South Australia Sir Henry Barwell told the workers, "You will get no assistance. Get out into the country and get whatever wages you can." That would be the position here. The hon. member for Bulimba, when Treasurer, on three different occasions cancelled an award made in respect of the carters of Rockhampton by an industrial board until the chairman of the board brought the award in conformity with what the employers wanted. That would be the position facing us in Queensland if this Government and the Industrial Court were wiped out. The workers

Mr. Dash.]

have had some benefit from the court, though not as much as I expected they would get, and not as much as they are entitled to get.

Mr. VOWLES: That is a reflection on the judge.

Mr. DASH: It is a reflection on the court, because the court has never yet given the workers what they are entitled to get. I have advocated the claims of the workers in the court for a number of years, and I say the workers have never got what they were entitled to get.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Are you supporting the Government in applying for reductions?

Mr. DASH: My attitude all along in the Arbitration Court and in the union will prove where I stand.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Did you vote against the Premier?

Mr. DASH: That is my business. This is what Brigadier-General Thompson said at that meeting—

“There is another aspect of the strike matter and that is this: have we any machinery able to provide for armed forces? Is there any machinery to-day by which you can put your hand on some reliable force to put against the force.

“Mr. R. Bowen: Hooliganism.

“If you have a few regulars it is wonderful what they can resist. I have seen 500 men in the shearers' strike held up by 75 mounted infantry men.”

I have a recollection of what took place in 1891, and what he says there is quite correct. (Laughter.) I saw “swaddies” riding down to the strike camps half a mile from the township of Blackall, trying to incite the shearers to riot.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: What did they do to incite them?

Mr. DASH: Rushed in amongst them with their bayonets. (Laughter.) There are men in Queensland to-day who know that is a fact. The squatters in those days set fire to their own wool sheds; and they would do the very same thing to-morrow. One station manager was so excited that he shot through his own overcoat, which was hanging on the line. (Laughter.)

Here is what Mr. Campbell said—

“I hope that all those who are outside the federation will recognise the good work that we have been doing, and link up and give us a helping hand. On many and many a night we have gone up to the House when the Liberal Government was in power, and secured alterations in the legislation going through, which have all been to your benefit. They were in touch with us all the time the tram strike was on.”

There is no doubt they were.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Do not the Trades Hall people come here nearly every night?

Mr. DASH: We had to-night the member for Townsville criticising this Government. The Townsville “Daily Bulletin” was a strong supporter of the hon. member and his colleagues when they were standing for office in the Townsville City Council. Since

[Mr. Dash.

the council have been advocating a £50,000 a-mile road, the Townsville “Bulletin” in a leading article states—

“The mayor is enthusiastic in his advocacy of the £50,000 a-mile road scheme for Flinders street, and is very indignant because the “Bulletin” refuses to follow him. Our position is that the present councillors were elected as an economy council. When the elections took place, the winning card with Mr. Green and his colleagues was, in effect, ‘If you elect the other side they will squander the money and raise the rates.’ Since that date the mayor and aldermen have added to the debt of the town about £100,000; raised the water rates 25 per cent., and the general rate 1½d. in the £1

... We have not the least doubt, the mayor, the chairman of the Rate-payers Association, the president of the Automobile Club and the president of the Women's Electoral League, hand in hand, would have been racing down Flinders street, risking the terrific traffic, shrieking out, ‘Crucify them! crucify them!’”

Hon. members opposite come here and criticise the Government because they have attempted to do something to try and overcome the difficulties of this State. Hon. members opposite made a great cry about the Government spending £174,000 in relieving the distress in this State. That only goes to show that employers in industries have failed to retain the markets that they had for Queensland products a couple of years ago. When the war was on they had markets for their products and were too busy making profits to look to the future, with the result that they missed the whole of the markets, and, because of their failure in their own organisation to make provision for the export of Queensland and Australian products, they want to blame this Government. The hon. member for Port Curtis said that, instead of paying £174,000 for relief, the Government could have taken the unemployed to the Clermont district to start cotton-growing. If the hon. member thinks that the unemployed are going to work for rations in the cotton industry or in doing any other work, he is making a very big mistake.

Mr. FLETCHER: I did not say that at all.

Mr. DASH: The hon. member inferred it.

Mr. FLETCHER: I did not infer it.

Mr. DASH: The hon. member said that the unemployed should have been organised and utilised in the cotton industry. The £174,000 has not been paid away solely to the unemployed. A large number of other people also receive sustenance from that fund. There are widows and their children who are provided for out of the fund. There are people who are in distress and cannot get employment. How far would £174,000 go in cotton-growing? That would not relieve the unemployed even then. If hon. members opposite are sincere in their advocacy of relief for the unemployed, they will vote for the Unemployed Workers' Bill when it is introduced again this session. Hon. members opposite have stated that this Government are wasting money, yet they have not shown one item where the expenditure could have been reduced.

Mention has been made of the State stations. It has been admitted by the advocates of private station owners in the Arbitration Court that the State stations were

better managed than any other stations in Queensland. The hon. member for East Toowoomba, at a conference in the South, said that he knew of one grazier who had given instructions to shoot so many thousand calves.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: I did not say anything of the kind.

Mr. DASH: If the hon. member says that he did not make the statement, I will accept his denial; but the statement was made at that conference that, sooner than pay the taxation, the squatters were knocking their calves on the head or shooting them. There is no necessity to pay taxation until the calves are branded, and, if they are valueless and the squatters do not want to pay taxation, they can leave the calves unbranded and then they will not have to pay.

Mr. FRY: How do you know that?

Mr. DASH: There is no necessity to pay until they are branded.

The SPEAKER: Order! I would ask the hon. member to address the chair and not to reply to so many interjections.

Mr. DASH: The statement has been made that right throughout Queensland squatters have been giving instructions to shoot their calves.

Mr. EDWARDS: No.

Mr. DASH: Yes. If it is not so, I am pleased to hear it. If it is correct, it only goes to show that it is simply being done for the purpose of trying to discredit this Government.

Mr. EDWARDS: Shooting the calves to discredit the Government? (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. DASH: Yes. Hon. members opposite think that the Government are doing something that is likely to cause a stir in their camp, and that they are doing something that should not take place. The hon. member for Nanango, on the introduction of the Primary Producers' Organisation Bill, said that if it savoured of politics he would vote against it.

Mr. EDWARDS: So I will.

Mr. DASH: That goes to show that the hon. member is not big-minded enough to grasp what is in the Bill. He anticipates that the Bill contains some political influence or significance, and gives that as a reason for voting against it.

Mr. J. JONES (*Kennedy*): I would like to reply to some of the remarks made by the hon. member for Mundingburra. He stated that calves were being killed by the squatters. I do not know about calves being killed, but I know that herds are being restricted, and that amounts to the same thing.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Are they doing that to avoid taxation?

Mr. J. JONES: Hon. members opposite have stated what the Government are doing in connection with cotton-growing. [10 p.m.] They are assisting people in the South and in the Central district, but what have they done for the North?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The same thing.

Mr. J. JONES: I do not think so. I remember that not long ago, when the Premier was in Townsville, a deputation from

Charters Towers and also from the Chamber of Commerce waited on him.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He made a good impression up there.

Mr. J. JONES: Not on me. (Laughter.) The Premier promised that he would give them assistance. I have been awake ever since, and I have not heard of what they are going to do for cotton-growing in that district. In the old Kennedy electorate there is any amount of Crown land available. There are three or four goldfield reserves in the electorate with an aggregate area of 50,000 acres of vacant Crown land. On the Charters Towers goldfield reserve there are some 60,000 acres of vacant Crown land, and on the Ravenswood goldfield there are somewhere about 160,000 acres of vacant Crown land; making a total area in the electorate of 270,000 acres.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: All suitable for cotton?

Mr. J. JONES: I do not say that, but a very big proportion is suitable for cotton, suitable for dairying, and suitable for fruit-growing. On Charters Towers to-day they are growing fruit.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The Federal Government will not join in. They promised to do so, and have refused to reply.

Mr. J. JONES: Never mind about the Federal Government.

Mr. BRENNAN: You want us to borrow more from "Uncle Sam?" (Laughter.)

Mr. J. JONES: It seems to me to be a very foolish thing on the part of the Government to resume country that is to-day growing a valuable product like wool—it has been proved to be valuable—while there are hundreds of thousands of acres of Crown lands lying idle. Not only that, but on these goldfields there are men with a few hundred acres of land who have been making a living in the past by working teams and also working on the stations. They do not make a living out of the land.

Mr. BRENNAN: By cattle duffing.

Mr. J. JONES: There is no cattle duffing now. You take it on and see. (Laughter.) It is no joke to these people up there. I think that the Government ought to do something for these people.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: They can get all the cotton seed they require.

Mr. J. JONES: Reference has been made during the debate to sugar-growing. I do not think it necessary for me to say much about it, because it is in a pretty satisfactory position now. But I think it rests with the Federal Government to maintain the sugar agreement, and, from what I have seen of the Prime Minister, I am sure he will do what is best. When the Prime Minister was up in Townsville, and during his trip through the sugar country, I could not get away from him, I was so fascinated. It is the first time for years that we have seen a member of the Federal Government so sympathetic towards the man on the land. He is the only man in the Government who has shown a little practical sympathy with the cattle men in their trouble.

Mr. BRENNAN: Did you hear him on the Country party?

Mr. J. JONES: He bought me more drinks than you have. (Laughter.) Reference is also made in the Speech to the land

Mr. J. Jones.]

policy. That is the policy with regard to which the Government have twitted me. The Premier told me that I have only one plank in my platform. I have only one plank; that is the land plank, and it is the plank Queensland is resting on. I notice that even the Premier is coming along and wants a little bit of my plank. Last year, when I spoke about reducing the rents of the small struggling selectors along the railway lines—they are only existing at the present time—the hon. member for Burke advocated no rent at all for those men who were away from the railway line. Why not advocate the same thing for all the selectors in Queensland? I am not now speaking for the pastoral lessees or the grazing selectors, because this Government, who are only a continuance of the old Labour Government, have classed them as parasites, and we are treated as parasites.

Mr. BRENNAN: This is not the same Government.

Mr. J. JONES: It is the same Government, or a continuation of it. You would like to get out of it now, but you never will. I do appeal to the Government to give some relief to the small, struggling selectors.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: They have given you some relief.

Mr. J. JONES: Do not count me. I only got what I am justly entitled to, and no more.

Mr. BRENNAN: Surely that is all you expect!

Mr. J. JONES: Yes, but this Government did not do it.

Mr. BRENNAN: Who did it?

Mr. J. JONES: The Land Appeal Court—the best court that you have got. I would like to say that the land courts in the North are not looked upon as being honest land courts.

Mr. BRENNAN: That is a reflection on the judges.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. COLLINS: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in reflecting upon the judges of the Land Court?

The SPEAKER: If the hon. member reflects on the judges of the Land Court, he will not be in order, and I would ask him to address his remarks to the chair.

Mr. J. JONES: This is what I mean. The procedure in regard to cases that come before the Land Court is this: The Crown send round a gentleman whom they call an Assessing Commissioner, and he puts what he considers a fair rental value on the land, but I am sure he always goes higher than he expects to get. It happened in Hughenden last year in two or three cases that the court fixed the rents higher than the Assessing Commissioner's valuation, and, in spite of that fact, the Government were not satisfied, and appealed to the Full Court to get a still higher rent. For some time after that the Land Courts have not given any decisions while in the North.

Mr. BRENNAN: Did they win their case in the Full Court?

Mr. J. JONES: Of course they did—they know which side their bread is buttered.

[Mr. J. Jones.]

Why are these cases brought to Brisbane? Why not give their decision in the North? The Government take a good deal of trouble to make the assessments of the pastoralists higher. They take no trouble to make the sentences of criminals higher, but they have taken a lot of trouble to make the sentences of murderers lower. The country is in the same position to-day that it was in twenty years ago. In the 1902 drought the people had no incentive to invest money in the land, and the Government of the day, being possessed of common sense, offered inducements to people to put their money into land, and one of the inducements was that their rents would not be increased by more than 50 per cent. in any one term. But this Government, like a lot of "yahoos," tore that agreement up.

The SPEAKER: Order!

I took up land myself in 1904, and it was on the advice of a solicitor in 1935 that I brought it under that Act, on account of the 50 per cent. limitation. We naturally expect the Government to honour their agreement. I have nothing more to say, but I appeal to the Government to give some assistance to the struggling settlers at Pentland. Around Charters Towers there are men who are only selling 30 bullocks a year. When they were getting £12 a head for bullocks they were making a fair living, but to-day they are not getting £4 a head. At £4 a head 30 bullocks will only come to £120. You ask these men to maintain a selection on half as much as a boy gets at the meatworks. Lads at the meatworks get £4 a week. You are spending thousands of pounds to put new men on the land, and, at the same time, you are forcing your own men off the land. I am not what you call a squatter, but I am a grazier, whom the Government have no sympathy for. I have some sympathy for the squatter. I do not think any member should sit here in the interests of any particular class; he should come here in the interests of rich and poor alike. When men put their money into anything on certain conditions granted by the State, those conditions should be honoured, but that is what the Government have not done.

Mr. BRENNAN interjected.

Mr. J. JONES: You will get into Stewart's Creek some day.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order, and he must withdraw that expression.

Mr. J. JONES: I will withdraw the remark.

Mr. CATTERMULL (*Musgrave*): I would like to deal with some of the remarks of the hon. member for Mundingburra with regard to coloured labour in the sugar industry. I was rather surprised to hear him say that there were something like 1,500 coloured men engaged in the industry. Last year I took pains to get the police returns, from which I found that in 1919 there were 1,007 permits issued. In 1920, there were only 306. For 1921, no information was available. The same remarks were passed last year by a certain member of the House. I am very sorry to see that information being used by the Government to-day, when we are trying to carry on the sugar industry under the white Australia policy. There is not 2 per cent. of coloured labour engaged in the

industry, and that is all north of Mackay. If anyone is to be blamed for employing coloured labour, it is the Government, who employ black labour on their stations. I admit that those men are doing work which white men will not do.

Mr. COLLINS: You know that Japanese are employed at Inkerman and also at the Pioneer Mill.

Mr. CATTERMULL: I wish to refer to the remarks of the hon. member for Bowen with regard to irrigation. During the recess I took a trip up North, and went out to the Home Hill irrigation works. The land which they are going to irrigate will, no doubt, grow cane; the areas at the present time are producing fine crops. They have some good mills there, which are working to their full capacity. The hon. member for Bowen stated that the irrigation works at Home Hill are going to cost £400,000. I agree with him—possibly more. The area he quoted this afternoon which could be irrigated was 16,000 acres. I will take it as 12,000 acres. If you multiply 12,000 acres by 20, you will get a crop of cane of 240,000 tons. Those men are going to grow cane, but the deplorable position is that there is no mill to crush it.

Mr. COLLINS: There is a mill at Proserpine. You do not know what you are talking about.

Mr. CATTERMULL: There is a mill at Proserpine, 160 miles away, which can deal with an additional 25,000 or 30,000 tons, but what is going to become of the balance. When the Government started the irrigation works they should have made provision for a mill to crush the cane.

Mr. COLLINS: The Government are fully aware of that.

Mr. CATTERMULL: These farmers will grow the cane, and will be in the unfortunate position of having to leave it on the land. The land is there to grow cane, and the water is there, but there will be no mill to take the cane when the farmers have grown the crop. I believe in irrigation. We have any amount of fine waterways in Australia. The Government, I understand, are going to start irrigation schemes on the Upper Burnett lands. But why go to the Upper Burnett when there are lands closer and more centrally situated, and more suitable for irrigation? The Burnett River for 100 miles up from Bundaberg could be locked in half a dozen places. Power stations should be erected on adjacent coalfields, and the power conveyed per cable to the various pumping stations.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You are advocating a hydro-electric scheme, are you not?

Mr. CATTERMULL: That is so. Dealing with the railways, I think that the policy of the Government in regard to railway construction is wrong. If they would start on one or two lines and complete them, they would become payable concerns; but lines are built for a few miles and then left, and the people wonder why the railways do not pay. I refer to the Goondoon-Kalliwa line as a case in point. It was promised by the Government, and 12½ miles have been completed to the Gin Gin Central Mill. Culverts have been put in for another 5 or 6 miles, and the timber cleared, but the line has been abandoned. Settlers were advised to go up into the Good Night and Perry scrubs. They have felled the scrub and made homes for themselves, and are trying to eke out a living,

The Government have broken their promises to them. I consider that, if that line was completed, there is sufficient timber in the Good Night Scrub to pay for its construction. There are 10,000,000 feet of mature pine there, which would pay the cost of building the line. Regarding taxation, I note that the Government propose to bring in two Bills dealing with the land and income tax. I hope that they will be better than the last amendments brought in. I consider that the men employing capital to-day are suffering great hardship because of the income tax. We are asked by the Income Tax Commissioner to put in our branded calves at 15s. for the purposes of the tax. When the calves are twelve months old they reach herd values, and they have to be returned at £3 each. Yet the very cattle that we have to return as income at £3 per head can be purchased at 12s. 6d. per head.

Mr. COLLINS: The Federal income tax is much higher regarding the price to be returned for calves.

Mr. CATTERMULL: We should not be asked to give any return regarding our increases in cattle; we should be simply asked to pay on the profits from our sales. It has been suggested by hon. members that we should not brand our calves, but we do not desire to be dishonest. The Government should give us relief in this matter, and we should be asked to pay only on our sales. Dealing with sugar, I congratulate the Government on sending a sugar representative down South as publicity agent to put the right side of the question before the Southern people. I know the opposition he has met with in the South, but he was the right man to send, and I give the Government every credit for sending him down. I might draw attention to a statement made in the Federal Parliament by the Prime Minister in reply to Mr. Charlton. This is from the Federal "Hansard"—

"The sugar agreement provides that a Sugar Cane Prices Board appointed by the Queensland Government shall apportion the £30 6s. 8d.—the purchase price of raw sugar—between the grower and the miller and their respective employees. The grower receives approximately £19 per ton, of which labour costs in sowing, cultivating, cutting, etc., represent about 75 per cent. The miller receives £11 6s. 8d. The labour costs range between 60 and 70 per cent.

"The cost of refining and distribution, including freights and insurance on raw sugar shipped to the refineries, is £5 16s. 4d. per ton."

If those figures of the Prime Minister were correct, the Federal Government would have made a profit on sugar equal to £2,750,000. I say unhesitatingly that the Prime Minister made a wrong statement, and he does not know the true position of the sugar industry. The position down South is that the people are complaining of the high price of sugar, which is retailed at 6d. per lb. If the Federal Government cut its losses for sugar sold at 4½d. and 4¼d., there would be sufficient to allow the jam manufacturers a rebate for sugar for export purposes. There is a large quantity of sugar used for export purposes, and the amount claimed by them in rebate will amount to over £400,000 for the last financial year. When the Prime Minister was in Queensland it was pointed

Mr. Cattermull.]

out to him that commercial alcohol could be made a by-product of the sugar industry. The Prime Minister was taken out in a car which was run by this spirit, and, after taking him round the district, he admitted that the car was going well. When he came to Brisbane he met the Country party, and they asked him to allow the Bundaberg Distillery to make motor-power alcohol, but he did not give any encouragement to that request.

Mr. COLLINS: You will vote for his party all the same.

Mr. CATTERMULL: If the Prime Minister would allow all the molasses in Queensland to be made into motor-power alcohol, we would make something like 2,500,000 or 3,000,000 gallons. To-day we are importing 9,000,000 gallons of motor spirit, and one-third of that could be supplied from our own molasses. If the molasses is not used in this way, then 75 per cent. will have to be burnt, because there is sufficient rum in Bundaberg to supply the Australian requirements for the next three years. I ask the Premier to give some attention to this matter, because there is a lot of molasses coming from the central mills, and it is now going to waste. It would be an excellent thing to have it manufactured into spirit as a by-product of the sugar industry. If we can manufacture motor alcohol from the molasses and supply it to the consumer at 1s. per gallon less than is being paid for it to-day, we shall be doing something for the sugar industry, and that money will be kept within Australia. By doing that we shall be helping to stabilise our industries.

We have been promised ever since the establishment of federation that there would be a reduction of members in the State Parliament. It has been suggested that we should economise, and I would point out to the Premier that if he wants to economise he should bring in a Bill to reduce the number of members of this Assembly from seventy-two to fifty. He need not cut down the allowances of members, but by reducing the number to fifty members, he would save the country £11,000 a year.

Mr. COLLINS: Do you want to wipe out the country members in favour of the town and city members?

Mr. CATTERMULL: No. With regard to arbitration, I say that it is an absolute failure; and, unless something is done to reconstruct the Arbitration Court, we shall not get the results we expected from it.

Regarding education, I am pleased that the Education Department has seen fit to go in for rural schools. I saw the exhibit from the rural school at Childers, and it was very creditable. I hope the Education Department will continue to establish rural schools in districts where they are required, because the children in the outside districts get great benefit from these schools. I know that the hon. member for Bundaberg has already taken steps towards getting a rural school in the Bundaberg district—Kalkie School—and I am with him, and will give him all the assistance I possibly can.

Mr. CLAYTON (*Wide Bay*): I am sorry that many members on this side have been debarred from speaking on the Address in Reply. However, when we get a change of Government and get liberty of speech we shall have an opportunity of addressing the Chair on such occasions. I was very interested in the Governor's Speech, and I

think Queensland is very fortunate in having as Governor the gentleman whom we have at the present time. He makes a point of getting amongst the people and giving them every encouragement he can—which is in striking contrast with the action of the Government in their land policy.

At 10.30 p.m.

The SPEAKER: Under the operation of Standing Order 17, I now proceed to put the question.

Question—Adoption of Address in Reply—put and passed.

PRESENTATION OF ADDRESS IN REPLY.

The PREMIER: I have to inform the House that His Excellency the Governor will receive Mr. Speaker, the mover and seconder of the Address, and such other members as care to attend, at Government House to-morrow morning at 11.15 a.m.

SUPPLY.

CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEE.

The PREMIER: I beg to move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the Supply to be granted to His Majesty.”

Question put and passed.

WAYS AND MEANS

CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEE.

The PREMIER: I beg to move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to His Majesty.”

Question put and passed.

BRISBANE TRAMWAY TRUST BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

(*Mr. Kirwan, Brisbane, in the chair.*)

Mr. SIZER (*Vundah*): When the Committee was interrupted I was showing that there were reasons why it was believed that the Bill should not be introduced. We have not heard anything to convince us that it is necessary, beyond the bald statement of the Government, which is a mere matter of opinion. We have not even heard any great clamouring of the people for this measure. It was a real issue so far as the Government were concerned at the elections. If it was an issue, then they must admit that in the metropolitan area they were ignominiously defeated on it, and that they have no mandate to saddle the local authorities with something which they are not themselves prepared to take over. There may be some reason within the knowledge of the Government why they should not assume this liability, and why they should hand it to the local authorities. Probably the reason is that they realise that, if there is to be some change in the management of the undertaking, it must be to some more efficient management than they as a Government would be able to institute. Before this Committee agrees to the proposal we should have more information, and I suggest that the matter be submitted to a referendum of those people who are likely to have to bear the burden. I believe the matter could be thrashed out without a heated campaign, and the whole matter placed before the electors inexpensively, and I believe the Government

[*Mr. Cattermull.*]

would probably be justified in proceeding if they had an assurance from the people in that direction. So far as we can see, the service can be maintained for many years to come with adequate protection to the people, and extensions could be made by the company—which is the main thing the people want, and which the company are prepared to give them without any of this trust business and the possibility of deficits.

The HOME SECRETARY: Why did not any of the Governments of the other States do that?

Mr. SIZER: I notice that other Governments are getting out of these Government controlled enterprises as fast as they can. We know perfectly well that we should not solve the problem of strap-hanging by this means. They have not been able to solve it in New York and London and other places during rush times, and it seems to me that the thing behind this Bill goes back to 1912, when the Government vowed that they would wreak vengeance on the company, and now in their dying days, when they are not prepared to take over the tramways themselves, they want to hand them over to the local authorities, who probably are not enthusiastic on the matter, but see that the Government are determined and that this is the only way in which they will get extensions. I believe that, if it were put to the local authorities to-morrow, with the alternative of a reasonable arrangement with the company by which they would get extensions, they would be very glad to let the company continue. I am quite satisfied that that is the only thing actuating the local authorities.

The HOME SECRETARY: I met 108 representatives of local authorities concerned, and there was only one dissentient—until the company got busy.

Mr. SIZER: I quite realise that, because those delegates recognised that the Government refused to negotiate with the company, and it was a question of Government control or control by themselves, and they naturally chose the lesser of two evils. I venture to say that, had the Government put this alternative to them—that they would negotiate with the company for extensions—that same body of men would have overwhelmingly decided to make an arrangement with the company. I believe that the Minister is competent to make a hard bargain with the company if his party would allow him to do so. I hope that the Government will allow the matter to be held over till it can be placed before the people concerned by referendum.

Question—That the resolution (*Mr. McCormack's motion*) be agreed to—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 36.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Huxham
„ Bertram	„ Jones, A. J.
„ Brennan	„ Land
„ Bulcock	„ Lacombe
„ Collins	„ McCormack
„ Conroy	„ Mullan
„ Cooper, F. A.	„ Payne
„ Cooper, W.	„ Pease
„ Coyne	„ Pollock
„ Dash	„ Riordan
„ Dunstan	„ Ryan
„ Ferricks	„ Smith
„ Foley	„ Stepford
„ Forde	„ Theodore
„ Gilday	„ Weir
„ Gillies	„ Wellington
„ Gledson	„ Wilson
„ Hartley	„ Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Bulcock and Mr. Conroy.

NOES, 35.

Mr. Appel	Mr. King
„ Barnes, G. P.	„ Logan
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Macgregor
„ Bebbington	„ Maxwell
„ Bell	„ Moore
„ Brand	„ Morgan
„ Cattermull	„ Nott
„ Clayton	„ Peterson
„ Corser	„ Petrie
„ Costello	„ Roberts, J. H. C.
„ Deacon	„ Roberts, T. R.
„ Edwards	„ Sizer
„ Elphinstone	„ Swayne
„ Fletcher	„ Taylor
„ Fry	„ Vowles
„ Green	„ Walker
„ Jones, J.	„ Warren
„ Kerr	

Tellers: Mr. Kerr and Mr. Sizer.

Resolved in the affirmative.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the resolution.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*): I beg to move—

“That the resolution be agreed to by the House.”

Question—That the resolution be agreed to by the House—(*Mr. McCormack's motion*)—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 36.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Jones, A. J.
„ Brennan	„ Kirwan
„ Bulcock	„ Land
„ Collins	„ Lacombe
„ Conroy	„ McCormack
„ Cooper, F. A.	„ Mullan
„ Cooper, W.	„ Payne
„ Coyne	„ Pease
„ Dash	„ Pollock
„ Dunstan	„ Riordan
„ Ferricks	„ Ryan
„ Foley	„ Smith
„ Forde	„ Stepford
„ Gilday	„ Theodore
„ Gillies	„ Weir
„ Gledson	„ Wellington
„ Hartley	„ Wilson
„ Huxham	„ Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Forde and Mr. Weir.

NOES, 35.

Mr. Appel	Mr. King
„ Barnes, G. P.	„ Logan
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Macgregor
„ Bebbington	„ Maxwell
„ Bell	„ Moore
„ Brand	„ Morgan
„ Cattermull	„ Nott
„ Clayton	„ Peterson
„ Corser	„ Petrie
„ Costello	„ Roberts, J. H. C.
„ Deacon	„ Roberts, T. R.
„ Edwards	„ Sizer
„ Elphinstone	„ Swayne
„ Fletcher	„ Taylor
„ Fry	„ Vowles
„ Green	„ Walker
„ Jones, J.	„ Warren
„ Kerr	

Tellers: Mr. Bell and Mr. Kerr.

Resolved in the affirmative.

FIRST READING.

The HOME SECRETARY presented the Bill, and moved—

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

Question put and passed.

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

Hon. W. McCormack.]

LAND TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

(*Mr. Kirwan, Brisbane, in the chair.*)

Mr. VOWLES: This matter will take some considerable time to debate.

The PREMIER: On two previous occasions you promised to put it through.

Mr. VOWLES: We will give you an opportunity of putting it through on the third occasion.

The PREMIER: Does that mean that one cannot rely on the hon. gentleman's word?

Mr. VOWLES: No.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman promised on two previous occasions to put the motion through.

Mr. VOWLES: You are a liar. I did not.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman must know that his remark is unparliamentary, and he must withdraw it.

Mr. VOWLES: I will withdraw it, but I used the word to emphasise that I did not make the promise that has been attributed to me.

The PREMIER: Last night the hon. gentleman said that he had got hold of the wrong business-sheet, and did not know that this Bill was on the business-sheet.

Mr. VOWLES: That is so. I intend to move the amendment that I have already foreshadowed, to omit the words "in certain particulars." Every session the land taxation or income taxation is interfered with in some direction. We are told that this is a munificent measure which is going to benefit the people and will in some mysterious way apply to the co-operative producers. The land taxation in Queensland is an unjust taxation because it applies to one section of the community, and legislation that is sectional is unjust and wrong. The Auditor-General's report discloses that £250,000 was received from the producers in land taxation. If we are receiving that amount of money from people whom the Government now propose to assist, we should not act on the present wrong basis, but should remedy the state of affairs and make it better for all concerned. The Government propose that the tax should be levied upon holders of freehold, and they will be penalised in consequence. The Government are already receiving a considerable sum from freehold land, and that money should be spent on reproductive work. The money borrowed in Queensland before the two American loans worked out at 4 per cent. A certain proportion of freehold land should be exempt from taxation. Living areas and cultivated areas should also be exempt from taxation. After all is said and done, the value of the

land to a tenant, whether he be
[11 p.m.] a freeholder or a leaseholder, is what he can get out of it. Both of them have to pay taxation on the income derived from the land. Hon. members opposite talk about the unearned increment, but

[*Mr. Vowles.*

in many cases, instead of there being an enhanced value, there is a depreciated value from the fact that the market has dropped. This Committee should take into serious consideration the bases of assessment of values, in the assessment of stock and the increase of stock. You have to consider the matter from all phases and find out what the land is producing, what other forms of taxation are paid, whether any anomalies exist, and whether we are being taxed at the same rate as people carrying on similar businesses in the other States. As far as possible, we should make our taxation uniform with that paid in the South, otherwise our people are working at a disadvantage. These reasons will indicate to the Committee that there are many matters which can be dealt with by the House, where anomalies can be rectified, where grievances can be adjusted, and where the land tax, if it is to exist as a sectional tax on one portion of the community, should be made more equitable than it is at the present time. I do not wish to take up the time at this hour, but I do resent the attitude of the Premier in saying that I broke any compact with him. He came to me and said that he had no business-sheet, and asked me if I would agree to certain business being done, and I said, "Yes." I had my own paper in my hand, which happened to be a proof, and it did not contain any reference to the Land Tax Acts Amendment Bill, and I asked him, when the matter came on last night, to adjourn it, as I wished to move an amendment and have a discussion. I have now moved my amendment and we are going to have the discussion. I beg to move the omission of the words "in certain particulars."

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): Many people in the metropolitan area and in my own constituency are concerned in the land tax, as it is one branch of taxation that is hitting industry pretty forcibly to-day. Last year, when the late Treasurer was introducing the Income Tax Act Amending Bill, he said—

"There is only one cardinal principle involved, that is giving relief to borrowers and correcting certain little anomalies."

Those remarks led us to believe that no other taxpayers were concerned, yet we found the commercial community of Brisbane were attacked from many points of view, and their taxation increased considerably.

The HOME SECRETARY: I defy you to give an instance where taxation was increased.

Mr. KERR: When we are asked to consent to the introduction of a Bill—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member heard the amendment—to omit the words "in certain particulars," and I would ask him to confine his remarks to the amendment.

Mr. KERR: The Labour Government instituted the land tax, which has increased from £274,000 in 1915-16 to £469,000 in 1920-21. Queensland is the heaviest taxed State in the Commonwealth, so far as the land tax is concerned. New South Wales

pays, in land tax, a sum of £2,834; Victoria, £314,000; Queensland, £459,000; South Australia, £146,000; Western Australia, £46,000; and Tasmania, £87,000. The total for the Commonwealth is over £1,000,000, and Queensland pays nearly 50 per cent. of that total. That being so, we should take some steps to reduce our taxation, more especially when the area under cultivation has been decreased. Queensland, in addition to the taxation, pays a rental of over £1,000,000, which is the second largest in Australia. The Government have been talking a lot about assisting the primary producers, and it is time they did something to reduce taxation. The Home Secretary raised the question of the taxation of the traders in Brisbane. We know that, where securities are invested in a business, those securities are deducted from the capital of the firm.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will confine his remarks to the question of the land tax.

Mr. KERR: Many people are asked today to send in useless returns. We know there is an exemption up to £300; yet people are required to send in a return if they have land of an unimproved value of £200. There is far too much taxation imposed on the primary producer.

Mr. COLLINS: We propose to wipe it out altogether.

Mr. KERR: I would raise the exemption to £3,000, or even to £5,000, to give the man who is struggling a chance. We would be doing something for the small man then. It is only right that hon. members should be given an opportunity of discussing this measure from every point of view. If you are going to tax people unnecessarily, it is going to handicap industries. In this instance it is going to affect production. We all know that the Government policy is no immigration and less production—production for use and not for profit. By land taxation they are taxing the profits which the farmer is endeavouring to make by working from early morning till late at night. What is applicable to the man on the land is applicable to the industrial community.

Mr. PEASE: Now we have it.

Mr. KERR: The land tax has risen to such proportions that in a short time it will equal the income tax, and, when it does that, it will be a sorry day for Queensland. I trust that the Government will either widen the scope of the Bill, so as to assist the small man, or withdraw it and introduce another Bill with a wider scope. The Government have done nothing but introduce amending measures. They are not game to bring down a consolidated Bill so that we may discuss it from the view of the producer and consumer and everybody concerned between.

* Mr. COLLINS: (*Bowen*): I do not know whether it is the intention of the Government to take the advice of the hon. member for Enoggera and withdraw the Bill. He says he wants it withdrawn so as to give some relief to the farmers. We have the combination on the opposite side of the hon. member for Dalby and the hon. member for Enoggera, who want the interests of Brisbane protected, and are not concerned about the

farmer. We hear a lot about a tax upon farmers. I find that the last report of the Commissioner of Taxes on the land tax states—

“Tax paid by farmers owning land valued at less than £1,281.

“Farmers owning land valued at £1,280 and under, who paid tax, numbered 11,518, the amount of tax charged being £18,659, equal to 4.06 per cent. of the total tax charged on all lands.”

The hon. member for Enoggera has been doing a bit of special pleading for the “*Courier*,” which pays as much land tax as anybody in Brisbane. The hon. member was speaking on behalf of the large property owners in Brisbane. Table B of the reports shows—

“Tax assessed on city and town lands owned at 30th June, 1920.

“City and town lands—unimproved value—£13,391,031; primary tax, £136,715.

“Super tax—unimproved value, £7,583,497; tax, £58,286.

“Undeveloped tax—unimproved value, £1,455,590; tax, £12,130.

“Total tax from city and town lands, £207,131.”

Where does the poor farmer come in there? I will quote the country lands so that I shall not be accused of being unfair—

Country Land.	Unimproved Value.	Tax.
	£	£
Primary Tax	21,247,993	177,344
Super Tax	8,779,471	66,958
Undeveloped Tax	961,772	8,015

We tax the land where the large estates are, and I am surprised that the leader of the Opposition is not in favour of bursting up those large estates and bringing the land under cultivation. How can our railways pay when we have railways running through large areas of undeveloped land privately owned? We have heard a lot about who is paying the land tax. According to the latest returns, 363 persons pay £157,477 in land tax out of a total tax of £459,000. I consider it is one of the fairest taxes introduced in any country in the world. The tax on the unimproved value for local authorities emanated from the Hon. W. Stephens, who was a member of the Legislative Council when it was abolished, and who was formerly a member of this Assembly, and it also received the support of Sir S. W. Griffith, who embodied it in the Local Authorities Act. I well remember in 1884 listening to the speeches of the Liberal members of those days advocating a tax on the unearned increment. There is no doubt that the hon. member for Dalby is in league with the persons who own the large city properties in this matter. Already we have remitted the land taxation on small farmers, who now only pay ½d. in the £1. When the hon. member for Enoggera was speaking, I asked him if he was in favour of abolishing the land tax altogether, and he said he was in favour of an exemption of £3,000, and later he said

Mr. Collins.]

an exemption of £3,000, and later he said he was in favour of an exemption of £5,000. We know where he is. He is speaking on behalf of the large landowners in Brisbane. I would like to know where the Country party stand. Every time we introduce a measure for the benefit of the farmers the Country party jeer and sneer at it and move amendments; so they cannot be in sympathy with the man on the land. At present the farmers only pay 4.05 per cent. of the land taxation, and in this Bill we propose to relieve them still further, in spite of the Country party. We will let the farmers know where the Country party stand on this question.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS interjecting.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If hon. members of the Opposition do not obey my call to order I shall have to deal with them under the Standing Orders.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I am sorry that the Premier has brought this Bill forward at this late hour of the night. The leader of the Opposition allowed him to get through the initiating stages of several Bills yesterday, and although several members on this side wanted to debate those Bills, the leader of the Opposition said he promised he would let the Premier get them through to a certain stage, and we refrained from speaking. To-night we let the Brisbane Tramway Bill go through without debate, although we could have debated it all night, and we would not have got to this Bill at all. The Premier must recognise that we have got to do our duty as an Opposition, and in future we must take every opportunity to debate all Bills at every stage. I believe in a give-and-take policy, but the Premier evidently does not believe in that. I am glad the leader of the Opposition has moved an amendment, because this is the stage to do it. If we leave it to a later stage we shall be told that the message from the Governor has been presented, and we will lose our opportunity. If we get this amendment carried now, we shall have an opportunity of moving amendments in the Bill later on. The hon. member for Bowen talked about the amount of tax the "Courier" paid. It is like waving a red rag to a bull to mention land taxation to that hon. member, and he always mentions how much land tax the "Courier" pays. I suppose the "Courier" can pay it; but the proprietors of that concern do not pay the land taxation. It is the tenants in the building who have to pay it.

[11.30 p.m.]

The HOME SECRETARY: I said that on the Local Authorities Bill, and you denied it.

Mr. MORGAN: The tenant only pays indirectly, and the very moment that the land tax is raised and the rent of the shop follows suit, he puts the extra amount on his goods, and the consumer pays.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to point out to the hon. member that it is necessary to keep to the question before the Committee. The leader of the Opposition has moved an amendment to omit the words "in certain particulars," and I hope the hon. member will confine his remarks to that amendment.

[*Mr. Collins.*

Mr. MORGAN: If the amendment is carried, it will enable us to discuss the whole question, and it is on that account that I am raising these points. Although 93 per cent. of our land is still held by the Crown, we are taking from the people more land tax than any other State in Australia. In prosperous Victoria, where farming land which would be valued in Queensland at £3 an acre is worth from £9 to £10 an acre, they take less tax from the land than Queensland does.

Mr. BRENNAN: If you are a friend of the farmer, you will not oppose this Bill.

Mr. MORGAN: I know that the Bill contains provisions to assist a certain class of farmer, but we want to go further than the Bill, and amend the Act to a greater extent. What has been the result of the land tax in Queensland? Take a farm of 500 acres near the city which the hon. member who interjects represents, valued at £6 an acre before the land tax was imposed for municipal purposes. That means that the total value of that farm was £3,000. Owing to the imposition of the land tax, the value of that farm has been reduced to £4 an acre, or a total of £2,000 only. The farmer actually loses £1,000 in the capital value of that farm. Another result is that the bank from which he may have had an overdraft of £1,500, or half its first value, immediately comes and asks him to reduce the overdraft to £1,000 because the margin is not sufficient. I have had experience in other States than Queensland, and I know that the average farmer goes on land when the value is low—say, £1 an acre. After fifteen or twenty years, by improving it and making it more productive, he makes it worth £4 or £5 an acre. That increased value represents the accumulation of years, and, just when he thinks he may be able to retire or sell, he finds that a tax is put on him which practically means ruination for him and his wife and family, although perhaps he has just been making a bare living all the time.

Mr. BRENNAN: Why should he want to retire after twenty years? A public servant is not retired till he is 65.

Mr. MORGAN: A farmer in twenty years will do as much work as a public servant in forty years, so that the conditions are altogether different.

At 11.35 p.m.,

Mr. DUNSTAN (*Gympie*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. MORGAN: I would also point out, in regard to the figures quoted by the hon. member for Bowen, that although only 7 per cent. of our land is alienated, the tax on country land yields about £40,000 more than on town land, so that really the country owner is paying a good deal more than the man in the city. I realise that it is the intention of the Government to give relief to certain small farmers. We are anxious to have a general reduction of taxation—in some cases, to wipe the land tax out of existence altogether, especially in respect of land of a lesser area than 1,280 acres, which is used for mixed farming. Not a member on this side representing a country constituency would be doing his duty unless he attempted to get relief for the primary producers in his

electorate. There is not a country electorate that is not suffering because of the land tax. The people on the land are practically down and out, and we think that now is the time for a reduction in rentals and taxation, to bring them down to pre-war level. Unless that assistance is given, a great number of people will be compelled to leave Queensland and seek land elsewhere.

Mr. BRENNAN: You left Victoria. Why don't you go back?

Mr. COLLINS: He was hunted out by the landlords; he was glad to leave it.

Mr. MORGAN: I only wish I could leave Queensland with the same amount of money I had when I came here. I sold the freehold I held in Victoria, to come to Queensland. When the great rush of people to Queensland took place there was freehold tenure; and we came here owing to that fact. Practically no selection of land is taking place at present. It is the duty of hon. members on this side to let the country people know that we tried to get better terms than the Premier is prepared to give them.

Mr. SIZER (*Nundah*): I wish to support the leader of the Opposition in his endeavour to enlarge the scope of the Bill. I believe the time has arrived for reviewing the situation in Queensland, and taxation is one of the matters we need to consider. To accept this resolution would mean we would be limited to what is in the Government's mind. We believe the scope of the Bill should be such as to enable us to discuss the whole question of land taxation, in order that we may bring some measure of relief to the taxpayers, and give an impetus to the progress of the State. For six years hon. gentlemen opposite have argued that the land taxation is not burdensome, and is not a hardship on the community.

Mr. FOLEY: They have all paid it.

Mr. SIZER: Probably it has been a great struggle in many cases. The hon. member for Bowen has told us that the incidence of taxation is not burdensome to the farmer or the community generally. Is he going to support this measure? Presumably he was out of tune with the Government on this matter, and it has been brought in in spite of his opposition. Seeing the Government have recognised there has been justice in the claim made by this side of the House, we wish to assist them to make the Bill a much better one. Taxation is one of the real causes of the high cost of living, and we hope, by the reduction of land taxation, to lighten the burden upon the community generally. We should encourage as many people as possible to come to this State, and if a $\frac{1}{2}$ d. or $\frac{3}{4}$ d. in the $\pounds 1$ in taxation is retarding the entry of people into this State, then the matter should be rectified immediately. Immigration is essential, and we should see that we get our quota, if not more than our quota, of immigrants in order to increase the population, especially in the primary industries. Whether the taxable land be in the city or in the country, we are desirous of cheapening the overhead charges on industries by a reduction in taxation. Unless the Government intend to remove the burden of taxation on the primary producers, the Bill will only be a lot of humbug, and is intended for electioneering purposes only.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: You are an authority on humbug.

Mr. SIZER: The hon. member is a canting old humbug.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The expression used by the hon. member for Nundah is unparliamentary, and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. SIZER: I withdraw. I do not, as a rule, use words like that, but the statement was made by the hon. member for Queenon, and I certainly think he should withdraw also. The following table shows the land taxation in the various States and the Commonwealth:—

Queensland.	Tasmania.	Federal.	South Australia.	Victoria.	West Australia.	New South Wales.
Rateable value less than— £500 .. 1d. £500-£1,000 .. 1½d. £1,000-£2,000 .. 2d. £2,000-£3,000 .. 2½d. £3,000-£4,000 .. 3d. £4,000-£5,000 .. 3½d. £5,000-£10,000 .. 4d. £10,000-£20,000 .. 4½d. £20,000-£30,000 .. 5d. £30,000-£60,000 .. 5½d. £60,000-£75,000 .. 6d. £75,000 and over .. 6½d.	Less than— £2,500 .. 1d. £2,500-£5,000 .. 1½d. £5,000-£15,000 .. 2d. £15,000-£30,000 .. 2½d. £30,000-£50,000 .. 3d. £50,000-£80,000 .. 3½d. £80,000 and over .. 4d.	£5,000 1d.	..	£250 exemption but it is estimated at £500, at uniform rate of ½d. in £.	½d. in £ on unimproved value of land within measures of Act and 1d. in £ on all other land; absentees ¾d. and 1½d. in £	£240 exemption, thereafter 1d. in £.

The PREMIER: I beg to move—

“That the question be now put.”

Hon. E. G. Theodore.]

Question—That the question be now put—
put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 36.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Jones, A. J.
„ Bertram	„ Kirwan
„ Brennan	„ Land
„ Bulcock	„ Larcombe
„ Collins	„ McCormack
„ Conroy	„ Mullan
„ Cooper, F. A.	„ Payne
„ Cooper, W.	„ Pease
„ Coyne	„ Pollock
„ Dash	„ Riordan
„ Ferricks	„ Ryan
„ Foley	„ Smith
„ Forde	„ Stopford
„ Gilday	„ Theodore
„ Gillies	„ Weir
„ Gledson	„ Wellington
„ Hartley	„ Wilson
„ Huxham	„ Winstanley
<i>Tellers:</i> Mr. Brennan and Mr. Foley.	

NOES, 35.

Mr. Appel	Mr. King
„ Barnes, G. P.	„ Logan
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Macgregor
„ Bebbington	„ Maxwell
„ Bell	„ Moore
„ Brand	„ Morgan
„ Cattermull	„ Nott
„ Clayton	„ Peterson
„ Corser	„ Petrie
„ Costello	„ Roberts, J. H. C.
„ Deacon	„ Roberts, T. R.
„ Edwards	„ Sizer
„ Elphinstone	„ Swayne
„ Fletcher	„ Taylor
„ Fry	„ Vowles
„ Green	„ Walker
„ Jones, J.	„ Warren
„ Kerr	

Tellers: Mr. Clayton and Mr. Logan.

Resolved in the affirmative.

[12 p.m.]

Question—That the words proposed to be
omitted (*Mr. Vowles's amendment*) stand
part of the question—put; and the Com-
mittee divided—

AYES, 36.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Jones, A. J.
„ Bertram	„ Kirwan
„ Brennan	„ Land
„ Bulcock	„ Larcombe
„ Collins	„ McCormack
„ Conroy	„ Mullan
„ Cooper, F. A.	„ Payne
„ Cooper, W.	„ Pease
„ Coyne	„ Pollock
„ Dash	„ Riordan
„ Ferricks	„ Ryan
„ Foley	„ Smith
„ Forde	„ Stopford
„ Gilday	„ Theodore
„ Gillies	„ Weir
„ Gledson	„ Wellington
„ Hartley	„ Wilson
„ Huxham	„ Winstanley
<i>Tellers:</i> Mr. F. A. Cooper and Mr. Ferricks.	

NOES, 35.

Mr. Appel	Mr. King
„ Barnes, G. P.	„ Logan
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Macgregor
„ Bebbington	„ Maxwell
„ Bell	„ Moore
„ Brand	„ Morgan
„ Cattermull	„ Nott
„ Clayton	„ Peterson
„ Corser	„ Petrie
„ Costello	„ Roberts, J. H. C.
„ Deacon	„ Roberts, T. R.
„ Edwards	„ Sizer
„ Elphinstone	„ Swayne
„ Fletcher	„ Taylor
„ Fry	„ Vowles
„ Green	„ Walker
„ Jones, J.	„ Warren
„ Kerr	

Tellers: Mr. Kerr and Mr. Sizer.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Original question put and passed.

The House resumed.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN reported that
the Committee had come to a resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

FIRST READING.

The PREMIER presented the Bill, and
moved—

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

Question put and passed.

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

The House adjourned at 12.10 a.m.