

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 18 JULY 1922**

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## FRUIT PULP USED AT STATE CANNERY.

Mr. SIZER (*Nundub*) asked the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises—

“What was the total amount of fruit pulp used by the State Cannery during the period of 1st July, 1921, to 30th June, 1922, under the following headings:—

(a) From fruit grown within the State?

(b) From fruit grown in the Southern States?

(c) What was the value of the pulp under the separate heads?

(d) If market values were paid in each case, what was the total disbursement under each heading—whether that disbursement was made either by cash, cheque, or any other form of legal tender?”

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

“The hon. member has already been informed that, in order to meet its requirements, the State Cannery purchased from the South last year a sufficient quantity of pulps of fruits not grown or procurable in Queensland, and that full details of the State Cannery's activities will be given in the reports of the Auditor-General and Trade Commissioner.”

## HIGHLAND SOLDIERS' SETTLEMENT—PAYMENT TO H. ATHERTON.

Mr. SIZER asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

“1. With reference to the Highland settlers whose crops were destroyed by frost, will he state the amount of money paid to settler H. Atherton from his loan account?

“2. How long was Atherton on the settlement?

“3. How much money did Atherton earn on road-making?

“4. What is the rate of compensation per acre for clearing and burning off?

“5. What was the usual rate allowed per acre on this settlement for these purposes, payable in the ordinary way, being part of the settlers' loan of £625?

“6. What compensation per acre (if any) is proposed in connection with planting, weeding, and other improvements?

“7. Were the improvements valued; if so, at what date, and by whom?

“8. Does he propose to include improvements made by the expenditure of personal money so far as compensation is concerned?”

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

“1. £204 13s. 11d. He was also paid a further sum of £45 in respect of maintenance.

“2. Seventeen months.

“3. £17 3s.

“4. An additional £1 per acre for burning off.

“5. £4 per acre.

“6. None.

“7. Yes. On 9th March, 1922, by Supervisor A. J. Dean.

“8. See answer to No. 6.”

## TUESDAY, 18 JULY, 1922.

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

## QUESTIONS.

## STATE ADVANCES TO FARMERS AND FOR WORKERS' DWELLINGS.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*) asked the Treasurer—

“1. What number of advances and what amount has been advanced to farmers other than soldiers from 1st July, 1921, to 30th June, 1922?

“2. What number of advances and what amount has been advanced for workers' dwellings from 1st July, 1921, to 30th June, 1922?

“3. The number of applications made by farmers and rejected?

“4. The number of applications made by workers and rejected?”

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

“1. Number of loans approved, 1,700; amount approved, £314,374, of which £187,403 was advanced during the year.

“2. Number of loans approved, 340; amount approved, £232,464, of which £136,890 was advanced during the year.

“3. 482.

“4. Eight.”

SHIPMENT OF ARROWROOT TO AGENT-GENERAL  
IN LONDON.

Mr. KING (*Logan*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

"1. With a view to introducing Queensland arrowroot to the home markets, did the department ship a parcel supplied by the growers to the Agent-General for Queensland?"

"2. If so, what was the result?"

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

"1. Yes.

"2. The only outcome so far is an inquiry from the Agent-General as to the cost per ton of Queensland arrowroot, c.i.f. London, in lined bags. This is being attended to."

OPPOSITION OF SOUTHERN JAM MANUFACTURERS  
TO SUGAR AGREEMENT.

Mr. FORDE (*Rockhampton*) asked the Premier—

"1. Is he aware that the wealthy jam manufacturing interests in the South, assisted by several Nationalist and Country party members, are bringing influence to bear on the Commonwealth Nationalist Government to delay a decision on the sugar agreement, with a view to the decontrol of sugar?"

"2. In view of the fact that 100,000 persons are dependent on the sugar industry in Queensland, and that a sum of approximately £6,000,000 was paid in wages to 20,000 employees in that industry last year, will he make urgent representations, by telegraph, to the Hon. the Prime Minister to give an early decision that the sugar agreement be continued?"

The PREMIER replied—

"1. I understand that such is the case.

"2. Yes."

CONSTRUCTION OF NEW RAILWAYS—LABOUR-  
SAVING DEVICES; MEMBERSHIP OF AUSTRALIAN  
WORKERS' UNION.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. Are the men engaged in the construction of new railways supplied with all the best labour-saving devices in order to get the most miles built for the money expended, thereby giving satisfaction to the men and to the State?"

"2. Is it a fact that in clearing the track the tree is first sawn off and the stump grubbed afterwards; if so, does this not add at least 100 per cent. to the cost?"

"3. Is it a fact that no man can get employment unless he has been a member of the Australian Workers' Union for two years?"

"4. On what terms can farmers, who have spare time and horses, get employment for themselves and teams; and does the two years' membership of the Australian Workers' Union apply to them?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Larcombe, *Kippel*) replied—

"1. Labour-saving machinery is generally adopted whenever the amount of

work to be done justifies the purchase and use of such.

"2. No.

"3. No.

"4. All labour requirements are obtained through the Labour Bureau."

MEMBERSHIP OF QUEENSLAND PRODUCERS'  
ASSOCIATION.

Mr. BEBBINGTON asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

"1. What instructions are being given to organisers for the Agricultural Council or Advisory Board in regard to members' fees?"

"2. In accepting membership, will the person be requested to state where he supplies his raw material, so that such factory's levies will pay his membership fee?"

"3. If he does not supply raw material to any factory or mill, will he pay a personal fee, or is membership free? If it is free, what is the value or use of free organisation?"

"4. Will suppliers to factories or sugar-mills who do not join the Government's organisation, but who pay levies to it through their factory or mill, automatically become members and have votes by virtue of their compulsory payments to such organisations?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE replied—

"1. Members will not be required to pay any membership fees.

"2, 3, and 4. All such matters will be determined by the Council of Agriculture, subject to the provisions of the Primary Producers' Organisation Act."

PRIMARY PRODUCERS' ORGANISATION BILL—  
POWER TO LEVY ON FACTORY SUPPLIES.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*), without notice, asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

"Is it proposed to give these free-enrolled members of the Queensland Producers' Association power to levy on the moneys due to factory suppliers?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE replied—

"I do not know whether the Standing Orders permit me to answer a question relating to a Bill which is now before the House. It appears to me that the question is in rather bad taste, and, not being able to catch exactly what the hon. gentleman said, I ask him to give notice of the question in the usual way."

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Very well, I will give notice for to-morrow.

MANUFACTURE OF POWER ALCOHOL FROM  
MOLASSES.

Mr. CATTERMULL (*Musgrave*) asked the Chief Secretary—

"Owing to the large quantities of molasses which will be burnt or destroyed this sugar season, will he take whatever action he considers advisable with a view to—

(a) Securing permission for the

Bundaberg distillery and any other distillery to make power alcohol from molasses?

(b) The erection of distilleries in connection with the Government Central Mills so that molasses may be converted into power alcohol?"

The PREMIER replied—

"The Government will assist in every way possible. The Commonwealth Government, however, controls the manufacture of alcohol, and determines the conditions relating to denaturation."

#### NUMBER OF CHILDREN DISCHARGED FROM STATE CONTROL.

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

"What is the total number of children discharged from State control during period 1st July, 1921, to 30th June, 1922—(a) Having reached age of fourteen years; (b) at request of parent or guardian; (c) on recommendation of Controller of State children for, in his opinion, being adequately maintained?"

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

"The information is being obtained."

#### REVISION OF ELECTORAL ROLLS.

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

"Have any steps been taken by him to instruct the police to go through the various electorates to see that the rolls are brought up to date?"

(Government laughter.)

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

"No instruction has been given by me, because I do not agree with the hon. gentleman's prophecy that there will be an early election."

(Laughter.)

#### PAPER.

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

Return to an Order showing the total amount of retrospective rents collected from all sources during the last financial year.

#### QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I desire to raise a question of privilege. During the proceedings of the House last Friday, after the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises had replied to a question by me, I said—

"I would like to know whether the hon. gentleman is entitled, in replying to a question, to cast a reflection on the hon. member asking the question?"

to which you, Mr. Speaker, replied—

"I did not hear the Minister cast any reflection on the hon. member."

Now, I have here a copy of "Hansard"—a part of the records of this House—in which the Minister is reported, in the course of his reply to my question, to this effect—

"There would be no advantage to the

community in the State receiving a little extra income tax if such were accompanied by the exploitation of the people by private enterprise, as desired by the hon. member."

I submit that that is a reflection on a hon. member of the House, and, as a question of privilege, I raise the point whether it should remain on the records of the House. At the time I asked your ruling, Mr. Speaker, and you said you did not hear the remark. I now ask your ruling.

The SPEAKER: I did not hear the Minister use the words of which the hon. member complained, but, after perusing "Hansard," I think that a reflection was cast upon him, and, had I heard it at the time, I certainly would have asked the Minister to withdraw. The occasion for doing so, however, has now passed.

Mr. VOWLES: I raised the question at the time. "Hansard" shows that.

The SPEAKER: That is so. At the time I certainly did not hear the words of which the hon. member complained, and I said at the time that I had not. Had I heard them, I would have asked the Minister to withdraw.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*): In replying to the question I did not desire to cast any aspersion on the hon. member. My intention will be easily understood by a perusal of the question and the answer given thereto. In the body of his question the hon. member asked whether, when private enterprise carried on certain activities, the State did not receive a certain amount of income tax. In the body of my reply I pointed out that it would be of no advantage to the community to receive a little in income tax if that were paid by companies exploiting the community, and thereby being enabled to pay such income tax. That is the logical conclusion.

The SPEAKER: Order!

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: I had no intention of casting any aspersion on the hon. gentleman's honour.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): I desire, with the permission of the House, to make a personal explanation.

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

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FRY: On page 168 of "Hansard" of 11th July, speaking on the Address in Reply, I am reported to have said—

"I have in my possession a copy of the authority for the One Big Union written by 'Jack Cade,' who is Mr. Ernest H. Lane, and edited by the Hon. J. Hanlon, formerly a member of the Upper House of Queensland."

That should read—

"With an introduction by the Hon. W. R. Crampton, M.L.C."

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is an addition, not a correction.

*Mr. Fry.]*

### FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

#### INITIATION.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*): I move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Factories and Shops Acts, 1900 to 1920, in a certain particular.”

Question put and passed.

### CAIRNS HYDRO-ELECTRIC POWER INVESTIGATION BOARD BILL.

#### INITIATION.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*): I move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to constitute the Cairns Hydro-Electric Power Investigation Board and to define its powers and duties, and for other incidental purposes.”

Question put and passed.

### PRIMARY PRODUCERS' ORGANISATION BILL.

#### SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

MR. NOTT (*Stanley*): I desire to embrace the opportunity of speaking on this Bill, which was originated by the Premier with the express purpose of placing the farmers in a prosperous position. I think there can be no question in the minds of every hon. member in this House that there is, at the present time, a very great necessity for legislative consideration to be given to the primary producers throughout Queensland, on account of the desperate straits they have been in during the past couple of years at least. There is no doubt that for a number of years past a great deal has been expected, and a great deal has been done in connection with co-operation. The co-operative organisations now in existence, whether dealing with fruitgrowing, dairying, or sugar-growing, have done a tremendous amount of good in the past, and they were certainly on the eve of accomplishing a great deal more, especially if legislation had been introduced to amend the Co-operative Agricultural Production Act. There is no question that primary producers have been very considerably hampered of late years, especially in respect of marketing conditions. Earlier in this debate, hon. members on this side of the House have mentioned the information that has been gained and the work that has been done by Mr. C. D. E. Mears, of New South Wales, in connection with co-operative marketing. Mention has also been made of the efforts made by Mr. Goodfellow, managing director of the New Zealand Dairying Co-operative Organisation, to secure information on the question of the necessity of improving conditions of marketing from individuals situated in Tooley street. Mr. Goodsir, managing director of Messrs. Weddel and Co., a well-known Tooley-street firm, says—

“The purchase by the Government of a whole season's output of butter, or

[*Hon. W. Forgan Smith.*]

cheese, from Australia or New Zealand, or Argentine, at an all-round price in each case has put ideas into the minds of producers which are likely to bear fruit in the future, in the direction of securing some sort of general supervision in each country over the standardisation of grades or quality, identity in terms of sale, regulation of shipments, and approximation of selling price, all of which must inevitably tend to the welding of each country's export trade into a harmonious whole—possibly after the fashion of the Danish butter trade, which is strictly controlled by the consent of the shippers for the general good rather than in the interest of the individuals.

“Unless traders anticipate such developments and prepare themselves to meet them, they may find themselves sooner or later stranded on the quicksands of lost opportunities. Already the co-operative idea has secured a firm hold in most of the oversea sources of supply. It is already knocking at the door of the home markets—indeed, has already advanced a foot over the threshold, and it is doubtful if ever the door can be closed against combination—in the distribution as well as in production—which is one of the aims of the co-operative movement. Would it not be far better for the existing trading interests to work together for an all-round simplification and betterment of methods by mutual consent, rather than wait for the inevitable conflict with the spirit of the new age as embodied in co-operation?”

Not only have the co-operative people in Australia and New Zealand, who have been to Europe making inquiries into these matters, recognised that there must be a considerable improvement in marketing conditions, but also the firms in Tooley street, who have been connected with the business for a long period and represent a large amount of capital, recognise that there is any amount of room for improvement in the marketing of our produce overseas. We hear quite a lot about the price of Australian and New Zealand butter as compared with the price of Danish butter, but we hear very little so far as cheese is concerned. It is interesting to note that on 6th May last the price of Australian and New Zealand cheese, on the London market, was from 72s. to 74s. per cwt., while cheese made in Great Britain was selling on that date at from 130s. to 140s. per cwt. That shows a margin of almost 100 per cent. against the Australian and New Zealand cheese, which indicates that the quality and grading of the Australian and New Zealand cheese must be very inferior, and that something is radically wrong in the marketing of it. Certainly, we hear that one of the reasons why the Danish farmer gets such a high price for his butter is that the merchant over there knows the people who are ready to pay a high price for that brand of butter, knowing its quality; and it seems to me that, with proper marketing and grading, much higher prices could be obtained for our Australian products. It is very apparent that the present marketing arrangements need improving. The gentlemen representing co-operative effort have come to the conclusion that at the present time it may not be quite possible—although it is desirable—for

co-operative companies to do the whole of the distribution. They consider that a very great improvement might be brought about by using the services of private concerns, which have been established for so many years in Tooley street, as distributing agents for their products.

When the hon. member for Warwick was speaking on the second reading of this Bill he remarked that every hon. member would vote according to the dictates of his own conscience, and I have no doubt that that will happen. The Bill was foreshadowed by the Premier in his Laidley and Lowood speeches, when he visited those farming constituencies. I had the pleasure of listening to the hon. gentleman when he spoke at Lowood, and since that night I have been anxiously waiting to hear what was going to be his next move, and wondering when he was going to call a meeting to inaugurate the scheme which, at that date, he said the Labour party were intending to bring in, though, perhaps, they had been somewhat dilatory in regard to the matter.

[4 p.m.] In due time I noticed, according to the Press, that the Secretary for Agriculture had sent invitations to a number of co-operative dairying associations. I was hoping that our association at Toogoolawah would have been the recipient of such an invitation, but the invitation did not eventuate. Knowing that the meeting was to take place on a certain date, I made it my business to be in Brisbane in order to be present, if possible, and assist in the organisation of the scheme, or do any good that I could, in the hope of bringing in something for the betterment of Queensland. On making inquiry I found that there was a rumour that the Premier did not want Country party members to "butt in."

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is not correct.

MR. NOTT: I made inquiries, and eventually the private secretary of the Premier was communicated with by telephone. As a result of that telephone message, I was given to understand that the Premier did not wish Country party members to "butt in" as politicians.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Not as politicians.

MR. NOTT: I was prepared to go to that meeting at any cost, and I went there claiming to be the representative of the Toogoolawah Association. I listened attentively during the whole of the debate to the unfolding of the scheme, and I also took part in the appointment of a condensed milk representative on the board. The method of the Premier in forcing the election of the various members of that board by representatives at the meeting has been somewhat questioned, and a number of people seem to consider that the hon. gentleman was too precipitate. Once the Premier had decided to launch this scheme, I personally do not blame him for forcing the matter on with all speed, as, after it was decided to inaugurate it, quick action was to be commended, especially considering the desperate straits of the primary producers throughout Queensland. But whether the Premier adopted exactly the right scheme for giving relief to the farmers is, I think, open to question. Since we opened the session we have been told that there will be an amendment of the Land Tax Act brought forward, and we have been told the directions the amendments will take. Not only

that, but the whole of the Government's programme seems to me to indicate that the Administration recognises that they have been making a mistake in regard to their legislation and administration, so far as the prosperity of Queensland is concerned, during the past six years. A deputation from the Country party waited on the Premier, when he expressed a wish that we would allow "the dead past to bury its dead," and he also expressed that wish again at the conference at which the provisional Council of Agriculture was inaugurated. That certainly goes to show that the Premier at least, if not every individual member of his party, is aware that he has been making mistakes. There is one thing in regard to the inauguration of this scheme which is very interesting to me: that is, the three different bodies which the Government are going to create to carry out the scheme are practically the same as the three bodies which we have started and are conducting in connection with the Primary Producers' Union. But there is one very big difference between the three bodies which it is proposed to establish under this scheme and those created by the Primary Producers' Union. In the Primary Producers' Union we aim at and endeavour to do our utmost to keep out outside interference. In the case of this provisional Council I regret to see that the Premier is not taking precautions to see that only those actually interested in the various industries have a say, whilst he has taken a great deal of pains to see that the present Administration are very strongly represented on the provisional Council.

MR. HARTLEY: They have to find a good deal of money, and ought to be represented.

MR. NOTT: If the scheme has been inaugurated with the idea of making political capital out of it, that is a great mistake. The method of appointing organisers to go out into the various electorates and form associations wherever they can might be allowed to stand, and, if the Government can build on that by adopting the procedure of the present co-operative butter factories and the different industrial associations, I think the scheme will do a great deal of good, so far as the primary producers are concerned, and in a much shorter time than it otherwise would.

I do not see how anybody can think that this scheme is going to be inaugurated and in working order for anything under twelve to eighteen months. I dare say a good many hon. members opposite know a good deal about organising the industrial workers. Well, the organisation of industrial workers is a very different proposition to the organisation of primary producers and various types of farmers. Then, again, the responsibilities of these people have a very fundamental bearing upon the possibility of successfully organising them. The artisan who works at some trade or calling receives his regular payments, and his savings are put into a savings bank. In the event of something happening to disturb the industry in which he is engaged, or in the event of a dispute arising, that man can put on his hat and coat and walk out. His savings are quite intact in the bank, and he can move from one part of the State to another without any trouble, and he can easily withdraw his savings if he wishes to do so. It is different with the farmer. The farmer's savings are represented by his improvements to his land. He cannot remove from his farm and go to

*Mr. Nott.]*

another part of the State. He has to remain there. There is thus a great difference between the primary producer and the artisan, and it will be seen that there is a great difference between organising the two men. The farmer cannot leave his farm and chance what he gets from the market without, perhaps, chancing almost ruination. Had the Premier started out with the existing organisation of co-operative companies as a basis, not only would he have saved the time necessary for building up the organisation, but he would have had a great deal more money to spend. It is proposed to spend from £25,000 to £30,000 per annum on this scheme, and that money could have been usefully expended in connection with the Department of Agriculture. It could have been spent in other ways to bring about a great deal of efficiency, because there is no doubt that a more immediate knowledge could be obtained from the Department of Agriculture. This, hitherto, has been the Cinderella of the departments, and it has remained so for many years. I only regret that the present Administration—just the same as previous Administrations—have not seen fit to recognise the princess and lift her and clothe her with the status of a princess. The Department of Agriculture has some very good officers, but they have never been given an opportunity to show what they can do. One of their successful avenues of operation was in the direction of the revivification of exhausted lands for banana culture. They have met with great success in that particular line, although in many other lines they have been very lax in procuring essential information. Take the case of tick fever or redwater. I do not think they have any up-to-date means of knowing what is the best treatment for redwater. In fact, I do not think the officers of the department are in agreement among themselves as to what is the correct policy to pursue in regard to the eradication of the tick—whether it is better to have partially clean areas established, or to clean the ticks right out. I think that more money should be made available for some of these things, and it would be of very material benefit to the State. It may be asked, "Can we trust the present Government with the administration of such a Bill as is before the House at the present time?" It seems to me, from our experience of their administration during the past six or seven years, that we cannot trust them.

Mr. COLLINS: Why stress the past six or seven years? Why not go back thirty years?

Mr. NOTT: It has not been in operation that long. However, we have had a great deal of dispute with the present Administration in these matters, and we have had the spectacle of the treatment accorded by them to the fruitgrowers, the cattle-raisers, and the dairy farmers, at a time when they were endeavouring to make ends meet. They applied for relief, and in many cases we found that, instead of being helped, they were hampered by the present Administration in those industries. During the past six years this Administration has done nothing to encourage the man on the land to trust them with the administration of the Bill that we are now considering. The Secretary for Agriculture made the statement lately that the farmer's business must be remunerative, and he must have an opportunity of earning a competence. We are glad to hear the Minister make that statement, especially when we remember that he made other

remarks not of that nature some considerable time ago. When we hear the Minister, in introducing this Bill, talk about the farmer's business being remunerative, it makes one wonder how the hon. gentleman squares his remarks just at this particular juncture with his previous remarks.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What remarks are those?

Mr. NOTT: In regard to the suggestion that the Bill should be regarded as a non-party one, I do not see anything non-party in it. Do the Government say that they are not bringing it forward with the idea of obtaining political kudos or anything of that sort? I do not think that their statements in this regard can receive serious consideration, because we have experienced their actions in the past. For instance, the Premier did not wish the Country party members to "butt in," as he termed it, at the first meeting in connection with this proposal. That goes to show that the present Labour party wish to claim all the kudos that may come from this Bill. Personally, I think the present Administration are bringing this measure forward in the hope that they will be able to use it to assist them to attain their socialistic objective. If the Bill goes through in its present form, without amendment, they have a very good chance of doing that. I think it was only one day last week that the Minister for Agriculture said that, with the advent of the Federal Labour party to power, they would be able to get Federal support for a scheme such as this, and, of course, if the Bill goes through in its present form, there is no doubt that that fact will enable the party to use the measure very much for the furtherance of their avowed objective.

Several other statements have been made, one of which I wish to quote as a reason for my statement that it is foolish for hon. members opposite to expect hon. members on this side to believe that they bring in this Bill without any idea of obtaining political advantage from it. The Secretary for Mines, at the May Day dinner, made a remark to this effect, "Now we have a majority of one we have to 'go slow.' Wait until we have a majority of three, or four, or five, and we will be able to put our policy into effect." The hon. member for Barcoo, Mr. Bulcock, during the course of his speech on this Bill made some remarks which, especially in the light of the fact that hon. members opposite have claimed that the Bill is not introduced for party purposes, would really make the cows smile. The hon. member said that the scheme of the Bill was a part of the Soviet system. What more do we need to show that they are determined to use it to that end? I personally think it would be far more honest if hon. members opposite would state frankly that they mean to put the measure through for that purpose. The other night the hon. member for Gregory, after having heard the hon. member for Normanby speak, endeavoured to show that the hon. member could not be trusted, especially since his defection from the Labour party and his joining the Country party. I am satisfied that the hon. member's attempts in that direction are having just the opposite effect from what he intends, because the hon. member for Normanby was a Labour supporter for twenty-nine years and a member of the Government party here for a great many years. He has fought, I believe,

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honestly in the interests of the farming community, and he continued to do so till he came to the conclusion that the convictions of all those years had to be altered, and so he was compelled to join another party which could assist further in the direction in which he was striving for the benefit of Queensland. In short, the administration of the present Government during the last six or seven years has been of such a nature as to force that hon. member to leave the party opposite and join the Country party.

It is my intention to support the second reading of this Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And yet you call it Sovietism.

Mr. NOTT: I propose to do so on the understanding that we shall have an opportunity to amend it in certain ways to make it safe, and, even if this is not a workable scheme in the beginning, it will, at any rate, be a start—something that may eventually be developed into a live working scheme for the benefit of Queensland as a whole; and, if later on we reach the stage where we can organise the representative producing interests into a large Federal scheme, we shall have got somewhere. I would have liked to see a Federal scheme brought forward immediately, or even before the State scheme, but the fact that the Federal authorities or the farmers are unable to get a Federal scheme going is no reason why we should not make a start and do what we can in our own State. At least, when we have a working scheme in Queensland we have all the better opportunity of completing a Federal scheme that will work even better; and, when we have a co-operative organisation working federally, I think we shall be able to make arrangements with New Zealand, and New Zealand, in turn, I believe, is very hopeful of being able to make arrangements with the agents at home, whereby we can get better distribution through the merchants of Tooley street than in the past. If that were brought about, a very great measure of good would result.

It is not my intention to occupy the time of the House at any further length, and I simply conclude my remarks by appealing to the Minister for the acceptance of amendments, which I hope will go some way towards making the Bill a sound, safe, and practical measure.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I have come to the conclusion, after listening to members of the Opposition, that the mantle of the late Sir George Reid has fallen on them, so doubtful am I whether they are in favour of the Bill or against the Bill. They should be straightforward and say what they think of it. They want organisation for the primary producers, do they not? Or are the primary producers so well organised that they do not want the assistance of Parliament? I take it that Parliament exists to assist the primary producers as well as the workers, and I remember advocating some years ago, when I was in Opposition, that the farmers should always be allied with the workers, because they were real workers and did not live on the labour of the people, but stood over the plough handles themselves and did useful work, just as the men in the Railway Department or men following other occupations.

Mr. FLETCHER: More so.

Mr. COLLINS: I do not agree with the hon. member. All work which is useful work should be recognised as good work. A man who earns his living digging drains to make a city clean is doing just [4.30 p.m.] as useful work as the cultivator of the soil. I am going to give a few reasons why I am supporting the Bill. Those reasons are—

1. That the hope of the future with all classes of workers depends on organisation;
2. That this Bill aims at organising all those who are cultivators of the soil;
3. That the future of this State depends on getting more people to settle on our lands;
4. That, to secure that settlement, we must have better methods in the handling of the crops of the primary producer, and secure to him a fair price for his products;
5. This Bill will enable those who are most concerned to have a say in fixing the price of their products;
6. This Bill will enable the farmer to take the necessary steps to secure a just reward for his labour;
7. This Bill will not bring in the millennium, as we can only advance one step at a time;
8. The Bill is evolutionary, and, as time rolls on and experience is gained, will, I have no doubt, require amendment;
9. More attention will have to be given to the question of financial assistance to the man on the land;
10. The introduction of the Bill shows an earnest desire to do something to assist the man on the land.

I find that those ten reasons are in accord with clause 6 of the Bill, paragraph (vi.) of which reads—

“Securing additional markets for the disposal of produce and improved means of distribution”;

and paragraph (vii.)—

“Studying markets; accumulating data regarding marketing processes and costs; disseminating accurate market information; and eliminating waste and unnecessary marketing expenses.”

I am satisfied that the tomato-growers and fruitgrowers around Bowen will welcome this particular measure. We notice in the papers that, owing to the fact that they have oversupplied the Sydney market, they have received a very low price for their products. In fact, the price mentioned on more than one occasion would hardly reimburse them for the cost of sending the fruit to Sydney. That was not because the people of Sydney did not require tomatoes, but was owing to the fact that there was not a proper organisation to see that the market was kept properly supplied, and thus enable the farmers to be paid for their labour. No one wants to see farmers sending tomatoes or other fruits long distances and not getting a just return for their labour. I am satisfied that this Bill will meet with support from members on this side of the House.

The hon. member for Stanley, who has just resumed his seat, referred to Sovietism, nationalisation, and socialisation. I am satisfied that the farmers do not care whether

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it is given the name of Sovietism, nationalisation, socialisation, or anything else, so long as they are going to benefit. When speaking on the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act Amendment Bill last session, I pointed out that a Soviet was at work downstairs, where we had the representatives from the different sugar districts recommending amendments in connection with that measure. Do you think that growers are worrying about what name you are likely to call an organisation or a Bill introduced into this House? The sugar-growers who sat in the caucus room—a very good room for them to sit in, because, more than likely, they got some inspiration there which resulted in some of the radical ideas which later appeared in the proposals they put in the amended measure—were not worrying about the name of the Bill; all they were worrying about was the securing of a better reward for their labour. I do not intend to detain the House, because my attitude on this question is well known. Some say that this is not in accord with our platform. I say it is, and that is the reason I am going to support it. Anything that has in it the welfare of mankind is in accord with our platform, because our platform is based on very broad lines. Under the heading of "Encouragement to Agriculture" we have several planks dealing with agriculture. I hope in the future we shall be able to do something for the man on the land, the same as we have done in the past.

Mr. CLAYTON (*Wide Bay*): I intend to support the second reading of this Bill. I sincerely hope the Minister will see his way to accept reasonable amendments from this side, because amendments brought forward from this side will come from men who have practical experience in farming, and in many instances have been successful in their occupation. We heard the other night an admission by the hon. member for Barcoo that there were weaknesses in the Bill. I consider there are. Going through the Bill, I find it rather different to what I expected it would be after having heard the Premier's speech at Laidley. I think the hon. gentleman will find that the farmers are going to be very difficult to organise. We have been organising amongst them for a considerable number of years, and they are not as easy to organise as are the men who are engaged in the towns and cities. On all occasions I have advocated organisation amongst the farmers. I think it is their duty to unite as far as possible. They will get much greater benefits than they would if they continue the independent attitude they have been adopting. Many a time I have pointed out to them the benefits the industrialists have gained as the result of unionism, and have pointed out that, were they to unite, they would improve their position materially. I think the organisation which was carried on amongst the farmers prior to the last election demonstrated that they have done something to improve their position. That is shown by the fact that they have so many representatives on this side of the House looking after their interests.

A great deal has been said this session regarding primary production and organisation. The discussion this year is in striking contrast to that which has taken place in this Chamber during the last seven years. I am inclined to think that, when the Government had a majority of somewhere about twenty-four members, they did not take into

consideration the necessity for doing what they are now attempting to do for the man on the land. But their majority has now been reduced to one, and they feel they have lost the support of the industrialists, so they are trying to do something to gain support from the farmers. The farmer, however, is not going to be gulled as he has been in the past. His success lies in having a Government with the policy and platform of the Country party. To prove that in the past the Government have neglected the men on the land, we have in the report of the proceedings at the dairy conference the Premier making use of these words—

"Agriculture was almost stagnant at the present time, and had been so for years."

The hon. gentleman went on to say—

"He was well aware that there were certain factors that had hampered agricultural development in recent years."

Further on he said—

"But it was not to be wondered at that land settlement was proceeding slowly when one realised the unsatisfactory conditions existing in the agricultural industry in Queensland. While men who were on the land considered themselves not sufficiently remunerated—while the people in rural districts considered themselves neglected, and there was a general atmosphere leading to the impression that there was no encouragement for a man to go on the land—there would be no great progress towards the extension of rural industries."

There you have the Premier's admission that during the seven years the Government have been in power they have neglected the man on the land. He states there that the reason we have not had the development we should have had is because nothing has been done to cause a man to go on the land and stay there.

As the result of the redistribution of the electoral seats, three new electorates have been created in the metropolitan area. That goes to show that the Government have been legislating for the man in the city—not for the man on the land—and consequently the drift of the population has been from the country to the city. The Premier, at the dairy conference, complained that the men on the land had not had a fair deal, and he wanted to assist them. I should be very pleased to assist him in trying to get better conditions for the man on the land. I have the reports of the Queensland Butter Pool Committee, of which Mr. W. Purcell was chairman, and Messrs. W. T. Harris and T. Flood Plunkett were members. The report states—

"The sale of the surplus Australian butter from 1st August, 1920, to 31st March, 1921, by the Commonwealth Dairy Produce Pool Committee having been effected by representatives of the producers at the rate of 274s. per cwt., an application was made by the Queensland section of that committee to the Queensland Prices Commissioner for an equivalent price for local sales."

If the producers had been given consideration, and the Government had listened to the pleadings of hon. members on this side of the House on behalf of dairymen at that time, the Government would not have allowed the Commissioner of Prices to take

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the stand he did in refusing to allow those engaged in the dairying industry to receive the price they should have got for their butter. The report further states—

“Had producers been able to obtain the market value of their butter sold locally, the pool, of course, would have been unnecessary, and cream suppliers would not have been compelled to sacrifice £242,000.”

Owing to the action of the Government in allowing the Commissioner of Prices to be dictated to by the Housewives' Association, the dairymen of Queensland were compelled to forgo an increase in the price of butter. The Government would not take any notice of our pleadings on behalf of the dairymen; and can you wonder that the dairymen have lost faith in the Government? The report further states, dealing with the sacrifice of £242,000—

“That sum represents the loss which was made by being forced to sell butter in Queensland below its value, basing the locally sold butter at 92 points, for which grade the Imperial Government paid 277s.”

The Secretary for Agriculture has stated what he is going to do for the man on the land; but his remarks are strange when one considers that, when he went amongst the industrialists, he said we should produce for use and not for profit. He does not talk in that strain when he goes amongst the dairy farmers, and I would like him, when he gets up to reply to the debate on this Bill, to give a full explanation of the phrase “production for use and not for profit.” We have advisory boards in existence at the present time, and, if men of common sense are elected to them, they may be the means of doing some good. Such boards have been in existence in connection with local government. Representatives of local authorities attend annual conferences in Brisbane. They come down here from all parts of Queensland, in order to discuss certain important matters, after which resolutions are drawn up and placed before the Home Secretary, but the hon. gentleman has not heeded them on very many occasions. In fact, he has been inclined to ridicule those conferences, and has not given them the assistance that should have been given them, in so far as he has refused them the free railway passes allowed by previous Governments. I was present at a meeting in the Minister's room when representatives from a co-operative dairy company met him in connection with cold storage. The representatives told the Minister that they were unanimously of the opinion that the cold stores should not be erected at Hamilton, because they would not be a paying concern there, but he did not heed them in any way. I sincerely hope that he will listen to any advice that he may receive from men with practical experience in different branches of the agricultural industry who may be elected to the advisory boards or the Council of Agriculture. I congratulate the Government on bringing forward this scheme. It is going to be a good one if they will take the advice we intend to offer in connection with its improvement. I think that the scheme should go further and become a Federal one. It has been suggested that we must start somewhere, and it is just as well to start in Queensland. Already we have advisory boards in connec-

tion with the dairying industry. They have stated that probably during drought conditions in Queensland the cost of butter production may be in the vicinity of 3s. 6d. per lb., whereas in the Southern States they may be enjoying very good seasons. What is going to prevent those States from sending their butter up here and depriving Queensland producers of the market for their butter? If we are united to prevent that sort of thing, then some good will come of the scheme. I would like to see us also united with New Zealand. We send butter to the London market, and we are in competition with New Zealand there. England can afford to do without New Zealand or without Australia, and therefore we are in competition. If we can come forward with a united front and bring New Zealand in under this scheme, I think we can both command a very much better price for our produce, especially during certain seasons of the year. We can learn a lot from New Zealand with regard to co-operation. I have here a copy of the articles of association of the New Zealand Co-operative Dairy Company, Limited, which show that they are doing a great deal in New Zealand to build up their co-operative concerns; and we could do a lot to assist primary production in Queensland if we were allowed to compel the farmers, by necessary inducements, to take shares in our co-operative dairy companies. Clause 11 of the articles of association of the New Zealand Co-operative Dairy Company, Limited, reads—

“Supplier members and bona fide members of the company who are already accepted by the company as such, in accordance with these articles, and other persons desirous of becoming and being accepted as aforesaid as supplier members or bona fide members shall be required to hold such a number of shares in the capital of the company as shall from time to time be fixed and determined by the directors in accordance with the provisions contained in the subclauses of this article:—

(a) The directors shall at such time or times as they may in their sole discretion think proper fix a standard or standards upon a butter-fat or such other basis or bases as they may think fit for the purpose of determining and computing the number and (or) class, group, or section of shares which shall be held from time to time by such supplier members, bona fide members, and (or) other persons as aforesaid, or by any of them.”

I am inclined to think that, if we adopted similar articles to those, it would be for the benefit of our co-operative factories, because, if we could induce our farmers to take up shares, it would be to their advantage. At the present time there are many farmers supplying milk to factories in which they have no interest at all. In New Zealand they have a standard in connection with butter shares, and, when a man increases his supplies over the quantity supplied the previous year, he is compelled, if the directors think fit, to take up a further number of shares. I have received a letter from the Superintendent of the New Zealand Co-operative Dairy Company, Limited, in which he says—

“The share standard for butter-making is 70 lb. of butter-fat per £1 share, and to qualify for the shareholders' bonus of

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gd. per lb. it is necessary for the full complement of shares to be held on this basis. No cash payment is required, the annual call on the shares being met by the shareholders' bonus of gd. per lb. above referred to, which is retained until such time as all shares held become fully paid. In the ordinary course payment is thus extended over a period of about six years."

If you extend the payment for one share over a period of six years, and the shareholder is increasing his supplies, you are not imposing any hardship on that man if you ask him to take up shares in the concern. I understand this company has a capital of about £1,000,000, which has enabled them to build up a huge concern which is doing a vast amount of good for the men connected with it. This company goes in for the manufacture of cheese and casein, and they have a representative at home watching their interests, and they have a system whereby they can check any inferior butter that arrives in London, and trace that butter to the factory, and from the factory to the farmer. This has done a great deal towards helping them to maintain the position they have acquired in the home market.

The Premier, when speaking, referred to the secondary industries. That is a matter to which we should give more serious consideration than we have given up to the present time. The secondary industries could be built up by co-operation, as has been proved by the Murarrie Bacon Factory. It has been proved in connection with that factory that the farmers can manage their own business with profit to themselves. It is a paying concern to-day, and the farmers are getting out of the concern everything they put into it. The farmers so far have been very successful in connection with co-operation, and I hope the Government will give them every assistance, both in connection with primary and secondary industries, so that we shall be able to manufacture all our requirements. We should also have men looking for markets overseas, and I was very pleased to note that at the Premier's Conference it was decided to send a Commissioner to the East to look for markets for our products. If we can establish a market in the East it will be a great factor in the success of our primary and secondary industries. At the present time many of our secondary industries are hampered by restrictions in connection with the training of youths. I am informed that at the present time, before you can get a young fellow into any of these institutions, they must employ no less than three seniors. If these conditions are allowed to continue, how is it possible to have our young men trained to become skilled mechanics? An opportunity should be given to our young men to learn trades, and the present restrictions should be removed.

I would like to congratulate the Government on what they have done in connection with rural schools. These schools are doing a wonderful lot of good, and they will be the means of inducing the men on the land to stay there.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: This is not the Address in Reply.

MR. CLAYTON: I was at Childers recently, and I saw a very fine exhibit there from one of the rural schools established in

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the district. These schools will be the means of inducing the young to take a greater interest in farm life and to stay on the land.

I have stated, when I have been before the farmers from time to time, that I was coming to this House to do all I could for the benefit of the man on the land; and, if this measure is going to be of benefit to them, then I intend to support it, because there is no section of the community that needs protection more than the man on the land.

MR. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I would like to say at the outset that I am not going to support the Bill in its present form. The farmers are not asking for such a measure, and, in looking through the Bill I can see no clause in it that is going to encourage co-operation.

We have come to the conclusion at all our conferences that co-operation is going to save the man on the land. We do not think that being tacked on to [5 p.m.] the Department of Agriculture as a sort of sub-branch of the department is going to be any good. I look upon this measure as nothing more than extra taxation, and I object to extra taxation. I do not believe that my constituents can afford to pay an extra tax.

MR. BEBBINGTON: Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN: The hon. member for Drayton this afternoon asked the Minister in charge of the Bill whether the organisers were going to charge a fee. The hon. gentleman knows perfectly well that, if a fee is charged, there will be no organisation.

MR. BEBBINGTON: There would be no members.

MR. WARREN: Last session the Minister rejected a measure that would have done 1,000 per cent. more good than this Bill is ever likely to do. The very groundwork of the Bill is wrong. We want to build up huge co-operative concerns. We have got big co-operative concerns at the present time, and presiding over them are men who have acquired real business capacity. They have been taught in the school of co-operation. This Bill will place the Secretary for Agriculture over those men. Without any personal reflection on the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill, I want to ask him what education he has had as far as co-operation is concerned? What big co-operative business has the hon. gentleman been in? We do not, by Act of Parliament, make big business concerns or big business men. We breed those men—we educate them.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have had more to do with the co-operative movement than you have.

MR. WARREN: If there is any possibility of getting any good out of this measure, I would like to get it, but what is the whole thing for? It has been said that hon. members are leaving the other side because it is a sinking ship. This Bill is simply intended to stop that leak. It is not brought in because hon. gentlemen opposite have developed some kindly feeling towards the man on the land. They have never changed, and could not change; they were not made in the mould of change. They act simply according to circumstances. They know that a dry rot has set in.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: White ants. (Laughter.)

Mr. WARREN: White ants, as the hon. member says. That is nearly as bad as dry rot. Had that dry rot not set in, we would have heard nothing of this Bill. We have seen the messenger bringing letters to the Secretary for Agriculture from different people. The thing was not big enough in itself, but he had to get people to send these letters to him. The men who wrote those letters do not know what a deadly thing this Bill is. I say there is nobody, with very few exceptions, who wants this Bill. They want something which will build up big co-operative concerns, but they do not want this measure which is being foisted on to them.

I want to point out some of the things which this Bill is brought in to deal with. First of all, it does not stand for co-operation. Clause 6 shows what it stands for. Every item in that clause is something which the Department of Agriculture ought to be doing for the people on the land. There is not one thing in the list which should have to be done by the people themselves. Yet hon. members opposite have the effrontery to come down and ask the farmers' representatives to support a measure of this description, which means a tax on the farmers.

Mr. DUNSTAN: A lot of your members are supporting it.

Mr. WARREN: I am not responsible for the members of our party. I am receiving bundles of letters condemning this measure. I am not responsible to anyone but my constituents in regard to this measure. I am working primarily for the farmer. Neither this Government, nor any other Government so far as I can see, has done sufficient for the man on the land. Why is agriculture in this State in such a deplorable condition? Why are people leaving the land? For ten years we have had no advance in co-operation. During that time we have never had a Government to do anything for us. If we want money for co-operative concerns, we are told that there is a depleted Treasury, and we are not able to get assistance. Take the fruitgrowers as an example. They want to organise so that the quality of the fruit can be maintained and sent overseas, but they do not come cap in hand to the Government and ask them to organise the industry. Naturally, they want the assistance of the Department of Agriculture. But, by a Bill of this description, we are putting a weight on an industry which is already sinking. Hon. members opposite have quoted a lot of figures to show the prosperity of the State. In fact, one hon. member opposite tried to show the House what the Government are doing for agriculture, simply because we waste a considerable amount more than some of the other States on our Department of Agriculture; but what he omitted to do was to put the other table into "Hansard" to show how little we get for our expenditure. With the exception of sugar and one other item we are right down below the other States, and that is because of the unsympathetic Governments we have had. I am not going to say that other Governments have been altogether unsympathetic, but I will say that they have not jabbed the knife into the farmer, and they have not tried to destroy the struggling farmer. The Government to-day are in a sorry position. They are not able to help the man on the land. They are able to go in for State enterprises

that are no earthly good to this State. They are able to do other things that are not beneficial to the State and are no good for the primary producer. This is a primary-producing country. If we do not assist the man on the land and go in for more primary production, then it is no good for this country. We want to do something for the man on the land, and we want to do it quickly, or we shall have a starving city. Look at the way the rural population is drifting into the city. The last speaker gave an instance in connection with the redistribution of seats, which proved conclusively more than anything else that something radical wants to be done, and that quickly, to prevent the population from drifting into the city. I want to ask: Is this scheme introduced for a specific purpose? Is it going to do any good? I do not care what the "Daily Mail" says in its leading article of Saturday last. It points out that, even if the Government are not sincere, we may get something out of this Bill. I do not agree with that. I say that, if the tree is wrong, then the fruit will be wrong, and that it is a wrong principle to expect that something good is going to come out of something that is bad.

Mr. COLLINS: That is something that the "Daily Mail" editor can paste in his notebook.

Mr. WARREN: The "Daily Mail" said in the leading article on Saturday that members of the Country party have right on their side when they say they are suspicious of this Bill. Although that paper is supporting this legislation, it stated that we have a right to be suspicious, and that our suspicion is only natural. Not only have we a right to be suspicious of this Bill, but it is our bounden duty to watch what the Government are going to do. I do not make any "bones" about it. I am not afraid of the political side of the question. I can go to the people in the country centres, because I know they can see through it. The people in the country can see through the Bill just the same as they can see daylight. They know perfectly well that the Government are not sincere. Whoever took them to be sincere? They have been showing their insincerity for the last seven years, and now they have turned down the men who put them over there. They are like the lion which ate its own cubs.

The SPEAKER: Order! I hope the hon. gentleman will deal with the Bill.

Mr. WARREN: I am dealing with the Bill, Mr. Speaker, and I hope you will allow me the liberty to express myself, because I feel that this is too big a question to be allowed to slip on one side like this. I am proving the insincerity of the Administration. I want the people of Queensland to know, and I want the people of my electorate to know, that I am not going to swallow it whole and take just what they offer. We know that the Government, when they go to the people, will say to the electors in certain electorates, "This is the Soviet system," and in other electorates they will say, "Look at the broad system it is."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What is the Soviet system? Tell us something about it.

Mr. WARREN: I will tell the hon. gentleman all about it if he will come up to my electorate. This question is so serious that

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I think the people should have some say in it. It should not be foisted on the people. I am prepared to allow my electorate to be the testing ground to see if the people want this Bill. I challenge any hon. member opposite to contest Murrumba with me on this Bill.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. WARREN: I make only one condition with such a contest, and that is that the Government will allow a member on the other side to absent himself while the contest is going on. It is too serious a question to deal with lightly. The people are saying there is no sincerity in it. Hon. members do not understand the position of the primary producer, and, what is more, they do not want to. They did all this on the sly, because they wanted to create an impression. They wanted to say, "We did it! Alone we did it!"

Mr. DUNSTAN: Some members say that it is exactly like your policy.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You say that we stole it from your platform.

Mr. WARREN: All I can say is, that if our policy is like this, I do not stand for it.

Mr. KIRWAN: You had better join the Nationalist party.

Mr. WARREN: If this is our policy, then I do not stand for it. I do not stand for Soviet control, or nationalisation, or whatever you like to call it. If that is our policy, then I do not want to stand for it. I want the people to look at this thing carefully. I have taken part in conferences where the farmers discussed this Bill, and the consensus of opinion was that they did not want to have any connection with the Government whatever.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. WARREN: If the Minister is reasonable and fair, and, if he wants this thing to be put on the statute-book for the good of the people, and if he has got any sense of right at all, then he will efface himself and any future Minister, whoever he may be, from this Bill. I do not want to see any public servant on the Council of Agriculture. Someone said that it is a fine thing to have the Commissioner for Railways on it. I say it is not. If the Commissioner for Railways is able to manage the railways of Queensland, that is one man's job, and it will occupy all his time.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: We do not want him interfering with us.

Mr. WARREN: I have great respect for the Commissioner for Railways. In fact, I respect him more than any gentleman in this Chamber; but, with all respect to him, we do not want him on the council. Let him attend to his own work, and we will attend to ours. We do not want a mere sop thrown to us. We want something that is going to last. The hon. member for Rockhampton described the Bill as something that was absolutely going to bring about a different condition of affairs so far as agriculture is concerned.

Mr. FLETCHER: He is irresponsible.

Mr. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, probably you do not know much about the agricultural industry; but, as a business man and a man of common sense, I ask you, "How is this Bill going to bring about any different conditions? How is it going to bring about

anything revolutionary in the agricultural industry? How many men is it going to put on the land?"

Mr. DUNSTAN: It is too big a question for you to understand.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: He is rubbing it into you, all right.

Mr. WARREN: The Minister, in introducing the Bill, held these letters of credit in his hand, and he said that they were all disinterested. I want to tell the hon. gentleman that, when men are receiving two guineas a day and extra money for expenses, they are not disinterested. It does not matter what trade or industry is going to be revolutionised, if you pay men to speak there will always be plenty prepared to speak. They will all speak and pipe the right tune if they are paid for it.

Mr. DUNSTAN: That is a reflection on the farmers.

Mr. WARREN: The Minister in charge of the Bill threw out his chest and said, "I am going to emancipate the farmers." (Opposition laughter.) Just study that word "emancipate." One hon. member on the other side says, "You insult the farmers" and here the Minister says they are slaves, because he claims he is going to emancipate them. Are they slaves?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Many of them.

Mr. WARREN: The Minister insults them. The Government have been seven years grinding them down and rubbing them in the dirt—seven years trying to damn these people—and now the Minister has the effrontery to get up and call them slaves. It is an insult to call any people in a free country slaves. I say they are not slaves, but their very calling puts them in a position where they are not able to express their views. They are scattered. The rural population is not like the working population in the cities.

I want to refer to the method of organisation adopted in the Bill. It was tried in California years and years ago, and it failed.

The HOME SECRETARY: What rot.

Mr. WARREN: I would like the hon. member to be a little more polite in speaking to me and other Country party members. (Laughter.)

The HOME SECRETARY: When was it tried?

Mr. WARREN: Sixteen years ago. It failed, and it was tried again on the principle on which the party opposite organise. They built up a system of separate sectional organisations and that proved a moderate success—so much of a success that now even the different sections of the fruit industry are organised separately. We do not need to go to California to prove the soundness of that conclusion. Here in Queensland the fruitgrowers were organised as a body for a few years and were growing into a big concern, but twelve months ago they found that they were going downhill as an organisation. So they started to organise the banana section as a separate section, and now each section of the industry in Queensland is organised separately. I say that to organise these people all together is going to be an absolute impossibility. Take Palmwoods, a centre in my electorate, one of the richest and most progressive places in Australia. We have dairying, fruitgrowing, and general farming

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there. The people engaged in those industries will all meet in one room and discuss their different problems. What will happen? There will be no interest in it at all. Take a wider field. Can you imagine anything more ridiculous than representatives of the sugar industry and the fruit industry sitting down at one table and talking over their different affairs? The thing is too utterly absurd to contemplate. What the Government ought to do, if they are going to organise these industries, is to organise them separately. But then they need not pay fifteen men to organise politically, and that would not have been any good to members opposite. When the scheme was floated, the Premier should have called the organised sections together instead of getting one or two in a sort of backdoor method. He should have got representatives of the various co-operative concerns, elected by the people, and consulted them in a proper democratic manner. But these gentlemen opposite are not democrats. They are not business men. They do not know the needs of the country. They see the country dwindling and the city swelling, but they do not know the remedy. They are politicians. We heard the Secretary for Agriculture say that the Premier was a statesman. Not only that, but we have also all these organisers going through the different electorates and saying the same thing. I shall not say anything about their qualifications, but the thing is absolutely wrong in principle and it will do no good to the State.

Mr. COLLINS: You seem to be very much divided in your opinions over there.

Mr. WARREN: We are allowed to express our honest convictions over here, but gentlemen on the other side are tied hand and foot. There is one despot ruling Queensland to-day. It is not a party—it is not a Cabinet; it is just a despot who threw to the winds the very men who put him there.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. WARREN: All these things bear on the Bill. The fact is that the Bill is a myth.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

Mr. WARREN: Some hon. members on this side think they are going to get amendments.

Mr. PETERSON: I doubt it.

Mr. WARREN: My opinion is that this Bill was never meant to do any good, because of the natural dislike of the people on that side to the "beef barons" and the honest tillers of the soil.

The SPEAKER: Order! I must ask the hon. member to regard my call to order and deal with the provisions of the Bill.

Mr. WARREN: I do not wish to disagree with your ruling, Mr. Speaker, but I feel very strongly on this matter, and I want to expose the motives for the Bill. You know yourself that there is nothing in this Bill other than a sop to the primary producer. You know perfectly well that there is nothing genuine or tangible to be given away. These gentlemen do not give anything away. They come from "Takingdom," not from "Givingdom." (Laughter.) I am prepared to take the Bill clause by clause, and, if there is anything in it for the farmer, if there is anything in it for my people, if there is anything in it for me as a man of the soil, I am quite prepared to do my best to put it into

proper form, so that the people of the State will benefit. Because, after all, if the present rate of loss to the country goes on in the way in which it has been proceeding for these last few years, we very soon are going to have a terrible disaster so far as primary production is concerned.

Mr. CATTERMULL (*Musgrave*): I regard this Bill from the viewpoint of a primary producer of some thirty-five years' standing. I have been during that time connected with various organisations of sugar-growers, dairy farmers, and others, out all the time to get better conditions. If this Bill is kept free from party politics and there are no dragnet clauses in it, it will have my support, for although I belong to the Country party, I am not a party man; I am out for results. As I have said before, I give the Government all credit for having passed the regulation of sugar-cane prices legislation.

Mr. BRENNAN: You were a Labour man then.

Mr. CATTERMULL: No more a Labour man than I am to-day.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Come over here.

Mr. CATTERMULL: I am all right where I am. The regulation of sugar cane prices legislation certainly gave the primary producers some benefit, and I have every hope that this Bill—if we are allowed to put certain amendments into it—will also have beneficial results. There are one or two amendments which will be moved from this side, and I believe the Minister will see fit to allow them to go in. If they go in, the Bill will have my whole-hearted support. If they do not, I am afraid I shall have to oppose it. The Minister has given his assurance that he will accept amendments. There is one [5.30 p.m.] thing that is very peculiar about this business. While we are

advised under this Bill to organise ourselves industrially, hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House tell the workers to organise themselves both industrially and politically.

I think it would have been better had the Minister, in bringing forward the Bill, used as a basis the organisations which already are in existence. The canegrowers, dairymen, wheat men, fruit men, and cheese men are all fairly well organised; and, had their organisations been made use of, a tremendous amount of expense would have been saved and there would have been no reason for sending fifteen organisers to stomp the country. Hon. members on the other side have said that if this Bill is passed there will be no occasion for members on this side to represent the farmers. Although I am in favour of the Bill, who is better able to see it properly administered than the man on the land representing his own class? There are men on the other side who, no matter how willing they may be, do not know the wants of the man on the land, and, therefore, cannot administer in the right way legislation which is passed for his benefit.

Mr. FOLEY: There are as many country men on this side as on yours.

Mr. CATTERMULL: No, there are not. I have advised the farmers to support this Bill, provided it is genuine. But I have told them to see that they return members who will ensure that the Act is properly administered. If we are to get any good

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out of it, it must not be confined to this State. If it is, it cannot have the result we would wish. Take the sugar position to-day. That industry is outside the State sphere of action, and is wholly dependent on Federal action. We have our cane prices boards, both local and central, but they can only base the price of cane on the price of raw sugar, and the price of raw sugar is determined by the Federal Government. It must, therefore, be a Federal matter. I hope the operations of this Bill will extend to all the other States. In the sugar industry we are fairly well organised in Queensland at the present time.

Mr. FOLEY: Disorganised.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: You have no organisation to compare with it.

Mr. CATTERMULL: Eighty-five per cent. of the growers are members of the Australian Sugar Producers' Association or the United Cane Growers' Association.

Mr. FOLEY: They are political organisations.

Mr. CATTERMULL: They are non-political. By way of levies to those organisations we contribute 3d. or 4d. per ton of cane. We are also further paying levies to the Government. Last year we paid for the Central Cane Prices Board 2d. per ton of cane. We are also paying towards the cost of the Sugar Experiment Stations 1d. per ton of cane. So, although you bring the sugar-grower under this Bill, I do not think you will have to ask him to pay any more than he is paying to-day.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Hear, hear!

Mr. CATTERMULL: We consume only 12 per cent. of our product; the balance goes to the Southern States, and the Federal Government fix the price of raw sugar, and on that price the cane prices boards determine the price to be paid for cane.

I would like to draw attention to some of the motions which were carried at the recent Adelaide conference, showing that the people down South are fully alive to the sugar situation. The following is taken from the report of the proceedings of the conference:—

“SUGAR AGREEMENT AND CONTROL.

“Mr. McGibbon (W.A.) announced that the committee appointed to consider the sugar questions had agreed upon certain recommendations. They were as follows:

“The maintenance of a white Australia being the established policy of the Commonwealth and this association, it is necessary to maintain white population in the northern parts of Queensland. This can only be done by the establishment of industries capable of employing a considerable white population. The sugar industry, being established for the purpose of fulfilling the national ideal of a white continent, it is necessary—

1. That the growers of cane shall receive for their product such a price as will recoup them for their cost of production plus a reasonable margin of profit.

2. That the workers in the industry shall receive a wage commensurate with the class of work undertaken, and which shall equal at least wages paid to white workers in other parts of Australia.

3. The millers and refiners shall receive remuneration in the price of

sugar such a sum as will ensure them a reasonable profit, the payment to have a direct bearing on the efficiency and economic value of their work.

4. That a Federal tribunal, consisting of representatives of growers, millers, refiners, workers, and consumers, be appointed to have jurisdiction to enable the above objects to be put into operation.

5. That the basis of the price determined shall be subject to alteration from time to time, and that the particulars be published for the benefit and information of the public.

6. That the high retail price of sugar, at present being charged is due to the Government's heavy losses on importation of foreign sugars, and is in no way attributable to Queensland sugar producers, who from 1916 to 1920 received less than world parity for their sugar. The losses made on those imported sugars are being recouped by the Government from the consumers by the maintenance of the present retail price.

7. That sugar necessary for industries having an export trade shall be available for the trade at a price not exceeding that at which sugar is available from other countries, should Australia be unable to supply those industries, either as regards price or quantity, and that then the importation of a sufficient quantity of sugar to meet the requirements of those industries shall be allowed.

8. That, in order to assist home fruit preserving and jam industries, a pooling system be established to enable such industries to be supplied with sugar at the most favourable price possible.

9. That to permit of the establishment of such a permanent scheme as outlined above the system of regulation, supervision of the industry be continued for a reasonable period, subject to such modifications as investigation of the conditions may prove to be justified without injustice to the sugar producers. It is recognised that to secure that end the whole industry must be brought under Federal jurisdiction.

10. That the sugar policy of Australia should be to preserve Australian markets for internal consumption for Australian-grown white sugar.”

I think that, before any further benefits can be achieved for the sugar industry, there must be a certain amount of Federal control, because, to grow sugar in Australia we must have a protective tariff, and the Federal Government control the imposition of that tariff, and, therefore, they have the final say in the sugar industry.

Mr. COLLINS: That does not mean that you are in favour of a higher tariff in preference to the present sugar agreement?

Mr. CATTERMULL: I have always been in favour of new protection. In connection with that matter, it was resolved at the Adelaide conference that there should be a board consisting of one representative each of the workers, growers, millers, refiners, and consumers, and that that board should start at the bottom and work upwards in connection with the fixation of a price until they reached a price at which sugar could be sold to the consumer, and the tariff wall will be fixed

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by the Commonwealth Government accordingly. There should be a fair return for everyone. The State can go no further in connection with this matter. We have the regulation of sugar cane prices legislation, but ultimately the sugar industry must be controlled by the Federal Government. I intend to support the Bill if the Minister will keep to his promise and accept amendments from this side of the House.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Reasonable and necessary amendments.

Mr. CATTERMULL: If the Minister will not accept the amendments we intend to submit, I shall have to oppose the Bill on the third reading. I do not want party politics to creep into the matter.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mimeo*): I naturally view this Bill with a great deal of interest. Although it has been mentioned by various hon. members on this side of the House that there are certain branches of farming fairly well organised, on the other hand there are some sections that are not. If there is any calling that should be organised in its own interests, it is the farming community. Something like thirty years ago I, with others, started to organise the farmers in the district in which I live. We devoted all our spare time, including Saturday afternoons and Sundays, and every other moment apart from our work in connection with the matter, and we attained a good deal of success. In a district in which there were 800 or 900 farmers, our roll showed a membership of 500 within two years, and I think that in those days that could be considered fairly good work. I had a hand in the formation of both the Australian Sugar Producers' Association and the United Cane Growers' Association. The United Cane Growers' Association followed on the Pioneer River Farmers' Association that I, with others, was responsible for forming thirty years ago. That is why I view the scheme before the House with a good deal of interest. I also think that I can claim to have a little knowledge of the subject. While I see possibilities of good in the Bill, I cannot help thinking that it might have been better if the Government had taken the present organisations connected with the industries that are at present organised and built upon them, and I think the success that would have been achieved by those means would have induced those branches of agriculture which at present are disorganised also to come into the movement. If this scheme is brought into effect, we shall have to scrap some of our existing organisations which possess a capacity for doing good, and that would be a great pity. I do not express that opinion from a pounds-shillings-and-pence point of view. But it will be a very heavy financial burden to keep both organisations going. I am only a grower in a moderate way, yet I am levied upon by the Government for the maintenance of cane prices boards and for the Sugar Experimental Stations, and I am also levied upon in connection with my organisation, making a total of between £30 and £40 per annum I have to pay in levies. If we are now going to be levied upon still further, it is going to be a very big tax.

Mr. COLLINS: Would not your levy represent about 1,000 tons of cane?

Mr. SWAYNE: It might. The hon. member, representing as he does cane-growers, should know that the net result of the ton-

nage for that purpose is very different indeed from the result to the grower. The worker receives over 70 per cent. of the value in wages, so the grower has to watch other disbursements very carefully. The Bill contains provisions for the good of the producer, but it may be so administered that its effect will be quite different from what many think. It could be so administered as to tend towards the nationalisation of industry: and, seeing that the Premier is endeavouring to pose in the new role of the farmers' benefactor, it is about time that he made his position clear. No man can serve two masters. Before we can take the Premier on trust, as he evidently desires us to do, he should tell us exactly how he stands in relation to his party's platform and also in relation to the extreme element in his party. Although we know there are times when he gets up and scolds them, he has never by any act on his part done anything to check them or protect other sections of the community. Speaking in Melbourne in connection with the I.W.W., the hon. gentleman said—

"They preach revolution, sabotage, and bloodshed to gain what the workers could take by constitutional means any moment they care to exercise their vote. (Applause and dissent.) The I.W.W.-ites were the worst enemies of Labour."

At the same time he allowed them with impunity to break the law, never enforcing his own Arbitration Act as regards strikers. He lends himself to that section in every possible way. For instance, I do not think I would be out of order in referring to a recent appointment to the Senate. I do not think I am doing Mr. MacDonald an injustice if I say that he is an extremist. The paper over which he recently had control has been preaching the doctrine of the One Big Union.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not now dealing with the Bill.

Mr. SWAYNE: In a second-reading speech I think I am entitled to try and ascertain the motives of those fathering the Bill. We know words may mean anything, and in ascertaining the value of a man's protestations, it is a fair thing to consider his actions, and the actions of the Premier throughout have not been such as to cause any great reliance to be placed on his protestations.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What do you mean by that?

Mr. SWAYNE: We see by the paper this morning that there are anticipations of a disruption of the party. That has nothing to do with the Bill, but it is interesting and may have some bearing on the question of how the Premier and the Minister in charge of the Bill stand in connection with these matters. In this connection I should like to point out that the late Hon. T. J. Ryan, on his return from the old country, indicated very clearly the attitude of the Labour party. According to the "Standard" report, speaking in reference to the platform—and, of course, we know the platform at the present time stands for the abolition of private ownership of any kind and that does not appeal to the farmer—the late Hon. T. J. Ryan said—

"Consequently they must be able to define and adhere to their position. Fortunately for Labourites, it was not difficult for them to define their position, because it was defined in the Labour platform."

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which everyone could read. The sure course of success for the Labour party was to adhere strictly to their platform. While they must adhere to their own platform—which he and every member of the Labour party had to adhere to and every person who claimed to be a supporter of the party must also adhere to it—he made it clear that he was not opposed to the extremists within the party. These stood for the platform for which they all stood. The extremists might want to go faster than the majority thought was wise, so fast that the majority of the party would think he endangered the existence of the party; still he was within the party."

Again he spoke of the solidarity prevailing amongst the various sections in the party. He continued—

"In conclusion, the Premier predicted that the solidarity which had carried the Labour party through four years of war would carry it through the next years of reconstruction."

The Bill as it stands contains so many elements of danger to the farmer that I think we are quite justified in viewing it with a considerable amount of apprehension, if the hon. gentleman who is bringing it before us is to have the administration of it, unless he tells us that he has changed his opinion on some of the matters I have mentioned. I think I am correct in saying that at the present time there is a general desire that the hon. gentleman should make his position clear.

In connection with the sugar industry, if there ever has been a clash between the demands of organised labour and the farmer's interests, I know the Premier has never upheld the farmer's end. In his control of the State-controlled sugar-mills, he always placed them second to the Labour organisations. I could quote case after case in support of that. Then, again, if the hon. gentleman is such a supporter of co-operation as he now tells us he is, how is it that he has given no indication of it in the past? We know that one of the best co-operative measures ever placed on the statute-book was put there by his predecessors. In 1914 the Co-operative Sugar Works Act was passed, and under that Act no one who is not a grower can hold shares in a factory.

The PREMIER: No sugar mill has ever been erected under that Act.

Mr. SWAYNE: No; because they had no opportunity; but the hon. gentleman refused an application under it. The previous Government passed the 1911 Act, under which they built five big sugar-mills in the North.

The PREMIER: We built those mills.

Mr. SWAYNE: The contracts for those mills were let before the Labour Government took office. The Co-operative Sugar Works Act was one of the most purely co-operative measures ever placed on the statute-book, inasmuch as only the producers themselves can hold shares in a company, and one would have thought that, if the hon. gentleman is such a great believer in co-operation as he now professes to be, when a company approached him for assistance under that Act, he would have given it; but I understand that he refused. All through, their actions have been such as to give us just reason to doubt their bona fides in this matter. At the present time fully 35 per cent. of the sugar-growers are already

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in the two organisations, and in so far as the sale of their produce in Queensland is concerned, we have the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act providing for local boards and a central board to hold the scales evenly between the grower and the miller. Then, in so far as the sale of the manufactured article is concerned, we have the agreement with the Federal Government. If the agreement is not continued in some form or another, possibly it might be of advantage to the industry to come under this Bill; but there is every hope at the present time that the agreement will be continued for a term of years, and, if that is done, I really do not see where the industry is going to benefit by this Bill. Then, regarding technical advice, at present provision is made for obtaining such advice at our own cost. Unlike other agricultural industries that have experimental farms provided for them, we have to pay the cost. I am not grumbling at the charge, as I am rather proud of our independence in that regard, and the gentlemen who have been in charge of the Sugar Experiment Stations are most capable, and we are very well served in the way of advice as to the kind of cane to grow, what manure to use, and so on. So that, altogether, I really do not see that we are going to benefit by this Bill. It will simply mean an additional burden being placed on our shoulders. Again, it seems to me unjust that a levy should be placed on any industry by men who have no interest in the industry and who practically know very little about it. Out of the fifteen members of the Council of Agriculture who are to be elected by the district councils, there might be only three cane-growers. The same thing would apply to any other branch of agriculture, and yet the central council will have power to impose unlimited levies, and also to inflict fines up to £100. We realise what an immense power that is to give under a measure of this kind, and those who are fairly well served at the present time will probably consider that they should be allowed to remain outside the scope of the Bill. One amendment that should be embodied in the Bill is a proviso that, if any section of agriculture decides to remain out, it shall be at liberty to do so. In discussing this Bill one cannot help remarking that the Council of Agriculture will have under its control very great and important matters. The thought which enters one's mind is whether the cost which ought to be borne by the whole community is not, through the medium of the council, to be thrust upon the shoulders of the producers. For instance, one of the objects set out in clause 6—and it is certainly very desirable—is—

"Securing additional markets for the disposal of produce and improved means of distribution."

That is all right. That should certainly come within the scope of their duties—but, if it means the sending of Commissioners to the East and other countries for the purpose of finding markets for Queensland products, then the cost incurred in doing so should be borne by the whole of the community. The whole community will share in the advantages derived from the sale of the products which are grown. That is one of the things which suggests itself to me, and which emphasises the need for freeing the scheme as far as possible from political control. Again, many of these functions override what ought to be the duties of the Department of

Agriculture. I imagine that we have already competent officials to carry on these duties. Will this Council of Agriculture appoint another staff of officials? Like many other projects, it seems at the beginning innocent enough, but it will be very costly. We are taking a very great risk. There is another matter I feel very strongly upon, and it is one on which I have had some experience—that is, the Minister being in the chair. When I first rose to speak, I mentioned the work done in organising the farmers. In that case the organisation which we had in our district had its local branches, its district council, and then, in common with other bodies throughout Queensland, it had something similar to the central council in this case, inasmuch as the Minister of the department each year held a conference. The first was held at Gatton in 1897. They held another at Rockhampton, then at Maryborough, Warwick, and other places. It was not very long before it was felt that the presence of the Secretary for Agriculture in the chair restricted the conference, somewhat, so far as freedom of discussion was concerned. In the case of the Council of Agriculture provided under this Bill, I think there would be greater freedom if the central council elected its own chairman. That, again, would be another step towards the end we have all advocated—namely, freedom from political control. Again, it seems to me that the definition of "primary producer" requires to be carefully safeguarded. It requires something more than we have in this Bill. I know it is said that we have majority rule, but we do not know that the majority will rule. Queensland at the present time is governed by an Administration which represents a minority of the electors by something like 27,000 votes. That is a big minority, especially when we consider that we have not got a very large population in Queensland. Such happenings as that should make us very careful when we are framing such a measure as this. If the Bill becomes law—and no doubt it will—I hope that such amendments will be embodied as will ensure the objects of those who truly and in reality represent the primary producers, including the farmers, the graziers, and everyone else on the land. The Government have been in office for the last seven years, and in view of their past actions, is it any wonder that we are suspicious of them? It is laid down in the platform of the Primary Producers' Union that the union aims at—

"Encouraging greater efficiency in industry and greater development, realising that greater development depends upon an assurance that the producers will obtain an adequate and fair reward for their labour."

It also aims at—

"Organising the country system of distributing, realising that once an efficient system of distributing and handling is assured, one of the big problems of the primary producer is solved."

This is where the Premier first got the idea. Although we cannot go into details at this stage, we consider that an efficient system of distribution is necessary. At the time price-fixing was established, we tried to get representation on the body which was appointed to fix the prices of our products, but without success. I do not see any provision in this Bill whereby the Central Council may be represented on the price-

fixing commission. The council should be able to send delegates to sit with the Commissioner of Prices. I am very doubtful whether we shall not have to maintain our existing organisation even when this measure becomes law. We know that various industries come within the scope of the Arbitration Act, and the various organisations are represented by members in the Industrial Arbitration Court, so that we shall have to keep a separate organisation, if only for that purpose. I think that it can be fairly laid down that everything depends on the administration, and unless the Government administering it are interested heart and soul in the welfare and prosperity of the primary producer, such a measure as this will not do them full justice. For instance, how could any gentleman supporting a party which has expressed such opinions as those I am about to quote carry out successfully the duties pertaining to the control of this measure? I have here a report of the All-Australian Labour Conference which sat in Melbourne in July, 1921, and I find amongst the opinions this statement—

"Between these two classes the struggle must continue until capitalism is abolished. Capitalism can only be abolished by the workers uniting in one class-conscious, economic organisation to take and hold the means of production by revolutionary, industrial, and political action."

And the farmer is a capitalist.

The SPEAKER: Order! I hope the hon. member will connect his remarks with the Bill.

Mr. SWAYNE: As I have already said, the control of the administration of a measure like this must be free from party politics in order to do justice to the farmers; and who can better administer the measure than the farmers, who show, by being farmers themselves, that they desire to improve their farms, their production, their implements, and their working plant? An interjection made in my speech before dinner shows how little hon. members opposite know of a farmer's needs. I said something about the amount that labour was getting out of it—the amount received by the grower for his cane. An hon. member opposite retorted that, so far as the real working part of my farm was concerned, I was not entitled to anything. I do not think we can get any other meaning out of the interjection than what I am putting upon it.

Mr. RIORDAN: No one said that.

Mr. SWAYNE: I shall support the second reading in the hope that the Minister will do his best to improve the Bill, and also to give the Premier an opportunity of making good what he has said is his desire. On looking up his speeches at Lowood or Laidley, I notice that he said he was not receiving from the Country party that help which he had a right to expect—which, by the way, is a rather curious remark to fall from the Premier in view of the statement of the hon. member for Stanley, one of our own party, that he was not allowed access to the conference which was the first step in the launching of this scheme. When we get into Committee the Premier will have an opportunity of making good his statement that he desires our sympathy and support in this matter. I think he must recognise that in this party there are men who have

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had considerable experience as farmers themselves, and men also who have been some of the foremost workers in the cause of co-operation, and who are only too willing to assist to make this measure a good one. I hope, therefore, that, when we get into Committee, we shall have an opportunity to make the measure what the Premier says he intends it to be—that is, a measure of benefit to the farmers of Queensland.

Mr. W. COOPER (*Rosewood*): I rise to support this Bill. I have been rather surprised, listening to the statements which have been made by Opposition members. It appears to me that the Opposition on this question of the organisation of primary producers are floundering. One hon. member will stand up and say, "It is too political"; another will say "It is too expensive"; another "The Premier is not in earnest"; another "The Labour party are opposed to anything that might be beneficial to the man on the land." Hon. members opposite have endeavoured to place impediments in the way of the passage of this Bill, as far as it is possible for them to do it, under a "Yes-No" attitude. The time has arrived when the farmers should know exactly where the members of the Opposition stand—whether they are in favour of, or against, the passage of this measure. As I understand the Bill, it contains a principle under which will be handed over to the primary producer of Queensland the right to control the products of his own industry.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What is to prevent his doing that now?

Mr. W. COOPER: The Opposition claim that the Government will have too much control. As far as I can learn, there will be fifteen representatives, of whom five will be nominated by the Government. Seeing that the Government have to find at least 50 per cent. of the money for the carrying out of this scheme—

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: For one year.

Mr. W. COOPER: It is absolutely necessary for the Government to safeguard the interests of the other taxpayers of the State. If they did not do so, they would not know where this was going to end. I have had a good deal of experience in co-operation. As far back as 1890 I erected and placed in position the machinery in a factory. Since then I have seen the birth of co-operation in one of the finest agricultural districts—particularly in regard to dairying—in the whole of the Commonwealth, and that is the Richmond River. The attitude taken up by the proprietary factories at that time was exactly the same as the attitude which hon. members of the Opposition are taking up to-day. Hon. members do not want the farmer to control his own industry; they want to get proprietary factories for the purpose of exploiting the farmer.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: We own thousands of shares in them, and you own none.

Mr. W. COOPER: One will commence to think the hon. member for Draxton is a dingo, if he yaps much more. That hon. member has never placed before this Chamber anything that has been constructive. He was a member of this Chamber long before the Labour party came into office, and he cannot show us how he has endeavoured to help the man on the land. This hon. gentle-

man, who refers to the robbery of the farmer as far as relates to butter, has always been concerned in cheese. I happened to go to the place where he lives, and I could not get a bit of butter there; the hotelkeeper told us, "We cannot buy it here." Yet the hon. gentleman endeavours to lead hon. members of this Chamber to believe that he is interested in the welfare of the primary producer!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: And he represents them.

Mr. W. COOPER: The hon. gentleman will do a lot better by keeping quiet for a while. When the first co-operative company was started on the Richmond River, the proprietary factories told that company, "Your machinery will rust out; we will see that it will rust out." They put their heads together; and, as a matter of fact, the first factory that was erected under the co-operative system did rust out. There happened to be there men of constructive ability. I refer to Mr. Andrew Alcorn and Mr. Robert Alcorn. To-day anyone who goes down to Byron Bay can see a monument to the memory of that great co-operationist, Mr. Robert Alcorn. To-day the Byron Bay factory is one of the largest, if not the largest, in the world. That is what has been achieved by co-operation on the Richmond River, and it has been carried to such an extent that I believe there is not a proprietary factory in the whole of that great, grand dairying area.

Mr. COSTELLO: Under a Tory Government.

Mr. W. COOPER: I would remind hon. members opposite that, if Tory Governments had their way, there would be no co-operative companies. Hon. members opposite may laugh, but they have always been opposed to co-operation, and they cannot deny it. They are opposed to the co-operative efforts of the workers. They have always claimed that there should be no unions and that there should be no preference to unionists; yet, when they are drawing up articles for their own associations, they always make provision for a preference clause.

Mr. VOWLES: Can you name any proprietary butter factory in Queensland?

Mr. W. COOPER: Yes.

Mr. VOWLES: Where? Name just one!

Mr. W. COOPER: There are four hon. members of the Country party on the Opposition front bench—one a solicitor, one a chemist, one a grocer, and I do not know what the other hon. member is. We have proprietary companies operating in Brisbane to-day who buy up co-operative factory butter and label it and sell it as their own. Have we had any protest from hon. members opposite in regard to that? Not one word has ever been said in this Chamber as to how the co-operative factories or their products are being exploited by proprietary companies in Brisbane. The identity of that butter is lost to those factories. The proprietary companies are receiving the product of those factories, and the factories are not receiving the fair and reasonable deal that they should get. All the opposition to this Bill is nothing less than camouflage and humbug on the part of hon. members opposite. In one breath they say that the Bill will be a good thing, and in another they say, "We cannot permit it to become law because of the fact that the Premier and his

[*Mr. Swayne.*]

party have introduced it." They know perfectly well that the farmers are now awake to the fact that hon. members opposite have been camouflaging for so long. How much have hon. members opposite done to bring about decent conditions of marketing for the men they represent? Not one hand's turn have they made, and not one thing have they done in an endeavour to organise the farmers or to assist them to market their own products and receive the full reward for their labour.

Mr. BEBBINGTON interjected.

Mr. W. COOPER: I know that the hon. member for Drayton has gone out on to the platform just before an election and told the people what he has done; but hon. members in this Chamber know exactly what he has said and how much he has done. He certainly has quoted butter, and that is about all he has quoted. But there are other primary industries besides the dairying industry.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: You said he was all chiese just now.

Mr. W. COOPER: Not one hon. member on the other side has ever endeavoured to bring into existence a rural bank for the purpose of establishing rural credits to enable the farmer to retain his produce until such time as the market is favourable. A great deal might be done by the Council of Agriculture to establish rural credits for the benefit of the farmers. If there is one hardship that the farmer has to contend with it is the fact that nine times out of ten he is compelled to sell his produce at a very low price, simply because he has no money to carry him over a bad time. As far back as 1910, on the Richmond River, I advocated the Government placing half a million pounds in the Savings Bank for the purpose of making advances to the farmers to enable them to hold their produce until a reasonable price could be obtained for it. We know that this Bill contains some very good clauses, such as the one relating to the marketing of farm produce. Had it not been for the Government fixing the price of butter in Queensland—no doubt some hon. member opposite will say that the farmer was robbed—

Mr. BRAND: And quite right, too.

Mr. W. COOPER: You are just about as conversant with the matter as other hon. members.

Mr. CATTEENULL interjected.

Mr. W. COOPER: You do not know anything about it; you would be better cutting sugar-cane.

The SPEAKER: Order! I would ask hon. members to refrain from interjecting, and I would ask the hon. member for Rosewood to address the Chair.

Mr. W. COOPER: Hon. members opposite are endeavouring to draw me off the track. Had it not been for the Queensland Government fixing the price of butter, the dairy farmer in Queensland would not have got as high a price for his butter-fat as he received as the result of the price being fixed by the Commissioner of Prices. (Opposition laughter.)

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Tell that to the marines.

Mr. W. COOPER: Hon. members opposite may laugh, but it can be proved that no

farmer in New South Wales, Victoria, or in any other State in the Commonwealth got the same price, during the time the Imperial Government was buying butter at 274s. per cwt., as was paid to the Queensland farmer. At the time I took the trouble to go over to the Northern Rivers and visited the Byron Bay, Ballina, Coraki, South Grafton, Ulmarra, and Kyogle factories, and, while the Queensland farmer was receiving 2s. 4d. for his butter-fat, the highest price paid to the farmer on the Richmond River in New South Wales was from 2s. 3d. to 2s. 3½d.

Mr. WARREN: They knew they had a soft thing on.

Mr. W. COOPER: They may have had a soft thing on with me, but I am quite satisfied they would have had a pumpkin if they got you over there.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. W. COOPER: The Commonwealth Government, in the first instance, fixed the price of butter at 228s. per cwt., and there is no hon. member on the other side who does not know that. The Commonwealth Government decontrolled butter, and it immediately fell into the hands of the speculators and dropped to 218s. per cwt. The State Government at that time took control of it, and fixed it at 238s. per cwt., or 10s. higher than the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. MOORE: What year was that?

Mr. W. COOPER: I do not know what year it was. (Opposition laughter.) I can give the figures, but I am not quite certain about the year. (Opposition laughter.)

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. W. COOPER: Hon. members opposite know very well that what I am saying is true. They may try to lead me off the track by asking the year; I do not remember the year, but I know that that was done, and that the State Government fixed the price at 238s. per cwt. They did more than that—they pooled the whole of the butter, and the farmers in Queensland received about 264s. per cwt. Before that, the co-operative companies and some of the butter merchants had a conference with the present Minister and asked him to cease to control butter, and after the Government relinquished control the butter immediately fell to 196s. per cwt. The farmers in my district are looking upon this Bill in a more optimistic light than many of the members of the Country party would endeavour to lead this Chamber to believe. The farmers say, "We have always been led to believe that the Labour party were opposed to the man on the land, but we have found that since they have been in power for seven years we have not lost anything thereby."

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: And the farmer has not gained anything.

Mr. W. COOPER: At all events, they are infinitely better off than they were before, despite the difficulties which the Government have had to contend with through drought, cyclones, and the war.

Mr. WARREN: What have the Government done for the farmer?

Mr. W. COOPER: My electorate is the most closely settled agricultural district in Queensland. You can safely say that 80 per cent. of the farmers in that district believe that the Premier and his party are

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in earnest in endeavouring to do something for them. If the Government fails, they can do no worse than past Governments have done, because past Governments have failed in everything they attempted to do. If past Governments have made an attempt to do something, you can rest assured that it was only camouflage on their part. At every election which came round, the only plank in the platform of hon. members opposite, whether belonging to the Nationalists or the Country party, was that the Labour party were a party of exploiters so far as the man on the land was concerned, that they were asking the farmer to pay too high wages, and would tax them off the land. As a matter of fact, one man went so far as to say that they would send up a gang of navvies and pick their farms up and wheel them into Moreton Bay if they were returned.

Mr. WARREN: Don't be funny.

Mr. W. COOPER: That was said. I do not know whether hon. members opposite said it or not, but I would not have put it past them. We have the Secretary for Agriculture as chairman of the council. Some hon. members opposite say that the Minister has no right to be chairman. It would be very interesting to know who they would suggest should take his place. I have no hesitation in saying that the farmers of Queensland will grasp this measure with both hands. When the district councils are formed and get into proper working order, there will be no need for this party to be ashamed of the part which it has taken.

Mr. BRAND (*Burrum*): The hon. member who has just resumed his seat has gone to considerable pains to try and make the House believe that the members of the Country party are desirous of voting against this measure. I do not know whether the hon. member is afraid of the Country party or not, or whether the farmers of Rosewood have been stirring him up, but he is an hon. member who supported the Government in connection with the commandeering of the butter in 1916, and the farmers of Rosewood know all about it. Only a few minutes ago, when the hon. member for Mirani was speaking, he used the word "suspicion," and immediately hon. members opposite went into a storm of resentment. I do not wonder that any hon. member in the Chamber, after reviewing the operations of this Government for the last seven years, and knowing what they have done to the butter producers, knowing that they have robbed the butter producers of some half a million pounds sterling and have further taxed the landowners of Queensland to the extent of many hundred thousands of pounds, should when a Bill of this nature is submitted to the House, have some suspicion about it. We know that, so far as the Premier and the Secretary for Agriculture are concerned, they recognise that every farmer in Queensland will have some suspicion of their agricultural policy, because the Premier has gone so far as to say, "Let the dead part bury its dead. Let us use our brains for some better purpose in the future." The Premier recognises that the farmers of Queensland cannot trust him in bringing forward a Bill that is to be so beneficial.

The HOME SECRETARY: We put you on your feet as a sugar farmer by bringing forward a Bill.

Mr. BRAND: The Premier will recognise that the whole of the sugar producers of the

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State have reaped their reward from the increased price of raw sugar due to the Commonwealth Government. (Government interruption.)

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Be fair.

Mr. BRAND: Hon. members on this side appreciate, even if it is a deathbed repentance, a measure which is brought forward which possibly, with some amendment, may prove advantageous to the primary producer. Only a few years ago the primary producers realised that, owing to the action of this Government, it was necessary for them to band themselves together politically and send representatives of themselves to this House to see if something could not be done for them through legislative action. I am pleased to say that, through the farmers of Queensland having sent a strong contingent of Country party members, the Government now recognise that they must do something to help the primary producer. Ever since we came into the Chamber we have urged the Government to do something for the primary producer. We have told the Government that it was necessary for them to do something for the man whom, on the hustings, they were pleased to term "the backbone of the country."

As I have said, at last something has come before the House, and as the Secretary for Agriculture says that he is prepared to accept reasonable amendments, I am going to support the second reading of the Bill. It is very pleasing indeed to know that at the dairy conference held on 24th March last called by the Secretary for Agriculture, and at which the Premier was present, His Excellency the Governor was asked to open that conference. During the remarks of His Excellency, he made use of sentiments that members on this side of the House have been urging for many long years.

The PREMIER: That is a reflection on the Governor.

Mr. BRAND: I am not saying that he took it from our platform. This is what His Excellency said on that occasion—

"Undoubtedly the farmer derived profit in body and character from living the most healthy of lives, but he must have something more than that. He must be able to gain from the hard work of his life sufficient to enable him to establish a good home, to bring up a large family as they should be brought up, and to secure for himself in old age, if not affluence, at any rate reasonable comfort and wellbeing."

So far as the primary producers and their representatives are concerned, those are our sentiments exactly. Last session the Secretary for Agriculture said in this House—and he also made the same remark in other places outside the House—that production should be for use and not for profit. He now recognises that it is right for the farmer to get some little profit to tide him over his old age.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is a beautiful ideal.

Mr. BRAND: But the hon. gentleman is not carrying out to-day what he said last year. In speaking on the second reading of the Bill the hon. gentleman said that the farmer must get something more than enough for to-day, and that he must get something

to cover his days of old age. The Bill does not provide for the price the farmer shall receive for his produce.

The PREMIER: It provides for an organisation.

Mr. BRAND: Yes; but it does not make provision for fixing prices. Hon. members opposite always say that they are interested in the welfare of the farm labourer, so I ask them to assist me to put some clause into this Bill which will enable the farmer, on the recommendation of the Council of Agriculture, if you wish, to receive for his produce a price sufficient to cover the cost of production. If you are not going to allow the price to be based on the cost of production, then, so far as the farm labourer is concerned, he is not going to get much out of it. We have had the principle of price-fixing established so far as the sugar business is concerned. The price which the consumer has to pay for sugar is based to a certain extent on the cost of production. I think we should put in a clause to provide that the price shall be fixed according to the cost of production. I am pleased to hear from the Premier, and also from the Secretary for Agriculture, that they have brought in this Bill for the purpose of carrying out their new objective, the socialisation of industry.

The HOME SECRETARY: You are not game to vote against the Bill.

Mr. BRAND: So far as the Premier is concerned, we understood that he was going to rescind the new Labour objective, which was passed at the All-Australia Congress held in Melbourne, and ratified in Brisbane last October, because we know that at the Brisbane conference the Premier put up a strong opposition against the new objective. We know, though, that important members of the Trades Hall and responsible officials made it quite clear that Labour Governments had to obey the dictates of the Trades Hall.

Mr. BRENNAN: What about the Colonial Sugar Refining Company that you have to obey?

Mr. BRAND: In speaking the other day in Melbourne on the socialisation of industry, Mr. E. J. Holloway, secretary of the Trades Hall Council, said—

"The congress had made it clear that the Labour movement did not now stand for the limited objectives of higher wages and shorter hours, but for the complete socialisation of industry. 'There is no need for politicians to be afraid to tell the people this fact,' declared Mr. Holloway. 'We are out to obtain ownership by the community of the means of production, exchange, and distribution, and the control of all industries by the unions.' One factor in bringing this about, the speaker said, would be the drawing together of different sections."

Mr. BRENNAN: What are the farmers doing here? They are forming themselves into one big union.

Mr. BRAND: I intend to support this Bill because the Minister is prepared to accept amendments that will limit the operation of the Bill to primary producers alone.

The PREMIER: You say you are going to support it, yet the hon. member for Murrumba says he is going to oppose it.

Mr. BRAND: We will support the second reading; but, when it gets into committee, we are going to demand that this Bill be made more simple and more definite.

The PREMIER: You are trying to kill it.

Mr. BRAND: I am not trying to kill it. The Secretary for Agriculture says that he wishes to make it as simple as possible. We are out to make all Bills, more particularly the classification of lands and laws relating to agriculture, as simple as possible, so that every farmer can understand it.

The PREMIER: Why hold it up? Why not let the Bill go through?

Mr. BRAND: I am not holding the Bill up, but I am using my right to speak on the second reading of the Bill. We have heard from the Premier from time to time, and also from the Secretary for Agriculture and from certain hon. members sitting behind the Government, that they are going to make this Bill non-political. (Hear, hear!) We can agree that, if the Bill is going to be successful, it must be non-political; but the statement made by the hon. member for Stanley this afternoon shows that it is not free from politics. The hon. member said that all who were present at the dairy conference on 24th March could come to no other conclusion than that the Premier was determined to make political capital out of it.

The PREMIER: He had no justification for making that assertion.

Mr. BRAND: No members of this party were invited to be present at that conference.

Mr. BRENNAN: I was not present, either.

Mr. BRAND: It was the opinion of those who were present that the Premier and the Secretary for Agriculture had no other desire than that it should be political. I have a report of the proceedings of that conference, and Mr. W. T. Harris, in speaking, made use of these words—

"In Queensland they had advocated in season and out of season the formation of a compulsory Commonwealth pool, but they were informed by the Commonwealth authorities that it would be unconstitutional to grant a Commonwealth pool. That being so, it remained for the Queensland dairy farmers to form a Queensland pool. Although he had always been an advocate for a pool, he knew that they had not been the success they at first anticipated."

The Premier, the Secretary for Agriculture, and everybody else knew that the Commonwealth had turned down the proposed pool, but Mr. Harris was just discussing the subject generally when the Secretary for Agriculture brought him back to the point again. The Minister said—

"Did the Commonwealth Government refuse to grant you a Commonwealth pool?"

Why did the Minister ask such a question? It was done because he wished to instil into the minds of the farmers present that the Commonwealth Government had turned it down. Mr. Harris replied to that question—

"The Commonwealth authorities refused to grant it on the grounds that it interfered with State rights."

The Premier thought it was time for him to butt in, and he said—

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"They would have as much authority to grant that as to form a Commonwealth Wheat Board."

The remarks of the Premier and the Minister made it political, otherwise what was their reason for asking those questions? There was no necessity for it. Mr. Harris was only stating a fact which everybody knew and had accepted. There was no need for the Premier to draw him on unless he had some political axe to grind. We know that at the first conference called for the purpose of bringing this Bill into existence the Premier and the Minister circulated resolutions to be submitted, and they had it all their own way; but at the second conference the Premier submitted a resolution that the Provisional Council should appoint the Government nominees to be the committee to draw up the constitution.

The PREMIER: No, I did not.

Mr. BRAND: But some gentlemen saw the drift of the Premier's action, and pulled him up, and many of the men there that day said that the Premier left in a very dejected mood in consequence. Need we go any further for proof that political capital is sought than the appointment of Mr. Jurd, one of the Northern organisers?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You had better not refer to that again, because I exposed the hon. member for Burnett the other night.

Mr. BRAND: The Minister did not justify his action. We have nothing to say against Mr. Jurd personally; he may be a very fine man, but why does the Minister wish to appoint these organisers? It is reported also on very good authority indeed that organiser Webster has been asked to contest some seat in the Labour interest after he has done some organising.

The PREMIER: On what authority does the hon. member suggest that I or someone in the Cabinet asked him?

Mr. BRAND: There is a rumour current that the Premier asked him. If he did not, let him get up and deny it.

There are many things in the Bill that possibly will assist the farmers to some extent, provided we can get in our amendments; but, possibly, nothing can assist us more than satisfactory transport. We know that to develop primary production satisfactorily you must have good transport, and I am pleased to see that the Commissioner for Railways is a member of the provisional council, because I think his advice will be a great asset indeed in the facilitating of marketing. It does not matter whether the transport be by rail, or road, or water; it is necessary to have good transport to get primary products to the market. Speaking in this House some few nights ago, the hon. member for Herbert mentioned that the development of the sugar industry in North Queensland was to a great extent due to the extension of railways, and I think he will agree that it is necessary to have good railway facilities in order that cane can get readily to market. But what has happened in North Queensland has certainly not happened in South Queensland, where we know the disabilities which go with the absence of railway communication. This Government have deliberately held up the extension of lines in South Queensland, more particularly the Goondiwin-Kalliwa line.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Is this a second reading speech?

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Mr. BRAND: Yes. I am dealing with transport, which the Bill provides shall be handled by the Council of Agriculture. I want to say also that it is necessary that the council shall have some mandatory powers, so that they can advise the Government that that line should be completed, because there is a large area there of undeveloped land fit for cane culture, the production from which would assist a mill in which the Governments are involved to the extent of some £50,000, and unless the line is extended they can never hope to regain that amount. The Bill provides that the Governor in Council "may, on the recommendation of the council," do certain things. I submit that in certain instances it should be obligatory on the Government to carry the recommendations of the council into effect. If not, what is the use of your council?

Mr. BRENNAN: You want the Council to be a separate Government.

Mr. BRAND: The Bill endeavours to make that provision, but there is a loophole.

The Minister, in his second reading speech, said that the provisional Council passed a resolution for the appointment of Mr. Stephen Walker to go to Melbourne. Does the Minister still contend that his appointment was made on the recommendation of that Council?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No. I never made that statement.

Mr. BRAND: The hon. gentleman did. I say that the appointment of Mr. Stephen Walker was made by a body comprising the hon. member for Musgrave, Mr. A. Adie, Mr. T. A. Powell, and Mr. Hoey.

The PREMIER: It was on the joint representation of the United Cane Growers' Association and the Australian Sugar Producers' Association that the appointment was made.

Mr. BRAND: That appointment was brought up here by the Minister, but I do not think he had much to do with it. I think a good deal of credit is due to the hon. member for Mackay for putting the sugar business through during the trying period of this year. Unlike the Secretary for Agriculture, he did not try to make political capital out of the last sugar conference. He has really shown the Secretary for Agriculture the way to deal with these problems, and I hope that in the future the example set by him will prove advantageous not only to the Minister but also to the sugar industry as a whole.

There should be an improvement in the quality of the produce raised on our farms, and the Council of Agriculture should see that produce of the best quality only is sent to competitive markets. We know that other countries send only their very best to competitive markets; but in Queensland the present Government believe that our best products should remain within our own borders, and be consumed by our own people, and that our second and third grade stuff should be sent outside the State. If that

is going to be allowed to continue, [8 p.m.] we shall have absolutely no hope of competing against other countries. That policy has had injurious effects in the past, and to a certain extent New Zealand has been able to outdo us on a competitive market. I hope the Council will send commissioners out to try and exploit our natural hunting ground in

the East. The East provides a great opportunity for Australia, and the Government should assist the council in trying to develop that market, because there are large populations over there who are desirous of obtaining our produce. In the first session of this Parliament the Government absolutely refused to allow even our second-grade wheat to go to the East at a high price, with the object of developing those markets. I hope the council will go into the matter of markets and transport facilities, and by that means obtain something which will help our primary producers. Above all, I hope they will be given mandatory powers to fix the price of our commodities on the basis of the cost of production. If the Minister agrees to the amendments which the Opposition are going to offer, I will wish the measure a peaceful journey through this House, and I hope the result will be satisfactory to the primary producer.

Mr. KIRWAN (*Brisbane*) (who was received with Opposition laughter and cries of "Another primary producer") said: I have listened to the noise made by hon. members of the Opposition. I have just as much right to discuss the principles contained in this Bill as have the four leading men now sitting on the front Opposition bench—a solicitor, an ex-solicitor, a motor agency proprietor, and a chemist. (Laughter.)

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: What does a railway porter know about it?

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member for Pittsworth has suggested that, as an ex-railway porter, I am not competent to discuss the matter. Perhaps I had as much to do with the farming community as some hon. gentlemen opposite when I earned an honest living as a servant of the Commissioner for Railways.

I have listened to the speeches of hon. gentlemen opposite. In the course of my address the other evening on the motion moved by the hon. member for Leichhardt, I mentioned that hon. members of the Opposition spoke in many languages. If evidence were required in proof of that statement, we have had ample in the debate on the second reading of this Bill. The main principles of this Bill were outlined by the Premier in an address which he delivered in February of this year at Laidley, followed by a further address at Loxwood. I think we can say without fear of contradiction that by no stretch of imagination can the "Daily Mail" be considered to be favourable to this Government. Therefore, I may be permitted to quote its opinion on the outline of the agricultural policy delivered by the Premier on that occasion. The "Daily Mail," which at one time was the organ of the Country party—I cannot say whether it is now—in a leading article on 22nd February, 1922, said—

"Considered purely from the standpoint of reason, they represent a splendid policy. They are constructive, and ought at least to promote a more intelligent interest in the problems of agricultural development. Mr. Theodore exhibits a statesmanlike vision when he joins with the Country party and advocates the cause of co-operation."

Mr. BEBBINGTON: That shows that we are statesmen. (Laughter.)

Mr. KIRWAN: As an independent critic, Mr. Speaker, you will observe wherein lies the difference between the Premier and his Government and hon. gentlemen opposite. In a later portion of this article the "Daily Mail" says—

"But he has gone beyond the leader of the Country party in laying down the broad lines on which co-operation should be more extensively established. The Country party has uttered a lot of platitudes about co-operative enterprise, but it has been left to the leader of a Labour party to come forward with bold constructive measures, based in the main upon the experiences of other countries. It is very regrettable that Mr. Theodore should be able to steal a march on a party which makes co-operation its slogan, but it would be very unwise for the members of the Country party merely to subject his proposals to petty party criticism. They should be considered on their merits. As a broad outline of a scheme for co-operative development, they provide few loopholes for criticism. The proposed district agricultural councils would be of invaluable service. They would be composed of practical farmers who would be able to bring their problems directly to the Department of Agriculture."

In spite of that, we have had the composition of that Council denounced in the most unmeasured terms by hon. members opposite.

Mr. DEACON: It is not all farmers.

Mr. KIRWAN: The article continues—

"However, the great question raised by Mr. Theodore is co-operation. By warmly espousing it and promising it the assistance and encouragement of the Government, the Premier has thrown a challenge to the Country and Nationalist parties. The challenge cannot be ignored. Vague generalities will not answer it. The answer must be proof of sincerity for the cause of co-operation, not in the narrow, but in the larger sense. . . .

"It is time that we gave up talking in the air about co-operation. We should get down to the bedrock of practical co-operation. That applies especially to the Country party, which now is called upon to meet a formidable challenge on its own ground."

How have hon. gentlemen opposite met that challenge? How have they attempted to criticise the statesmanlike proposals outlined by the Premier which find embodiment in the various clauses of this measure which we have been discussing for the last two or three days? Let us take the attitude of the Country party on this measure. The hon. member for Pittsworth (Mr. J. H. C. Roberts), in the "Daily Mail" of 24th February last, expressed his opinion under the heading—

"TRAP FOR FARMERS.

"THE PREMIER'S BAIT.

"Thrown Out to Catch Votes.

"Mr. Roberts Suspicious."

He said—

"Taking the speech as a whole, it seems to be exactly similar to that delivered on one occasion by Mr. Holman, the leader of the Labour Government in New South Wales, but nothing eventuated there, and I look with great suspicion upon this outburst as more or less a vote-catching trap,

*Mr. Kirwan.]*



baited with a tender morsel to catch a certain farming vote. Government control of the agricultural industry will prove an everlasting menace to those engaged in agriculture."

Mr. BEBBINGTON: And he is of the same opinion still.

Mr. KIRWAN: I shall connect them up briefly, and we shall see where hon. members stand. The Tower of Babel was as nothing compared with hon. members at the present time. The "Daily Mail," dealing with the attitude of the leader of the Opposition, headed the article—

"TRUST THEM NOT.

"LABOUR'S PROMISES.

"*Mr. Vowles's Advice to Farmers.*

"'They are Fooling You.'"

It said—

"After seven years' inaction regarding your interests, this Government, which prided itself in the past with being a one-class Government, suddenly wakes to the fact that your votes may be useful to them in the future. 'Trust them not. They are fooling you'—Mr. W. J. Vowles to the Queensland farmers."

Hon. gentlemen opposite ought to appoint a revising department to peruse the speeches and statements they make in the public Press and compare them with those they propose to deliver in this House, so that there will be some continuity of policy, some consistency in their attitude. The leader of the Opposition, after seeing the Premier's policy outlined in that way, speaking the other night in connection with this Bill, said—

"... I say that we want this; the farmers want it; we have asked for it; and it is in our platform. It is a part of the platform which was enunciated years ago by the Farmers' party."

At that rate the Farmers' party stand for vote-catching, and they stand for fooling the farmers.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The farming community want co-operation, and not nationalisation.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member for Mirani may be regarded as one of the most reactionary members sitting in opposition. In a letter in the "Daily Mail" of 25th February, 1922, he said—

"It is certainly very gratifying to members of the Country party to find that Mr. Theodore now promises to carry into effect some of the objectives contained in the Country party's platform."

The PREMIER: I am afraid it was not too gratifying.

Mr. KIRWAN: In the "Daily Mail" of 13th May last, the hon. member for Drayton said—

"Whatever may have been Mr. Theodore's intentions, there can be no doubt that the scheme is developing into the greatest political scheme ever foisted on the public and paid for by the people. The chief aim of the Government is to break up the Queensland Farmers' Union, the Sugar Growers' Association, and the Country party. This scheme is being used for that purpose."

If this Bill embodies the policy of the country party how can the hon. gentleman stand up to that statement of the "Daily Mail"? Does he say that the Country party stand

for the smashing of the cane growers' organisations, the bursting up of the Queensland Farmers' Union, and generally spreading disorganisation amongst the primary producers? Hon. members opposite have stated that the Bill represents their policy, and that it has been a plank in their platform, and then the next minute they denounce it in most unmeasured terms. Let us know definitely from these hon. gentlemen where they stand. Notwithstanding that the leader of the Opposition said—

"We want this; the farmers want it; we have asked for it,"

the hon. member for Drayton in the "Daily Mail," on 22nd May last, said—

"So far as can be seen, little benefit is going to accrue to the ordinary farmer and dairyman from the Government's scheme of organisation."

Mr. BEBBINGTON: We have not seen it yet.

Mr. KIRWAN: If the hon. members opposite can prevent it, we are not going to see a great deal. If this Bill stands for the principles that have been enunciated by the Country party, one would have taken it for granted that the leader of the Country party would have stood up and congratulated the Premier for at last doing something for the farming community, and the hon. members opposite would have allowed the Bill to go through its second reading and be carried on the voices, and ere this we might have had the Bill passed through the Committee stage.

Mr. BRAND: We will see all about it when it is going through Committee.

Mr. KIRWAN: Hon. members opposite are determined to wreck the Bill when it gets into Committee. Their policy has been one of consistent misrepresentation so far as the attitude of the Labour party is concerned generally towards the farming community; and, now that the Government have brought forward a constructive Bill and have put forward a measure which the Brisbane "Daily Mail," which is an anti-Labour organ, describes as a statesmanlike attempt to deal with one of the greatest problems in Queensland, hon. members opposite are going to wreck the Bill if they can. They have no serious intention of doing anything to make the Bill acceptable to the farmers, generally.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: What do you think of Mr. Jurd's appointment? Did he not stand down for the Premier at the last election, and is not this his reward for doing so?

The PREMIER: I never knew him.

Mr. KIRWAN: If hon. members opposite have any objection to a provisional appointment, their attitude as a party should be to pass this Bill for the benefit of the farming community, upon which it is based and upon which it depends for its success as an effective measure, in order that machinery may be put in working order so that the farmers can elect their representatives. I hope the Government will not rush this Bill through. After the next election the hon. member for Drayton may be looking for a job, and they might put him on. The attitude of the National party is something akin to that of the Country party. They are divided, and they do not know where they stand on this measure. The hon. member for Kurilpa is generally regarded as one of the most important members of that party, and I noticed that, when they were round after

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the scalp of the hon. member for Oxley recently, the hon. member for Kurilpa was one of the members who addressed nearly every meeting in conjunction with the leader of his party. Speaking the other night in connection with this Bill, the hon. member said:—

"... It cannot, therefore, be reasonably expected that the Nationalist party will offer any serious objection to the introduction of this measure, and for that reason we will give it all the assistance we possibly can."

No matter what one may think of the hon. member for Warwick, one must admire him for his courage and candour. There is no beating about the bush so far as he is concerned. He made a straight out, plain declaration, and allowed his electors to know clearly and emphatically where he stood. He did not walk the plank like the leader of the Opposition. In contrast to the utterances of the hon. member for Kurilpa, the hon. member for Warwick, speaking on this Bill the other night, said:—

"... I am out-and-out opposed to the Bill under the present Administration, and I do not care who knows it. A more daring, audacious, and cruel Bill, was never presented for the consideration of a deliberative Assembly in a British land.

"THE PREMIER: What do you think of the Country party for supporting such an audacious proposal?

"MR. G. P. BARNES: That is a matter for the Country party. I do not care what my electors do with me. I have no hesitation in telling them that they are touching a very dangerous thing, which comes within the domain of common ownership, and which I have termed 'toned-down Sovietism.'"

MR. MORGAN: Is that in order?

MR. F. A. COOPER: It is in "Hansard."

MR. KIRWAN: It is much better to have it reported in "Hansard" than to have any difference of opinion as to whether it is in order or not. Reference was made during the debate to letters received by the Secretary for Agriculture, congratulating the Government on the proposal now before the House. If we take the attitude of the anti-Labour Press, we find that those men who may be regarded as speaking with authority, so far as primary production of the State is concerned, with very few exceptions are able to rise above their political party views, and to give credit to the Government for what they have done in connection with this particular Bill. The following article, appearing in the "Daily Mail" of 11th July last, expressed the views of Mr. G. H. Pritchard in connection with this proposal:—

#### "MR. PRITCHARD'S VIEWS.

##### "RESULT OF ORGANISATION.

"Mr. G. H. Pritchard, secretary of the Australian Sugar Producers' Association, who is a member of the council and of the administrative and sugar committees, was asked to express his views on the subject of the council in its relation to the sugar industry. He said he thought that where the council would serve that industry most would be where any joint action was necessary on the part of the primary producers of the State, and, perhaps, later on, of the Commonwealth.

"There could be no two opinions concerning the wisdom, indeed, the absolute necessity, for intense organisation of each industry, and the constitution of the Agricultural Council had been well and carefully thought out, and if taken up by the producers with anything like enthusiasm, as it should be, much of material benefit should accrue to them."

Anyone who knows Mr. Pritchard knows that he is strongly anti-Labour and has no time for this Government. He is a man with definite convictions so far as the policy and attitude of this party are concerned. That is the definite statement of Mr. Pritchard, and Mr. Pritchard, as I have already indicated, is a man who holds strong anti-Labour views; he has no time for this Government or its policy. But contrast his views with the views of the hon. member for Drayton. In the one case you have the opinion of a man who is not afraid to speak the truth regarding his political opponents, and on the other hand you have the hon. member for Drayton, who is continually whining and crying about the alleged misdeeds of this Government. After the creation of this provisional council, due to the energy and work of the Secretary for Agriculture, warmly supported by the Premier, certain gentlemen went South. They first addressed the conference in New South Wales, and they later on went to Melbourne; and will any hon. member on the Opposition benches dare to contradict me when I say that they pointed out to the New South Wales farmers and the farmers of Victoria how much better off the farmers in Queensland were? How does that fit in with the continual reiteration of absurd statements by hon. members opposite that the farming community is not doing well under this Government?

MR. MOORE: Will you deny the statements made by the same gentleman last year when the Government commandeered their butter?

MR. KIRWAN: I will deal with that interjection later on, but I am not going to be drawn off my recognised course by the hon. member. (Opposition laughter.) The hon. member will not "Ha! Ha!" when I have finished with him. The "Daily Mail" of 17th April, under the heading "Conference in Sydney," had this to say—

"... The conference on Thursday was the largest of its kind ever held in New South Wales, delegates from practically every dairying company in the State being present, in addition to Messrs. T. F. Plunkett, W. Purcell, W. T. Harris, and J. E. Dean, of Queensland. Mr. J. C. McRea, president of the Primary Producers' Union, presided. . . .

"Mr. T. F. Plunkett, of Queensland, who had received permission to address the conference, made a forceful and convincing speech, which called forth frequent outbursts of applause. Queensland, he said, had had a wheat pool for the past two seasons, and at the request of the cheese-producers a compulsory cheese pool had now been established. Owing to that pool prices prevailing in Queensland at the present time were higher than in the Southern States. The delegates present would readily understand why it was necessary for himself and the other Queensland delegates to visit the Southern States to assist in bringing

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about standardisation of prices throughout the Commonwealth in order that primary producers might be able to live on the land."

A long statement was made by these gentlemen on their return from the Melbourne conference, a report of which appeared in the Brisbane daily papers on the 1st May, and a paragraph from that report, which appeared in the "Courier," reads—

"The example set by Queensland, and the advent last week in Melbourne of the members of the Dairying Industry Advisory Board, the splendid work they accomplished in the way of private negotiations with the proprietary, selling, and other interests prior to the conference last Wednesday, the publicity campaign they initiated, and the very evident desire to sink all personal animosity and jealousy and do something practicable to better the status of the dairying industry, together with their willingness to discuss every aspect of the proposals with the proprietary, selling, and co-operative interests in Melbourne, bore fruit. . . ."

What I want to emphasise in connection with that statement in the "Courier" is that it was mainly due to the attitude of this Government, particularly to the attitude taken up by the Secretary for Agriculture and the Premier in having created that provisional council, that those six representatives were sent South and were able to infuse some new ideas into the representatives in New South Wales whom they met, and in Victoria, which is the most disorganised State in Australia so far as the farming community is concerned, and where they are cutting each other's throats so far as prices are concerned. There has been no effective organisation of the farmers there, and the visit of these gentlemen opened the eyes of the farmers of Victoria, who were refused a pool by the Nationalist Government. Generally speaking, the creation of the provisional council by the Secretary for Agriculture was largely responsible for the good work that was done. The hon. member for Aubigny asked, "What about the butter that this Government commandeered?" I would sooner stand behind a Government that commandeered the butter of a farmer than stand behind a party that wanted to commandeer the farmer's sons. The party opposite wanted to commandeer members of the farming community and send them overseas, whether they wanted to go or not, and now they kick up a row because of a few pounds of butter that were commandeered by the Government. I do not admit that their statements are correct—I have very frequently repudiated their suggestions—but allowing, for the sake of argument, that their statements are correct, we will put on one side against the Government what the farmers lost in connection with that compulsory seizure of butter, and we will put on the other side what the sugar-growers of Queensland got from the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act, and on the same side what the farmers of Queensland got in connection with this provisional council, and then let the hon. gentlemen opposite balance the account. I unhesitatingly say that, as a result of the operations of the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act, the farmers of Queensland have done better at the hands of this Government than they did at the hands of any previous Government. At any rate,

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they have a Government in power that had the moral courage to bring forward that Bill and press it through this House, and endeavour to get it through the Legislative Council, in spite of the boasted and powerful financial influence which backed hon. members opposite at every election and which provided the funds for their political battles. I find in the "Sun" of Sunday last—another journal which cannot be described as being favourable to this Government—an article headed "Why All This Fuss"? The article makes reference to the attitude of the Opposition on this Bill to the general line of argument they take up, and to the general purport of their speeches, and sums up the position very effectively in these words—

"The definition of the word Parliament, according to a noted authority, is 'A meeting of persons for conference or deliberation to deliberate on and determine affairs of State.' It is generally accepted that any measure which meets with the approval of all members of the Parliament shall be hailed with delight, and that the passage of the measure to the statute-book shall follow with a minimum of deliberation. The foregoing may be the procedure in theory, but we in Queensland are just now having a demonstration of its absurdity in practice. The State Labour Government has introduced a Bill which embodies a scheme for the organisation of the agricultural industry. The Nationalists and Country parties have expressed their appreciation of the measure, but are wasting a lot of time that could otherwise be spent on a more debatable subject."

Mr. VOWLES: You are wasting time now.

Mr. KIRWAN: It is necessary for hon. members on this side to rise in their places and reply to the absurd and silly statements made by hon. members opposite, and to point out what is their real attitude towards the farmer. The trouble with hon. members opposite is not that the Government are going to do something that will materially benefit the primary producer, but that the passage of this Bill and its operation in practice will prove to the hard-headed farmer that the statements made by hon. members opposite about the Government are entirely untrue and without foundation.

Mr. NOTT: Actions speak louder than words.

Mr. KIRWAN: Certainly they do. Much louder than words, and we are prepared to put our practical work, so far as the farmers are concerned, alongside that of hon. members opposite. The article to which I referred continues—

"As for the Bill itself, it is possibly one of the simplest measures that has ever been introduced into Parliament, and in no Bill for the benefit of the primary producer has such wide powers been given to him, and under no Bill has he been given greater freedom to work out his own destiny. Therefore, away with all this fuss and let the Bill become law with a minimum of delay."

Hon. members opposite have objected to the levy. They have said that one of the objections they have to the Bill is that the farmer will be called upon to pay a levy. I would point out that this Bill is practically a form of insurance for the primary producers of this State, and we all know that, whether

we go in for life insurance, fire insurance, or any other kind of insurance, we have to pay a premium of some kind. I venture to suggest that the farmer will be very satisfied.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: With the levy of 10s. per head that you make for the workers' insurance?

Mr. KIRWAN: I am pointing out that the farmers will be quite prepared to pay the levy which may be imposed by their representatives. We can rest [8.30 p.m.] assured that the farming community will elect to the council representatives who will truly represent their views.

Hon. members opposite have some objection to certain members of the Council of Agriculture. They object to the Commissioner for Railways, to the dairy expert, to Mr. Story, and to Mr. Short. We will first take the Commissioner for Railways. The hon. member for Burrum admitted that the question of transport was one of the most important questions so far as the farming community was concerned. Is it not necessary for the representatives of the farmers to meet the Commissioner for Railways, in order to point out to him improved methods of transport and improvements in waggon construction, so that their goods will reach the market in a better condition, and therefore realise better prices? Is it not advisable to have a gentleman with the powers of the Commissioner for Railways present as a member of the council to listen to the views of the farmers' representatives?

Mr. MOORE: The representatives of the farmers have been asking for these things for the last six years.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member need not worry about what I am saying. What he had better worry about is those hon. members opposite who call this a socialistic measure, and an instalment of Sovietism and Communism. If it is that, how can hon. members denounce the Bill, and describe it as an application of those principles which they are strongly opposed to, and at the same time say that it is part and parcel of their platform?

Mr. VOWLES: Do you not think the control of public services should be in the hands of the Government as a matter of public policy?

Mr. KIRWAN: I take it that all the Government representatives on that council have been put there for reasons which are so obvious that it should not be necessary to mention them. I have mentioned the Commissioner for Railways. I will now take Mr. Short, who has had experience in the management of sugar mills. In view of the fact that one of the most important industries to be dealt with under this Bill is the sugar industry, what more desirable representative could be on the council than Mr. Short? Why should he not be on the council? Mr. Story is another gentleman.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: What has Mr. Story done?

Mr. KIRWAN: Mr. Story has done something in formulating the basis of this Bill, and, if that is so, is it not necessary to have him on the council to see how the scheme works, and, if there are any difficulties which the farmers' representatives can point out, Mr. Story's power of organisation is such that he will be able to remove difficulties? Then, again, will non. members opposite

decry Mr. Quodling's ability? Will they not admit that, as an agricultural expert, he stands second to none in the Commonwealth? Why should he not be on the council? If men like the hon. member for Albert, the hon. member for Oxley, and the hon. member for Townsville can represent the farmers in this House, then I say that the men whose names I have mentioned are fit to represent the Government, and to listen to the views of the farmers on the council. They know just as much about the farming community as any of the hon. members I have mentioned. If hon. members opposite hold the view that only farmers should stand as Country party candidates, where would the leader of the Opposition be? Where would the hon. member for Townsville, the hon. member for Albert, and the hon. member for Oxley be?

Mr. MORGAN: Why don't they have a merchant to represent Brisbane? (Laughter.)

Mr. KIRWAN: I am not so ridiculous as to say that they should have a merchant to represent Brisbane. When the people in Brisbane had their opportunity in 1912, they selected me, and I have been here ever since, and I hope to remain here after the next catastrophe which is going to take place. (Opposition laughter.)

Several hon. members opposite have urged, by way of trying to discredit the Bill, that the matter with which the Bill deals is one for Federal action, and should not be taken up by the State. They want to put it on to someone else, just the same as, when you mention what has been done by this Government on the sugar question, hon. members opposite say that, if it was not for Mr. Hughes and the National party in the Federal Parliament, the sugar industry would not be where it is to-day. It will be interesting when Mr. Hughes makes his announcement as to what the attitude of his party is going to be on the sugar question to see what hon. members opposite will say. I want to know what hon. members opposite have done towards making representations to that party which is supposed to represent the farmers in the Federal Parliament in the direction of a pool? What has the Country party done in connection with the primary production of Australia? What have they done so far as Queensland is concerned? As a matter of fact, some of the members of the Federal Country party are opposing the sugar agreement, and hon. members know that perfectly well.

Mr. MORGAN: The Federal Government have done something to assist the meat industry.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. member will not say that this Government has not done something to assist the meat industry, too. But if this Government were responsible for a policy which gave the hon. member £10 a head for his bullocks, he would still decry the Government and abuse them.

Mr. J. JONES: And take £9 sterling away from him. (Laughter.)

Mr. KIRWAN: In conclusion, I wish to say that I am one of those who believe that the Bill marks a new era for the farming community of this State. I believe that the farmers will have an opportunity of demonstrating their capacity for organisation and constructive measures, all of which they will have the opportunity of placing before the council. The council will then be such a

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widely representative body—it will include representatives of all the primary industries in the State—that, when it makes a representation to the Government, the Government will realise that the members speak as the accredited representatives of the great farming industry of the State in all its aspects. As far as the increase in the cost of living is concerned, I stand here as representative of the industrialists, and say that I believe the industries on the land are entitled to as much consideration as the industries of the factories and workshops. No industrial worker can say that he is entitled to good wages and hours and deny them to the man on the land. When the man on the land is prepared to organise and use the same constructive ability as the industrialist has shown, he will then reach the same goal as the industrialist. This Bill lays down machinery and gives opportunity for him to do that, and I have no doubt that, when the Bill goes through, it will be a success, and hon. members opposite will be getting up in a few years' time and saying that they passed the Primary Producers' Organisation Bill, although they have done their best to oppose it.

HON. J. G. APPEL, (*Albert*): This is a matter which, to my mind, is of such great importance that we can well approach it without indulging in any personalities. (Hear, hear!) I have listened with great interest to the speeches which have been delivered on both sides of the House, especially those which have fallen from hon. members sitting on the front Government bench and their supporters. I would point out, when the present Government obtained control of the administration, the members representing the primary producers were only five in number. Those members were not committed to support any party in this House. They were pledged to endeavour to obtain justice for the primary producer on the lines of the platform of the Country party. Speaking for myself and my fellow members, I made clear to the members of this House and to the leader of the Government representing the Labour party that, if they were prepared to assist the primary producers in carrying out their platform, we were prepared to use our right to support them. The Government being secure with one of the largest majorities which had ever been given to any party dominating the affairs of this State, we were a negligible quantity at that time.

The PREMIER: Were you not a member of an Administration that had a majority of twenty?

HON. J. G. APPEL: Strive and try as we would for justice to be done to the primary producers, did we gain anything? Have I not myself described how we felt, and likened my appeal for justice to a voice crying in the wilderness? Did we receive any justice? I venture to say that the wants of the primary producers were absolutely neglected. The conditions of centuries ago seem still to obtain to-day. After listening to the speeches so rich and full of promise made by the Secretary for Agriculture and made by the leader of the Government in addressing the primary producers in different parts of the State, and after listening to the speeches which have fallen from the rank and file of the party, full of promise and concern for the future of the primary producer, it struck me that the same methods that obtained centuries ago

obtain still to-day, and that we may still accept the advice which was given so many centuries ago by Virgil, when he delivered, through the mouth of Aeneas, this warning—

“Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.”

A warning which, literally translated, means—

“I fear the Greeks when they bring gifts.”

This was more fully translated by Conington, who said—

“Whate'er it be, a Greek I fear,  
Though presents in his hands he bear.”

After the injustice which has been done to the primary producers—when I see those who inflicted this gross injustice upon them and placed intolerable burdens upon their backs—when I see them now, having failed to break down and destroy the primary producers, endeavour to seduce them by their gifts, then I think that those warning words placed in the mouth of Aeneas by Virgil have an application, and may well be taken to heart by us who have the actual and bona fide interests of the primary producer at heart. We quite realise this, and I have no hesitation in saying that every member sitting on this side of the House thinks the same as I do. We realise, and they realise, that it is absolutely necessary and essential that something shall be done in the interests of the primary producer.

The PREMIER: Then, why don't you support the Bill?

HON. J. G. APPEL: Have we not pointed out on the floor of this House, year after year, that settlement on our lands has been rendered so unattractive that the sons of farmers are leaving their farms wholly for the purpose of settling in the town? They have refused to go on the land owing to the fact that the conditions there were not attractive. Was any heed paid to our representations? No. But when they find that they are reduced to a majority of one—

Mr. PEASE: Two.

HON. J. G. APPEL: Put it at two—I am quite prepared to give the Government a majority of two, including the Speaker and Chairman of Committees. When they are reduced to a majority of two, with the knowledge of the discontent which reigns supreme throughout the length and breadth of Queensland, finding that they are losing the confidence of the dwellers in the cities and suburbs, they come to the primary producers. We know how the gambler makes his last desperate cast, and so have the Government ventured on this cast to the primary producers of the State to endeavour to regain that which they have lost. The leader of the Government, conceiving of persons being moved to tears, it is quite possible that he has not seen the privations that many of his electors have had to undergo, or, if he has, he has had no regard for the suffering they have gone through. The members on the Opposition side have seen the suffering that has taken place owing to the conditions imposed on them by the very party which to-day is trying to seduce them by means of this Bill—this gift. This Bill, we are told, is going to bring untold happiness to the country. It is going to create a new Utopia, and is going to alter the conditions of settlement. All this is to be done by one short measure. Everything is to

become prosperous, and everything is to become brighter. Yet the Government delayed for seven long years before they decided to take up that attitude. The reason for it is that they find now that it is absolutely necessary for them to take this one cast to enable them to retain possession of the Treasury benches, which, alas! they have not held for the benefit and advancement of the people of the State of Queensland. The primary producer, as I have already stated, is now to be the most favoured of all men. They are putting through on his behalf a certain measure of land taxation. But have you observed the conditions contained in that particular measure which is supposed to give him freedom from that taxation? Have you observed the sting in that measure forecast by the Minister? There is a provision that the standing timber upon a man's selection is to be treated as unimproved value, and that the coal which may exist under the surface is to be treated as unimproved value. And this measure, which the hon. members opposite contend is to give relief to 4 per cent. of land taxpayers, is going to impose a very considerable additional burden of taxation on the balance of the community who pay land tax. It is just as well that we should examine these matters and weigh carefully the concession which it is proposed to make; and, so far as the freedom from a measure of land taxation is concerned, I have no hesitation in saying that it is a mere shadow in comparison with the substance they will lose.

Richly do the primary producers of this State deserve all and any consideration which it is possible to give them, more particularly those men who, accompanied by their wives, have gone on to the scrub selections of our State, and, were such a measure proposed for the purpose of giving them that relief, I do not think there would be one member, on whatever side he might sit, who would not gladly give it his assistance and support. Objection has been raised by the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill, and other hon. members on the other side, that the Opposition are criticising this measure. That is our province. I have no hesitation in saying that, unless the authority of the Government—this or any Government—is removed from this measure, and the whole power of governing themselves is left in the hands of the farmers who are to be benefited from it, I propose to vote against the second reading, and in saying that I voice the opinion of certainly 75 per cent. of the primary producers in the electorate which I represent. But, provided that Government interference and control are eliminated, I believe that in the hands of the farmers themselves—and have they not the right to govern themselves?—

The PREMIER: Under this Bill they will govern themselves.

HON. J. G. APPEL: What right have the Government to say, "We do not trust you; you are not fit for this duty?"

The PREMIER: You say that—not we.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The Government say so. The fathers of the Bill say so, because they insist on having control over affairs in the administration of the measure.

The PREMIER: No. There is no Government control under this Bill.

HON. J. G. APPEL: The absolute administration is practically vested in them.

The PREMIER: It is not.

HON. J. G. APPEL: Well, let the Government remove from their Bill those clauses which, I unhesitatingly say, practically give to the Government of the day the authority to administer or have the greatest percentage of influence in the administration of the Bill.

The PREMIER: That is not so.

HON. J. G. APPEL: It is all very well for the leader of the Government to say that it is not so, but I say it is, and I shall have no hesitation in pointing out to the electors whom I represent that those are the absolute facts in the measure. Why should the Government insist upon having control, if they are making a gift to the farmers?

The PREMIER: Where is the control?

HON. J. G. APPEL: Let the Government provide the machinery to enable the farmers to carry out the objects set forth in this measure, in the same way as the machinery of self-government is provided, and then the farmers and primary producers, with that machinery, can carry out the functions which will enable them to improve their conditions. Why should the Government of the day insist on interfering in the matter? Just let us draw a parallel with local government. Would it not be an extraordinary thing if the Government of the day insisted upon having the preponderating influence in the councils of every local authority—insisted, for instance, upon appointing the chairman or the mayor? I believe that it is done in foreign countries, and that the burgomaster or chief officer of a municipality is appointed by the State; but we are not in a foreign country, we are in a free, democratic, British State, and, if it be proper that the local authorities should have the fullest control of their own affairs, then why not also the farmers of the State?

The PREMIER: They have, under this scheme.

HON. J. G. APPEL: Does the hon. member seriously make that interjection, when he has in his own measure a clause which provides that the Government have the right to appoint five representatives?

The PREMIER: Five out of twenty-five!—Where is the control?

HON. J. G. APPEL: And the hon. member knows that the chairman and the men they appoint will have the preponderating influence.

The PREMIER: No.

HON. J. G. APPEL: Whether they have or not, why should they intervene? Why should the Administration say, "You are not fit to appoint your own chairman?" I say that the primary producers are fit to discharge that function, and, if the Minister and his leader are prepared to eliminate these objectionable clauses, they will receive the fullest support from every member who recognises that it is necessary that something should be done. And we all recognise that. We have cried out for it for the last seven years, to enable the farmers to gain that which is their due.

The PREMIER: Why are you hostile to this measure?

HON. J. G. APPEL: These interjections are not worthy of the leader of the Government. We are not speaking now in a public meeting, where he can simply cast an insinua-

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tion of that kind with impunity. I have not said I am hostile to a measure with these principles, but I am hostile to the Bill while it contains these provisions for control by the Government. I have already intimated that, if the Premier is prepared to eliminate them and merely create the necessary machinery to enable the farmers to appoint their own chairman and advisory board, I, for one, am prepared to accept it, and to congratulate the Government on having at last recognised what is justly due to the primary producers.

The PREMIER: The farmers have already accepted the constitution of the provisional council.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I object to a Bill which provides for authoritative interference by the Government, and I am not alone in that opinion. Political economists have always opposed authoritative interference by the Government.

The PREMIER: Political economists? Do you mean the hon. member for Oxley?

HON. J. G. APPEL: I certainly recognise the hon. member for Oxley as being one of the ablest men in this House.

The PREMIER: In that party.

HON. J. G. APPEL: I know the leader of the Government recognises him as one of the ablest men in the House. It is well that the electors of the State should

[9 p.m.] know that members who are opposing authoritative interference by the Administration, in a matter of this kind, are guided by expert authorities. It is generally recognised that John Stuart Mill is one of the foremost authorities upon political economy. It would be as well if we had his opinion embodied in "Hansard," so that the electors can see why members on this side are opposing authoritative interference by the Executive in connection with the conduct of their own affairs by the farmers of the State. In Book 5, chapter 11, pages 568, 569, 570, and 571 of the "People's Edition," we find the following extracts:—

"We must set out by distinguishing between two kinds of intervention by the Government, which, though they may relate to the same subject, differ widely in their nature and effects, and require, for their justification, motives of a very different degree of urgency.

"The intervention may extend to controlling the free agency of individuals. Government may interdict all persons from doing certain things, or from doing them without its authorisation, or may prescribe to them certain things to be done, or a certain manner of doing things which it is left optional with them to do or to abstain from.

"This is the authoritative interference of Government. There is another kind of intervention which is not authoritative: When a Government, instead of issuing a command and enforcing it by penalties, adopts the course so seldom resorted to by Governments, and of which such important use might be made, that of giving advice and promulgating information; or, when leaving individuals free to use their own means of pursuing any object of general interest, the Government, not meddling with them, but not trusting the object solely to their care, establishes, side by side

with their arrangements, an agency of its own for a like purpose."

"It is otherwise with governmental interferences which do not restrain individual free agency. When a Government provides means of fulfilling a certain end, leaving individuals free to avail themselves of different means if in their opinion preferable, there is no infringement of liberty, no irksome or degrading restraint. One of the principal objections to governmental interference is then absent. There is, however, in almost all forms of Government agency one thing which is compulsory—the provision of the pecuniary means. These are derived from taxation, or, if existing in the form of an endowment derived from public property, they are still the cause of as much compulsory taxation as the sale of the annual proceeds of the property would enable to be dispensed with. And the objection necessarily attaching to compulsory contributions is almost always greatly aggravated by the expensive precautions and onerous restrictions, which are indispensable to prevent evasion of a compulsory tax.

"A second general objection to Government agency is that every increase of the functions devolving on the Government is an increase of its power, both in the form of authority, and still more in the indirect form of influence."

That is exactly the position which would ensue if this Bill became law and the farmers were controlled under the measure as it now stands. The quotation continues—

"The importance of this consideration, in respect to political freedom, has in general been quite sufficiently recognised, at least in England; but many in later times have been prone to think that limitation of the powers of Government is only essential when the Government itself is badly constituted—when it does not represent the people, but is the organ of a class or a coalition of classes; and that a Government of sufficiently popular constitution might be trusted with any amount of power over the nation, since its power would be only that of the nation itself. This might be true if the nation, in such cases, did not practically mean a mere majority of the nation, and if minorities were only capable of oppressing, but not of being oppressed. Experience proves that the depositaries of power who are mere delegates of the people—that is, of a majority—are quite as ready (when they think they can count on popular support) as any organs of oligarchy to assume arbitrary power and encroach unduly on the liberty of private life. The public collectively is abundantly ready to impose, not only its generally narrow views of its interests, but its abstract opinions, and even its tastes, as laws binding upon individuals. And the present civilisation tends so strongly to make the power of persons acting in masses the only substantial power in society, that there never was more necessity for surrounding individual independence of thought, speech, and conduct with the most powerful defences, in order to maintain that originality of mind and individuality of character, which are the only source of any real progress, and of most of the qualities

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which make the human race much superior to any herd of animals. Hence it is no less important in a democratic than in any other Government that all tendency on the part of the public authorities to stretch their interference, and assume a power of any sort which can easily be dispensed with, should be regarded with unremitting jealousy. Perhaps this is even more important in a democracy than in any other form of political society; because where public opinion is sovereign, an individual who is oppressed by the sovereign does not, as in most other states of things, find a rival power to which he can appeal for relief, or, at all events, for sympathy."

Hon. members sitting on this side of the House have given in detail the actions which have not been taken for the benefit of the primary producers in the State. They have referred to the increases which were levied upon them by way of railway freights; they have given evidence—and I do not see how we can get away from the fact—of the enormous amount of penalty which was inflicted upon the primary producers in connection with the seizure of their butter, amounting, approximately, to the sum of 3½d. per lb. on every pound of butter produced. The primary producers at that time, owing to the fact that the Government had a very large majority, were a negligible quantity. They were of no value to the Administration of that time, and hence no heed was given to their appeals, and from time to time different burdens were placed upon their shoulders. At that time they fell more heavily upon them than they might have done at some other time. The hon. member for North Brisbane has referred to drought conditions. At that time the farmers were suffering from the effects of the drought, in addition to the spoliation. I can only stigmatise the condition at that time as one of confiscation. After all the evidences that we have had of what the present Administration has done for the primary producer of the State, we should scan very closely indeed any measure which they introduce ostensibly for the benefit of the primary producer of Queensland. For a period of seven years the Government have consistently done all they could to injure and despoil them. I think you will admit, sir, that no measure has been introduced into this House that has not been loaded, or that has not contained traps for the unwary, and we are only asking that a measure shall be introduced for the primary producers having those traps removed. The control and the influence that the Government have provided over the farming community should be eliminated from the measure, and if that is done, and all these objectionable traps and clauses are removed, we are quite prepared to assist the Administration in so shaping the Bill that it will be a real measure for the benefit and advancement of the settlers in the State. We cannot close our eyes to the fact—and no doubt, sir, you have recollection of that fact—that it is not so long ago that the workers' unions passed resolutions providing that this Administration should bring in the necessary legislation to impose an embargo upon the export of produce, which would have meant that the farmers' butter would have been practically of no value, because it is only by export of that butter that the

farmer can obtain its value. The same applies to hides and every other exportable article of produce. They would have been reduced in value, and it was only owing to the fact that such a measure could only be carried out with the concurrence of the Federal authorities that it was abandoned. You must realise that under those conditions, when we have a party who are prepared to damage the primary producers—and that would have been a blow which would have absolutely crippled them and rendered it impossible for men to settle and remain upon the land—we have to view any proposed legislation by the present Administration with extreme caution and extreme care. By taking up that attitude we are not only fulfilling our duty to our own electors but to the whole of the electors of the State by criticising and endeavouring to assist the Minister by such criticism, in producing a measure which will have the bonâ fide effect which he states the present measure will have. When administering that caution a few moments ago, it struck me that I might draw a parallel in connection with the old story of the siege of Troy. For ten years an attempt had been made by the Greeks to subjugate, destroy, and enslave the Trojans. For seven years an attempt has been made by the Labour Administration of Queensland to ruin and embarrass the primary producers of the State. The Greeks, failing in their attempt to destroy the Trojans, made another attempt by the gift of a great wooden horse in the belly of which was concealed a band of warriors. Here we have a Bill which may be likened to the wooden horse, loaded with clauses which may be likened to weapons which, I venture to say, if they are accepted in the form in which they are presented to this House, will have the same effect as did the present of that horse by the Greeks. This proposal will have the same effect on this State, and the farmers will be crippled and destroyed. If the Secretary for Agriculture is prepared to indicate that he will eliminate all the political control from the administration of this measure, I am personally prepared to give it every assistance in its passage through this House; but if he proposes to permit all the objectionable clauses to remain, I propose to vote against it.

Mr. MACGREGOR (*Merthyr*): I would like first of all to express my pleasure and appreciation of the opportunity of addressing this House for the first time this session. In these days of limitation of debate and of gagging, discussion is disappearing in the House under the Constitution under which we are suffering. I propose to deal with the Bill itself. I have no reports of speeches to quote to the House, and, in my opinion, speeches made some time ago are not of much value, as apparently this Bill never saw the light of day until it was introduced into this House the other day. Judging from the way hon. members have spoken, those speakers had no idea of what the Government were going to bring forward. Taking the Bill, and judging from the words used in it, we find that, first of all, Queensland is to be divided into not less than fifteen districts, and, taking Queensland as a territory of over 670,000 square miles, it means that each district will have an area of over 44,000 square miles, which in a square would be 209 miles by 209 miles, and in those districts compulsory local

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producers' associations are to be formed. The Bill provides that local producers may choose whether they will form associations or not. If the proposal in the Bill is a good scheme, then its weakness is in making association voluntary. If it is a good scheme, it ought to be made compulsory. At the present time the producers in this very wide area of 44,000 square miles may have very great difficulty in forming associations and in getting in touch with their district councils. Apparently the local producers' association is the association that is to start all the business.

The local producers' association is to take the initiative in rural matters pertaining to the particular locality in which the association is primarily interested. That is delightfully vague and indefinite, but it is nothing to the next two clauses. They are to ascertain the requirements of such locality and formulate schemes for having these requirements met. These requirements may have nothing to do with rural industries or matters rural. This word "rural," of course, goes all through the Bill, and when you get inside the Bill you get an atmosphere that is sometimes called "truly rural." (Laughter.) Paragraph (iii.) of subclause (5) of clause 8 says—

"Bringing before the district council, through the association's representative, requirements and problems which are not of purely local concern but are of common interest and concern."

That has nothing whatever to do with rural industries or rural matters, but with any requirement. They may require the Government to be put out, or they may require something to be done in America. All these things have to be initiated and brought before the council by these local associations. Then—

"(iv.) Advertising, supporting, and assisting the district council in its efforts to promote the general prosperity of the primary producers."

That is the sort of vague catch-phrase of the socialist. All through this Bill you find the Government indulging in wild catch-phrases to tickle the ears of the farmers. Then we have—

"(v.) Generally co-operating with, advising, and assisting the district council in enabling it to discharge its duties and functions efficiently."

What definiteness is there in anything of that sort? Is the district council not to be able to manage its own business and discharge its own business functions? Then—

"(vi.) Endeavouring to co-ordinate and correlate the work of the local associations, progress associations, and other like societies in the district, and to strengthen the work they are doing in so far as it relates to the rural industries."

All through this Bill you find "rural industries." I notice it is entitled "A Bill to promote the agricultural and rural industries by the organisation of the primary producers of Queensland in a completely unified national organisation"; but you do not find the "agricultural and rural industries" referred to again in the Bill by that name. They are all "truly rural" industries. The impression created by the Bill is that it is merely preliminary to a log for the rural industries. We have therefore to start with the provisional districts, which formulate what are called the local producers' associa-

tions. They apparently are to establish the district council. No number of members for this district council is mentioned, and no provision is made for them except an indirect provision. Wherever there is an omission the Council of Agriculture can legislate for itself. The number of the members of the district council is not mentioned; but then this district council is to have some high-sounding duties and functions—

"The duties and functions of a district council shall be—

"(i.) To secure co-operation as far as possible amongst the primary producers who are members of local associations assigned to the district;

"(ii.) To advise and assist the council in developing schemes—"

It is all a scheme, this Bill—

"in regard to the production, marketing, grading, and standardisation of primary produce, or for making more effective use of the experts and facilities of the department."

Delightfully vague phrases!—

"(iii.) To advise and assist the council in such matters as co-operation in the purchasing of machinery, fertilisers, and other articles employed in the production of primary produce, promotion of herd-testing, fodder conservation, and the circulation among primary producers of information and advice on primary production generally."

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I rise to a point of order. I ask if the hon. member for Merthyr is in order in discussing the details of the Bill at the present juncture?

The SPEAKER: The hon. member will not be in order in discussing the details.

Mr. MACGREGOR: I am not discussing the details. I have to refer to the clauses in order that hon. members opposite will not be able to say that I am twisting.

The SPEAKER: I understand the hon. member is discussing the principles of the Bill.

Mr. MACGREGOR: I am pointing out that the Bill contains a number of indefinite high-sounding phrases, and, more dangerous still, a width of powers which, when you come to consider them, are very dangerous. I am going to consider that point a little later. Each district council sends one representative to the Council of Agriculture; but I want to point out that in the definition of "primary producer" there is another example of phrase-making, because they have gone to the trouble of defining "primary production." They say—

"'Primary produce' and 'primary production' have correlative meanings."

But they never use that phrase except once; they like the high-sounding phrase production of primary produce. You find that the Council of Agriculture has to co-operate with the department by co-operating with the department. Clause 6 says that the functions and objects of the Council shall be to co-operate with the department, district councils, and local associations, by "co-operating with the department." That shows how they desire to get out vague high-sounding phrases that mean nothing. Coming to this Council of Agriculture—which apparently is going to deal with fractions of men—you have twenty-five on it, but the Government are not going to have more than one-quarter; so that,

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if there are twenty-five members, the Government will have six and a-quarter representatives on it. That is unless the vice-president is also going to be a nominee of the Government. If they are going to have twenty-four, including the Minister, and then a vice-president—there is no provision that the vice-president is to be a member of the Council—the twenty-five will be made up. The clause says—

“There shall be a vice-president of the Council appointed by the Council in the prescribed manner.”

These twenty-five members represent apparently eight classes of producers, and possibly nine. You have the dairy farmer, wheatgrower, maizegrower, cereal-grower, canegrower, fruitgrower, grazier, farmer, and any other class of persons declared by the Governor in Council. One would have thought there would have been some provision for proportionate representation of industries on this Council of Agriculture. You would have expected, seeing that there are so many different classes of primary producers represented, that there would have been some proviso preventing one interest overloading or overpowering another interest, but there is no such provision, and obviously the Government thought there was no power to do it, because there is nothing to prevent the representatives of two or three interests overpowering the interests of another primary product. If that is so, I ask from the depths of profound ignorance, does the dairying man know anything about the sugar man? Can the wheatgrower help the grazier? Can the fruitgrower know what the maizegrower is doing? If they are separate industries or callings, or whatever you like to call them, then it is not a completely unified organisation. It is a combination of interests which may turn out to be diverse, and cause trouble, because, if the sugar people find that the levies made on them are being expended in the interests of the butter men or the wheat men, they, of course, are going to be annoyed, and, naturally, there will be trouble.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: They are going to keep out.

Mr. MACGREGOR: Naturally. In looking through the Bill you will find that it is a skeleton Bill—that really the only definite thing it does is to appoint a Council of Agriculture, district councils, and local producers' associations, and then all the rest is to be prescribed—that is, either by Orders in Council, by regulations or by laws, and the whole of the effect of the Bill is to give to the primary producers another Parliament with legislative and executive functions, and with the power of taxation to an unlimited extent.

Mr. PETERSON: They do not give them mandatory powers.

Mr. MACGREGOR: I do not think Parliament knows what it is giving them. It says that the regulations may provide for any of the following matters:—

“(i.) The fees, allowances, and travelling expenses which may be paid to members of the Council.”

They do not provide payment for members of a district council by name, but they say—

“All the expenses of the district council incurred in respect of the execution of the Act may be paid from the general fund.”

Then paragraph (v.) reads—

“The control and management of the fund; empowering the Council or any district council to make levies on primary producers generally or in particular industries or sections of industries, or in particular districts or localities, and fixing the amount of such levies.”

An untrammelled power to tax the primary producer, who will be doubly taxed, because he will have to pay the levies and fines exacted by the Parliament of the primary producers, and then, as a general taxpayer, he will have to provide the subsidy which is to go with the levies and fines which he provides in his own society.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: He will not have anything left.

Mr. MACGREGOR: It seems to me that this Bill overloads the primary producers with expenses. You have the expenses of the Council of Agriculture and of the district council—all their travelling allowances and expenses. You have the expenses of a secretary, a director, organisers, and other officers who may be appointed to the bureau of information, the advisory board, and of all the typists and others that may be appointed under this Bill, because, of course, I take it that the Council of Agriculture is going to sit somewhere permanently, and is not going to travel about the country. They

will need to have an office for all [9.30 p.m.] this literature and research, and all they are going in for is to originate from it. But the great object of this Bill is the formation of this producers' Parliament which is to be independent of the State. Everything is to be done by regulation, by law, or Order in Council, for the people who join these associations, and possibly indirectly for the people who do not join them. The extraordinary thing about that is the exact way in which it fits in with all the schemes of the guild socialists. Anybody who attempts to study socialism rapidly gets into what has been termed “a swirling welter of opinions and arguments, and does not know where he is.” But, since the war, three classes of socialism have developed—Marxian socialism, syndicalism, and guild socialism. If you want criticism of the Marxian socialist, go to the syndicalist; and, if you want criticism of the syndicalist, go to the guild socialist; and he will tell you how the believers in Marxian socialism have become voluble inefficient. They become members of the M.I.E., or members of inefficiency. The guild socialist proposes to divide the territorial association into two bodies—the producer and the consumer—and the producer has to organise into one big union. His idea is that associations shall develop into one big union, and this producers' union will have legislative and executive powers of its own, independent of the State Parliament, which is to represent the consumer. In works on this subject you will find agricultural guilds referred to by that name. This idea fits in with the idea of guild socialism. Hon. members on the opposite bench are socialists; but what sort of socialists we do not know. We do not know whether they are Marxian, syndicalists, or guild socialists, or whether they are the whole lot. (Laughter.) The Bill, therefore, seems to be objectionable on all these grounds. It establishes another body in the State independently of the State. It will probably introduce a rural log, and largely increase the cost of consumption. The

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producer is a very important person in the community, but he is not much, so far as Parliament is concerned, without the consumer, and the consumer ought to be considered as of the importance he deserves in this Bill. The farmer, of course, being a trusting person, thinks he finds in this Bill all his grievances remedied. He will not see that an Act of Parliament—that mere words—does not do anything, and there is nothing in the Bill that could not be done, in my opinion, by a more thorough organisation of the Department of Agriculture.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MACGREGOR: If the Department of Agriculture finds that the income of the amount allotted to it is not sufficient, let the Minister tell Parliament about it, and I am sure there will be no objection to giving everything these matters require—whatever will help to assist the primary industries. It seems necessary to say, when you are speaking on a Bill of this sort and expressing the opinion I have expressed, that you are not hostile to the farmer or the primary producer in any way.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: You are covering up your tracks.

Mr. MACGREGOR: Every person recognises that he is the most important man in the country and entitled to a good deal; and, so far as the general taxpayer is concerned, I am sure there would be no grudging or unsympathetic attitude to the primary producer if it would help him in his troubles. Subsidies are condemned everywhere as unfair to the general taxpayer, and here we have a pretty large subsidy going to the primary producer.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: No; it is going to find billets.

Mr. MACGREGOR: Probably that is so—that is a still greater objection to it; but, if it were necessary in the interests of the primary producers to have a better equipped and more expensive Department of Agriculture, I for one would be quite willing to assist the Government in extending the operations of that department.

At 9.35 p.m.,

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

Mr. MACGREGOR: I think that, on the whole, no amendments short of the deletion of these clauses of the Bill, and preventing the establishment of another Parliament in this State, will do. Speaking of the Bill as it stands, I for one, have no doubt that I cannot support it.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): There are three or four facts which stand out to a very large degree. In my opinion, one of the first reasons that induced the Premier to bring in the Bill is because he is going in for a large land settlement scheme in the Burnett district. Anybody who is going in for a large settlement scheme under the conditions on which land settlement has been carried on in Queensland during the last seven years would be a lunatic if he endeavoured to bring settlers here under the conditions we have been labouring under. He now brings forward a Bill which looks very well; but there is not much in it. It leaves the primary producers to do most of the work and find most of the money after the first year. One thing which stands out is the incompetence of the Department of Agriculture. The department, to my mind, should have been able years

ago to see the necessities of the man on the land without an advisory board such as this. The department ignored all the warnings issued by hon. members on this side and by the farmers outside, and it has been found necessary now to appoint an advisory board of a very cumbersome nature. There is another thing that stands out very clearly, and that is the childlike faith of the Government in the ability of the primary producers to pull Queensland out of the mess it has got into under socialistic theories and schemes they have put into operation during the last few years. Everything is put on the shoulders of the primary producers to pull, if possible, the State out of its difficulties. We must all recognise that it is not a bit too soon that some new scheme is brought forward. Personally, I think that Government interference in a scheme such as this is absolutely wrong. It will not meet with the favour of the farmers. It will serve to keep a lot of farmers out who would otherwise have come in; and I think the Minister will be well advised to accept amendments which will be submitted by this side. One of the greatest troubles in this State is Government control in any shape or form. The farmers have had experience of it in the past, and want to get out of Government control and manage their own affairs.

Mr. PEASE: They do not want to get out of the sugar agreement.

Mr. MOORE: The sugar industry is on a totally different footing to the ordinary rural industries. We know that the opinions of the Government were not always the same in regard to the sugar industry as they are to-day. I am going to quote from "The Producers' Review" to show the views of that journal a year or two ago with regard to the attitude of the Government on the sugar question. We have not always found the promises made by the present Government realised. I would like to quote a statement made by this Government in the election campaign in 1915. It contains the same empty words we hear to-day—

"The farmer must have sufficient acumen to understand that, in order to have properly equipped farms; in order to save himself and his wife and boys and girls from the drudgery of long hours and unprofitable employment; in order to make farming a dignified, pleasant, and remunerative occupation, he must put into power a party that will be alive to his interests; one that will help him to develop his latent faculties for co-operation; that will save him from the middleman; and that will protect him from the machinery combine."

All this was going to be done in 1915. We remember the pamphlets which were issued about the Government agricultural machinery works that were going to be established so that farmers would be able to buy implements at a cheap rate, but we know what followed. The statement goes on to say—

"He has no other course but to support the party that will assist him with capital, experience, and advice."

Anybody knowing to-day what the present Government have done would say, "What sarcasm!" Just fancy talking about giving the farmer experience, capital, and advice, when we know that the farmers' applications have been turned down by the State Advances Corporation, and when we know that the

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Co-operative Agricultural Production Act has never been properly administered by this Government! The Treasurer, when speaking on the Financial Statement last year, and referring to the fact that the farmers were turned down by the State Advances Corporation, made the remark, "We must save the fools from themselves."

The PREMIER: Do you say that I said that?

Mr. MOORE: No. The hon. gentleman was not Treasurer last year. It was when Mr. Fihelly was Treasurer, and it was he who made the remark.

The HOME SECRETARY: Where is he now? (Laughter.)

Mr. MOORE: He was pushed out by the Cabinet. The Government were very fortunate in getting rid of him from their ranks. If he had been here now, the Government would have a nice kettle of fish to carry on with, and they were very glad to push him out.

The PREMIER: You were very quiet about him when he was here. It would be more graceful on your part if you remained silent when he is not here to answer for himself.

Mr. MOORE: That gentleman is well able to look after himself, and I am not going to worry about him. It is set out further in this document that the Labour party is the only party in the State to help the farmer to establish a modern form of organisation to carry on his industry under modern conditions.

The HOME SECRETARY: You ought to stop there and sit down.

Mr. MOORE: What about all the price-fixing legislation, the stock embargo, and the small advances, amounting to £24,000, made under the Co-operative Agricultural Production Act between 1915 and 1920? What about all the restrictions placed on the stockowners? and what about all the election promises which were made but were never kept? Now, at the eleventh hour, we have another set of promises and high sounding words. At one time we found the Premier persecuting the primary producer, and now he has turned round in his favour. It reminds me very much of the conversion of St. Paul. We know St. Paul persecuted the Christians for many years, and then he went out on a big persecuting campaign. But the light dawned on him, and he turned round and joined the ranks of those he formerly persecuted and espoused their cause. The Premier has not gone so far as St. Paul, because he has not severed his connection with his old associations. He still keeps company with the people who have always despised the farmer. He still keeps with the Secretary for Agriculture, who says that production should be for use and not for profit. The Premier, in commenting on that statement, that production should be for use and not for profit, said that even if they abolished the capitalistic system they would still have production for profit, and he said that the statement of the Secretary for Agriculture was a loose one. He said on that occasion—

"That the term 'production for use and not profit' was a loose one likely to lead to a confusion of thought. Even if they abolished the capitalistic system they would still have production for profit. The first step towards socialisa-

tion was the nationalisation of banking and the whole structure of credit. The nationalisation of industry would follow. There was a feeling abroad that the Labour party to-day was an expediency-mongering party. The term socialisation in its present incomplete and ill-considered state should not be tolerated. He would like to know how the farmer would get on under the socialisation of industry."

These are the Premier's own words, although he still keeps with the Secretary for Agriculture, who says he believes in production for use and not for profit. Although the Premier admits that that is a loose term, he still has the Minister with him. We find now that the Government bring in a scheme such as this although, as a party, they still believe in the socialisation of all industry. That was carried by a majority at the conference down South, and it was carried again in Queensland against the advice of the Premier, supported by three members of this House—Mr. Whitford, Mr. Riordan, and Mr. Weir being against the hon. gentleman. The Premier still sits with that party, and then brings in such a scheme as this. Is there anything to show why we should not have some suspicion of a party that brings this in? They are evidently pledged to the socialistic policy.

The PREMIER: Why should you allow that to weigh with you? If the scheme is a good one, support it!

Mr. MOORE: It does weigh with me, because we know that the party opposite believes in the socialisation of industry.

The PREMIER: The Council of Agriculture will have full control. Why worry about it?

Mr. MOORE: The Council will not have control at all.

The PREMIER: Why don't you say if you favour the scheme, instead of side-stepping it.

Mr. MOORE: It is because of the indefinite terms in which the scheme is drawn up, and I want to make it more definite. If it is put on a more definite basis, so that the farmers know where they stand, I will support it.

The PREMIER: Is it not a farmer-controlled scheme?

Mr. MOORE: No. The Premier knows that, if the Council of Agriculture was to submit a proposition which was against the policy of the Government, it would have no more chance of being carried than of flying. The Premier knows that the Governor in Council has the last say whether any proposal is to be brought into effect or not.

The PREMIER: Surely you do not want Parliament to abrogate its functions?

Mr. MOORE: It is already abrogating its functions. I wrote to the Department of Agriculture the other day, and the letter was handed on to the Advisory Board. I also wrote to the Railway Department asking for a reduction in freights, and I received a reply from the Advisory Board.

The PREMIER: Are you opposed to that?

Mr. MOORE: Of course I am opposed to it.

The PREMIER: You are opposed to it, anyhow.

Mr. MOORE: I do not want a super-Parliament.

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The PREMIER: Some of your members oppose the Bill because it does not give sufficient powers to the Council. You are opposing it because it has too great powers.

Mr. MOORE: You are sheltering behind it now. The Premier knows perfectly well that the Government are sheltering behind the Advisory Board. Take the two occasions when the Dairy Advisory Council dealt with the reduction of freights and the sweeping out of the cheese trucks.

The PREMIER: You are ridiculing the farmers' representatives.

Mr. MOORE: No. If the Department of Agriculture or the Railway Department were worth their salt, they would not have any of this interference, and they would know that these things require to be done without any advisory council interfering.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Hear the chorus of antagonists to the scheme!

Mr. MOORE: Every time we have discussed the Railway Estimates we have asked for better provision for the primary producers. We have asked for reduction in freights and for attention to the trucks.

The PREMIER: Why didn't you ask that when the Denham Administration was in office?

Mr. MOORE: I was not in Parliament then. Ever since this Government have been here we have been pointing out how the primary producer was ruined through the faulty transport of the Railway Department. We pointed out that the trucks have been left standing out in the sun for five days, and the Government took no notice of it. Now the Government claim to take notice of the Advisory Board and attend to these things?

The PREMIER: We are getting the views of the farmers in council.

Mr. MOORE: The farmers' representatives have been making these requests for years. Now that the Government are losing the support of the industrialists, they turn round and make out that they are supporting the farmers in every way possible. I do not think the farmers are going to be caught, because they have a great deal of common sense. They will come under this scheme for the first year, but, if they find that they do not get much out of it, they will quietly drop out; but in the meantime a lot of money is going to be spent. I should just like to quote Mr. Mark Harrison, from whom the Government took their scheme in a great measure, where he sets out the cost of an Advisory Board. He admits that the Government have adopted his scheme in part.

The PREMIER: We consulted him.

Mr. MOORE: There are all sorts of billets under this Advisory Board, and Mr. Harrison says—

"The approximate expenditure of the advisory board during the first year might be set down as follows:—

	£	
Six members at £400 per annum ... ..	2,400	
Travelling allowances and expenses (six members) ...	1,200	

As a matter of fact, we have fifteen out already at £8 a week.

The PREMIER: Not on the Advisory Board.

[Mr. Moore.

Mr. MOORE: No—organisers—

	£
"Managing administrator ... ..	3,000
Secretary ... ..	600
Accountancy expert ... ..	1,000
Legal adviser, permanent ... ..	1,000

The hon. member for Toowoomba says that he is prepared to take on that job. (Laughter.)—

	£
"Business expert ... ..	1,000
Publicity expert ... ..	1,000

I believe he has already been appointed. I suppose he is the gentleman who is writing to the papers praising the scheme.

The PREMIER: You seem to be very annoyed at the advocacy of Mr. Mark Harrison.

Mr. MOORE: I am giving his own figures as to the cost. The Premier said he discussed the scheme with him—

	£
"Travelling expenses in opening new markets ... ..	1,000

That is not very much, considering that the organisation with which I am connected sent a man to the East to open up a market there, and it cost us £800, without any assistance from the Government—

	£
"Payment representative to London, to America, and to the East ... ..	1,500
Other expenses ... ..	2,950
Total ... ..	20,000"

The PREMIER: This is your criticism of the Bill.

Mr. MOORE: The Premier says that the cost will come to £20,000 or £30,000 for the first year. The Secretary for Agriculture has already made that statement. Here are Mr. Harrison's suggestions for the Advisory Board, and he goes into the whole question. He brings it to £20,000, and he admits that organisers will have to be appointed also. I say that it is going to cost a lot of money for a very doubtful benefit. It is all very well to say that we will get the benefit of it. We may or we may not. The butter pool cost £172,000, and that went back on the butter that was exported; but, although the pool cost that sum, it kept the market steady.

The PREMIER: Do you not think the wheat scheme is a good scheme?

Mr. MOORE: It is a good scheme; but, unfortunately, the Wheat Board, like many other things, has developed in the same way as a Government department. It is not there to keep the business in a go-ahead condition, as private enterprise would.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Give instances.

Mr. MOORE: I could give any number of instances.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Another insult to the farmers.

Mr. MOORE: I am perfectly at liberty to make my statement in this House without any impertinent interjections. My statement is that at the present time, when it is vitally necessary for the farmers to get their seed wheat in when the rain has come they have to wait for four or five weeks after sending down to the Board, and that shows their inefficiency.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH interjected.

Mr. MOORE: The Minister knows nothing whatever about what he is talking of. The fact that Mr. Archibald brought wheat from the South has got nothing whatever to do with supplying seed wheat to the farmers. It only shows the ignorance of the hon. member. Because the Secretary for Agriculture has a pet scheme, he does not like to hear any criticism. I claim that these people, now that the rain has fallen, and when we do not know when more is going to come, have every right to get their seed wheat. It is a perfect scandal that they have to wait five or six weeks.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Whose fault is that?

Mr. MOORE: The Wheat Board's. The farmers did their best to put in the best men they could. What brought this discussion up was that the Premier said, "Do you not think the Wheat Board has been successful?" I think it has been successful to a certain degree, but I think these boards and pools get into the same condition as a Government department. They have not the same incentive to keep things going as a private individual.

The PREMIER: What is the remedy?

Mr. MOORE: If the Government are going to tell everybody to sell produce through one channel, they should have some better system than that.

The PREMIER: The producers in that particular industry desired it.

Mr. MOORE: Of course, men will vote for a scheme when they think it is going to be good, but when defects are found in it afterwards it is up to the Government to remedy them—not to turn round and say that, because people elected a board, everything is going to be perfect. The people elect members of Parliament.

The PREMIER: It is the same with every one of these boards—there is always going to be carping criticism. That is all that it amounts to. I think that the Wheat Board is doing most excellent work.

Mr. MOORE: I admit that a large portion of their work has been carried out very successfully; but what I am pointing out is that when you have pools for which the people have to sell all their produce, it is up to them to manage proficiently, so that there will not be vexatious delays that may cost the farmer a tremendous amount of money through no fault of his own.

[10 p.m.]

The HOME SECRETARY: Whom do you want to interfere with the Wheat Board—the Government?

Mr. MOORE: I want the Government to make it so that we shall not have the whole of our produce forced through one channel.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: How can you do that? Under the pooling system, how can you do it otherwise?

Mr. MOORE: By the way it is done in California, where the channels of distribution are left open and the prices are controlled by the producers' organisations. Speaking of California, it is not the paradise it is supposed to be. I had a neighbour who left the Downs three years ago for California, because such glowing accounts were given of the co-operative selling and distribution and the manner in which the whole business

was organised there. He came back last year and said he would rather carry his swag in Queensland than work under the conditions that existed over there.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: There will be no necessity for him to carry his swag.

Mr. MOORE: At the present time he is doing so. He tried to get on the Burnett works, but they said he had not been a member of the Australian Workers' Union for two years; and so he could not get a job. (Government dissent.)

The PREMIER: There is no such disqualification on any reputable worker.

Mr. MOORE: He is up there now.

The PREMIER: He has been "pulling your leg."

Mr. MOORE: He went to a citrus orchard in California. When he came back I said to him, "You have come back in the nick of time. We have a Premier who is advocating the same sort of scheme you have over there. Have you all those schemes over there?" He said, "Oh! yes, we are tied up everywhere; we have to sell through the one organisation. You are bound under a £1,000 fine that you will not sell outside the organisation." I said, "How does it work?" He said, "Oh, well, just the same as it does here. You send your produce away; you send money after it to pay for it; but the only difference is that you send a little more, because there are a few more people over there who get a cut out of it than there are here." For three years they could not sell the greater part of their stuff, due to the same cause as exists here—the cost of production was too high, and the organisation they had could not get them a payable price.

The PREMIER: On that showing, do you say we should abandon the organisation?

Mr. MOORE: I do not. But I do not think it is going to bring the millennium; it is not going to emancipate the farmer and raise him to a position of affluence; it is not going to take away many of the hours of drudgery connected with farm life. What is the good of pretending that it is?

The PREMIER: In my opinion, it is going to tend in that direction.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Is it not a worthy attempt to do something?

Mr. MOORE: It is an attempt; and it can be made much better if you eliminate political control.

The PREMIER: You suggested political control for the Wheat Board.

Mr. MOORE: I did not. The Government made it absolutely imperative that you must sell all your produce through one small source.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The pool could not succeed otherwise.

Mr. MOORE: It has succeeded in other places. It has succeeded in Victoria.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You are putting in a special plea for the millers now.

Mr. MOORE: I am not. The principles of the Bill, if left free from political control, probably will be of some assistance.

The PREMIER: They are bound to take political action, because they may require some amending legislation. But they ought to keep themselves free from party entanglements.

*Mr. Moore.]*

Mr. MOORE: We have the Secretary for Agriculture the chairman of the Council.

The PREMIER: In his capacity as Minister.

Mr. MOORE: I want to make the composition of the Board such that they will be perfectly entitled to make any representation they like. I do not want to have the Minister sitting as chairman of the Council, and, as soon as the members bring forward a suggestion, find him saying, "It is no good bringing that in, because it is against the policy of the Government." Let us have it perfectly open.

The PREMIER: If there were any danger of that, would not the farmers' representatives on the provisional Council have pointed it out? They never raised any objection.

Mr. MOORE: How do you know?

The PREMIER: Because it was put before them. They discussed it and adopted it.

Mr. MOORE: When we come to have an elective Council, they will suggest something which will be against the policy of the Government. They ought to be in a perfectly free and open position to do that, and not be controlled in any way.

The PREMIER: They are all grown up. There are twenty-five members, five of whom will be representatives of the Government, and four of those five heads of departments.

Mr. MOORE: Another suggestion made by the hon. member for Rosewood was that we would be able to establish rural credits to enable the farmer to hold up his produce when prices were low until the prices rose again. The Government passed the Profiteering Prevention Act specially to prevent that being done.

Mr. W. COOPER: Any man who has sufficient money can hold his produce until the market is good.

Mr. MOORE: I would point out to the hon. member that cheese and butter factories have to furnish statistics showing how much stuff they have on hand and how long they have had it. If they have more than the Government think they are entitled to, they have to get rid of it.

The PREMIER: Do you say we force any one to get rid of his produce?

Mr. MOORE: I do not say that, but they have letters saying that, if they hold more than a certain amount, they have to get rid of it.

The PREMIER: Give me a case where we have intimated that to anyone.

Mr. MOORE: The Government have intimated that to me by letter.

The PREMIER: That is absolutely wrong. From which department was the letter sent?

Mr. MOORE: The Department of Agriculture.

The PREMIER: The Department of Agriculture does not administer the Profiteering Prevention Act.

Mr. MOORE: It is under the Profiteering Prevention Act that circulars are sent out.

The PREMIER: No; you are misleading the House on that subject.

Mr. MOORE: I am not.

The PREMIER: You are. I challenge you to show any intimation from the Government compelling any firm or any individual to get rid of their produce.

[Mr. Moore.

Mr. MOORE: I have had requests for information as to how much stuff I had. Under the Profiteering Prevention Act, if you hold more than a certain quantity, you are liable to be called upon to dispose of it.

The PREMIER: You do not know what you are talking about.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Produce the letter.

Mr. MOORE: The Profiteering Prevention Act was brought in specially for the purpose of preventing the hoarding-up of produce.

The PREMIER: To stop the hoarding-up of produce that was intended for the exploitation of the community—not to stop farmers taking advantage of a rising market.

Mr. MOORE: Will the hon. gentleman tell the House the difference between a farmer selling his produce and a sale by a man who purchases the produce?

The HOME SECRETARY: You do not see any difference?

Mr. MOORE: No.

The HOME SECRETARY: You should belong to the Nationalist party.

The PREMIER: We draw the line against the middleman.

Mr. MOORE: There is no difference. The Government brought in a Bill for a specific purpose, and now they want to draw the line—

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! I would like hon. members to respect my call to order. The hon. member for Aubigny has some difficulty in speaking, and I would ask hon. members to allow him to proceed.

Mr. MOORE: We have been asked to weigh the benefits and the disadvantages under the scheme and see which came out on top. I intend to quote from the Government's own little "Red Book" in connection with the actions of the Government a year or two ago, before they arrived at the position they are in to-day.

The HOME SECRETARY: What do you think of the Bill? (Laughter.)

Mr. MOORE: I think we can make it more satisfactory if we are given an opportunity. The hon. member for Rosewood was talking about 1915, and then went on to refer to the Federal price-fixing of butter.

Mr. W. COOPER: I did not say 1915.

Mr. MOORE: The hon. member did not know the date. (Laughter.) He had a little information given to him which he dished up in this Chamber without knowing the correct figures and without knowing the date on which it took place. (Renewed laughter.) What we were talking about was the butter pool last year, when the same hon. gentlemen went down, it is said at the instigation of the Secretary for Agriculture, to convert the farmers in the South. They pointed out that, owing to the Queensland Government's action in not allowing the primary producers in this State to get London parity, which they were getting in the other States, they lost £240,000 odd. Those are the same men in whom he puts such trust now, and whom he sent down South—Mr. Mark Harrison, Mr. Purcell, and Mr. Plunkett. Those are the men on the Board to-day.

Mr. W. COOPER: They said they were wrong.

Mr. MOORE: They were right. "The Producers' Review" of 10th February, 1916, which is produced by Mr. Harrison, had this to say—

"The above extract from 'Hansard,' giving the Premier's reply in regard to the butter taken over by the Government, indicates a strangely-warped view. 'As a matter of fact,' says Mr. Ryan, 'the butter was purchased.' Quite so! It was purchased at the price fixed by Mr. Ryan and his colleagues. That price, fixed and paid by the purchaser, was much below market rates. To all intents and purposes the butter was seized; in similar fashion the sheep also were seized. In both cases the owners were compelled to hand over their own property, and they were paid when and at what price Mr. Ryan and his colleagues determined. No amount of juggling with words will alter the fact that the butter and the sheep were seized by the Labour-Socialist Government and the rights of the owners were as completely ignored as if the rights and the privileges of ownership had ceased to exist in Queensland."

Then he goes on to deal with the crisis in the sugar industry in 1916—

"At time of writing, the sugar industry is on the verge of ruination, and, although some settlement might possibly be reached, very heavy losses will have resulted. In the treatment meted out to the sugar-growers lies a lesson to dairymen and mixed farmers which ought not to be forgotten. However much the present Government might seek to deny the fact, it is none the less true that the crisis was accentuated because the Government was callously indifferent to the sugar farmers. The crisis was brought about by Acting Judge Dickson framing an award which not only increased the cost of production by between 40 and 50 per cent., but imposed conditions which increased the burden. The Government had constitutional power to intervene, but it failed to do so. To intervene meant to offend the unions, and this Government seems ready to do anything damaging to industries rather than offend some union. The Government has tacitly admitted that the industry cannot exist under the conditions of the Dickson award, and yet it has wilfully and deliberately plunged the industry right on to the verge of disaster rather than offend the unions. If the dairy farmer and mixed farmer is unable to see in this an urgent reason why he should become a member of the nearest branch of the Farmers' Union, then his reasoning ability must be curiously kinked. To-day it is the tragedy of the sugar farmer to come under the grinding heel of labour unions' demands; to-morrow it will be the tragedy of the dairy farmer or wheat farmer. There is only one hope of safety. That hope lies in an ever-strengthening Farmers' Union based on true co-operation and absolute loyalty to the movement."

Those are the opinions of Mr. Mark Harrison, as reported in "The Producers' Review" in 1916, and now we have the Government saying what they have done for the producers of this State.

The HOME SECRETARY: The scene has changed.

Mr. MOORE: The scene has changed because the Government have a majority of one.

The HOME SECRETARY: Read the last issue of "The Producers' Review."

Mr. MOORE: I only want to show the real candid opinion of the man from whom the Premier says he took this scheme, and the way he is bullocking it up to-day, and the real candid opinion he expressed two or three years ago.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is the last photo that counts.

Mr. MOORE: The last photo counts to-day because the Government find they have a majority of one.

The PREMIER: Why are you so antagonistic to him?

Mr. MOORE: I am not antagonistic. I am showing the necessity of getting away from Government control.

At 10.15 p.m.,

The SPEAKER resumed the chair.

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

Mr. LOGAN (*Lockyer*): I think that I ought to be privileged to speak, seeing that the Premier came to my electorate to introduce this scheme. On that occasion I thought the scheme outlined was very good; but since we have seen the Bill we have reason for feeling a little doubtful about it. I think that 25 per cent. of the farmers in my electorate would be in favour of accepting this scheme. There has been an attempt to call meetings to be addressed by the gentlemen who are going round organising this scheme, but, unfortunately, we have not yet been able to get a strong body of farmers together to find out what are really their opinions about the matter. We have had one meeting at Gatton, at which several farmers were present. They had the resolution before them, and it was put to the meeting by the chairman, and they had some difficulty in getting someone to move that the resolution be adopted. It was moved by a farmer and seconded by a man who was a primary producer, and, consequently, the resolution was not carried. That seems to be the feeling of the farmers in my district. They do not seem to desire to take up the scheme. Those I have come in contact with say that they do not think it is going to be free from political control. A good deal of suspicion has been created, and we cannot be surprised at that when we look into the matter. It would be well if the Premier would adopt the suggestion made by an hon. member on this side the other night, and tell the House whether the scheme is to be free from politics. It would cause a better feeling. So far the Premier has not said that.

The PREMIER: I said at Laidley that the scheme will be free from party entanglements. I mentioned it at the dairy conference, and it has been discussed at the Council of Agriculture.

Mr. LOGAN: Since we have seen the Bill we have felt the suspicions which I have mentioned. However, I am going to support the second reading of the Bill. The Premier asked me at Laidley what I thought of the scheme. I told him that, on the surface, it appeared to be very good, and that, if it

*Mr. Logan.]*



were brought before the House in that form, I would support it. I am going to stick to my guns and support the second reading; but we shall require some amendments to be made, otherwise I do not say that I am going to support the third reading. The Premier at Laidley told us that there was no political influence in the scheme, and that he was there to launch the scheme, but before doing so he made an attack on the Country party and the Nationalist party. Amongst other things, he said that the so-called Country party had not supported the Government in any of the measures they had brought forward in the interests of the farmer. That was not correct. Since then they had a meeting in the Lands Court, at which I was present, and the Premier asked those present to let bygones be bygones.

The PREMIER: You will not find that phrase in my speech at the meeting in the Lands Court.

Mr. LOGAN: The hon. gentleman admitted that the Government had made mistakes, and asked that they should let bygones be bygones.

The PREMIER: I did not use those words. I have the full text of my speech.

Mr. LOGAN: At Laidley the hon. gentleman also said it.

The PREMIER: At Laidley there were four metropolitan reporters reporting my speech, and it must have been their fault.

Mr. LOGAN: The Premier made reference to certain legislation beneficial to farmers on that occasion, and he also stated that certain members of the Country party opposed the cane price-fixing legislation. That was not so. There was a proposal to introduce the cane price-fixing legislation, but it was tacked on to a "No confidence" motion introduced by Mr. Ryan, and the members of the Country party referred to by the Premier did vote for that want of confidence motion. They supported the Denham Government at that time. It was quite true that on a private members' day the members of the Country party, assisted by the Labour party, carried a motion in favour of cane price-fixing legislation against the Denham Government.

The PREMIER: Then the Government swallowed the members of the Country party and rejected the measure.

Mr. LOGAN: But they voted against the "No confidence" motion in the first place. Later on a Bill was brought in, and it went through. This Bill was brought in by the Labour party, and there was no division taken.

Mr. COLLINS: We were forty-four strong then, and we were not worrying about you. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. MORGAN: That is quite true. You spoke the truth then.

Mr. LOGAN: The Premier also said that Messrs. Morgan, Swayne, Corser, and Bebbington voted against the cane price-fixing legislation, but I looked up "Hansard," and I found that they did not vote against it, but voted for it.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman is not quoting my remarks at all. I said that those members were members of the Nationalist party, and they left the Nationalists and joined the Country party.

[Mr. Logan.

Mr. MORGAN: You said we voted against the cane price-fixing legislation.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. LOGAN: The Premier misquoted the Country members, and made misstatements about them.

The HOME SECRETARY: You young members do not know anything about the sins of the older members. (Laughter.)

Mr. LOGAN: The Premier also said that Mr. Vowles left the Nationalist party and joined the Country party. As a matter of fact, Mr. Vowles did so after having been selected as a Country party candidate by plebiscite.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must refer to hon. members by the names of their electorates.

The PREMIER: I have the newspaper extract of my Laidley speech here, and it shows that I said that Mr. Denham was supported by Messrs. Vowles, Swayne, Corser, and Morgan.

Mr. LOGAN: It was unfair for the Premier to come to Laidley and say that there was no election looming in sight, and there would not be one for sixteen months. He also said that he was not going to make an election speech, but he outlined the policy of the Government. He went on to talk about the Country party and the Nationalist party, and I must admit that he did it very forcibly. Next morning at Forest Hill the president of the Workers' Political Organisation came to me and said, "I was very pleased to see you at the meeting last night," and I replied, "Yes, I was glad to be there." He said to me, "It is rather too late in the day for the Premier to come around telling us a tale like that. (Opposition laughter.) I have always been a Labour supporter; but when the old Tory Government were in power I had to pay no land tax, and to-day I am paying £5." (Renewed Opposition laughter.) The Premier said the poor farmer was not paying land tax at all. Well, I am a small farmer, and I pay land tax. I think the Premier must admit that every small farmer pays, if he has land of an unimproved value of over £300. Although the Premier comes into my electorate, he must not think that, because I am pretty quiet, I propose to allow him to make those statements.

The PREMIER: Do you deduct your land tax from the income tax you pay?

Mr. LOGAN: I do now. (Government laughter.) I did not, and the Commissioner did not make it his business to tell me I might, and until I became a member of this Chamber I did not know I could do so.

The PREMIER: Really, you ought not to be a member of Parliament at all.

Mr. LOGAN: This Bill has been pretty fully discussed, and its weak points disclosed. There is reason to believe that there is a certain amount of socialisation in the scheme. We believe that an agricultural policy should be one for the benefit of the farmers and controlled by them and not by Government appointees; but I am afraid that, in practice, we shall find there will be a good deal of Government "pull." I regret that very much, and I sincerely hope that, before it becomes law, that "pull" will come out,

and that it will put the primary industries in a better position than they are in at the present time.

Mr. COSTELLO (*Carnarvon*): I beg to move—

“That the debate be now adjourned.”

Question put and passed.

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

The House adjourned at 10.30 p.m.

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