

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 15 AUGUST 1922

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TUESDAY, 15 AUGUST, 1922.

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

PRIMARY PRODUCERS' ORGANISATION BILL.

ASSENT.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt from the Governor of a message conveying His Excellency's assent to this Bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I desire to make a personal explanation.

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

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COLLINS: I notice in to-day's "Courier," and also in the "Daily Mail," a telegram from Townsville, which reads—

"Questioned concerning the comments by Mr. Collins, M.L.A., and the Minister for Justice (Mr. Mullan) on the circular recently issued to graziers and others by the Northern division of the Country party," etc.

I wish to state that I asked no question in this House on that subject; that question was asked by the hon. member for Gregory (Mr. Pollock). I would like those newspapers to make that correction. I am in accord, however, with the question, and with the reply given by the Minister.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

PRECEDENCE OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS ON THURSDAY.

The PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I beg to move—

“That during the remainder of this session, unless otherwise ordered, Government business do take precedence of all other business at 3 p.m. on Thursday in each week.”

Question put and passed.

WANT OF CONFIDENCE MOTION.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*), who, on rising to speak, was greeted with Opposition “Hear, hear!” and Government laughter, said: I beg to move—

“That the Government does not possess the confidence of this House or of the electors of Queensland.”

I remember, on the last occasion on which I had the privilege of moving a motion of want of confidence, I referred to the lack of decorum displayed by the rank and file of the Government party. I am rather surprised to see that the Premier is the leader in that respect on this occasion. If ever a man occupying the position of Premier had reason to sink into his hole and hide himself, that is the case with the Premier to-day. (Government laughter.)

In moving the motion standing in my name, I ask hon. gentlemen to look at this matter from a national point of view. (Government laughter.) I ask hon. members opposite not to look at this matter from the petty, trivial, and small-minded point of view in which they do and in which they have done in the past. It is all very well for hon. members opposite to go out into their electorates whispering to their constituents that they are not at one with the Premier in his policy, as they are doing at the present time. They get up on occasions in this House and make expressions which they intend to use during the elections for their own personal purposes. To-day they have an opportunity of doing something practical. (Government laughter.) Hon. members opposite in the past have fallen into line, and no doubt they will do so again to-day.

Mr. RYAN: You have got one; you will not get any more.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: The price is not big enough.

Mr. VOWLES: If the hon. member is talking about price, perhaps he is talking about something that appeared in to-day's papers. Let me say that I want to dissociate myself from anything that appeared. (Government laughter.)

The PREMIER: You will hear all about it later on.

Mr. VOWLES: I will give the hon. gentleman an opportunity of saying anything publicly.

The PREMIER: I will make a speech later on.

Mr. VOWLES: The hon. gentleman is not game to say anything outside so far as I am concerned. If he does, he will very soon get a writ from me. It is admitted on all sides that the Government have outlived their usefulness, if they ever had any useful-

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ness. We find now that that statement is made in all quarters. It is being publicly expressed by the Labour organisations and by the official newspapers which are supposed to represent the Government, and it is also being made by individual members in the community. There was a time when the Labour Press stood manfully behind the Government, but to-day we find it speaking openly, and telling the Government that the time has arrived when they should retire and give the electors of Queensland an opportunity of deciding whether their policy is to be continued for the future. The electors are the judges of these matters, realising that, when the Government were put into power on the last occasion, it was on a well-defined line of policy which is not now being adhered to. We find this democratic Government in the remarkable position of occupying the Treasury benches carrying out their legislation and administration without fairness to the country when they represent a minority of the people. How on earth the Premier, who calls himself a democrat, can reconcile that position with democracy I am at a loss to know. I would like to impress upon the Premier, and upon hon. members who sit behind him, that during the last election the electorates were not equitably distributed, with the result that twelve electorates returned twelve Labour representatives to this House representing a smaller number of electors than was represented by six hon. members sitting in opposition. That being so, and the Government having now brought about a redistribution of electoral areas, I say it was their duty then to have brought about an election—more particularly when they represent a minority of the electors—to decide which policy was to continue in the future.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J. Mullan, *Flinders*): There was no election after the redistribution in 1910.

Mr. VOWLES: The position was altogether different in 1910. We did not have the position that arose when the Premier represented about 2,000 votes, while the hon. member for Bulimba represented about six times that number.

The PREMIER: In that Parliament we had one member who represented only 800 voters.

Mr. VOWLES: The Government claim to be democratic; and, if they acted on democratic lines, the proper thing for them to do was to get another mandate from the people. Time has gone on, and we find the Government are not carrying out their electioneering promises. They have betrayed the trust that was placed in them by the electors. They have gone back on the public service, and repudiated promises which were made and repeated again within the past few months. When an hon. gentleman who occupies the position of a Minister in this House to-day was a candidate at the Paddington by-election, he and many other prominent members of the Government party publicly proclaimed that on no account would they be a party to a reduction of wages. Not only have they brought about that reduction, but they have done it in the face of the opposition of their own following.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We gained a majority at that election.

Mr. VOWLES: We find now that the secrets of the caucus are being let out

because it suits certain individual members, but the members who represent a minority in the caucus are not prepared to stand with the Opposition and add their weight to defeat the Government.

Mr. RYAN: Who offered them bonds? (Government laughter.)

Mr. VOWLES: I would not like to offer bonds to the hon. member. In 1918 the Government represented a majority of 24,000 electors after the election. In 1920 they represented a minority of 20,000 electors. That shows that 44,000 electors of Queensland changed their views in that short space of time.

The PREMIER: Nothing of the sort. If a majority of 20,000 is changed into a minority of 20,000, it does not mean that 40,000 electors have changed their views.

Mr. VOWLES: If you go from a majority of 24,000 down to a minority of 20,000, I think that makes a difference of 44,000.

The PREMIER: It does not.

Mr. VOWLES: The conduct of business in this House by the Government is not only unique, but it is unprecedented and unconstitutional. I called your attention before, Mr. Speaker, to the position which has arisen here. We find laws being altered and fresh legislation being enacted all by the casting vote of yourself, Mr. Speaker, or of the Chairman.

The PREMIER: That is not unprecedented.

Mr. VOWLES: I could understand that happening occasionally; but, when it becomes the rule, it is the duty of the Government to consider the position and not to place you, Mr. Speaker, and the Chairman of Committees in the invidious position you have been placed in daily when you have had to take the whole of the onus of the alteration or creation of laws. In regard to the financial administration of the Government, we are asked this year to find a very much larger revenue than has ever been found in the past. (Government laughter.)

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES: When this Government came into being, the amount of money that was required to run the services of the State from ordinary revenue was, roughly, seven and a-quarter millions. We are rapidly approaching the stage now when it is necessary to find 100 per cent. more to do the same service. In spite of the fact that there has been a recognised decrease in the cost of ordinary services, material, and in other directions, the Government, who urge economy on public servants—who compel them to economise by forcibly reducing their wages—are not carrying out the same principle themselves. But they are requiring more money to carry on, and, yet, in the face of forcibly taking away from the public servants the sum of, roughly, £300,000, they anticipate finishing up this year's transactions with a deficit of £576,000. I would like to know where this is going to end. How can any business be carried on on those lines? It leads only to one goal, and that is the goal of insolvency. Not only have the Government had, and not only will they have this year, a record revenue, but they propose to spend the revenue and a sum of money from the Loan and Trust Funds totalling in the vicinity of £10,000,000. The

Government came into being on a policy of no borrowing except on reproductive works. Yet we find that they have borrowed £33,000,000 during the time they have been in power, and that the public debt has increased from £52,000,000 to £85,000,000. I would like to know if there are any of the works which have been carried out by this Government which can be considered reproductive works. In many cases they were experimental; in many cases they have been begun and never finished—never brought to a paying point—with the result that we have had for many years past some hundreds of thousands of pounds tied up in useless work—work which is depreciating by the fact that earthworks are being washed away and not one penny is being earned because the work was never completed. Are we to continue to carry on in that way? Are we to mortgage and keep on mortgaging and piling up debts for posterity? Should the Government, who told us they were going to carry on all their public works out of revenue, be permitted to carry on in this way when they cannot show any return for the money they are spending? I know of railways costing thousands of pounds which were begun three or four years ago and which are now lying dormant. The capital is tied up, and we have not got the services of the railways which are partly finished, but which are paying interest all the time.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The percentage of money invested in unopened lines is not so big under this Government as it was under your Government.

Mr. VOWLES: The point is this—that, when the Government came into being, we were paying £1 8s. 2d. in direct taxation per capita, and to-day we are paying £4 8s. 10d., and 40 per cent. of the revenue which the State takes from the public through this vast taxation has to go in payment of interest on the public debt. In 1914-15 the rate of interest per capita was £2 18s. 5d., and to-day it is £4 5s. 4d.

The PREMIER: You have been reading the "Courier."

Mr. VOWLES: I have not been reading the "Courier." I have been getting the figures from official sources.

Mr. FOLEY: Why not quote South Australia and Western Australia?

Mr. VOWLES: I am not dealing with South Australia or Western Australia, but with local conditions; I am dealing with this Government, who have had a seven years' tenure of office, and who have been drifting and further drifting, and are growing worse every year. It is for that reason that I appeal to hon. members sitting behind the Premier to assist us to help to bring this thing to a close by allowing the electors to decide whether the Government are to carry on this conduct in the future or not. (Government laughter.) It is proposed that a sum of £5,000,000 shall be spent this year from the Loan Fund, in what direction we do not know altogether, but a good deal of it is going to be spent in railway construction and in developing certain schemes in the Burnett and other districts. I would like to know how the Government propose to get any return out of the money which is to be expended in these ventures if they are not going to have a healthy immigration policy, and if they are not going to do the same as Western Australia is doing—that is,

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encourage people with capital and enterprise to come to Queensland and settle in these areas when they are made fit for settlement. We are told on the one hand that the Government are going in one direction, and on the other hand we are told that the Trades and Labour Council will not permit the Government to bring in immigrants under any circumstances.

Mr. HARTLEY: That is not true. It is only while there are unemployed in Queensland.

Mr. VOWLES: So long as the Government carry on their policy of inducing loafers from the other States to come to Queensland where they will be kept for nothing by the Government, you will have unemployed here for all time.

Mr. HARTLEY: You have no authority to say that the Trades and Labour Council are against immigration. It is only while there are unemployed in Queensland.

Mr. VOWLES: I read it in the papers. If the Government would only administer the relief in a proper way without encouraging people to loaf for the purpose of getting relief, you would get rid of the unemployed.

Mr. DASH: You call them loafers?

Mr. VOWLES: Yes. I have heard of cases where single men have refused work and yet they get rations. If a police officer can show that a young man has been offered work and that he refuses to take it, his rations should be stopped. That is the only way to bring such men to their senses. I admit that the Government have a very difficult proposition, so far as the married men with responsibilities are concerned, because in that case there are the women and children to be considered, and we cannot allow the women and children to suffer. I have heard of people going round the country like Government tourists, travelling from station to station, receiving rations and cadging tobacco and other luxuries as they go.

Mr. DASH: Name one case.

Mr. VOWLES: I asked the Premier the other night whether he had considered the question of the loans which are maturing very shortly, and I quoted the amount of money which will be falling due next year and also in 1925 and 1926. The Premier so far has remained silent, and has not told the House what his policy is.

The PREMIER: Apparently part of our loan matured yesterday. (Government laughter.)

Mr. VOWLES: How much did you get? I had a little to say about the American loans the other day, and I have something further to say about them now. The first loan of 12,000,000 dollars was for a period of twenty years, inconvertible, with interest at 7 per cent., and the second for 10,000,000 dollars for twenty-five years, with interest at 6 per cent. That was also inconvertible. When I was speaking the other night I set out to show that it was not a sound business proposition, and that the rate of interest was uncertain. I pointed out that the whole thing was speculative, and was dependent upon the dollar value when the loan matured. The Financial Statement

gives the rates for the different loans for the present financial year as follows:—

	Financial Year 1922-3—	1st Loan.	2nd Loan.
Net amount realised, as per Financial Statement	£2,826,705	£2,088,541	
Interest for financial year 1922-3	dollars 840,000	600,000	
At present rate of exchange of 4.46 dollars to £1 sterling, is equal to	£188,340	£134,529	
Interest on net amount realised is equal to, per cent.	6 11 7	6 8 10	
Rate given in Financial Statement	5 12 10	5 17 5	

The PREMIER: Those figures are quite correct.

Mr. VOWLES: They are not correct.

The PREMIER: They were checked by an actuary. Do you set yourself up as an actuary?

Mr. VOWLES: The Sydney "Bulletin" critic, who writes the "Wild Cat column," states that they are not correct, and I would be more inclined to go by his opinion than by the opinion of anybody else.

Mr. COLLINS: You are an authority on "wild cats."

Mr. VOWLES: I quote those figures for this reason. I want to make a comparison to show that the Government did not do the good business that they are supposed to have done in regard to those loans. A loan was floated by Canada at the same time for 6 per cent., and a loan was floated by Victoria in February, 1922, at 5½ per cent., which realised £99. This was a loan of £4,000,000, and no less than £56,000,000 was offered. The net proceeds were, approximately, £3,810,000, and the actual interest on the net proceeds was £5 15s. 6d. per cent. Compare that with the rate of interest that had to be paid by Queensland. The New Zealand loan floated in London in May, 1922, of £5,000,000 at 4½ per cent., realising £100, resulted in £10,000,000 being offered, and the net proceeds were, approximately, £4,800,000, and the actual interest rate on the net proceeds worked down to £4 5s. 2d., which, even on the Premier's own showing, is £1 12s. 3d. per cent. lower than the rate of his own loan.

There are some matters that I want to refer to here, first of all in connection with the want of fulfilment by the Premier of promises which he made at the last general election. He told us, for one thing, that he was going to bring in a Bill to build workers' homes, and was going to make that proposal an active portion of his programme. All we know about it is that we find at the very tail end of the Governor's Speech, which is part of the Government programme for the present election, a promise to do that which they promised to do in 1920.

The PREMIER: For which election do you say it is part of our programme?

Mr. VOWLES: The election that is coming on now. (Government laughter.) I take it that it is pretty certain that there is an election in view, judging by the action of the Government and by their trying to raise an election cry as they have done during the last few days. (Renewed Government laughter.) Like a drowning man clutching at

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a straw, they refer to the workers' homes, which the Premier himself promised in his policy speech in the Exhibition Hall as far back as 10th September, 1920. When one finds that the legislation is only now foreshadowed as a sort of afterthought in the Governor's Speech, although it was promised in 1920, one realises that it is just another little sample of the window-dressing that goes on about such times. The Premier is trying right throughout his programme to placate the agriculturists, but at the end he finds that he must fall back on his old love, the worker, and so he tells him that he is going to bring in legislation for workers' homes.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: The Bill is before the House now. It is on the business-sheet.

Mr. VOWLES: We have seen a lot on business-sheets and we know of slaughtered innocents at the end of the session. We have seen lots of things put there for a purpose and then dropped, and the Premier will be pleased to drop many of the things that have been foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech, and he will blame the Opposition, and the "Standard" will turn round and tell us that we are wasting the time of the country, and will probably give instructions to the Premier to curtail the debate by putting on the "gag." This is what the Premier said on the date I have mentioned—

"Hence it will be seen that the scheme under which the Government proposes to erect workers' homes in various parts of the State is a necessary corollary to the control of rents legislation. The Tories have assisted the rent profiteers by damning for the time being our chances of raising money in London. The Government, however, will not allow the Tories to frustrate its plans, and means will be found, either from the proceeds of the proposed local loan or by the issue of special housing bonds, to carry out the scheme."

Nearly two years have gone and I would like to know how far the Premier has fulfilled his promise to the workers of Brisbane in that particular. On the question of child endowment, I will quote from the "Standard" of 2nd October, 1920—

"The system of basing wages on what was required to keep a man and his wife and three children was fallacious, and, in fact, the Arbitration Court had never fixed a wage on that basis. The Government was determined to work out a plan to enable women to bring up their children in the way they should, and, therefore, there must be subsidies to the wives of workers for their children.

[4 p.m.]

"An Interjector: Hurry up, before mine all grow up.

"Mr. Theodore: You may be sure the Government will not delay."

Two years have passed, and we have heard nothing further.

The PREMIER: If you have not heard, it is because you have not been listening. That offer was made to the workers last year.

Mr. VOWLES: I have been listening and reading. Nothing has been brought before this House which would give effect to the words of the Premier.

Again, on the subject of the purchase of the Brisbane tramways, this is the appeal made to the people of the city at the Exhibition Hall on 10th September, 1920—

"The Government have the right, from the 20th September of this year, to acquire by purchase the Brisbane tramways. This right will be exercised at an early date."

The PREMIER: So it will.

Mr. VOWLES: So it will, if the Government can push it on to the local authorities. If they can carry legislation empowering them to compel the local authorities to take something that they do not want, then they will bring it into being.

The PREMIER: Who should control the tramways?

Mr. VOWLES: Continuing, the Premier said—

"The financial boycott will have no effect on the intentions of the Government in this matter, for we have the right to pay for the undertaking in Government debentures."

Where is the excuse for having made that promise to the electors of Brisbane and not having carried it out?

On the subject of unemployment, at Rockhampton the Premier said—

"The Government intend to proceed with the Unemployed Workers Bill."

Have they proceeded with it? They are not game; public opinion is so much against it. Nevertheless the Government are prepared to tell that to the electors for the purpose of getting their votes. The hon. member for Bowen on 3rd December, 1915 ("Hansard," page 2651), said—

"He regretted very much that they had to distribute outdoor relief in a State like Queensland; but he was convinced that, so long as they had production for gain instead of production for use, so long would they have to give outdoor relief."

That is one of the gentlemen who now is advocating a policy conceived from an agricultural point of view: yet he is one of those who believe in production only for use and not for profit. How on earth he can reconcile and justify his attitude towards the workers with his attitude towards the producers is beyond my comprehension.

Mr. COLLINS: Don't you worry about the hon. member for Bowen.

Mr. VOWLES: Again, at Bowen, on 3rd October, 1920, the Premier said—

"There was nothing about which the Government was more in earnest than the establishment of the Bowen iron and steel works."

Have they been started?

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: No.

Mr. VOWLES: Is not that another false promise? These things are all coming home to roost.

Mr. COLLINS: They never would be started if you had your way.

Mr. VOWLES: That is two years ago. The Premier said—

"To say that this part of the Government's policy was political window-dressing was a falsehood. The Government meant to go straight ahead with

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the work and the failure of the London loans would not affect the position. They had local financial resources and the work would be carried out without delay."

Surely the hon. gentleman must appreciate the fact that he has not been playing the game with the electors of Queensland!

The PREMIER: Who did you say had the financial resources? (Government laughter.)

Mr. VOWLES: I think the hon. gentleman is supposed to have them. We have often tried to find out what the hon. gentleman has in the way of financial resources, but he is one of those who will never give us the information.

Mr. FORDE: He never got any from your side.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. VOWLES: These quotations I will now make should cause followers of the Government to realise the position they are in to-day. Not alone have they public opinion against them; they have union opinion against them—the heads of organisations as well as the rank and file. On the question of reduction of wages, at a mass meeting at the Ipswich railway workshops on 4th July, 1922, Mr. Rymer said—

"Mr. Theodore had made promises in his speeches before the last election. Labour candidates had assured the railway men that there would be no retrenchment. Was that honoured? They were also told there would be no reduction in wages. Was that honoured?"

Again, Mr. Rymer said this—

"Legislation was to be introduced which would provide a central fund for the purpose of paying a bonus for every child born. Had that promise been carried out? . . . Mr. Theodore said he would search the pockets of the wealthy."

I think he found, Mr. Speaker, that they were empty. (Laughter.) Mr. Rymer wants to know if he has done that, and says he was more inclined to search the pockets of the workers. Continuing, he said—

"I am sorry to say that delegates have reason for believing, as far as the member for Bremer is concerned, he is in the bag with Ted Theodore and McCormack."

Then, again, on the question of these promises about which people want an explanation, the Secretary for Mines at a meeting of the Fire Brigade Section of the Australian Workers' Union on 30th March, 1922, according to the "Standard" said—

"The time was undoubtedly ripe for the propaganda campaign now being conducted by the Queensland Central Executive of the Australian Labour party. It was everywhere apparent that it was the intention of the employing bosses to bring down wages. It was most remarkable that whenever a time of difficulty arose the average employer could see no way out but to cut into the wages sheet."

The Secretary for Mines is one of those who subscribe to the plank in the Arbitration Court to have the wages of public servants cut down, in the face of having said that as late as 1st April, 1922—rather an appropriate date—it was April Fool's Day.

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Again, the hon. member for Bremer, at the Ipswich railway workshops, on 6th July, 1922, said this—

"In reference to the address which Mr. Rymer made at the workshops on Tuesday, the statements made were not correct. When the matter of the proposed reduction was before the Caucus a motion was submitted which would have had the effect of preventing the Government going to the Arbitration Court. He voted for that motion and against Mr. Theodore. He was not 'in the bag' with Mr. Theodore, as Mr. Rymer had suggested."

That shows distinctly that, even on matters of policy where direct promises have been given by members of the Ministry individual members sitting behind the Government have no soul of their own and no voice of their own. Had those eight members, who have been lauded up to the skies by the workers' organisations, joined forces with the Opposition—as they should have done if they wanted to assert their manhood—they might have saved the workers of Queensland from the broken promises of the Government.

Again, on 31st July, 1922, Mr. Bond, the secretary of the Professional Officers' Association, said at the Albert Hall—

"The principles of the Labour movement had been distinctly violated by the Government, which had distinctly departed from the pledges it had given to the people before the last general elections."

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: What "Bond" is that?

Mr. VOWLES: Those are not the bonds the hon. member is talking about. (Government laughter.) In addition to those things I have mentioned, we have had increased hours for clerical workers—I do not say they may not be necessary, but the promise was made that these things would not be done—pooling of work, reduction of wages by application to the Arbitration Court, special retrenchment by legislation, and, what is commonly known now as "deflation." So far as the police magistrates in particular are concerned, the Government, I understand, are attacking their salaries with the 5 per cent. reduction notwithstanding the fact that there is a special agreement in writing between the Government and those officers that their salaries were not to be touched.

I think I have given some reasons, from a financial point of view—and more particularly from the Government's own actions in respect of their policy during the present session—which should justify members sitting behind the Government in realising that they should consider very seriously whether they propose to permit the Government to carry on in the future; or whether, by their votes, in conjunction with those of the members of the Opposition, they intend to bring about a crisis which will force a general election. Are we to continue as we have been doing in the last few weeks?

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: I hope not.

Mr. VOWLES: The Government are in a state of uncertainty. On a recent occasion they had to adjourn the House in order to carry on. At a critical stage they were unable to carry on at all. If they are going to carry on and the voting is equal, they will only be able to carry on on the casting vote of yourself, Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman of Committees when the House is in Committee.

Is it a fair thing that the Government should put you in that position? You personally are supposed to be independent of any party in this House, and you should not know what the Government's policy really is. When the Government bring forward legislation which is going to alter existing conditions, the unwritten law on this matter, according to constitutional authorities, is that the duty of the Speaker or the Chairman, as the case may be, is to leave conditions as they are. According to "May," the constitutional practice is for the Speaker or Chairman not to alter existing conditions.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: And not to oppose the Speaker at an election.

Mr. VOWLES: What about the election of 1915? Did you not oppose Mr. Armstrong?

The PREMIER: Did he not attend the caucus of the Nationalists?

Mr. VOWLES: When the Denham Government were in office, I never saw the Speaker at a meeting of the party.

The PREMIER: Did he not give his casting vote in favour of the Denham Government?

Mr. VOWLES: I do not know; but, if the Speaker or Chairman did so, I say without hesitation that he should not.

Mr. COLLINS: Weak men follow precedents, strong men make them.

Mr. VOWLES: I can imagine the attitude of the hon. gentleman if the tables were turned. The people have a right as individuals and electors to say, "We will not allow this state of affairs to continue." I have moved this motion this afternoon in order that members sitting behind the Government, even at this late stage in the history of this Parliament, may give the electors an opportunity of saying whether the present Government are to continue in office or not.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I desire to second the motion moved by the leader of the Opposition. Queensland has got into such a state that something has got to be done, and it is up to hon. members sitting behind the Government to see that what we have been going through during the last four years does not continue. It is a terrible state of affairs if contentious measures have to be carried on the casting vote of the Speaker or Chairman.

The PREMIER: Did you not refuse the position of president of the Local Authorities' Association the other day because you were going to get a portfolio in this House?

Mr. MOORE: No; there was nothing said about a portfolio. The electors of *Aubigny* have sent me to represent them in this House, and it is my duty to give my whole time to that work. Had I accepted the position of president of the Local Authorities' Association my parliamentary work would have been interfered with. This motion will enable Government members to cast their votes in the interests of the country and in the interests of Queensland as a whole.

The PREMIER: Is it not strange that the leader of the Nationalist party did not second the motion?

Mr. MOORE: I do not think it is strange at all. I have a perfect right, as deputy

leader of the Country party, to second the motion moved by the leader of the Opposition—

The PREMIER: It is very significant.

Mr. MOORE: More especially as during the last seven years the country people have seen the ones who have suffered most at the hands of the Government.

Mr. COLLINS: What rot!

Mr. MOORE: We have suffered at the hands of the Government during the last seven years, and it is only within the last three or four weeks that the Country party has received any attention from the Government, and that is because they anticipate going to the country, and they know perfectly well that they have lost the confidence of the workers outside, and consequently they are turning to the agriculturists in an endeavour to secure support. We know very well that at the present time the Labour organisations outside are calling a special convention to deal with the recalcitrant position of the Premier in defying the Central Political Executive.

The PREMIER: Do you say that the wheat-growers and the canegrowers are suffering?

Mr. MOORE: They have suffered. It is no good picking out just the sugar-growers. They are in the position they are in to-day because of the Federal Government.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No.

Mr. MOORE: Labour members in this House prior to 1914 prophesied that the Federal Government would be the saviours of the sugar industry. To-day we have to consider the position that the finances of the State have got into.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Any concession that was got for the sugar industry was wrung out of the Federal Government by this Government.

Mr. MOORE: It is no use the hon. gentleman talking like that. We have members in the Federal House representing Queensland who are just as anxious for the continuance of the sugar industry and the prosperity of the growers as hon. members opposite.

The PREMIER: Are they Country party members?

Mr. MOORE: Country members, too.

The PREMIER: Why is the Prime Minister giving them so much attention?

Mr. MOORE: The Prime Minister recognises that the Country party is a force to be reckoned with, and also recognises that the Labour party in the Federal House is a dead letter, and consequently gives his attention to the Country party rather than the Labour party.

The PREMIER: They are not a dead letter in Queensland.

Mr. MOORE: That remains to be seen. When the convention is called by the Labour organisations to deal with the Premier and his colleagues we shall find what position they are going to take up. We had a conference sitting in Queensland last October, when certain resolutions were passed in direct opposition to the warning of the Premier. A conference also sat in Melbourne, which reaffirmed those resolutions, and now we have the Premier directly opposing those resolutions. As a member of the Labour party, he has to sign a pledge, not only to assist in carrying out those resolutions, but

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also to become an active propagandist, and, when matters come into Parliament founded on those resolutions, he is expected to carry them out. We had the Premier making the statement that there would be no reduction in wages, yet we find that a reduction has come. It was forced on him. I am not going to say whether it was right or wrong; but, in my opinion, the reduction was right. I do not think it was right for the Government to make a distinct pledge to a body of workers by saying that there would not be any reduction, and then breaking their pledge and going to the Arbitration Court.

Mr. COLLINS: If your Government were in power, they would reduce wages.

Mr. SWAYNE: Your Government got into power on false pretences.

Mr. MOORE: As the hon. member for Mirani says, the Government got into power on false pretences. When the State enterprises were launched we had a statement published broadcast throughout Queensland that, by the establishment of State enterprises, revenue would be increased, taxation would be increased, and borrowing would become unnecessary. What has been more false than that? We find that last year the total loss in connection with State enterprises was £266,628; after absorbing a reserve profit there is still a loss of £79,505. We have seen the extraordinary accounts in connection with them. We know the valuation put on the stock on State stations and how the enterprises have been managed. We know perfectly well that the assets to-day would not realise within 55 per cent. of the price paid for them. We find that the Treasurer, in delivering his Financial Statement, anticipates a deficit of over £550,000, and yet makes no provision to meet that.

The PREMIER: Could you not deal with these matters on the Financial Statement?

Mr. MOORE: I have a perfect right to speak on what I consider is of interest to Queensland whether I am speaking on this motion or on the Financial Statement.

The PREMIER: Could you not say all this on the Financial Statement?

Mr. MOORE: Of course I could, and I could have said it on the Address in Reply; but, unfortunately, the Premier cut out the Address in Reply and we are forced to take other opportunities in this House to put forward our complaints.

Mr. FOLEY: What about the services rendered to the community by the State enterprises?

Mr. MOORE: The services rendered to the community by the State enterprises are in no way commensurate with the amount of money the people have had to pay for them by way of taxation.

Mr. FOLEY: The people outside do not think so.

Mr. MOORE: I have lived outside, and I know the way things are going on. It is all very well for the Minister to say that the State butcher shops have reduced the price of meat to the consumers. We know very well that they have not done so. When they were commandeering meat from the pastoralists at their own price, they were able to sell a little cheaper than the private shops, but to-day they are not able to do so. In the past, in many places in Queensland, the State butcher shops could not compete with the private shops.

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Mr. GILDAY: If it were not for the State butcher shops the price of meat would be considerably higher than it is.

Mr. MOORE: In Toowoomba the State butcher shops could never compete with private enterprise. Private enterprise undersold them the whole of the time, proving that the argument of hon. members is altogether wrong.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: They are doing very well in Toowoomba.

Mr. MOORE: Private enterprise to-day can undersell the State shops and always has done so in Toowoomba. Take the position in Queensland to-day so far as the money that has been borrowed for reproductive works is concerned. For the eight years ending 30th June, 1922, the interest charged on borrowed money amounted to £20,346,479. The earnings during that time from reproductive works amounted to £8,665,454, leaving a loss for the eight years of £11,681,045, which has had to be found by the taxpayer. The actual charge on the revenue in 1915 was 3.72 per cent., while to-day it is 18.18 per cent. Roughly, there are about £45,000,000 of loan money expended in Queensland not earning any interest at all. Can anybody say that that is a satisfactory state of affairs in a country like Queensland? Nobody can say that is a condition of affairs that should exist in Queensland, considering the position we were in in 1915.

Mr. FOLEY: The same thing applies to every other State.

Mr. MOORE: It does not apply to every other State. The hon. member has only to look at Saturday's "Daily Mail" and he will see from the report in connection with the railways in New South Wales that they paid 5.9 per cent. interest. That is the best paying system in the world to-day, while the greatest deficit in Queensland is in connection with our railways. In that respect, Queensland is in a far worse position than any other State in Australia. The interest charge per annum to-day amounts to £3,286,096. But the financial management has been so indifferent that the receipts from loan works only amount to £1,047,308, leaving a deficit of £2,238,788, which was a direct charge on the taxpayers of Queensland. If a private company carried on business in that manner, they would not be able to carry on for more than twelve months. If they were not able to pay their shareholders and debenture holders, the shareholders would put in a receiver and realise on the assets; but, because the Government have got the taxpayers to fall back on, it does not matter; they do not care what taxation is imposed on the people. They are not prepared to cut down expenditure in any way whatever. They estimate a record revenue for the coming year and anticipate a deficit of over £560,000, and have made no provision to meet it.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: In order to give low rates to the primary producers.

Mr. MOORE: Not at all. The primary producers have only come into the view of the Government within the last few months. Before that the Government did not care what happened to them. In the past, railway rates were increased as much as 60 per cent. A few items have been reduced by 20 per cent. within the last three or four months, and that is all we have got out of the Government; and yet they are making a great boast about what they have done for

the primary producers. The Government talk about economy. They have been talking about it for a long time, but so far we have seen no signs of economy, and private economy is discouraged. One of the greatest evils in Queensland to-day is the gambling that is going on throughout the State. I have previously called attention to the evil of proprietary racing and of the gambling devices going on throughout Queensland. In 1916-17, as reported on page 395 of "Hansard," Mr. Pollock, the hon. member for Gregory, said—

"Now, I am against proprietary racing because I am against all monopolies. That is the reason why I believe that proprietary racing in Queensland should be exterminated, and I think that the only way in which that can be done is by getting hold of the hub of racing in Brisbane."

Yet we find the Government, which stated that they were going to combat monopolies and combines, giving their support to the greatest monopoly in Australia to-day, and not a word raised in protest by one hon. member on the Government side. How they have changed their views during the last three or four years! The hon. member for Fitzroy strongly supported the motion with regard to the control of proprietary racing. He said—

"With regard to proprietary racing, I think it is an evil which has brought racing down in a great degree. It has spoilt horse racing altogether since proprietary racing has crept in, and the sooner it is done away with the better. It is a pure money-making game and that is the only reason that it is continued. To think that proprietary racing has been allowed to get into the hands of one man to fleece the big cities of Queensland is very bad, and I hope the Government will take hold of it and deal with it drastically."

The resolution dealing with the matter was carried in this House, but so little do the Government think of any resolution carried in this House that they have not touched it. They have never been game to lift a finger against this evil which is growing up in our midst. A little further on the hon. member for Fitzroy said—

"The sooner proprietary racing is done away with and the profits are removed from these parasites—that is all you can call them, although they may have hundreds and thousands of pounds in the bank—the better. Proprietary racing should be done away with altogether. I shall vote for the motion."

Then, Mr. Fihelly, as reported on page 399 of "Hansard," said—

"At the last Rockhampton Convention, I think a resolution was carried by the delegates there from the different electorates representing the Labour movement, to abolish bookmakers and nationalise the totalisator.

"At the present day the horses are merely used for gambling purposes and nothing else."

In 1915, in reply to a question by Mr. Gunn, the late member for Carnarvon, the Attorney-General said that there passed through the totalisator alone in six months £62,560, the Government having received £3,128, and the owner of the course £4,535. In twelve months there passed through the "tote" £157,413; the amount claimed by the Govern-

ment being £7,875; and the proprietor received £11,419. For the twelve months ending 1st July, 1922, there passed through the totalisator a sum of £193,101 5s.; the amount claimed by the Government was £11,661 19s. 9d.; and the amount received by the proprietor, £12,551. That is only on one racecourse, and we find that during the last twelve months there were two hundred and twenty-two days on which racing took place in the metropolitan area. Does this evil not cry out for some action on the part of the Government? We heard that a Bill was to be introduced during this session to control racing, but it was suddenly dropped. We have a Government who are supposed to combat monopolies, and yet they absolutely refuse to lift a finger to control something which is sapping the life of the community, and, as the hon. member for Fitzroy said, breeding parasites in our midst.

I will take the figures for one day this year in connection with proprietary racecourse meetings in Brisbane, held on the 1st of this month. The totalisator turnover was £5,895 5s.; the club got [4.30 p.m.] £383; the bookmakers in the paddock paid to the club £462, while those in the leger enclosure paid £199 10s. Nominations and acceptances came to £188; the prize money amounted to £900. Roughly, for that one day's racing in connection with one racecourse in Brisbane, £2,082 went to the proprietors of the racecourse. Surely it is time that such a disgraceful state of affairs was put a stop to by whatever Government is in power, especially as a mandate to that effect has been given by this House, and hon. members opposite spoke in favour of it. Still the Government are afraid to do anything. Surely the Government recognise that they have got a mandate from their own supporters to do something. It is their duty to act on that mandate, and, if they are not prepared to do so, let hon. members opposite come over to this side and force the Government to carry out this work, which is for the benefit of the State. But apparently they would sooner submit to the degradation of the people by allowing gambling to be carried on as it is being carried on. They would sooner see parasites flourishing in Queensland than have some- body else on the front Treasury bench.

Mr. FOLEY: We never hear you advocating the abolition of the Stock Exchange.

Mr. MOORE: We are constantly asked by hon. members opposite, when we deal with this matter, "Do you want to abolish church raffles, or the Stock Exchange?" If we are going to deal with the thing properly, let us take hold of it and not hide behind subterfuges like that.

Mr. FOLEY: You are not sincere.

Mr. MOORE: I tell you I am sincere.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. MOORE: I want to refer to the "Liberty Fairs" which have been carried on throughout Queensland. These gambling devices are carried on in spite of the protests of the people in the various towns of the State. I would like to quote this extract in connection with the "Liberty Fair" which was held in Toowoomba—

"Despite the protests of the City Council and other bodies, the 'Liberty Fair' commenced operations on land adjoining the town hall on Saturday night.

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"The town clerk (Mr. F. H. Merritt) has forwarded the following letter to the Attorney-General following on Friday's deputation of protest:—

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that at a conference between the Council, the Ministers' Association, and representatives of the Toowoomba Municipal Band, the following resolution was unanimously carried:—

That an emphatic protest be entered against the action of the Queensland Attorney-General in granting the promoters of 'Liberty Fair' permission to conduct various pernicious forms of gambling in Toowoomba, and that the Minister be requested to cancel the permit forthwith.

In 1918 the Council forwarded a similar protest through the Home Secretary, but since then the adult franchise has been extended to local government elections, and surely the unanimous wishes of a council elected on that basis should be given some consideration.

I am, therefore, directed respectfully to request that you will be pleased to carry out the term of the resolution by immediately withdrawing the authority to the proprietors of 'Liberty Fair' to carry on a business that is detrimental to the moral welfare of the community.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) FRANK H. MERRITT, Town Clerk.

"In our report of the deputation appearing in Saturday's issue, the arrangements for the division of the profits from the fair were not made quite clear. These provide for the promoter to receive 40 per cent., 30 per cent. to go to the Brisbane 'Standard,' 15 per cent. to the local Trades Hall Board, and 15 per cent. to the band."

When the advertisements came out, it appeared that the "Liberty Fair" was being run in the interests of the band in Toowoomba, but this extract shows how much they got out of it—only 15 per cent. The biggest percentage, 40 per cent., goes to the promoters, and 30 per cent. to the Brisbane "Daily Standard." We find that this kind of thing is allowed throughout the length and breadth of Queensland.

Mr. COLLINS: Not half as bad as bribing members of Parliament.

Mr. MOORE: This has been going on for years, and there have been continual protests made against it by the people. I know that several hon. members opposite object to it just as much as I do. The president of the Trades Hall in Toowoomba got up on a public platform and emphatically protested against this form of gambling being allowed to go on, and yet not one word of protest is raised by hon. members opposite. They are prepared to accept any money. (Government dissent.)

Mr. KIRWAN: That is where you people made the mistake. It may be £5,000 next week.

Mr. MOORE: We find also that the Governor has seen fit to enter a protest against the "Golden Casket."

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Mr. COLLINS: The Governor ought to be put into his proper place, and told to mind his own business.

Mr. MOORE: Every public man in Queensland has a perfect right to voice his opinion if he sees the moral principles of the people being undermined.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. KIRWAN: There is not a man on that side who would not take the £5,000 if he won it. It is properly conducted.

Mr. MOORE: It is not a question of whether it is properly conducted at all. New South Wales put a stop to it because they recognise that it is an evil.

The PREMIER: They did not stop "Tattersall's."

Mr. MOORE: A previous Government turned Tattersall's out of Queensland, because it was prejudicial to the morals of the people, and now we have the "Golden Casket."

The PREMIER: Tattersall's was still going here when the "Golden Casket" was started.

Mr. MOORE: We have a £25,000 "Golden Casket" running every fortnight in Queensland, and can anybody say that it is for the benefit of the people?

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Yes—for the benefit of the hospitals.

Mr. MOORE: That is the way hon. gentlemen opposite always try to shuffle out. It does not matter whether the people are degraded or not, or what goes on, so long as the money comes in. That is the way in which the Government seem to look at all these questions. We had the Secretary for Railways getting up a little while ago and endeavouring to prove that the railways in Queensland are run better than those in any other State. I will give some figures to show the position.

Mr. GILDAY: You are always decrying your own State.

Mr. MOORE: I would point out to the hon. member—

The SPEAKER: I would ask the hon. member to address the Chair.

Mr. MOORE: I have a right, when I see things going on in the way they are going, to try and remedy the position. I wish to give the figures with regard to the number of train miles per employee, as compared with the number in 1915 in the various States of Australia. In New South Wales the mileage increased by 18.9 per employee, in Victoria by 90.5 per employee, in South Australia by 10.4 per employee, in Western Australia by 81.6 per employee, and in Tasmania by 97 per employee, while in Queensland there was a decrease of 435.8 miles per employee. That shows the difference between Queensland and the other States, and the bad position we have got into. Our railways, which are one of our biggest assets, show a great loss, and our State enterprises, instead of being a benefit to the country, are a curse and a burden on the taxpayers. It is time that this sort of thing was stopped. The people are taxed very much more heavily in proportion than they were in 1915, and some remedy should be found.

The Government have been talking about what they have done for the settler. The advances made by the Settlers' Branch were: 1913-14, £256,732; 1914-15, £332,793; and

1915-16, £414,187. I have taken those figures from the Treasurer's tables. The settlers are just as much in need of advances to-day as they were then. In 1920-21 and 1921-22 the advances were £240,770 and £251,274 respectively. There were 5,600 applications sent in asking for advances, but 50 per cent. were turned down, because the Government did not have sufficient funds. The settlers wanted money to improve their properties, but they were turned down by the Government.

Mr. GILDAY: Why don't you take the whole period of seven years?

Mr. MOORE: If I took the whole seven years, it would be worse still. The position is exactly the same in connection with workers' dwellings. We find from the Treasurer's tables that the advances made from the State Advances Corporation Fund in connection with the Workers' Dwellings Branch in 1913-14 amounted to £449,004; in 1914-15, to £453,808; in 1915-16, to £341,252; while for the last two years the advances have been—1920-21, £216,902; and 1921-22, £193,732. Those figures show a decrease of 40 per cent. in the advances made in connection with the workers' dwellings. We know that the Government have not got sufficient money to lend to the settlers. When this matter was mentioned in this Chamber last year, the late Treasurer said that it was necessary to save fools from themselves. The settler outside is endeavouring to improve his holding, but half the times he seeks an advance he is turned down by the Government because they have not got sufficient money, and the only satisfaction he gets is for the Treasurer to say that it is necessary to save fools from themselves. All these things are acting vitally against the interests of the settler. We find that the position of the State is going back. We find that the settlers are having a very hard time; so much so that the Government, in self-defence, have been forced during the last few weeks to bring in a Bill to remedy, or endeavour to remedy to a certain extent, the position into which they have forced the primary producer outside for years past. For years the Government have been trampling on the primary producer, and now they have introduced a Bill with the object of lifting him from the ditch into which they have pushed him. It is about time that hon. members opposite recognised the position. With the expenditure of money proposed for the present financial year, and with the record revenue anticipated by the Treasurer, we find that the Government expect to end the year with a deficit of £570,000. What chance have the unfortunate people of Queensland got of recovering their position? The Queensland people have to carry a huge burden of taxation every year, while in Victoria they have had no additional taxation since 1915. The other night the hon. member for Herbert said that Queensland was the only State which reduced taxation this year. It is quite true that they have reduced taxation on one small section of the community to the extent of about £8,000.

The PREMIER: Small section? I thought you said the farmers were a large section.

Mr. MOORE: The hon. gentleman himself does not anticipate that the relief will amount to more than about £8,000. We know that the Government have been collecting taxes from people for years when they have no right to collect it. The money was paid

because the people did not understand that they were entitled to make deductions. It was never clearly stated in the income tax instructions that they were entitled to make a deduction. The matter was brought up in this House on one or two occasions, and the Government said the matter would be remedied, but it was never remedied. When they get money from people that way, it is merely extracting money from the people by a subterfuge. That is not the way to carry on a country. I hope that the hon. members of the Government party who represent country constituencies will see that the burdens placed on their electors are too heavy, and will endeavour to have them removed.

Mr. KIRWAN: They are not too heavy. Look at the record wheat prices.

Mr. MOORE: I pointed out previously that there is a large section of people in Queensland who are living practically on gambling. If the Government find any satisfaction in continuing it, they are welcome to do so, but, in my opinion, this gambling is having a bad effect on the people. The Home Secretary himself admitted that he did not believe in the principle of collecting money in the way that it is being collected by the Government at the present time, but he did not see any other way of doing it. If a Minister is so barren of ideas that he is prepared to witness the degradation of the people rather than put his foot down on an evil that is growing bigger every day, then it is time the Government had an election, and let the people say whether they are prepared to back them up in the way they are going. We have only one legislative Chamber now, and measures are carried here by the casting vote of yourself, Mr. Speaker, or the casting vote of the Chairman of Committees. That is not the right way to carry on the government of the State. In every country in the world, when a redistribution of seats takes place, an election follows shortly afterwards, so that the people can ratify the action of the Government in regard to the redistribution of seats. The position here is that the Government force through legislation on the casting vote of the Speaker. That is not fair to yourself as Speaker, and it is not fair to the country. I think that hon. members should have an opportunity of saying whether they approve or disapprove of the condition of affairs the Government have got this State into.

The PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*), who was received with Government "Hear, hears!" said: Although I cannot sympathise with the leader of the Opposition in the motion he has moved, or in the predicament he finds himself in, I can quite understand it. The hon. member gave notice with great confidence last Friday of his intention to move this motion. It must be a very bitter experience to him to have to go on with it this afternoon—(Government laughter)—because his plans have so grossly miscarried.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The hon. member was very confident during the whole sitting on Friday, and he spoke about the Government having reached the climax of its existence, and predicted the early fall of the Government. One can easily understand his confidence in the light of a recent happening.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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The PREMIER: The happenings of the last day or two reveal the fundamental difference between the Labour party and the anti-Labour party.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The Labour party is based upon the recognition of high principles. (Opposition laughter.) One can understand the guffaw of the party that stands for what boodle will buy.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The Labour party hopes to achieve success by the faith it has in its political ideals; but the Opposition parties in the Queensland Parliament at present hope to achieve success—how? By buying members of Parliament.

Mr. FLETCHER: We have got nothing to do with it.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Port Curtis says he has got nothing to do with it.

Mr. FLETCHER: The Country party have nothing to do with it.

The PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition has not said so.

Mr. VOWLES: I say so now.

The PREMIER: Then how is it that you were able to say last Saturday at Ascot that you had arranged, or that someone had arranged, for the hon. member for Toowoomba (Mr. Brennan) to vote for the want of confidence motion?

Mr. VOWLES: I never said anything of the kind.

The PREMIER: Can the hon. gentleman explain how it was that he knew that an offer was being made to a member of this party, and that he believed it would be successful?

Mr. VOWLES: I never said anything of the kind.

The PREMIER: It is well known to hon. members opposite, because individually they were quite gleeful about it.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: We are still gleeful.

The PREMIER: The hon. member's looks belie him.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: So do yours. You ought to get a looking-glass.

The PREMIER: Then what does the hon. member mean by saying: "We are still gleeful"?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Because we have right on our side. (Government laughter.)

The PREMIER: Is that how the hon. member describes attempts at bribery?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: No.

The PREMIER: They have the influence of the capitalists and the boodlers, and the hon. gentleman says they have right on their side.

Mr. FLETCHER: Do you say that we are influenced by boodlers?

The PREMIER: You were quite prepared to take advantage of what the boodlers were able to do for you.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FLETCHER: You do not know anything about it.

The PREMIER: Does the leader of the Opposition expect me to take notice of the

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motion he is moving this afternoon and of the long diatribe he delivered, which had no point and no application? When he found that his plans had gone awry, he had to make some laboured attempt to carry on for half an hour, to make some pretence to justify this motion by drawing a smoke-screen around the place. Even he should know that something more important than the mere trivialities he dealt with in his speech has been moving in political circles in Queensland of late—something for which he is partly responsible, even if he is not culpable. I say it was well known to the controllers of the Country party—the organisation behind the Country party—the organisation behind the Opposition generally. (Opposition dissent.)

Mr. MAXWELL: Absolutely no.

The PREMIER: I hear the hon. member for Toowong say, "No." How, then, was he able to announce on Saturday that the Opposition had secured the vote of a Government member? (Uproar.)

Mr. MAXWELL: I said nothing of the kind.

The PREMIER: It is just as well that the atmosphere is being cleared in regard to this kind of illegal attempt at political corruption, which originated with the enemies of the Government, with the organisation opposed to the Labour party. For over a year members on that side, or organisations behind members on that side, have been attempting to corrupt members of Parliament.

Mr. FLETCHER: Are we responsible for what any member of the community does?

The PREMIER: I am not going to hold the hon. member responsible. What I say is that his party is a party evidently controlled by bosses or an organisation that is prepared to stoop to that kind of thing.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: That is not true.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: What about your party?

The PREMIER: For over a year organisations or forces representing anti-Labour organisations in Queensland have been attempting to corrupt members of Parliament; they have been attempting to bribe members of Parliament to oppose the Labour Government. They do not rely upon the advocacy of their principles or the formulation of a policy that will appeal to the people in order to turn this party out of office, but upon the corruption of members of Parliament.

Mr. FLETCHER interjected.

The PREMIER: Labour members are not up for sale. (Government cheers.) At any rate, no more Labour members are up for sale.

Mr. VOWLES: Did you not yet your price?

The PREMIER: No, I have not got a price. (Government cheers.) I have no doubt that, if I had a price, it would have been offered to me; but, as a matter of fact, overtures have been made to me quite recently by people speaking authoritatively on behalf of Opposition organisations—offers not to buy my vote, but offers for my services to lead a new party, formed principally of Opposition members.

Mr. FLETCHER: Lucky you did not take it.

The PREMIER: Some of those overtures have been quite recent. Perhaps the word

“overtures” is not the correct term, for the individuals making them had no encouragement in the advances they were making.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: Be honest.

The PREMIER: I will be perfectly honest. My regret is that everybody is not honest.

Mr. EDWARDS: Tell us who they were.

The PREMIER: The hon. member will get the information in due course.

Mr. CLAYTON: Name the member who made the overtures.

The PREMIER: I did not say it was a member. Hon. members are apparently shaking under very considerable anxiety—they cannot restrain themselves. What I said was that quite recently suggestions were made to me, and in the course of those suggestions it was made clear to me that offers were being made to buy a member of the Labour party. Therefore, I knew before the end of last week that these offers were being made, and the Opposition were well aware of them long before the hon. member for Dalby gave notice of the motion which now is being debated. I was told that it was going to be moved, and I was told that a Government member was to be bought to support him. And that is what the hon. member apparently knew on Friday, when he was so hopeful of carrying this motion.

Mr. VOWLES: You were offered a job yourself, were you not, at the same time?

The PREMIER: I was offered the job of leading a majority of the members on that side, together with other members who were expected from this side, and I refused to accept the job.

Mr. VOWLES: I refused to have anything to do with you. (Government laughter.) I turned you right down.

The PREMIER: That is so. What I was told was that the hon. member was one of the stumbling-blocks.

Mr. VOWLES: I said I would have nothing to do with it.

The PREMIER: That confirms what I have been saying.

Mr. VOWLES: Outside people again—interfering!

The PREMIER: The hon. member knows they approached me.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Name him!

The PREMIER: I will name him, and I will also quote what he stated in his approach to me. The first man who approached me was Mr. Garbutt, president of the Northern Country party, and the second man who approached me was Mr. Boyce, secretary of the Primary Producers' Union.

Mr. EDWARDS: Why did you not expose them?

The PREMIER: I am doing that now, and I am taking the most effective way I know, so that no other misguided individual will be induced to make such unwise approaches in future.

Mr. FLETCHER: This will do one good thing. It will wipe out a lot of these people. (Government laughter.)

The PREMIER: I do not bring this forward for the sake of making any cheap sensationalism out of it.

Mr. VOWLES: You are trying to connect me with it.

The PREMIER: I am trying to connect the organisations behind the Opposition party with this motion of want of confidence. There is a very clear connection between the approach that was made to members of the Labour party and the want of confidence motion that has been launched this afternoon.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: You asked for it on Thursday night. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: And you are asking for it now, and you are getting it. (Government laughter.) I shall not quote the whole of the verbatim report of the interview between Mr. Garbutt and myself, but only the relevant portions. If hon. members want the whole, I will make it available to them. Mr. Garbutt said—

“I have come to see you again—”

I mentioned that I had been approached earlier by an authority of the Country party organisation. (Opposition interruption.)

Mr. CORSER: He did not represent the organisation.

The PREMIER: If the hon. member will listen to this, I will answer any questions at the conclusion.

Mr. CORSER: You should not say it was the organisation.

The SPEAKER: Order! I hope hon. members will allow the Premier to make his speech.

The PREMIER:

“Mr. GARBUTT: I have come to see you again to know if anything could be done on the same sort of lines?”

“The PREMIER: What are you suggesting?”

“Mr. GARBUTT: My suggestion is a coalition between the moderate section of your party and the best section of our party.”

(Government laughter.)

“The PREMIER: What party do you mean?”

“Mr. GARBUTT: The Country party.”

“The PREMIER: That party has shown a great deal of antagonism and hostility towards me. You say the better section?”

“Mr. GARBUTT: Yes. When I say the better section, I mean those who are prepared to do something.” (Government laughter.) “The hostility to you is only one of the usual procedures of Parliament. I am down here now to see what can be done—to see if we cannot arrange something.”

“The PREMIER: Do you know what I told you last year? A man has to be a member of the Labour party or the anti-Labour party. There is no between course.” (Government cheers.)

“Mr. GARBUTT: Is there no moderate course?”

“The PREMIER: If I had to sever my connection with the Labour party, instead of the support of the ‘Standard,’ which I now receive, I would be supported by a newspaper like the ‘Courier.’ That is what it means, or what it amounts to. What policy do you have in mind for a moderate party of this kind?”

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"Mr. GARBUTT: The Country party policy.

"The PREMIER: That is a nebulous kind of thing. You cannot define it.

"Mr. GARBUTT: We would soon find it if you were there."

(Government laughter.) Mr. Garbutt is still speaking—

"I always feel that if a man like you were directing things on our side there would be no doubt about the results. I have a lot of influence in the North, and I feel that the North of Queensland would be satisfied to let you direct things on their behalf. I have a big business to look after as well as political matters, and I am not very much taken up with the question of policy."

[5 p.m.]

"The PREMIER: You mean to suggest that if I form a new party, I can formulate my own policy

"Mr. GARBUTT: Yes.

"The PREMIER: What about measures to which strong objection has been taken in the past?

"Mr. GARBUTT: I tell you candidly I think the repudiation Act was a big mistake. I believe now that, provided some satisfactory arrangement could be made with regard to an extension of lease for pastoralists—

"The PREMIER: Some of the land will be required for closer settlement, and in those cases there will be no renewals.

"Mr. GARBUTT: You have to protect markets. I think our party would be prepared to consent to some arrangement for an extension of leases or something to that effect, although I tell you candidly I think the Act was a breach of contract. If a man went to the Northern Territory and took up land at 10s. 6d. a mile on a forty-years' lease under the same conditions as we originally took up land here, and if that land became valuable, would you be justified in—

"The PREMIER: The circumstances are not analogous. They would have taken up their leases without any limitation.

"Mr. GARBUTT: I have been told that the extremists of your party are going to defeat you. We have received good information to the effect that certain members of your party are going to defeat you and send you to the country on the question of the reductions.

"The PREMIER: You see what has to be considered. Your suggestion is that I should form a new party and outline a new policy on the assumption that I would get the support of certain members of the Opposition Country party. What assurance is there that I should get the support of men on that side? What assurance have I that they would consider it?"

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: None at all.

The PREMIER: The conversation proceeds—

"Mr. GARBUTT: It appears to me that if you have to face the country under existing conditions—the Country party with their own electorates, and the Nationalists with other electorates, and the Labour party fighting all the electorates,

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and some of the members of that party fighting you—we have to have a coalition whereby those of your moderate section would be prepared to follow you with certain members of the Country party.

"The PREMIER: Do you think members of the Country party would?

"Mr. GARBUTT: I was wondering whether you would?

"The PREMIER: How do you know they would? I mentioned in Parliament some time ago that during the last year or so I have had half a dozen approaches made to me from one quarter and another.

"Mr. GARBUTT: Our trouble is with our organisation or our parliamentary party we cannot guarantee anything, although I think certain things would happen. If a crisis came, I think they would do it."

Mr. CORSER: That is your trouble.

The PREMIER: Mr. Garbutt is speaking. He says—

"I can speak on behalf of our two men in the North. They would be only too glad."

(Loud Government laughter.)

Mr. GREEN: Did you believe that?

The PREMIER: This is how I replied—

"I have given a lot of consideration, both as Premier and as leader of the Labour party, to our policy and how it is to be shaped, but I have never considered for a moment the question of severing my connection with the Labour party. I do not think a man is justified in making his own position secure in the event of his party being faced with a crisis. I think the best plan is for a man to go out of office rather than make himself more established there at the expense of his party.

"If any mistake has been made in the Labour party policy and administration, I am just as much culpable as others. I have had to shape that policy without being subject to any outside tyranny or anything of that kind. Any allegation of that kind is fictitious. In the circumstances I do not see that there is any proposition that I can consider for a moment in this regard."

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The conversation proceeded—

"Mr. GARBUTT: There are eight men in your party who are prepared to defeat you. They say they are prepared to send you to the country on the question of the reduction of wages, and they will be prepared to do it on Thursday or Friday next.

"The PREMIER: The members of a party cannot be expected to see eye to eye on all questions. So far the Labour party has remained quite solid, and I have no doubt that that solidity will not be broken up."

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Mr. Garbutt then said—

"Perhaps we can wait and see what takes place in the next few days."

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Ah!

Mr. MORGAN: Who took that note?

The PREMIER: A stenographer took these notes. Whether Mr. Garbutt intended that

conversation to be confidential, I do not know; but he did not ask that it be considered private or confidential.

Mr. VOWLES: He had no authority from me to make it.

The PREMIER: The hon. member can explain that himself; I do not know anything about that. Two days after that Mr. Boyce, who is one of the authoritative party managers of the Country party outside Parliament, came to see me on practically the same subject. I will quote extracts from the conversation which took place with Mr. Boyce on Thursday last, the 10th instant—

“Mr. Boyce said Mr. Brennan had been dissatisfied, and arrangements had been made to secure his vote on the want of confidence motion.”

(Government laughter.)

“The PREMIER: How were they securing his vote?”

“Mr. BOYCE: By making it worth his while.”

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Ah!

The PREMIER: It proceeds—

“The PREMIER: The Opposition parties?”

“Mr. BOYCE: No, someone outside Parliament.”

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: There you are.

The PREMIER: I then said—

“Who would it be—the graziers?”

“Mr. BOYCE: He did not know anything except what was told to him by Mr. Garbutt.”

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Ah!

The PREMIER: I replied—

“It is incredible that anyone would offer to bribe a member of Parliament, or that any member would accept a bribe.”

“Mr. BOYCE: Make no mistake—they were prepared to pay a large sum—as much as £5,000. It had been whispered that the Premier was going over to the Country party.”

That is why he came to see me, I suppose. Then the conversation went on—

“The PREMIER: He had already been approached, and he had put it to one or two of those who had sounded him in this way—If he were to come out and say it was necessary to form a new party, what would he be expected to do? Throw over the policy he had been advocating? The Pastoral Rents Act had caused a good deal of criticism.

“Mr. BOYCE: He was at a meeting when a resolution was asked to be put through that it would be the first plank in the policy of the Country party that this Act should be repealed, and immediately one with sufficient knowledge said, ‘What did they propose to do? Were they going to pay back the money? Where were they going to get the money?’ The general impression then was, it was wrong to repeal it; they could not do it. Besides, the Country party had now begun to realise that the men who were hit were a small number of men.”

Mr. J. JONES: Wrong.

The PREMIER: I remarked, then—

“At one time the politics of this country were under the control of the

squatter class. For many years the Assembly was under the domination of that class; for many years after that domination ceased in the Assembly it continued in the Council.

“Mr. BOYCE: There was a feeling amongst a lot of graziers that these fellows were cajoled.”

Then the conversation went on. If hon. members are interested, I am quite willing to read the whole thing.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Yes, read it.

The PREMIER: I think hon. members have had enough.

Mr. MOORE: You have cleared the Opposition.

The PREMIER: Whatever responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the Opposition for the attempt to bribe members of Parliament, at any rate—

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: None.

The PREMIER: Their organisations and party managers have been “in the know” in regard to the thing; and they have been sharing that knowledge themselves.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No.

Mr. VOWLES: You have been “in the know.”

The PREMIER: I have been, because the police have been attempting to catch these people who are the archpriests of corruption and bribery.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MORGAN: Why did you not have Garbutt arrested, if you say he is responsible?

The PREMIER: I did not say he was responsible. I say he knew. I have only Mr. Boyce's authority for that. Mr. Boyce, in his interview with me, said that he was told by Mr. Garbutt. I am not saying that Mr. Garbutt had anything to do with it. But I know that someone had something to do with it beyond those who were carrying round the notes and bonds in their pockets.

Mr. VOWLES: Did not the hon. member for Toowoomba give a public demonstration of it here on Friday, and defy your “whip”? Did we not all see it?

The PREMIER: Does the hon. member explain why it is that his want of confidence motion came at the psychological moment when it was expected by these people who were offering bribes, and why it is he said at Ascot on Saturday—

Mr. VOWLES: That I understood Brennan was coming over. (Government laughter and interruption.)

The PREMIER: The hon. member now admits it. The hon. member will have quite sufficient explaining to do in the next few weeks. The hon. member moves a want of confidence motion. What does he expect the Government to do? Resign? To make way for whom? A party without principle, without a policy—members of whose organisation go round with thousands of pounds in their pockets offering to bribe individuals—to corrupt members; attempting to drag down politics in Queensland into the mire and the gutter? So far as the Government are concerned, they will resist it. We have every justification for so doing. Whilst we are able to command a majority in this House, even if it is only on the casting vote of the Speaker, we shall remain here to keep out of office a

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party who, at the behest of hoodlers outside, are doing their best to corrupt the public life of this State.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Ozley*): Speaking for myself and, I think, most hon. members on this side of the House, I am very delighted that this incident has been exposed in the manner in which it has been. I make the statement, and the leader of the Opposition will certainly support me, that we know absolutely nothing about those negotiations. (Loud Government laughter.)

COUNTRY MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: We are not a party to corruption of any sort. The basis on which we fight our battles against the forces of communism—(loud Government laughter)—is upon principles, and not on corruption. There has been a good deal of simmering in this House for the past few weeks, and it is a pleasure to me, and to most hon. members here, that an opportunity is given us to state our position fearlessly and frankly. The position is that we are not a party in any shape or form to any motive, bribe, or enticement which may be advanced to break hon. members opposite from their so-called allegiance. It is remarkable that hon. gentlemen opposite should be coquetting with the forces opposed to Labour, showing that they are tottering, at any rate, or that there are symptoms that their principles, or their faith in the principles of Labour, have been weakening of late. If they had the courage, they would do as the hon. member for Normanby did. (Loud Government laughter.) They should act on principle and upon conviction, and walk across to this side of the House without the offer of any bribe. (Renewed Government laughter.) I am ashamed of hon. members opposite. I say that nothing but honest motives can be attributed to the hon. member for Normanby in coming across to this side of the House.

Mr. KING: They would not say it outside

Mr. PETERSON: I challenge the Premier to resign and contest Normanby with me.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: This is a serious matter, and should not be treated with levity. Glad as I and hon. members on this side of the House were to hear the exposure by the Premier, I do appeal to the hon. gentlemen opposite not to associate a man like the hon. member for Normanby with anything else but proper motives and proper principles when he crossed to this side of the House. The whole point is that we have been worked up into a state of more or less anxiety concerning the welfare of this country.

The PREMIER: You have.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: We are dealing with a body of hon. gentlemen who do not seem to understand the etiquette of parliamentary procedure, and do not seem to understand, when it comes to a matter of holding office by the casting vote of the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees, that it raises resentment in people's minds instead of inculcating the right idea of government. It raises a feeling of resentment; it takes men, perhaps, away from their calmness and judgment; but, in spite of all the epithets that have been thrown across the Chamber during the last few weeks, I can assert that I am satisfied that there is not a man on this side of the House who was directly or indirectly connected

with the overtures which were made to the hon. member for Toowoomba, as the Premier wishes the people to believe.

The PREMIER: How did you know all about it?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: That will no doubt be exposed in the proceedings that we shall hear about later on.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: This episode is not going to divert the Opposition from their course. That is to attack the Government, simply because we believe that they have lost the confidence of the people, and the manner in which they grasp at this straw—

The PREMIER: "Straw"? (Government laughter.)

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The Government for the past five or six years have been reveling in "Golden Caskets" and "Liberty Fairs" to get funds to keep their organisations going; and the pity is that they have become so hardened that hon. members opposite are now treating this matter, not as an insult to Parliament, but rather as a party advantage. I have prepared a case of "No confidence" in this Government, and I am going forward with it, and will not be influenced in the slightest by what has taken place, glad as I believe hon. members on this side of the House are that the time has come when those who bring the whole Opposition into a certain amount of disrepute, as has been done in past years, shall be exposed, and we can go on our course without diverting from it because of any party organisation outside, with the full conviction that we have right on our side and the people of the country are behind us. (Government laughter.)

Mr. STOPFORD: How did they get you?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What does the hon. member for Mount Morgan mean by that?

Mr. STOPFORD: You twisted from the Nationalist party to the Country party.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I twisted, as the hon. member calls it, purely on a matter of principle, just as hon. members opposite are twisting to-day. They are twisting from the principles of communism to the principles of primary production, because they see in the primary producer an opportunity of securing a new lease of life. Let the hon. gentleman look after himself; I am quite prepared to look after myself. There are ways and means for people expressing their confidence or otherwise in me when the right opportunity comes. I am going to present my case as a member of the Country party as to why it is the Government have lost the confidence of the people.

It has been remarkable to hear the protestations of the Premier and his followers, and to hear them state that they can see no reason and no evidence that the people of Queensland have lost confidence in them. The man who in the past has been reputed to have travelled the longest distance without noticing anything was Jonah, when he was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; but hon. gentlemen opposite have travelled Queensland at the expense of the country for the past nine or twelve months, and still they state that they have seen no evidence of lack of confidence in them. I hand the palm hitherto borne by Jonah to the Premier and his supporters. What do they care about public confidence? What has it got to do with them? How are they

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concerned in the matter of whether the public has confidence in them or not so long as they can retain the riches of office, which we have seen exposed in this House during the past few weeks? Riches, the extent of which they are not prepared to proclaim and take the public into their confidence about; but, so long as they have an opportunity of making themselves richer at the expense of the country, then so long will these hon. gentlemen hang on to office entirely regardless of whether they retain the confidence of the people or not. I am sorry to keep harping upon the point, but I consider it to be a matter which demands that we should continually refer to it, and that is the fact of the Government hanging on to office by the casting vote of the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees. It simply means the Government are sacrificing the hon. member for Maree in their desire to retain office. (Government laughter.) The hon. member for Maree is going to lose his seat by reason of the invidious position that the Government are placing him in. (Renewed Government laughter.) I do not blame the hon. member for Maree, but I blame hon. members opposite, who are making a tool of him in order to keep their positions warm. Hon. members opposite always remind me of that fertile fruit, the pomegranate, by reason of their fertility of imagination in gulling the public. They are perpetually putting sugar-coated pills before the people to attract them, and in an endeavour to bring them once more into their meshes.

Glancing at the Financial Statement, which is nothing else but a piece of propaganda work, we have some eleven different electioneering items referred to therein, and I intend briefly to refer to these to show how the main issues are entirely and absolutely disregarded, and that these gentlemen are once more putting their sale attractions in the window with a view to enlisting further support from the electors at a general election shortly to take place. We see a reference made to land settlement in the Burnett, in the Dawson Valley, and in the Palmerston and Capella districts. We see a reference made to the appointment of an irrigation expert—no reference made, by the way, to their irrigation white elephant which finds its home in the area represented by the hon. member for Bowen. No reference is made to that, but we have some further sugar-coated pills trotted out—new irrigation areas and the appointment of an irrigation expert, which is going to be a further expense to Queensland. We see a reference to the submitting of schemes to Parliament in regard to these measures, and we see further the inspection of new wheat areas, with a view to having larger areas under cultivation in that regard. We see reference to the immeasurable benefit of the Council of Agriculture; we see cotton-growing paraded before the people; we see new sugar mills; and new Royal Commissions to inquire into the benefits or otherwise of these ventures. We see land tax exemptions promised, which, according to the Premier's own speech, will only mean a saving of something like £8,000 to the farmers, which really is largely negated by the fact that whatever they will save in land tax they will pay in the shape of income tax, inasmuch as they will not be able to deduct their land tax payments from their income tax payments. We see a further reference made to a vigorous railway extension policy

and also an increased main roads appropriation—which, no doubt, are going to be used to bolster up the positions of many hon. members opposite, and we see a revival of the Workers' Homes Act, an enactment which has been on the statute-book for some years without anything being done in regard thereto. But now, immediately prior to an election, it is again paraded, no doubt with a view to providing the propaganda which these gentlemen will make use of in a few weeks or months' time. Yet, overshadowing all this propaganda, overshadowing all these sugar-coated pills—these blandishments which are put before the people—is this undeniable fact—that unemployment and discontent are rife; industries are languishing, and a deficit of £576,000 is estimated in spite of cutting things to the bone, as the Premier points out. All these things are the real crux of the situation. All these blandishments are all right, but we have to get down to the bone, as the Premier says, and, if we do that, we notice a lack of confidence, languishing industries, unemployment, and relief given out by thousands of pounds.

These are the real tests of the situation and are reliable, having had seven years of Labour government to disclose themselves. These hon. members opposite at every election put forward some new bait. I remember well in 1918 the great attraction which was then put before the people was cheap meat. In 1920 the great attraction was interference with self-governing rights in Queensland, knowing perfectly well it was all "fake" and absolutely untrue. Yet it answered their purpose, because it tickled the imaginations of those thoughtless people who for seven years have been relying on hon. members opposite to protect their interests and look after their prosperity. No doubt to-day we are going to have an election based on these little blandishments which appear in the Financial Statement, in the hope that the supposed disunited forces of the Opposition will give them the opportunity which they are going to grasp. But let me assure them that they are going to be sadly deceived. The exposure which was made this afternoon, evidently in the hope that it is going to make our position worse, is going to make our position better, because it has given us an opportunity of seeing exactly what it is that is helping to cripple the forces of the Nationalist and Country parties, and we can now go forth to the public knowing exactly what the position is.

I remember just before the advent of the Labour Government that the Premier and the late Treasurer issued a manifesto which, at the present day, makes very humorous reading. It dealt with a great deal of the activities during seven years of a Liberal Government. As I am firmly convinced that we are within striking distance of another election, it is fit and proper to put before the people a comparison between seven years of Labour government and seven years of Liberal government to let the people see the two things side by side. We had the Premier's document published in 1915, and now let us have the sequel; and it seems to me in this regard that the Labour party would be doing a good service to the community generally if they published sequels to those various publications which they have issued during their term, such as "Socialism at Work." Let them publish results to let the people

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see what "Socialism at Work" has produced, and let them see the baneful influence of socialism and communism as preached and practised by hon. gentlemen opposite. In spite of the fact that figures are always dry matters to deal with, I intend to give a comparison showing the figures in connection with the State finances—the figures for 1915, the last year of the Liberal Government, and the figures for 1922. In 1915, the public debt of Queensland was £54,066,000. In 1922, according to the Financial Tables, the public debt of Queensland is £85,691,000—an increase of £31,625,000 in seven years. Yet hon. gentlemen opposite are those who condemned public borrowing, while their record shows that in seven years the public debt has been increased by considerably over 50 per cent. The interest on the public debt—which is beginning to strangle the life of Queensland—in 1915 amounted to £1,975,000. To-day that interest amounts to £3,286,000—an increase of £1,311,000 in such a short period as seven years. It took from fifty to sixty years to build up an interest on the public debt amounting to £1,975,000, while in a short seven years it has been increased by the spendthrifts opposite to £3,286,000. A most important point in regard to this interest—a point which we must lay stress upon—is this: Interest on most of our public debt should be derived from that industry in which the money is invested, and not be a drain on the revenues of the State. In 1915 the interest chargeable to revenue was only £267,000. The interest chargeable to revenue in 1922 was £2,233,000—an increase of £1,971,000. 3.72 per cent. of our revenue went to pay interest on the public debt in 1915, while in 1922 18.18 per cent. of our revenue goes to pay interest on the public debt. Just summarise the position. In seven years of Liberal government, ending with the year 1915, the total sum in interest which was chargeable to revenue was £2,789,000, while for the seven years ending 30th June, 1922, the amount of interest which has been chargeable to revenue under the administration of hon. members opposite has been £11,410,000—an increase of £8,621,000.

Yet these gentlemen say that Queensland is prosperous. They wonder what it is that is strangling industry in Queensland to-day and producing so much unemployment. [5.30 p.m.] In 1915 the revenue of the Liberal Government was £7,202,000. The revenue in 1922 was £12,311,000, or an increase of £5,109,000 in revenue in the short period of seven years. The expenditure in 1915 was £7,199,000, and in 1922—the year just closed—it was £12,499,000, or an increase of £5,300,000. The expenditure per head in 1915 was £10 12s. 9d., and the expenditure in 1922 £16 4s. 8d., or an increase of £5 11s. 11d. per head of population since this Government came into power. These figures are dry, but they are the life-blood of our prosperity in Queensland, and it behoves the people of Queensland to study these figures, because in them lies the real crux of the situation. The stagnation, lack of enterprise, our dwindling industries, and our unemployment, are all accounted for by these figures, which disclose the true situation, just as our house bills at the end of the week disclose our situation from a domestic point of view. The expenditure—and here is a staggerer in the comparison—in the last seven years of Liberal administration amounted to

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£41,684,000, yet the expenditure under the Government of hon. gentlemen opposite for the seven years ended 30th June, 1922, was £70,652,000. In seven years those hon. gentlemen have spent £39,000,000 more than did the Liberal Government in the seven years prior to that period. The taxation in 1915 produced £954,000, while in 1922 it produced £3,420,000, an astonishing increase of £2,466,000. The taxation per head in 1915 was £1 8s. 2d., and to-day it is £4 15s. 10d., an increase of £3 7s. 8d. What does the hon. member for Bowen say about this?

Mr. COLLINS: The taxation is paid by the wealthy.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: All I can say is that the hon. member is not cognisant of the opinions of those he represents, because there are many of them earning £300 or £400 a year who realise the excessive taxation which they are called upon to pay—and even those in receipt of less than that are complaining of the stagnation which has been produced by high taxation. Here is another comparison. The revenue provided by income taxation in the seven years of Liberal Government was £2,710,000, or less than the present Government abstracted from the people last year alone. The amount which the present Government have drawn from the people in the last seven years in the form of land and income taxation is £13,736,000, or an increase of £11,026,000 over the taxation of the Liberal Government. These are staggering figures, and the man who cares to sit down and study them will understand what are the grounds for the lack of confidence in the Government who have squandered money in the manner in which they have done and brought about the present state of industrial stagnation.

The railway income in 1915 was £3,792,000, and in 1922 it rose to £5,125,000, an increase of £1,333,000. The railway expenditure, however, in 1915 was £2,410,000. In 1922 it had increased to £4,808,000. The railway expenditure increased in that seven-year period by £2,398,000, as against an increase of revenue of £1,333,000. The net return on the railways in 1915 was £1,379,000—and I would remind hon. members opposite that it is only by the net return that you are able to judge whether the railways are being run economically, efficiently, or otherwise—whereas the net return on railways in 1922 was only £314,000, a decrease compared with the last year of the Liberal administration of £1,065,000. The net returns for the last seven years of the Liberal administration were £7,873,000, and the net returns for the last seven years of Labour government have been £3,917,000—exactly one-half—showing a decrease of £3,956,000. The railway charges on consolidated revenue for the last five years of the Liberal administration were only £103,000, but the railway charges on consolidated revenue for the last five years of Labour administration were £7,186,000, an increase of £7,083,000 as compared with five years of the Liberal administration.

Mr. COLLINS: Quote the wages for the last seven years.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Just to put on record a comparison with regard to the net earnings of the railways, I will quote the last five years of the Liberal administration as compared with the last five years of the Labour administration. The Liberal five years were £3 18s. 10d.; £3 9s. 11d.; £3 8s. 6d.; £3 11s. 9d.; and £3 13s. 9d.—an excellent return, showing proper administra-

tion and efficiency. Compare it with the net returns for the last five years of the Labour administration, which works out at £1 8s. 10d.; 15s. 1d.; £1 6s. 10d.; 11s. 11d.; and 15s.

I want to call attention to Government relief, which is a true reflex of the prosperity of the country. In the year 1915, the sum of £5,870 was distributed in Government relief, in comparison with which last year this Government distributed £177,000. In the last seven years of the Liberal administration there was distributed in relief £37,000, and in the seven years of the Labour administration the amount was £437,000. Yet hon. members opposite say that they cannot see any indication of stagnation and lack of prosperity. Those figures, if studied in a cold-blooded manner, disclose a situation which, in my opinion, is becoming intolerable. In spite of all this, there is forecast in the Financial Statement a further great expenditure on railways. An expenditure of money which is costing us 6 per cent. and only producing 13s. per cent., does not matter to hon. gentlemen opposite. Posterity is going to pay for that. The taxpayer is called upon to pay the difference between 13s. per cent., the earning power, and 6 per cent., the interest on the money borrowed. Hon. members opposite have no regard for that. That is going to be added in future years to the burdens which are going to be imposed on the taxpayer. Hon. members opposite seem to be blind to the position that the effect on the taxpayer is reflected on the man in the street—an argument which we continually stress, and of which there are perpetual evidences, but which hon. members opposite fail to appreciate by reason of their blunted perceptions, or because it does not suit them to acknowledge the fact.

The hon. member for Bowen is in the House. I can give an excellent illustration of what railway construction means under the direction of the hon. member for Bowen. We have the Bowen Coalfield line, and I will give the estimate of the cost of that line in 1915 and the actual cost in 1922.

Mr. COLLINS: Don't forget that wages have nearly doubled.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The estimated cost of the Bowen coalfield line in 1915 was £392,000, and the actual cost of the line, according to the reply given to my question by the Secretary for Railways the other day, was £604,000. That shows what reliance can be placed on the Estimates of cost of railway construction given by hon. gentlemen opposite. In explanation of the extraordinary increase, the Secretary for Railways pointed out that the railway was 4 miles longer than was originally intended. It appears the railway was increased from 42 miles to 46 miles, and that resulted apparently in an increased expenditure of £200,000.

Mr. COLLINS: The wages were nearly doubled.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The taxpayers have to meet the accrued interest on this extra cost, and now we have the Government putting on more railways simply because an election is approaching. We know the methods they adopt to bolster up their tottering cause in many electorates. They discover that there is a section of railway required to be built in a certain electorate, and therefore they transplant 200, or perhaps 500, railway workers, and they keep them there for a

month until they are able to get on the roll, and everything in the garden is sweet.

Mr. COLLINS: You are quite dramatic.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: How can a man help being dramatic when he is up against impossibilities like the hon. member for Bowen? You ought to see the hon. member on his soap-box in Bowen, and you will see who is dramatic, especially when he rants and raves and waves his arms about. (Opposition laughter.) If Benson, of Shakespeare fame, wants a recruit, I refer him to the hon. member for Bowen. (Opposition laughter.) Evidently hon. members opposite are not at all pleased with the things I am disclosing.

Reference has already been made to the two American loans which were recently negotiated by the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. The first was a 12,000,000 dollar loan for twenty years, supposedly bearing interest at £5 12s. 10d. per cent. The second loan was for 10,000,000 dollars for twenty-five years, at a supposed interest of £5 17s. 5d. per cent. The leader of the Opposition, when touching upon this matter during his speech this afternoon, called attention to the fact that that may be the paper interest which is supposed to be paid for these loans. If hon. members opposite were in any way experienced in financing, they would know that in the payment of interest the rate would be quite different. Instead of the rate of interest being £5 17s. 5d. per cent., it would approximate to something like 7 per cent. The interest has got to be paid in dollars in New York, so that in converting it from the pound sterling into dollars there will be a great increase in the rate of interest that has to be paid. There is no doubt that there has been a considerable increase in the value of the pound sterling, but it still stands as low as 4.45 dollars as compared with the standard of 4.866. That means that, if the loan were converted now, it would cost approximately 42 cents in every pound sterling to convert it into dollars. The leader of the Opposition was sound in his argument, but the Premier very cleverly side-tracked it. Until the pound sterling is worth the standard value of dollars, 4.866, the rates of interest which the Premier mentioned in his Financial Statement are misleading, because the actual interest which we are paying for the American loans is far in excess of those figures. The hon. gentleman featured the profits of conversion in his Financial Statement, which he pointed out totalled £714,809. It is impossible to say what are the ultimate profits of conversion, as it will depend entirely on the rate of exchange which prevails when we come to repay these loans. The Premier, in his argument, takes it for granted that the value of the pound sterling is going to be dollars 4.866 when these loans have to be redeemed. There is nothing to justify that statement. I wish to point out that, if these loans were converted to-day, if we were called upon to convert them at the present rate of exchange, it would mean that it would cost us £425,000 to do so in excess of the amount sterling which we borrowed. Therefore, the assumed profit of £714,809 has to be reduced by that amount, which really means a profit of something like £289,000. That is all speculation.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Your argument is largely a speculative one.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Possibly the hon. member does not understand it. If the hon.

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gentleman follows my figures in "Hansard," he will get a better conception of what I want to convey. I am pointing out that the assumed profit of £714,000 will be reduced to £289,000—that is, if we have to convert the loan at to-day's rate of exchange.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: There are too many "ifs" in connection with it.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: There are a great many "ifs" in connection with the Labour party. It is quite possible that the dollar in America will be very much dearer when Queensland has to convert the loan than it is to-day.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: And it may be very much cheaper.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: If that is the case, and the Government are hoping that it will be very much cheaper, I contend that, when you are dealing with State finances, you should not enter into a speculative market of that description, because you are handing down to posterity the effects of a speculation which they will have to pay. You will not be here another year, let alone in twenty-five years.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Neither will you.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The hon. member for Kennedy will occupy the seat now occupied by the hon. member for Queenton when we meet here next year. The Premier expressed the pious hope that the financial transactions with America were going to lead to the opening of markets for our exports. I say that the American is a gentleman who does not deal with sentiment. He deals in pounds, shillings, and pence only. We can see an illustration of their sentiment by the fact that there are some Australians and Queenslanders shifted to an island off the American coast waiting for permission from the American Government to enter that golden land. Thirty or forty Queenslanders is the maximum number allowed to go into the United States in the course of the year, so that, if this Government are trading on a sentimental basis, they have no idea of what they are dealing with. When they are dealing with America in the matter of loans, there is no sentiment attached to it. It is no use saying that we are a child State of the Mother Country. It is all a matter of what we are going to be charged when we are dealing with the United States. I do not say that in a disparaging manner, but, when the time comes, if the Government in power are subjected to harsh terms, they will know that the Opposition of to-day warned the Government in regard to the two loans. It is a great pity that the Australian States, and Queensland in particular, and also the Premier—who seems to have the best grip of financial matters of hon. members opposite—do not recognise that Great Britain is Queensland's best customer. You have to make the money available in Great Britain to meet your obligations there, and also to meet your interest bill. If you are going to transmit your moneys to America, it simply means that it is going to add a further burden to commerce by reason of the charge which exchange entails. All these points seem to be forgotten.

I want to say this also—and it is a fact which hon. members opposite probably do not know—that under the Income Tax Act in America the American manufacturer or exporter does not pay income tax on the profits he makes on goods which he exports, with the result that he can put any price

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he likes on the commodities which he sends to Australia, and, therefore, he can defeat any price-fixing commissioner you like to name, because he can produce evidence that that is his price in the United States of America. If the American had to pay income tax on the profits he made on his exports, we would have very much cheaper articles from America than we have to-day; but America, with the object of building up her export trade, exempts all such profits from taxation. These are facts which, if we are going to trade with America and look to America to take the place of the old country—which, to my mind, would be a disaster—hon. members opposite have to regard.

Mr. COLLINS: Trying to work in a little sentiment?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I am dealing with a matter which, probably, the hon. member does not understand, because it is not to be found in Karl Marx, although it is to be found in true economics, and, moreover, we are upon earth and not in that heaven which the hon. member for Bowen is building up for himself, and to which he wants us all to follow him. To show how prodigal we are of our interest, let me refer to the fact that debentures worth £755,000, which fell due for redemption last year, have been renewed at a price of £98 and an interest of $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., although within a few months certain other States of the Commonwealth borrowed money at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. We are satisfied to pay $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and renew them at an issue price of £98, against a redemption at par.

Passing to another point in the Financial Statement on which I lay stress, because it is a true index of the position and of the methods of hon. members opposite, we find that at last they are waking up to the fact that to get production and in order to get quality we have to pay by results. That is a point which I have continually emphasised from this side of the House. Now we see from the Premier's reference to the cotton position in Queensland that, after the present guarantee expires, the cotton-grower is going to be paid only on the basis of quality. That is exactly what we have been arguing all through the piece. It has been one of the fundamental causes of the stagnation which exists to-day that hon. members opposite stand for a policy which gives a man payment, independent of quality and irrespective of results. Yet, when it comes to a question of applying the principle to the payment of the primary producer, who is their supposed new-found friend, they are going to pay him only by results, whilst those persons who live upon him in the cities—the workers in whose interests they propose to legislate—are paid independent of results altogether, whether they be loafers or workers, whether they produce the requisite quantity or not. In the case of the primary producer, the gentleman in whom the Premier has suddenly found an interest, unless the quality is there he is going to get reduced prices for his cotton. I hope the primary producer will study that point and observe the differentiation which the Premier and his party are making. I say the Premier because he is the party in these days, he is the only man in it. I wish the primary producer to notice that he is to be paid only by results, whilst the industrialist is remunerated independent of results—a very enlightening side view of Trades Hall control.

I cannot let this opportunity pass by without making some reference to the fact that Mr. Dan Jones, who has been battling for the cotton industry ever since I remember Queensland, who has been fighting a lone hand in season and out of season in insisting on the possibilities of cotton-growing in Queensland, is allowed to leave the State—as he did on Saturday—probably to find a home in Western Australia amongst more sympathetic people. In my opinion the greatest amount of praise should be bestowed upon him for having unflinchingly fought the battle in the past and brought cotton-growing to its present state of popularity. It is all very well to dance attendance on our new-found friends and say what good fellows they are, particularly when they are here on a purely business basis, but the man who has plodded a lonely road year in and year out, without any remuneration—and probably looking for none—is allowed to leave to find a home amongst people who will extend the hand of friendship to him.

Mr. COLLINS: He told me he would be away only four months.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: When you have a conversation with him—

Mr. COLLINS: I did have a conversation with him so late at last Friday.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Perhaps he does not treat the hon. member with the same confidence which he extends to others. The fact remains that, when we need to concentrate all our attentions on a new-found opportunity to reinstate ourselves financially, it is a criminal blunder to allow a man like Mr. Dan Jones to leave this State, when there are so many who think highly of him, and when he has given so liberally of his energies and capabilities to Queensland.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: There is another matter—in respect of the State Advances Corporation—to which I want to direct attention. It is the fact that, although hundreds and thousands of settlers have been looking for financial assistance to tide them over the difficulties which have beset them during the last few years, difficulties which the Premier has never taken in hand but always neglected till a month or so ago, all we could rake up in advances to settlers last year was £282,000, whereas we gave £232,000 for workers' dwellings, principally in Brisbane. I do not wish to deny to the workers the privileges of the Workers' Dwellings Act, which was one of the best Acts put upon the statute-book by the late Liberal Government; but a comparison between those two amounts is significant and leads us inevitably to the conclusion that last year, and in all previous years, the welfare of the man on the land was hopelessly neglected by this Government. Now, of course, he is to be better looked after because an election is looming. So the Premier is going to talk pumpkins and forget all about industrialism, although how he is going to reconcile communism with pumpkins I am "blowed" if I know. No doubt, with all his cuteness and his chameleon-like character, he will be able to reconcile things which to me seem impossible of reconciliation.

I pass on to a figure appearing under the heading of "Revenue." The Premier estimates his railway revenue at £5,300,000 this year, as compared with a revenue last year of £5,125,000. I want to ask the hon.

member how he expects to increase railway revenue in Queensland when he is giving concessions right and left in support of this industry and that? I am not debating the

point as to whether he should [7 p.m.] or should not give concessions at this time, but what I say is that to estimate an increase in railway revenue when one is giving thousands of pounds a week to one branch of industry or another is, in my opinion, an improper way of stating the case. By all means state—as he should do—that the railway revenue is going to be reduced because of these concessions which are going to be made.

I have been endeavouring to show that, if this Government had a shred of appreciation of the true financial position in Queensland, they would come to the conclusion that they had entirely lost the confidence of the community as a whole. I have succeeded in putting into "Hansard" a comparison of figures taken from the Treasurer's tables presented recently to us, which are absolutely authentic. To those who really want to ascertain what the position is, I commend a study of those figures. According to those tables, we notice further that the accumulated deficit during the seven years of this Government to which we have been subjected has been £625,000—for which no provision has, as yet, been made.

Mr. BRENNAN: What about Western Australia?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I will answer the hero's interjection in a few minutes. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. BRENNAN: I would not like to offer you £3,500.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: In addition to this accumulated deficit of £625,000, the Treasurer estimates that the deficit for the present year is to be £576,000; so that, after the close of the current financial year, we shall face a total deficit of £1,200,000; and, according to the Treasurer's own remarks, he is trusting to luck for finding the ways and means of meeting that obligation. It is enlightening to compare the position as we shall find it, according to the Treasurer's estimate, at the end of this year, with the position that the worthy gentleman found existing in 1914-15, just prior to the advent of this Government. He then used expressions which evidently were meant to impress the masses. I see the hon. gentleman smiling. I am glad it has drawn a smile to his face; it is an indication of how humorous the whole situation is. At that time the hon. gentleman said—

"Do you know that, from 1900 to 1914, the deficits amounted to £1,163,983, and the surpluses to £714,623; that is, in fourteen years an accumulated deficit of £449,270."

In the fourteen years of Liberal Governments to which the hon. gentleman was then pointing, there was an accumulated deficit of £449,270. Yet in seven years of Labour Government—just half the period to which the hon. gentleman was taking exception—there will be an accumulated deficit of £1,200,000! No doubt this will be put down to the war, the weather—everything but the deficiencies of the Government. The Government have been past masters in the art of shelving responsibility on to some event—some weather condition, or something of that nature, which, of course,

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cannot answer for itself; it is never due to the shortcomings of the present Government. If that were sufficient to disturb the Liberal Government in 1915—which, apparently, it was—I contend there is ample evidence in that fact alone to uproot this Government in the year 1922.

Mr. STOFFORD: By fair means?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Income tax, as I have pointed out, is one of the greatest impositions which the people of Queensland are suffering from to-day, and the effects of it are far-reaching, and the whole trouble is that the ease with which income tax is levied, and the small number of voters that are directly affected, presents a great temptation to a Government that lives for the day. The opportunity or the advantage which the Government has taken of that source of revenue has been utilised to its utmost extent—to such a degree, in fact, that, in my opinion, a great deal of the depression which exists to-day is due to that. In finalising, one can rightly say that money melts in the hands of this Government like a snowball in Hades, and it leaves just about as much trace.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): The Nationalist party has had indirectly some references made to it by the Premier this afternoon. I will admit the hon. gentleman did not come out from under cover at all.

The PREMIER: Someone else did.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The remarks the hon. gentleman made were about "Opposition organisations generally." I say emphatically that I know pretty well what is going on in connection with Nationalist organisations. (Government laughter.)

Mr. STOFFORD: Why did not your leader tell us all about it?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I hurl back any charge that the Nationalist party had anything whatever to do with these charges that have been made by the Premier to-night. I am answering as a member of the Nationalist party. When the hon. member for Dalby was speaking this afternoon, an hon. member opposite interjected something to this effect: "The Nationalist party have to do with this."

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Why did not your leader tell us all this?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am speaking as a member of the party. I have every right as a member of the party to place my views before this House.

The PREMIER: How can you explain that the hon. member for Toowong was able to say on Saturday that the hon. member for Toowoomba was going to vote with the Opposition on the no confidence motion?

Mr. MAXWELL: He did not say that.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am not saying anything to the Premier that is in any way unfair or anything by way of encouragement of an action having for its object the making of a member of this House become a traitor. I want to ask how it was that those statements were taken down in the form in which they were taken down? Was the stenographer on each occasion to be seen?

The PREMIER: Is that an important matter?

HON. W. H. BARNES: That is one thing which the Premier, I assumed by his reti-

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ence, was afraid to disclose to this House. The other night the Premier taunted me with doing something that was distinctly honourable and straight—namely, writing to the Auditor-General. I read my letter to the House. I did not get a stenographer behind the screen to play a double game, which is what has been done in this case.

The PREMIER: When honest overtures are made to me there is no necessity for such tactics.

HON. W. H. BARNES: It is certain that the Nationalist party are absolutely blameless in that matter, and the Premier must confess it. (Government laughter.) And why, Sir, is it trotted out in the way in which it has been trotted out?

The PREMIER: To expose it.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Simply to whip up the party—we have heard of the eight—to whip up the party so as to make them feel that there is no man like the Premier in this State of Queensland. Let me speak for the Nationalist party. I am a Nationalist every inch of me. (Government laughter.) I have never hesitated to say where I am. The Nationalist party stands for the purest democracy. They say that the people of this great State must settle these matters, and that there must be no underhand business carried on in connection with such a thing.

The PREMIER: Those are good sentiments.

HON. W. H. BARNES: And they are the sentiments that we practise every time. The Premier knows that that is so.

The PREMIER: Why was it that on Friday the hon. member was able to say we would be turned out of office on Tuesday?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Premier cannot say such a thing was said by the Nationalist party.

The PREMIER: By you on Friday.

HON. W. H. BARNES: No; the Premier is absolutely wrong.

The PREMIER: You said we would be turned out on Tuesday next.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I said that the wisdom—(Government laughter)—that the wisdom of the country and the wisdom of the House would turn the hon. gentleman out. (Government laughter.)

Mr. RYAN: You thought it was all cut and dried.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am speaking for the Nationalist party, and I say that the statement which the Premier has just now made is not correct.

The PREMIER: I accept your explanation.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman must accept it, as his statement is not correct. While members of the Nationalist party believe that hon. members opposite are helping to ruin this great State of Queensland, they believe that there are higher ideals which must be set for a great State like this, and those ideals are ideals—not of bribery or corruption—

NATIONALIST MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. W. H. BARNES: Ideals in the direction of doing that which is right so far as the community generally is concerned. I do not for one moment believe that any member of the Country party has been a party to this.

The PREMIER: They had a full knowledge of it.

HON. W. H. BARNES: As I proceed to-night—if I get the opportunity of proceeding—I am going to show that very largely this whole business is the outcome of the way the Government have dragged the government of the State in the gutter during their term of office. (Government laughter.) Nothing justifies bribery; but what has happened? It has been known that the Government of this State have been loose in their methods.

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: In what way?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I will show you later on. In connection with gambling if you will. They have been loose in their methods and they have struck at the moral tone of the community. Let anyone cast his mind back for a while and ask what are the ideals even of this House of Parliament compared with what they were twelve years ago. I say they have distinctly fallen, because the Government of the day have again and again been recalcitrant to the high positions which they hold, and have failed to discharge them in the way they should have done as the Government of the country. (Government dissent.)

THE SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Does that justify bribery?

HON. W. H. BARNES: No, but the actions of the Government—and the Secretary for Agriculture knows all about it—have again and again attracted men outside who were prepared to do the wrong and improper thing.

THE PREMIER: Who are those men?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I do not know, but the hon. gentleman seems to know.

MR. RYAN: You have all got a price over there. (Opposition dissent.)

HON. W. H. BARNES: No. Those men, no matter what their position is, ought to be punished, and that is the attitude which the Nationalist party take up.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. W. H. BARNES: There should be no excuse for them. I speak to-night as one of the oldest members of this House, and I venture to say that in this great State of Queensland there has never been thrown at the Liberal party, or the Nationalist party—and let me say, too, the Country party—a charge of anything which has sullied their fame.

MR. STOPFORD: What about the Ready incident in the Federal Parliament?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am speaking here to-night of the State Parliament.

MR. BRENNAN: What about Billy Hughes's £25,000?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member, who has got a voice like a rasp, is trying to drag a red herring across the track.

THE SPEAKER: Order!

HON. W. H. BARNES: Before I leave this matter let me say that the Nationalist party believe that no man—I care not who he may be—who has pledged his loyalty to any party has a right to change his position unless he appeals to his constituents.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS interjecting,

THE SPEAKER: Order!

HON. W. H. BARNES: Whatever other hon. members may think, that is the attitude I take up to-night.

MR. STOPFORD: If an hon. member had accepted a bribe would you have voted with him?

THE SPEAKER: Order! I must ask hon. members to obey my call to order. I hope hon. members will refrain from interjecting.

HON. W. H. BARNES: This is an important matter, and I would say that the records of the House, at any rate in connection with the conduct of hon. members who are sitting here, are clean records and records which will stand the light of day. I want to deal with a question which should not be side-tracked, because there has been something of this kind introduced by the Premier this afternoon.

THE PREMIER: Not introduced by me. The hon. member knows that that is the reason for introducing the motion of want of confidence.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman does not like physic from this side. There are many things which have shaken the confidence of the people in the present Administration, and one is the question of gambling. Do you know, Mr. Speaker, that Brisbane has been made the home of the gambler? I hold in my hands a letter which I will read to the House. I will hand the original letter to the hon. member for East Toowoomba, and will read a copy of the letter to the House, because the House may insist on me laying it on the table. The letter reads—

“SYDNEY EIGHT-HOUR AND LABOUR DEMONSTRATION.

“H. NICOL, Queensland Representative.
“Box 511, G.P.O.

“Brisbane, 1st August, 1922.

“Arthur W. Yager, Secretary,
“Trades Hall, Sydney.

“Dear Sir,—Under separate cover I have taken the liberty of forwarding to you twelve books, Nos. 193-204 of twenty-five tickets each, and advertising literature for the Sydney Eight-Hour Art Union, I being again appointed as representative for Queensland.

“The commission allowed to you for the sale of tickets will be 20 per cent.—5s. per book—and I trust that you will be successful in the sale of same. When returning butts, unsold tickets, and cash for sold tickets (which must reach me not later than 20th October, 1922) kindly deduct your commission on sale as above.

“The result of the drawing will be published in the Brisbane papers on Wednesday, the 8th November, and a parcel of printed official result slips will be forwarded to all agents direct. More tickets and literature can be had on application to the undersigned.

“Please note.—It is imperative that all books from which no tickets have been sold should be returned for I am personally responsible to the head office in Sydney for all such tickets.

“Wishing you every success in the sale of the said tickets, and thanking you in anticipation of a favourable return,

“Yours faithfully,

“H. NICOL,

“Queensland representative.

“Sydney Eight-Hour Committee.”

MR. BRENNAN: What is wrong with that?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I will deal with it in my own way, and I will show what I think is wrong with it, although the House

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may not agree with me. What is the position? These people have been driven out from Sydney, and they come here and make Queensland the dumping-ground because there is a gambling Government in office. (Government dissent.)

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. W. H. BARNES: I say they make this the dumping-ground because there is a gambling Government in office.

The PREMIER: Didn't you give them permission when you were Treasurer?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Chinese are raided upon. The men outside who have no influence are raided upon.

Mr. BRENNAN: The Stock Exchange, too?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The men who are most guilty in connection with this matter to-day are some hon. members opposite, and more particularly the Government, and, let me say, the hon. member for Brisbane, who presides over the "Golden Casket," which is a menace to the moral life of the community.

Mr. KIRWAN: I will stand as good a chance at the Last Day as you will.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I hope the hon. member will stand well on the Last Day.

Mr. RIORDAN: You will have a hotter time than he will.

Mr. COLLINS: You ought to read the Gospel.

HON. W. H. BARNES: If the hon. member read the Gospel a little more, he would be able to live up to it.

Mr. COLLINS: You gamble every day in foodstuffs.

HON. W. H. BARNES: This gambling evil—

Mr. BRENNAN: In foodstuffs.

HON. W. H. BARNES: This gambling evil is the result of the actions of the Premier and his colleagues. It is said that somehow or other the action of the Premier has been adduced by the fact that his early training encouraged it. I do not know whether that is so or not. (Government dissent.) I do not know how true it is, but it has been said that in some directions the hon. gentleman is an adept, and so are some of his colleagues, in that direction. They touch the small thing and leave the big thing.

Mr. BRENNAN: What about the wheat profits made by Barnes and Co.?

HON. W. H. BARNES: They will leave the big things as often as they possibly can. (Interruption.) Do you notice, Mr. Speaker, how they do not like it, as I am getting home upon them? (Renewed interruption.)

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member for Toowoomba and the hon. member for Bulimba to cease their cross-firing.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I thank you for the protection you are giving me from these unruly gentlemen on the other side. We have had gambling such as I have spoken of at "Liberty Fair" quite recently, where, in the Domain, just near Parliament House, girls and boys were lured at night, because this Government said, "Here are 'spinning jennies' and other things which we have got on one side so that the majority of people shall not see them." It is an evil, it is a cancer, eating into the very life of the community, particularly of the young members of the community, and, if I had no other

word to say in condemnation of the Government, in justice to the constituencies and the people of Queensland, who I feel are in sympathy with me in this matter, I should lay that charge against them. The Premier and the Attorney-General know how true it is that the very foundation of the community has been sapped.

The PREMIER: A serious attempt was made yesterday to sap the foundations of the community.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Premier himself apparently descended to despicable means to get information. (Disorder.)

The SPEAKER: Order!

HON. W. H. BARNES: Am I to withdraw that? I withdraw it, and I say that the hon. gentleman adopted very unworthy means in order to get it.

The PREMIER: To get what?

HON. W. H. BARNES: At any rate, means not in keeping with the position of the leader of a great party, and means not in keeping with the dignity of a great party. Now, I want to deal with another question—that of employment. One would scarcely think that we were in the State of Queensland, because it seems to me that, engineered very largely by the Government and the policy they have pursued, you have to be of a certain brand in order to get employment. I can remember that after the general strike of 1912 there was placarded in large letters everywhere, "No victimisation." I can remember that the Government Printing Office staff came to me and I said to them—

Mr. PAYNE: You batoned the workers.

HON. W. H. BARNES: These people opposite have been battering on the workers, and the hon. member has been battering on them all his life. I said, "It does not matter to us what you are so far as unionism or otherwise is concerned. All that we ask is that you shall give a fair day's work. There will be no victimisation." Victimisation has been the chief attribute of this Government. Take, if you will, the teachers' advances. There are teachers in the State who, because they would not bow the knee to Baal, are being paid less money than others—not because they are less efficient, but because they are unwilling to sign certain documents. No victimisation! Why, one of the charges which the leader of the Opposition might have laid against this party might have been, "You are the Government who victimise." We all know that in the majority of cases, unless a man's politics are right, he does not get a job. The Premier knows that is the case to-day.

The PREMIER: I know it is a deliberate misstatement—a deliberate untruth.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I said that certain influences had been at work to prevent men from getting employment. I have here a letter written by a man who, [7.30 p.m.] fortunately, has had his case dealt with indirectly by the Arbitration Court to-day—

"I wish to draw your attention to the fact that I was working at Addis Bros., Roma street, for nine days, when the secretary of the Storemen and Packers' Union notified Addis Bros. to put me off, because I was not a member of the Storemen and Packers' Union; although I am a member of the Australian Workers' Union. I went to the Trades Hall to join the Storemen and Packers'

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Union, and they would not accept me, because I have not had six months' experience in the produce trade since 1918—although I had three and a-half years previous to 1918. I am a married man, with a wife and four children; a native of Australia. It means that I am debarred from getting a living."

The Government have been behind that sort of thing. That is not a solitary case. At the present moment this man, fortunately, is working for Laidlaw Bros.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: What is his name?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am not going to give the name to men who practise victimisation.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. W. H. BARNES: I shall be very pleased to give you the name, Mr. Speaker, so that you will know the exact position.

Mr. PAYNE: It is your own make up.

HON. W. H. BARNES: If the hon. member reads the papers he will find that nearly every day the same thing is happening. Might I remind him what happened at Dalgety's, where a young fellow applied for work, was put on, and finally put off, through the influence of the union; and did not the judge say, "He has to be put on," and he was put on when the case was put before him?

THE PREMIER: That is the judge of the Arbitration Court which we created.

HON. W. H. BARNES: And which the Government do not live up to; because they are seeking to deprive men of the right and privilege of going to the Arbitration Court.

I was not in the Chamber this afternoon when the leader of the Opposition was speaking; I was trying to get a few notes together.

THE PREMIER: You did not make much of a job of it.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I have been told I have a copy of something which he quoted. It is well worth quoting a second time. When the Premier returned from that visit to the old country, where he got such a knock-out—

Mr. BRENNAN: You got him the knock-out.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I will tell how he got it. That is one of the charges I lay against this Government—he got the knock-out because he had failed to live up to the ideals which any Government should have carried out. Hon. members have the right to claim that this is a Ministry of repudiation.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. W. H. BARNES: That is a name to which the Government are entitled, and which has soiled this Government and this country. (Government interruption.) In sheer desperation they had to go to America for a loan. What happened? Another charge which I lay against this Government is that they have failed to carry out their election promises. The Premier was reported on 11th September, 1921, by one of the papers, in the following terms:—

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Which paper?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I suppose hon. members opposite will say it is the "Courier"; I will just tell them it was the "Standard"—the Labour bible, which, they say, can never make any mistake. The following appeared as having been said by the Premier:—

"The Government have the right, from

20th September of this year, to acquire, by purchase, the Brisbane tramways. This right will be exercised at an early date."

Mr. BRENNAN: It is still too early for you.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Premier continued—

"The financial boycott will have no effect on the intentions of the Government in this matter, for we have the right to pay for the undertaking in Government debentures."

I want to emphasise that—"We have the right to pay for the undertaking in Government debentures." I would like hon. members to follow the debenture list created by this Government. When they came into office £52,000,000 was the loan indebtedness of this great State. Now, I suppose, including the last loan which they got from America, it is about £84,000,000. There is a good deal of the characteristics of one of Dickens's characters about them. It will be remembered that Mr. Micawber, one of Dickens's characters, when he had a bill to meet, signed the paper, and said, "It is due many years ahead; thank God that debt is paid."

At this stage the Home Secretary (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*) entered the Chamber, accompanied by the Premier, and was greeted with cheers from both sides.

HON. W. H. BARNES: May I diverge for one moment to say that we are glad to see the Home Secretary in his place once more.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I beg to move—

"That the question be now put."

(Opposition interruption.)

Question put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 36.

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

Tellers: Mr. Forde and Mr. Pease.

NOES, 35.

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

Tellers: Mr. Fry and Mr. Kerr.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Hon. E. G. Theodore.]

Question—Want of confidence motion (*Mr. Vowles*)—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 35.

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

Tellers: Mr. Bell and Mr. Sizer.

NOES, 36.

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

Tellers: Mr. Bulcock and Mr. Gilday.

Resolved in the negative.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I beg to move—

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

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): This motion is one which, under ordinary circumstances, the House would naturally feel it had a right to give assent to; but the position to-day is one which, so far as I know, has never been endorsed by any Government. The position, as revealed by the divisions to-night, shows that the Government have to continue in office either by bringing into the Chamber a man whom we are all very glad to see—

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: A sick man.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Allowing that every member is in perfect health, the Government have to carry on by one vote, and in the case of an equal number of votes, then either by the casting vote of yourself, Sir, or the casting vote of the Chairman of Committees. I have seen a similar position created in this House when Supply was given on the distinct promise that, when it was given, the Government would go to the country and let the people decide.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. gentleman is not in order in continuing a general discussion. The motion is one for the sus-

pension of the Standing Orders, and the hon. gentleman will be in order in showing why the Standing Orders should not be suspended.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I was just endeavouring to lead up to that, and to show there were good reasons why at this juncture the Standing Orders should not be suspended owing to the position in which the Government find themselves to-day. There are reasons for not suspending the Standing Orders, and the Premier must know it. Right down in his inner consciousness he must feel that the Standing Orders should not be suspended unless there is some promise given that he will obtain Supply and then go to the country. Unless that promise is given, this House has a right to protest against the Standing Orders being suspended. So far as a majority of voters of the State are concerned, the Government have not the confidence of the country. They are in a minority, and that being so, there is only one thing which should induce us to suspend the Standing Orders, and that is that Supply be granted in order to ascertain the will of the people.

Mr. STOPFORD: Do you claim that we were in a minority before the hon. member for Normanby left this side and went over to the other side?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Speaker would pull me up if I discussed that matter. Even granting that, we know what the figures were after the last election. The combined Opposition parties had, and have, a majority. I suggest that there are abundant reasons for delaying any suspension of the Standing Orders until we know whether it is proposed to face our masters and let them settle the position as it exists in Queensland to-day.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I did not call “Not formal” to this motion, but it has always been the practice to protest against the suspension of the Standing Orders. I think it has been the time-honoured custom here, more particularly before the last election, when the Government have submitted a motion to suspend the Standing Orders—

The TREASURER: When there is a justification for it.

Mr. VOWLES: It has always been the custom of the Opposition to object, the reason being simply to protect the rights of the Opposition. I can never understand, when we have so much time at our disposal, why it is necessary to suspend the Standing Orders to go through all the stages of a Bill in one evening, and more particularly is that so at this late hour in the evening. But I have to realise that, whether a thing is right or whether it is wrong, so long as the Government make up their mind to do it that is the end of it, and we have to bow down to the will of the Government, whether it be democratic, whether it be constitutional, or whether it be customary, and I suppose we shall have to do so on this occasion too.

Question put and passed.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

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

POSTPONEMENT OF RESOLUTION FOR AIDE-DE-CAMP'S SALARY.

Question stated—

“That there be granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1922-23, a sum not exceeding £300 to defray the salary of the Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor.”

[*Hon. W. H. Barnes.*]

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I beg to move—

“That this resolution be temporarily withdrawn.”

Question put and passed.

VOTE ON ACCOUNT, £4,500,000.

The TREASURER: I move—

“That there be granted to His Majesty, on account of the services for the year 1922-1923, a further sum not exceeding £4,500,000 towards defraying the expenses of the various departments and services of the State.”

The appropriation asked for is to cover all the services from consolidated revenue, trust, and loan funds, for a period of two months, which is the period usually covered in an Appropriation Bill of this kind.

Mr. FRY: Will that cover the election period? (Laughter.)

The TREASURER: It is not intended to cover any expenditure except what is provided for in the Estimates already laid before Parliament.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): If we are going to carry on at the rate of £24,000,000 a year, I think we are “going some.”

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: You have already “gone some.” (Laughter.)

Mr. VOWLES: I would like to know why it is necessary that such a large sum should be voted for two months. It seems to me to be very much over the proportion that we have been spending during the last few years. When I was speaking on the Financial Statement I estimated that the expenditure would be at the rate of £20,000,000 per annum, but it appears now that we are going £4,000,000 better. I would like to know how it compares with the expenditure for the corresponding period of last year. £4,000,000 appears to be a mere bagatelle to the Government, and we are asked to vote that amount without any explanation at all.

The TREASURER: The amount asked for is strictly in accordance with the Estimates already placed before this House.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: That is £24,000,000 a year?

The TREASURER: The hon. member can see from the Estimates themselves the amount that is provided for. The amount asked for at this time last year was £4,200,000. The rate of expenditure on Loan Fund account has gone up, and therefore we are now asking for £4,500,000.

HON. W. H. BARNES: What are the amounts from the various funds?

The TREASURER: We are asking for £2,000,000 on account of consolidated revenue, £1,250,000 on account of Trust Funds, and £1,250,000 on account of Loan Funds.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): I understand that the Treasurer is seeking Supply for two months, and it seems that under present conditions the amounts that have been asked for, especially on loan account, are particularly heavy. I understood the hon. gentleman to say that he was asking for £2,000,000 on account of Loan Fund.

The TREASURER: No; £2,000,000 on account of consolidated revenue.

HON. W. H. BARNES: In any case the hon. gentleman is asking for a very big

sum on account of loan. We do know that there are certain undertakings which at present are being initiated by the Government, and which, to some of us, appear very doubtful. We do know that the Government in the past have not carried out the arrangements that have been made by this House, at any rate so far as the spending of moneys, especially loan moneys, in a satisfactory way is concerned. When you look at the position of the Loan Fund, and when you remember that some of the Trust Funds and other moneys have been spent in ventures that have been exceedingly unsatisfactory, you hesitate when a Government like this come along and ask for certain sums on account. If the Treasurer was on this side as a private member he would not allow this kind of thing to go without very considerable discussion.

The TREASURER: I would remind the hon. member that we can get no authority beyond what is provided in the Estimates for the expenditure of this money.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman is quite right in saying that, but I believe that this Committee in the main—

I include some of the supporters of the Government—have no confidence [8 p.m.] in the Government. The hon. gentleman knows that the Government have a minority of 20,000 votes, and yet this is a Government which is supposed to be democratic.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. W. H. BARNES: They brought in a Bill against the expressed will of the people to put an end to the other Chamber, and thus defeated democracy. The Government have spent huge sums of money in undertakings which have been exceedingly unsatisfactory to the country. The expenditure in connection with State enterprises for 1921 was increased by £200,000, and those enterprises show a very heavy loss. The Government ask us to trust them at this juncture with this amount of money. It is our duty to get the fullest information from the Government, and to give them sufficient meanwhile to carry on, but nothing more. The Government do not deserve the money; they are not worthy of the confidence of the Committee. The Treasurer smiles, but he knows how true that is.

The TREASURER: You are wasting time.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I never waste time here. The hon. gentleman wants to hurry up. This is the “hurry-scurry Government,” anxious to get into recess as quickly as possible.

The TREASURER: Let us hurry on to the next business.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The best course for the Treasurer would be to give his masters a chance of meeting him. He wants to get away from Parliament as quickly as possible, but to hang on to office as long as he can. I suggest that the hon. gentleman should do what any self-respecting leader would do—that is, give us an opportunity to see what the people have to say about it.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I would like to ask the Treasurer if any of this £1,250,000 of loan money is to be expended in the construction of the Dawson Valley weir, and what portion of it is to be expended in the construction of a railway from Tara to Surat. I would also like to know what the Government's intentions are in regard to

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bringing about the restoration of the cattle industry, which, as the Treasurer knows, is at present "down and out." The hon. gentleman will agree with me that perhaps nothing in Queensland is affecting us more prejudicially than the downfall of the beef industry. In oversea value alone the industry represents in an ordinary season about £4,500,000 per annum, and we have practically during the last twelve or eighteen months been without that amount, which would have been spent in the State. The industry is carried on mainly by Queensland, and is of much less importance to the other States. I think the Government have not done all they could have done to assist in bringing the industry into a prosperous condition.

The TREASURER: What would you suggest?

Mr. MORGAN: I would suggest that the Government should advance money for the purpose of establishing new markets in other parts of the world. The Imperial market is at present useless, so far as Australian beef is concerned. We have been informed on good authority that there are markets awaiting us in other parts of the world; but, as we have no storage facilities for our products, we are unable to take advantage of markets in the East—for instance, in Japan and India. There are no storage facilities or distributing centres from which to supply the products to the people there. If the Government would give assistance in the way of providing storage accommodation in those countries, we should not then have to depend on the markets of Great Britain in disposing of Queensland beef. There is no country in the world which produces better beef than we do in Queensland, and it is only necessary to get a market for our beef in order to restore the industry to a prosperous condition. I have studied this matter closely during the past two years, and, in my opinion, the cattle industry in Queensland will not be restored to its normal condition until we recognise that the British market is lost to us, and that we must endeavour to establish new markets in the countries I have mentioned and in the numerous islands in the Pacific, the geographical position of which prevents the Argentine from competing successfully with us. I would also suggest that the Government should decontrol the price of beef in our local markets in Queensland. I had a wire from New South Wales yesterday asking me to send fat cattle to sell in that State at £1 15s. per 100 lb. I suppose that the highest price those cattle would bring in the market here would be £1 or £1 1s. per 100 lb.; yet in the adjoining State cattle are bringing £1 15s., in Victoria £2, and in South Australia £2 5s. per 100 lb.

The TREASURER: There is a bigger home consumption market there.

Mr. MORGAN: That is so, and Victoria and South Australia do not produce sufficient beef for their own requirements. They export a lot of mutton, but they practically export no beef, and require our beef for the local consumer. I suggest that the Treasurer should do all he possibly can in the way of giving railway facilities in order that our beef may be taken to these centres as cheaply as possible. In order that we may take advantage of these markets, we in Queensland have the right to see that all the markets in Australia are placed at our disposal. If an article is produced in Vic-

toria and it cannot be produced in Queensland, then Victoria will take advantage of that and compel us to pay a higher price for that article. We have the right to get the same treatment with regard to our beef. We produce the beef here and they do not produce it in sufficient quantities in Victoria, New South Wales, or South Australia for their own consumption, and we should be given the advantage in those markets. We should have placed at our disposal every facility to enable us to send our beef to those markets. We should get cheaper means of transit and every other facility to enable us to place our products in the Southern markets in a fit and proper condition for human consumption. This Government increased the railway freights on stock by 63 per cent., but, after a deputation waited on the Premier and the Secretary for Railways, the Government decreased the freight on cattle by 20 per cent. The Government are charging 30 per cent. more for cattle conveyed on the Queensland railways to-day than was charged in 1914, notwithstanding the fact that the market to-day is not nearly as good as it was in 1914. If the Government were only to do justice to those engaged in the cattle industry, they would find that it would benefit the financial position of the State. They can do that by bringing the railway freights down to the rates that existed in 1914. Unfortunately, the Government do not see their way clear to do that. If the Government would reduce the rates, they would be more than compensated by the number of stock that would travel on the railway. In different parts of the world they take notice of these things. In Canada the Minister for Railways, after reducing fares and freights in connection with almost every article carried on the railways, said he would sooner carry large quantities of goods at low rates than small quantities at high rates. The Queensland Government are of a different opinion, as they would sooner carry a small quantity of goods at a high value. The result is that the railways are not working at their full capacity. It is better to have more engines and rolling-stock engaged and have more men at work, and this can be done by reducing the freights and encouraging more traffic. I can tell the Premier from my own experience that cattle-owners can drive their stock at one-half of the cost that they would have to pay if they were carried on the railways.

The PREMIER: Not for long distances.

Mr. MORGAN: Yes; the longer the distance the cheaper you can drive them.

Mr. HARTLEY: And the greater losses in the mob.

Mr. MORGAN: The only time when the railways can compete successfully with droving is when there is no water or food on the track. Under ordinary circumstances we can drive our stock for one-half of the cost that it would take if they were sent by rail. It is owing to that fact that the railways are losing a great amount of traffic that they would otherwise get. The same thing applies to motor-cars and other things. At one time you would see numbers of motor-cars conveyed by rail to different parts of Queensland, because the freight was reasonable. Now that the freight on motor-cars has been increased to such an extent, the people who buy cars in Brisbane and other centres drive their cars to their destinations and the railways lose that freight. Is that

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good business? It is not good business, because all that traffic is lost to the railways. I hope the Government will recognise the fact that low rates on the railways will mean more traffic. It will mean more employment, because it will mean more use for the rolling-stock. Instead of men being employed four or five days a week, they will then be employed full time. I think the suggestion is well worth consideration. I hope the Minister will take a note of my remark, as I think something should be done in the direction I suggest. If the Premier is waited on at any time in respect to the cattle industry, I hope he will give us all the assistance he can, because the cattle industry has as much right to receive assistance as any other industry. While it is the duty of the State to help the cattle industry, it is also the duty of the Commonwealth Government to render it every assistance, particularly so far as the frozen meat market is concerned.

Mr. BRENNAN: How much assistance has the Commonwealth Government rendered? Only £20,000!

Mr. MORGAN: The Commonwealth Government have granted us a subsidy on all frozen meat exported. They have done far more than the State Government have done.

Mr. BRENNAN: No.

Mr. MORGAN: The only assistance that the Queensland Government have rendered the cattle industry is by a reduction of freights on the railways by 20 per cent. I defy any member of the Government, the Premier included, to say that they have assisted the cattle industry in any other direction. They increased the freights 63 per cent. on the railways and afterwards reduced them by 20 per cent. There are more small men engaged in the cattle industry than any other industry in Queensland. Hon. members opposite who represent cattle districts, like the hon. member for Burke, for instance, recognise that what I say is correct. We all know the deplorable condition these men are in at the present time. That hon. gentleman suggested that the rents should be reduced in certain parts of Queensland. I consider that the cattle men generally should have their rents reduced by a considerable amount. But, instead of having their rentals reduced, they have to pay a penalty of 10 per cent. if their rentals are overdue. That penalty should be wiped out. A penalty of 10 per cent. is an exorbitant tax to put on these men. We would not allow a money-lender to charge 10 per cent.

Mr. BRENNAN: He can charge up to 12 per cent.

Mr. MORGAN: We have an Act of Parliament which prohibits that amount of interest being charged by the Jew. Notwithstanding that fact, we have a Government which imposes this penalty on the man on the land. The Government know from their own State stations that the cattle industry is down and out, and yet they charge a penalty of 10 per cent. for non-fulfilment of the rent conditions.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That was imposed by a Liberal Government.

Mr. MORGAN: I asked a question of the Secretary for Public Lands, and the hon. gentleman said he was bringing in an amendment in that direction. I do not object to the sheep men and the sugar-growers getting assistance from the Government, but I claim

that the cattle men are entitled to some consideration, because they cannot pay their rentals imposed on them, owing to the fact that their stock are not saleable. In some cases they cannot give away their stock for nothing. I know places where splendid cows have been offered for sale at less than 10s. a head, and three-year-old and four-year-old bullocks are offered for £1 a head, but there were no buyers. That is an illustration of the state of the cattle market. The Premier told us that the State was in a flourishing condition, and he deduced that from the record attendance at the Brisbane Exhibition. If we are to base the prosperity of Queensland on the attendances at the show and the racecourses in Brisbane, then Queensland is prosperous.

The TREASURER: I said it was a sign of prosperity, as indicating the amount of money that was being spent.

Mr. MORGAN: Is it not a sign of stagnation and depression that £174,000 has had to be given away in doles to keep people from starvation, as the Premier himself showed by figures? Is it a sign of prosperity that the Secretary for Agriculture admits that he had to open the opossum season in order to benefit 6,000 men, who were out of work, and to enable them to provide for their wives and children, who were on the verge of starvation? The innocent opossums had to suffer, and I know that the Minister opened the season against his own judgment; but there were people who would starve had the season not been opened. Yet the Premier will endeavour to mislead the people by saying that Queensland is in a prosperous condition under Labour rule. I say that Queensland was never in a more depressed condition than at the present moment. I am not judging Queensland by what I see in Brisbane, but by what I see in the back blocks, where I live. If you are going to judge Queensland's prosperity by what you see in Brisbane, where everybody is nicely dressed, and the picture shows are crowded, you are judging Queensland on a false basis. It only shows that the attractions of the cities are such that they are luring people away from the country; but we shall have to pay for it sooner or later. As surely as the sun rises every morning the time is coming when the people of Brisbane and the towns generally are going to feel the effects from which the country people are suffering at the present time. They are becoming poorer day by day.

Mr. BRENNAN: The farmers are better off than ever they were.

Mr. MORGAN: The Treasurer is day by day introducing into this Chamber legislation to try to keep the farmer on the land. That shows that the hon. member for Toowoomba does not know what he is talking about when he says that the farmer is better off to-day than ever before. I hope the Treasurer will take note of my remarks, and let me know just what he intends to do for those people who are down and out, and who are entitled to a fair share of prosperity.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): It is not our intention to oppose the vote. The Treasurer is asking for no less than £4,500,000 for the next two months—£2,000,000 from revenue, £1,250,000 from the Trust Funds, and a similar amount from the Loan Fund. As we are told in the Financial Statement that it is proposed to spend £12,780,000 from

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revenue this year, how are we going to live within that margin if for two months we require £2,000,000? In the twelve months, too, the Treasurer estimates that an expenditure of £5,000,000 from loan is going to be sufficient, and yet he is going to spend £1,250,000 in two months. This will give us a very much greater general expenditure at the end of the year than the £17,780,000 proposed in his Budget Speech. It is very nice, before an election, to make appropriations so that, when the House dissolves, or if the Government prefer to enjoy a recess, sufficient funds will have been passed for the purpose; but we must remember that the people of Queensland have some day to foot the bill, and that, when we expend large sums from Trust and Loan Funds, someone must pay the piper some day. We must also remember that during the years in which this Government have been in office, they have increased taxation per head from £1 8s. 2d. to no less than £4 8s. 10d.

Mr. COLLINS: That is not correct.

Mr. CORSER: It is correct.

Mr. COLLINS: Taxation is paid by the wealthy.

Mr. CORSER: When we had the Local Authorities Bill before the House and the Bill adjusting pastoral rents, we were told that all taxation was paid by the workers, so that the hon. member cannot be consistent in his remark. When it suits hon. members on the other side, they claim that the workers pay; but, when there are big deficiencies, we are told that the wealthy pay.

Mr. W. COOPER: You made up the deficiencies by selling Crown lands.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. members did not make them up by giving Crown lands to the Trades Hall. The Government do not believe that any man should have a freehold title. They claim that perpetual leasehold is better; but, when their own Trades Hall wanted a new site and a new building, an exception was made in favour of the autocrats of the Labour movement, and they received a freehold title of a very choice piece of land on which to build a fort or something like it over the city of Brisbane.

The TREASURER: Speak up. (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: If the hon. member cannot hear, we will try to find a seat for him over here. (Renewed laughter.)

The TREASURER: You have already tried. (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: We have not tried. When we do try to do anything, we go on until we finish. Nor did we try to find the £3,500.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member is not going to suggest that that came out of Trust Funds? (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: I would not; but I would suggest that such an appropriation should be referred to the Price Fixing Commissioner to see that he gets fair value.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Whom are you referring to?

Mr. CORSER: I am not referring to anybody.

Mr. PEASE: He is your boss outside.

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Mr. CORSER: He is not my boss. Hon. members are whipped by a boss outside, which is the reason why they give to the Trades Hall the freehold they will not give to the individual farmer. They say to the man outside, "Go on the land"; but on one occasion in my electorate, the Workers' Political Organisation asked that the land in a certain neighbourhood should be opened under perpetual lease and not freehold. Another Government was in office then, and it was decided that the land should be opened for selection under perpetual lease or freehold. Not one application for that land was made under perpetual lease conditions, and

not one of those people in the [8.30 p.m.] Workers' Political Organisation was an applicant for that land. Those are the people who wish to dictate the policy of the other fellow who has to go on to the land. The Country party's policy in that regard claims that whoever goes on the land should have the option of saying whether he wishes to enjoy the freehold or the perpetual lease tenure.

Mr. COOPER: Expound your platform.

Mr. CORSER: We know what the platform of hon. gentlemen opposite was in 1915. They claimed that, when the workers fully realised what an interest bill meant they would storm Parliament House; that they would pull down the institution which was responsible for their being called upon to pay to some financiers on the other side the amount represented by the big interest bill which is rendered necessary by borrowing money. When they came into office they found a public debt amounting to £52,000,000—incurred chiefly in building railways, which were paying and were a credit to the State and the men who were running them—and they increased the public debt from £52,000,000 to £85,000,000.

The TREASURER: Part of that was your liability.

Mr. CORSER: Part of that was our trust account, which the hon. gentleman spent. During their term of office this Government—who did not wish to borrow money, who shunned the idea of borrowing money—expended no less than £33,000,000 of loan money; and they propose to spend £5,000,000 in that way during this year. During their term of office this Government, who said they had no money to carry out their platform, spent no less than £103,000,000, not including Trust Fund expenditure.

The TREASURER: You say we spent £103,000,000 and yet could not secure money.

Mr. CORSER: You spent £103,000,000 and claimed that you could not secure money.

The TREASURER: You claimed that our credit was destroyed.

Mr. CORSER: The Government's credit evidently was not ruined by anything that was done by Queenslanders in opposition. They had to buy their credit by going to "Yankee Land." They spent £70,000,000 from revenue.

Mr. PEASE: The Federal member for Wide Bay said that your party had no policy.

Mr. CORSER: I have known the Federal member for Wide Bay all my life. (Laughter.)

Mr. PEASE: I would sooner believe him than believe you.

Mr. CORSER: You only believe us when it suits you. What else do we find that hon. gentlemen opposite have done? They have had to increase taxation; they have had to increase their loan expenditure; and they have spent a large amount of money from Trust Funds—because they have killed the incentive for thrift and they have killed industry in the State. When they first came on the front Treasury benches we told the people of Queensland that their policy of socialism—like their present-day communism—meant the stifling of enterprise, and would kill thrift and industry. Does not the condition of the country to-day prove that those statements of ours were correct in every detail? During the eighteen months prior to July of last year there was invested in new industries in the Commonwealth no less than £270,000,000 of new money—chiefly British money—and only a very small proportion of that came to this State. We as Queenslanders on the next occasion that we have will see that our vote at the ballot-box will make Queensland what it should be, by giving encouragement to thrift and industry and to the man of initiative, so that he can invest his capital in his own business and give employment to Queenslanders, who are as good at the lathe or the machine as are any people in the Southern States.

Mr. WEIR: Will you allow private employers to build butter factories?

Mr. CORSER: The farmers subscribed the money to build them. We do not want the Government to build them.

Mr. WEIR: You want the people to build them, like we do?

Mr. CORSER: We want them to be built for the people who are interested. We believe that the control of industry is best left in the hands of the persons engaged in that industry—that the primary producer is the man who should control his own industry. When I refer to industrial co-operation I do not wish to mix it with domestic co-operation. We say, too, that, whilst we wish to encourage our primary industries, we want to see our raw products converted into manufactured articles by Queenslanders who are enjoying the best conditions and the best wages that can be paid. Although the Country party has been belittled by some of the strongest metropolitan papers, although that Press from day to day make whatever statements they like and we cannot refute them except in this Chamber, we claim that, as a Country party, for the prosperity of the country we wish to build up our secondary industries so that our city as well as our country people can enjoy the benefit of full primary production. We are not sectional in any degree; we believe that there is a place under the sun for every section of the people in the State, and we are determined to improve the State to the extent to which Providence intended it should be improved. We repudiate the statement that we are sectional. We repudiate the articles we see in some of the metropolitan Press.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Used for a purpose.

Mr. CORSER: Used to try and belittle us. I sympathise with the Labour party, if they have sometimes had to suffer a criticism by some of the unfair Press in Brisbane.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: That is the only sympathy we have for them, though. (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: A few years ago in this House mine was a lonely voice advocating the advantages of the lands of the Upper Burnett. It was claimed that I was using the parish pump in the interest of the electorate I represent. What do we find to-day? Whilst we asked for £300,000 to open up that land, as suggested by the largest commission of inquiry ever held on any land in Queensland, the Government have now launched in that district, with the object of opening up that land, a railway policy involving an expenditure of £2,500,000—and that is not going to complete it. I say to the Government that, in deciding upon resummptions, they should leave in the hands of the grazier those lands which are fit only for grazing, and put in the hands of the smaller men only such lands as are worthy of his holding and on which he could make a living. Where lands cannot be thrown open in small areas, let them give a man a sufficient area to allow him to make a living. Whatever were my opinions in those days they are my opinions to-day. I add this: That, since the Government are spending Queensland's money in the Upper Burnett, I will do everything in my power, as the member for the district, to assist the settlement of that land in the best interests of the State. The Government will have my assistance, as member for the district, to settle those lands and induce the best men to go there. I only hope that the scheme will eventually prove successful.

Mr. COLLINS: You only hope that the Government will remain in office to carry it out.

Mr. CORSER: If the Government remain in office for the next twenty years the hon. gentleman will not get his iron and steel works. (Laughter.) We were promised, and he was promised, those works. We believed they were going to be erected in the Burnett district, where we have the best iron in Queensland at Mount Biggenden and Mount Hastings. I think the hon. gentleman was the last to advocate the establishment of the works in the Bowen district, but he came out on top, although he has not got those works yet. The manager who was engaged for the works is now trying to get coal from Baralaba and other State coal mines, and he is also managing the State arsenic mine. (Laughter.)

Mr. COLLINS: And don't forget he is managing the Bowen State Coal Mine, which will be producing coal on the 29th of this month.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. CORSER: I hope it will be more successful than the other State enterprises, because they paint a very ugly picture in Labour politics in Queensland.

Mr. WARREN: The Warra State Coal Mine!

Mr. CORSER: The Warra State Coal Mine watered all the cattle in that district during the last drought. (Opposition laughter.) It cost £47,000 to dig that hole. We also have the sorry spectacle of the Government's adventure in mineral oil. They imported a man from America, and now they have a great steel bit, 8 feet long, properly embedded in the bore casing, and from week to week we hear possibilities of success—that oil is smelt—or probably it is kerosene. The present Government have spent a lot of

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money in that venture with very little success.

Mr. RIORDAN: We did not even get the smell when hon. members opposite were over here.

Mr. CORSER: We have got the smell now.

Mr. RIORDAN: Hon. members opposite have the smell of those bonds, all right. (Government laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: That is the hope of the Government. The Government promised to amend the State Advances Corporation Act, and it was amended by increasing the advances from £800 to £1,200; but that is only on paper, for in practice a man is lucky if he gets £200 on a Government valuation of £600; and, if he is hit up in bad times and cannot make his payments he has got to sign a stock mortgage; and, if he does not do that, the State Advances Corporation will do it for him. That is the result of the Act passed by the present Government.

Mr. COLLINS: What do you propose?

Mr. CORSER: I propose to give the farmers fair value for their money and make the advances in accordance with the Act. Hon. members opposite claimed during the last elections that they had made the Act more liberal.

Mr. COLLINS: So we have.

Mr. CORSER: The Act is liberal, all right, but the administration is rotten. It is only worthy of hon. members opposite.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Whom do you blame?

Mr. CORSER: The hon. gentleman as much as anybody.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What Act are you talking about?

Mr. CORSER: The State Advances Corporation Act.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have nothing to do with that.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. gentleman has not now, but he did have something to do with it. He shuns it like most other hon. gentleman on the other side. Unfortunately, it is now under the control of the Premier, and the Government are promising to amend it. They claim that it is not what they said it was. The Act is all right, but the trouble is with the regulations. The Government have this beautiful Act saying that certain advances are to be made to farmers and farmers' wives, and that they are going to have anything they want, and then they draft a lot of regulations, and the farmer loses the farm in the end. I have seen notices on farms in my district during times of drought stating "This farm has been seized by the State Advances Corporation." This has been done because the man would not sign a stock mortgage, or because he could not pay his interest and his redemption.

Mr. COLLINS: What did the hon. member for the district do?

Mr. CORSER: He brought that notice down and showed it to the department. Any man who removed that notice was supposed to be put in gaol. I have any number of instances of hardship to the country people through drought. These people have to work,

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not as members of Parliament have to do—for a few hours a day sitting down.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member is a member of Parliament.

Mr. CORSER: During the life of a primary producer who secures an advance from the State Advances Corporation he must be successful and not experience any droughts, or he will have the heel of the Government down on him. We find that the Workers' Homes Act is to be amended to make greater provision for the men in the city. When we had that Bill before the House it was opposed by Labour members, because it meant giving to the individual worker a home and a piece of land of his own. If ever the Country party have an opportunity of providing land for the farmers and also for the city workers they will give them a freehold to make it possible for them to own their homes. To make a successful State they should own their own homes and the furniture in them. When they have got that title, they will have the security that will make them proud citizens of the State, and you must have proud citizens if you are going to have a proud and successful State.

Mr. SIZER (*Nunda*): Before we pass this first Appropriation Bill to provide for the needs of the public service since the Government have shown a reversal of their policy and have taken away from public servants those privileges which until quite recently the Government were quite proud to laud, I think we should have some information from the Government on the question of their future policy affecting the public servants. We know that during the life of this Parliament and the last Parliament there was great jubilation in the ranks of the Government party because they had at last granted to the public servants the right to go to the Arbitration Court the same as any other class in the community. It has been said by people outside Parliament who support the Government that the policy of the Arbitration Court is to raise wages and not to decrease them. Knowing the reversal of the Government policy, I want to know from the Treasurer what is going to be the position with regard to public servants in the future. Will they be deprived of their automatic increases as a result of the Government's recent act? The effect on a man with over £300 per annum is going to be very, very harsh indeed. It is generally recognised that public servants have to accept a 5 per cent. reduction, the same as members of Parliament and people outside; but at the same time there is no future provision whereby a man on the £300 mark will be protected with respect to his automatic increases, and this little reduction of 5 per cent. will mean a reduction of 15 per cent. in some cases.

Before we pass this Appropriation Bill we should have some assurance from the Government that the automatic increases will not be interfered with. When the Bill to provide for a 5 per cent. reduction in the salaries of public servants was before the House, the hon. member for Enoggera was anxious to move an amendment to protect the public servants in the matter of their automatic increases, but we were informed by the Premier that he was not prepared to hear argument on that occasion by virtue of the fact that before the hon. member for Enoggera had an opportunity to move his amendment the Premier rose in his place and moved—

“That the question be now put.” It is unfortunate that Parliament has been degraded to such an extent as to deprive the hon. member of an opportunity of discussing that most important subject. It shows how we are diverging from the principles of democratic government when members of the Assembly, elected by the people outside, can, at the sweet will of one individual, be deprived of the right of discussing a most important subject dealing with the honour of the Government in regard to a certain section of their employees. Happenings of this sort are doing more to undermine our parliamentary system of government and to bring Parliament into disrepute and ridicule than anything else one can imagine. When we consider the position we should take this opportunity of discussing the question as fully as possible, and I am glad of your generosity, Mr. Chairman, in this connection.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member is not reflecting on the Chair. (Laughter.)

Mr. SIZER: Quite the opposite. I was paying a tribute to your fairness this evening.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order in saying I am fair this evening and unfair on some other occasion. I hope the hon. member will get to the resolution before the Committee and discuss that.

Mr. SIZER: This modest little 5 per cent. reduction in the salaries of public servants will mean that in some cases the men will be deprived of their automatic increases. Some of them will really be worse off than they were before they got the increase, and in their cases it is truly a case of the proverbial Irishman's rise. No doubt, certain public servants have made commitments, trusting in the good faith of the Government that their automatic increases would be protected, but now they find they are to lose them in addition to the 5 per cent. It is a most unfair position, and before the Appropriation Bill is passed we should have every assurance from the Government that they intend to protect these automatic increases.

I hope that some adequate provision is made in this Appropriation Bill to remedy the scandalous state into which some of our State property, particularly school buildings, has fallen. I sympathise with the Secretary for Public Instruction, because I believe he is anxious to provide those school buildings that are necessary for the children. He realises that many of our school buildings are dilapidated and overcrowded, but, unfortunately, when he makes a recommendation to the Works Department, the Works Department has power to turn his recommendation down.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: My recommendations are only turned down because of a lack of money.

Mr. SIZER: The Government have had a record loan expenditure, and yet in regard to one primary function of the Government—the protection of the interests of the young—they have to admit candidly they have not sufficient money to keep these essential functions up to a decent standard.

Mr. RYAN: They do not admit that at all.

Mr. SIZER: They must admit it. The Government have had the money, but they have wasted it on frivolous enterprises.

They have neglected these essential functions of Government, with the result that their school buildings, rolling stock, etc., are in such a deplorable condition that it is impossible for anyone to get an adequate idea of the true position of the State, because, in order to do that, one has to estimate how much it would cost to bring these school buildings and rolling stock up to a fair and reasonable standard.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The school buildings are in a better condition now than ever they were.

Mr. SIZER: Some school buildings are being erected, and some repairs are being attended to, but for every one that has been attended to there are ten which have been neglected.

Mr. COLLINS: That is not true.

Mr. SIZER: The hon. member knows that it is true.

Mr. RYAN: Name one school that is falling down.

Mr. SIZER: If the hon. member will go a few miles out to Zillmere he will see a school which is falling down. It has been there sixty or seventy years, and has been condemned by the Works Department for some considerable time. Provision is made for 70 or 100 children, while double the number of children are attending daily.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Do you know that approval was given for certain work there this week?

Mr. SIZER: I am very pleased to hear that, and I am glad to know that my representations at last are bearing fruit.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You never made representations to me at all.

Mr. SIZER: I did not go to the hon. gentleman. I went to the Under Secretary. I can get better results from the Under Secretary. If the hon. gentleman will go to his Under Secretary, he will find that the chairman of this school committee and myself were with his Under Secretary within the last month.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Why did you not come to me?

Mr. SIZER: I prefer to go to the Under Secretary.

Mr. BRAND: Is it necessary to go to you for every little job?

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: This is not a little job.

Mr. SIZER: I am glad to know that something is at last being done. The Secretary for Public Instruction knows it has been thought of for years, and he has con-

tinually done his utmost to have [9 p.m.] the school attended to. He expressed those views to a deputation recently. We followed up that deputation by asking the Public Works Department to try and get it as high up in the list as possible, and I am glad to hear from the Minister that we have got it. But where one school is being attended to there are twenty which are being neglected.

Mr. COLLINS: That is not true.

Mr. SIZER: It is true. I believe it would require an enormous sum to bring our school buildings up to date.

Mr. KERR: A quarter of a million pounds.

Mr. Sizer.]

Mr. SIZER: Far more than that.

Mr. RIORDAN: What school buildings round here want bringing up to date?

Mr. SIZER: I do not want to use the parish pump; but, if the hon. member would pay a visit with me to the Sandgate school, he would be astounded at the scandalous condition it is in; so much so that we have had to send some of our children to the other end of the town to be educated in a shed.

Mr. RIORDAN: Some people in the country have to send their children 5 or 10 miles to school.

Mr. SIZER: I hope that matter will be rectified. I know of one case where an addition was carried out in my electorate to a school which was not in such a bad condition as some of the schools I have mentioned. That was done without any representation on my part, although it is in my electorate.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You have never made any representation to me at any time with regard to any school.

Mr. SIZER: Because the hon. gentleman happens to live in that locality, he was prepared to spend a big sum of money on additions to a new school a short time ago—however justified it was—in preference to the places where there was either no school at all or the school was dilapidated.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Do you say that that work was not necessary?

Mr. SIZER: I say that the work was necessary, but nothing like as necessary as at Zillmere, Sandgate, and in the other cases that I have mentioned. The reason why that school got preference is, I believe, because the hon. gentleman happens to live there, and also the hon. member for Herbert.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: My children go to the Nundah school.

Mr. SIZER: Although it is in my electorate, I say that it was not as urgent as other cases.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Is it in your electorate under the redistribution of seats scheme?

Mr. SIZER: Some of it is. It is not fair that the hon. gentleman, by virtue of occupying the position of Secretary for Public Works, should be able to ignore the recommendations of his colleague the Secretary for Public Instruction to the Works Department and overrule them at his own sweet will.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You must have been very neglectful of your duties.

Mr. SIZER: I am prepared to say that there are in my electorate numbers of requests for school additions recommended by the Secretary for Public Instruction which are more pressing in their urgency than the Virginia school.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: This is the first time you have mentioned Zillmere, and never at any time you have been in my office have you recommended a single school. You should go about the matter in a proper way.

Mr. SIZER: The Minister should go about the matter in a proper way and decide cases on their merits.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: So they are decided on their merits.

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Mr. SIZER: He should not be influenced by the fact that he lives in a district which has a new school that needs an extension.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: I say that is absolutely untrue. You do not know what you are talking about.

Mr. SIZER: It is true.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must accept the Minister's denial.

Mr. SIZER: The Zillmere school was condemned. The Virginia school was a new school, probably not more than two years old, but an elaborate extension has been added to the school within the last few months without any reference to me as member for the district.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: It shows how neglectful you are.

Mr. SIZER: It shows that I have not been shown the courtesy given by other departments. To my knowledge, I have not received any information.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You ought to be more careful. I can produce a copy of a letter to you from the files to-morrow.

Mr. SIZER: The school there was recommended and granted before hundreds of others.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member is not going to be guilty of tedious repetition. He has repeated himself three times in connection with the Zillmere school.

Mr. SIZER: I want to emphasise it, because the Minister says that what I say is untrue.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: I am the best judge of that matter.

Mr. SIZER: I notice the manner in which your judgment runs.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will address the Chair.

Mr. SIZER: I want to know whether provision is made in this loan money to bring into operation the Workers' Homes Act which has been lauded by the Government party for a considerable time.

Mr. RIORDAN: Hear, hear!

Mr. SIZER: I gather from that "Hear, hear!" that some of this loan money is to be used for that purpose.

Mr. RIORDAN: It is time the workers got something.

Mr. SIZER: It is time they got something. They have been expecting it for about seven years and have not got it yet. Now that the Government realise they have lost the confidence of the industrial workers, they are appealing to the primary producers, and it is necessary for hon. members on this side to ask the Government to honour their pledges to the industrial workers. One of the most prominent features of the Government's programme at the last election was the Workers' Homes Act, but so far nothing has been done in regard to that measure. Probably in the dying days of the session something will be done. Is there any money provided under this Appropriation Bill for that purpose? I hope also that greater activity is going to take place—

Mr. RIORDAN: In taking over the trams.

Mr. SIZER: I will probably come to the trams directly. I hope that greater assistance will be granted to provide moneys for

the Workers' Dwellings Act, because I prefer the Workers' Dwellings Act to the Workers' Homes Act.

Mr. RIORDAN: Do you know which is which?

Mr. SIZER: One is an Act which was passed by this party when in power, and the other is a useless Act which has never been put into operation, but has simply been dangled before the people for electioneering purposes.

Mr. RIORDAN: It was thrown out by your party in the Upper House.

Mr. SIZER: The Workers' Dwellings Act, which was passed by the Liberal Government, has given more homes to people than any other Act passed in any State in the Commonwealth. I hope that sufficient provision will be made for money under that Act. I hope that the Government are not going to spend any more money in perilous adventures and for speculative enterprises, such as buying iron deposits in Western Australia that will never be used.

Mr. COLLINS: That is not correct.

Mr. SIZER: We know that it will never be used. I hope that there will be some curtailment in the wasteful expenditure of Government money on perilous enterprises. I hope the Government will see the wisdom of relieving the unemployed by allowing the people in the metropolitan area and outskirts to enjoy electric light facilities.

Mr. COLLINS: Under the control of the Council.

Mr. SIZER: I am not concerned about that, so long as the people are reasonably protected and the residents get the comfort they desire. It is much better to give employment to men in that way than to increase the vote for the payment of doles, which has been largely added to during the last year or so.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I understand that a considerable amount of loan money is involved in this vote, and, while we are on the subject, it is as well to draw attention to the work paid for out of loan account. I have always expressed the opinion—and I think a large majority of the people of Queensland will agree with me—that the interests of the people would be better served if we altered the system of constructing our railways and public buildings. We have had the day-labour system in operation for some time, and I think I am well within the mark when I say that under that system it costs £3 for work which we could get done for £2 under the contract system. When we are voting millions for the construction of railways, you can see that, when one-third of the amount is wasted under the present system, it runs into a large sum, and should make hon. members realise the seriousness of the position. Dealing with public works, I might draw attention to a question which I asked the Premier on 26th July last regarding the cost of the Inkerman irrigation works, and, judging by the reply, either the Premier has told an untruth or his informant did.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is an old enough member of this House to know that he must express himself in parliamentary language. I hope that, when the hon. member is criticising, he will use parliamentary language.

Mr. SWAYNE: I will withdraw the statement I made and substitute for it the words that the Premier made a statement which was not in accordance with fact. I will let it stand at that.

Mr. COLLINS: That is nearly as bad. It is only a play upon words.

Mr. SWAYNE: It is quite parliamentary. It is nothing to the language you people used when you were in opposition. On the 26th July last, I asked the Treasurer the following question:—

“Is it true that the holder of a block on the Inkerman irrigation area, alarmed at the greatly increased cost of these irrigation works, brought about by the system followed by the Government in their construction and installation, has offered the sum of £500, payable in annual instalments of £100 per annum, to be released from his obligations in this connection?”

I think it will be realised that things are very serious when a small farmer is so alarmed at the indebtedness with which he is likely to be saddled under this scheme that he offers £500 to be released of his obligation. The Premier, in reply to that question, answered, “No, it is not true.” I may say that I based my question on the following letter written to me by Mr. John Mann, at one time a member of this House—

“Firstly, may I say that you are at liberty to use my name and to say that I am owner of a block in the irrigation area, and publicly offered to Mr. Theodore the sum of £500, payable at the rate of £100 per annum for five years, to be allowed to withdraw from the scheme and install my own plant to irrigate my own farm in my own way. My objection to the scheme apart from its cost is the fact that no provision has been made for a period of general drought throughout the district, and, although your case may be drying you have to wait your turn to water and by the time you get the water the cane may be too far gone.”

Mr. COLLINS: That is the man I beat in 1918.

Mr. SWAYNE: He is a bonâ fide farmer, and he is perfectly willing to back his opinion to the extent of £500.

Mr. COLLINS: He was a failure in politics, and he is a failure on his farm. He is a failure all round.

Mr. SWAYNE: After the Premier gave me that reply, I wired to Mr. Mann, advising him that his statements had been denied, and Mr. Mann sent me the following reply by telegram, under date 3rd August:—

“Re Theodore reply your question Inkerman block offer made as stated in public Press still open you can offer to close with him on terms as stated by you.”

Mr. Mann, in his telegram, repeats that he is willing to pay £500 to be released from his liabilities under this scheme, owing to the bad management accompanying it. I have another witness in the case, named Mr. Szalla, regarding whom the following appears in the “Brisbane Courier” of 25th February last:—

“In August, 1917, Mr. Szalla arrived

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at Home Hill to make all specifications and to supervise the electrical section of the scheme. The first work was to alter the whole layout of the electrical section, as, in his opinion, the general distribution of lines and transformers was unsuitable from a technical point of view. This was a preliminary difficulty."

Then he goes on to say—

"The whole layout of the scheme from the first instance was carried out in the dark. It was necessary to sink trial bores before the construction of a well, to ascertain whether sufficient water was available, but in very many cases erroneous reports were submitted, stating that water was available at a certain point, where, in reality, no water could be found, or the strata made well-sinking too difficult."

Regarding the system of day work, he says—

"Some of the employees spent time in fishing, playing cards, and, in a word, loafing, and supplied incorrect information in order to account for waste of time."

He goes on at some length in similar terms. That is only one more instance in proof of the shocking waste of money that has taken place under Government management in the laying out of loan money. The interest indebtedness already amounts to some £3,600,000 roughly, and it is increasing. We have a large amount of loan moneys falling due in the near future, and I suppose we shall have to renew them at current rates, which are much higher than those at which the moneys were originally lent. Seeing that such a huge charge is to be thrown on the people of Queensland, the least the Government might do is to use the best judgment, to manage so far as they can to avoid unnecessary expenditure; in other words, to make the money go as far as possible. Under the circumstances one would be almost justified in moving an amendment, although I am not going to do it, calling attention to the fact that public money is wasted year after year. I think in the first question I asked this session I inquired of the Secretary for Public Works whether the loan expenditure fore-shadowed in His Excellency's Speech was to be carried out under the present system, and also whether he was not aware that that system meant a huge liability which sooner or later would fall upon the shoulders of the producers. Speaking from memory, I think he accused me of being misleading and inaccurate. I was nothing of the kind. Anyone who has watched occurrences knows that I was perfectly right, and I say that, if anyone was inaccurate and misleading, it was the Minister. For instance, I was up at Mackay three or four times whilst the State butcher shop there was being built, and it was a laughing stock. I understand the hon. gentleman is a tradesman, and he must know the facts, and, if he would only say what he knows to be true—it is said that open confession is very often good for the soul—he would admit that money is being wasted. I say that anyone, having made a promise as he has in his oath of office to do his duty by the people of Queensland, is not carrying out his oath unless he does so.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member will withdraw that statement. I would

{*Mr. Swayne.*

like to point out to him that it is rather a serious reflection—perhaps he does not realise its gravity—to say that a Minister is not keeping his oath of office.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*): In addition, I think that the hon. member should apologise. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. SWAYNE: I think myself—

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to withdraw that statement.

Mr. SWAYNE: I did withdraw it.

The CHAIRMAN: I did not hear the hon. member, and I think I have pretty keen hearing.

Mr. SWAYNE: I withdraw. This is the first question I asked this session—

"1. In connection with the list of public works mentioned by His Excellency the Governor when opening Parliament as being part of the programme to be dealt with during this session, is it the Government's intention to carry them out under the system of day work now prevailing on Government jobs; or will they introduce a system of piece or contract work where conditions are favourable for it?

"2. If the former, is he aware of the excessive cost of our railways and other public works, brought about by construction under this method of late years, and the huge load of unproductive indebtedness already piled up thereby, to be a heavy burden of indebtedness in years to come upon our producers?"

I might say that part of the Government's programme is borrowing only for reproductive works, and, if there is one plank that the Government have shattered more than another, it is that. The answer to the question, as I have already said, was that it was inaccurate and misleading.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: So it is. I say it again.

Mr. SWAYNE: It was nothing of the kind, and I feel quite safe in leaving the decision between us to the electors. If ever there was an Administration which squandered the public money, it is the present Administration.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: Something like the money you squandered over that sawmill at Alligator Creek. Have you paid MacQueen's wages yet?

Mr. SWAYNE: You are making untrue statements. I think the people of Queensland will know how to deal with the Minister when the time comes.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: They will know how to deal with you about that. Did your kanakas get their wages?

Mr. SWAYNE: Again untrue. I should like to quote another misleading answer—I think that is parliamentary—to a question, given to me by the Premier this session. The hon. member for Rockhampton made cheap political capital at the expense of members of the Country party in the Federal Legislature, and tried to discredit them by means of an innuendo under cover of a question in this House. My memory went back to the attitude of our friend here, and so I asked the Premier—

"1. Did he not once advise against a request being made for an increase in the price of sugar from £21 per ton to £24 per ton?"

"2. If the then price of £21 per ton had been adhered to, could the amount of £6,000,000, mentioned by the hon. member for Rockhampton in his question of 13th July, have been paid in wages to employees last year?"

And the answer to that was, "No." He denied ever having given advice.

Mr. FORDE: The Premier of Queensland has done more for the sugar industry than any other man in Australia.

Mr. SWAYNE: I shall simply read the report of a meeting of sugar representatives which he attended on behalf of Queensland, and quote his own words as given in the public Press, and leave it to public opinion to decide whether he was telling the truth or not.

[9.30 p.m.]

Mr. COLLINS: What newspaper are you quoting?

Mr. SWAYNE: I am quoting from a daily paper of 8th October, 1918. One of the delegates, Mr. T. A. Powell, moved—

"That, in the opinion of this conference, to enable a remunerative price to be paid for cane, the price for raw sugar should be fixed at a minimum of £24 per ton at the mill, so long as the present factors remained unaltered, and, if necessary, the price of refined sugar should be increased, and if labour and other costs are increased, the price of raw sugar should be increased proportionately."

Mr. Theodore said—

"He thought it would be unwise to ask for £24 per ton. If they asked for £22 in the hope of getting it there might prove to be business in it."

Yet the hon. gentleman denies now that he ever advised to that effect. If that is not advice, I do not know what is. He and the then Secretary for Agriculture (Hon. W. Lennon) were the representatives of the Government at that conference. In further confirmation of the Premier's action on that occasion, I notice that Mr. Lennon said—

"He entirely agreed with Mr. Theodore's view that they must be moderate in their requests. They must remember that the present price was a war price."

In the face of that, I would like again to draw attention to the Premier's answer. If ever there were good grounds for the carrying of a motion of want of confidence in any Administration, they are to be found in the way in which this Administration prevaricate, sidestep, give misleading answers to questions which hon. members are perfectly entitled to ask, and make statements which are not in accordance with facts.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): This vote entails a fair amount of loan money. I wish to reply to some questions which have been asked on the Government side about Western Australia. I have collected facts concerning Western Australia. Probably, when they hear them, Government members will not be so prone to inquire about Western Australia, because it compares more than favourably with Queensland. Whilst Queensland has made no provision for the redemption of its loans, Western Australia has made every provision, and now has in hand more money than is required to meet the payments of loans which are maturing. Though last year it showed a deficit of £719,634, Western Australia actually provided

a sum of £780,000 to meet the repayment of loans. So that, though it would appear to have shown a deficit, on the actual facts it has shown a surplus of about £60,000. These facts are supplied by the Auditor-General of Western Australia, and cannot be refuted. Whilst the public debt of Western Australia is £41,000,000 after allowing for maturing loans—the money for which is provided—the Queensland public debt amounts to £86,000,000. During the period that this Government have been in office, they have increased our national debt by £34,000,000—almost as much as the total national debt of Western Australia. They have done that in seven short years by maladministration and by spending money as a prodigal would spend it. Whilst Western Australia has made some provision for the redemption of loans, the Queensland Government have made no provision whatever, but have gone on squandering the money here, there, and everywhere. Are you not aware, Mr. Chairman, that the Government run forty-nine motor-cars round Brisbane; practically every member using a motor-car to go to the butcher shop and get his sausages, and in carting his friends around Brisbane? The expense in that direction is anything between £50,000 and £100,000, and the Government will not give us any information about it.

Mr. GILLIES: That is not true.

Mr. FRY: The money is being squandered on joy rides; and, notwithstanding the fact that we have on record a motion passed by this Chamber ordering the Government to supply that information, the Government have not produced the figures. When the facts are made known which are now being covered up, it will be an eye-opener for the men and women who have placed their confidence in a Government which allegedly is a Labour Government. We have maturing in three years loans to the amount of about £23,000,000. That must be repaid, and not a penny is provided for its repayment. A Sinking Fund is provided for the repayment of the American loan and the interest on it. The lenders of the dollar loan insisted on the provision of that Sinking Fund; they were not going to take any risk. What have the Government done in providing for the repayment of the loans which are falling due? It is common knowledge throughout the length and breadth of the land that the Government have lost the confidence of the people outside, who are only waiting for an opportunity to turn them out of office. Any Government which secures the Treasury benches will have to meet big deficits and the loans which are falling due, and they will have nothing with which to meet them. The revenue last year was £40,689 more than the Government expected to receive; and they spent £235,757 less than they expected to spend. At the end of June the Government had a deficit of £123,592, and at the end of July they had a surplus of £153,000. How did that state of affairs come about? Were the accounts so arranged to deceive the unemployed, or was it done to keep those people who had placed their confidence in the Government in the dark?

Mr. BRENNAN: What does the hon. member care about the unemployed?

Mr. FRY: I have done more for the unemployed than the hon. member for Toowoomba, and where my electorate will return me next time with a big majority the electorate of the hon. member for Toowoomba will not return him at all. The people of

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Queensland realise that their true friends are the National party—a party which represents the working man more justly and more honestly than the present Labour party. The present Government are not the old party, and, when they ask for money, we must review their past. At the 1920 general election the Government stated that there would be no retrenchment and no reduction in wages, and within a few weeks and before the words had stopped resounding through the country they had dismissed 2,000 men from the railways and another 1,000 or so from the other various departments. We find Government members afraid to stand up in this Committee and give voice to their opinions. We have been in session five weeks, and the Government members have had every opportunity of raising a protest against the actions of the Government; but to-day they confirm the Government action by casting their votes in a way expressing confidence in the Government, and they have thus confirmed everything that has been done.

Mr. BRENNAN: What about that bribe?

Mr. FRY: The less the hon. member says about bribery the better. I would not like to trust him. I have in my electorate a school which has been built for some considerable time, and during boisterous weather the little children are compelled to carry out their classes under conditions not at all favourable to their health and wellbeing.

Mr. CLAYTON: The hon. member ought to go to the country and see them under the schools.

Mr. FRY: I am dealing with the West End school, and I will deal with country schools later. The reports in connection with this school have been more or less favourable to the work being carried out; but year in and year out nothing is done. I am not going into detail on this matter, because the Minister has been on the premises and he knows what is required. Apart from propping up a board or two and doing a little painting, nothing has been done in the interests of the poor "kiddies" to give them a chance to receive their education under favourable circumstances. For some years there has been some sort of a lukewarm movement in connection with the establishment of a High School at South Brisbane. We are told that the Central Technical College and the Brisbane High School are overcrowded, and here is an opportunity to build a school worthy of the name of a school and a monument of the Government's interests in the children.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It will be started this year or early next year.

Mr. FRY: I am very pleased to hear the Minister say that. I can assure him that I do not want it started the day after the elections, because in that case some of our own party may have the pleasure of laying the foundation stone.

I would like to defend the unemployed and the working man. The Premier, in delivering a speech the other night, asked if the country was not prosperous and the people had not the confidence in the State how it came about that there were 70,000 people at the Exhibition, all of them showing evidence of prosperity. It was because of the spirit of independence and self-reliance of the

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people that make them so proud of themselves that they like to go out as well dressed as they possibly can; but under those clean-looking coats there beats a very sorry heart and in that clothing, which appeared to be the clothing of the prosperous, was the work of the poor mother who had probably put in her hours trying to make her old clothes look respectable, and in repairing the youngsters' clothing in order to get them ready for the show. That is how it is that they all look prosperous—no thanks to the present Government, who ruthlessly turned the father out of employment, and who have been during the last seven years endeavouring to foist on the community measures which have retarded the development of the State. We saw at the Exhibition the produce and the handiwork of our people, and that should be to us a very great lesson. It showed the great resources of the State and what could be done if attention was concentrated on developing the State. It was only last week—really at the eleventh hour—a deathbed repentance, when the Government are clutching at anything they can get hold of in order to save them from the hereafter, or whatever is coming to them—that they introduced a Bill to encourage primary production.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: There was nothing in it.

Mr. FRY: It reminds me of a man dressing his window and making a great display and having no stock behind it. That is the position with the present Government. We challenge the Government to go to the country; we challenge them to go to the people and say, "Here we are! We ask for an expression of confidence. We have kept our promises." When the Government went to the elections in 1920 they had a majority of twenty, which has now dwindled down to a majority of one, and, including the Speaker, a majority of two. I promise the Government that they will get a very warm reception when they go to the people and again ask for their confidence. They are not game to go. When the Treasurer asked for two months' supply, I asked him if that was sufficient to cover the election period, and he replied, "No." The more's the pity that the country must go on for another twelve months under the control of a Government who do not possess the confidence of the people. Paradoxical as it may seem, while they have one of a majority, they have 20,000 of a minority so far as the voters of the State are concerned. Yet they hang on to office. Is it not a fact that even during this session they were defeated twice? Is it not a fact that they were saved on two occasions by the casting vote of the Speaker and on six or seven occasions by the casting vote of the Chairman? Is it not a fact that they were able to hang on to office on several occasions by one vote only? If that is not humiliating enough for the Government, have we not the spectacle that sitting behind the Government they have two sections tearing at one another's throats? If that is not sufficient, how much more is required to humiliate the Government? Not only have they not the confidence of the people outside, but, if it were not for the fact that their very jobs depend on it, many hon. members opposite would be persuaded to exercise a free decision and cast their votes against the Government.

Mr. BRENNAN: Did you not vote for the reduction in salaries?

Mr. FRY: I voted for a reduction of members' salaries.

Mr. BRENNAN: Of course you did; you had to vote as you were told.

Mr. FRY: Don't be silly.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. FRY: I am not going to bother about the hon. member for Toowoomba and his insane interjections. He is introducing personal matters which are worthy of the hon. gentleman. So far as the Nationalists are concerned, we are the party who have the confidence of the workers of this State. (Government laughter.)

Mr. BRENNAN: You are a funny man.

Mr. FRY: Hon. members opposite think they have the confidence of the workers, yet they are afraid to face them. They approach the electors like a naughty boy approaches his father when he has a stick in his hand. He goes up and says, "I love you, father," but he is not game to go near him. That is the position of hon. members opposite.

Mr. BRENNAN: Who do you say represents the people in this Chamber?

Mr. FRY (to Mr. Brennan): I say, we do.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will address the Chair.

Mr. BRENNAN: I am very sorry for the people.

Mr. FRY: You may be sorry for the people, and the people are sorry they elected you.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Your party are sorry that a certain scheme failed.

Mr. FRY: What is the Minister speaking of?

Mr. BRENNAN: I will give you two guesses.

Mr. FRY: If he is referring to the £3,500 case, I may say that he knows more about it than any member of the Nationalist party.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. FRY: Any Minister who sits on the Treasury benches and makes such an insinuation is not worthy of the position he occupies.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in order in making a statement of that nature, and I hope he will withdraw it.

Mr. FRY: If it is unparliamentary I withdraw it, but I do not know what the hon. gentleman is talking about. He is talking ambiguously and in keeping with the method in which he is carrying out his policy as exhibited during the last seven years.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): The present policy as outlined by the Government is a continuation of their policy of "Borrow all we can; tax all we can; and spend all we can." When we come to look at the figures for the last year of the Denham Government and those for the present year, we find an increase in income tax and land tax alone of £2,465,839. In one item alone—land tax—there is an increase of £480,000. We find also that there is an increase in rents, survey fees, and timber licenses of £332,132. Who carries that burden? Who have to pay these increases? In the first place, in spite of the slump in cattle and products of that kind, the Government have raised the selectors'

rents as much as 100 per cent., and have made the increase retrospective for seven years, which has put many a hard-working grazier into a very difficult financial position. Then again, there has been a large increase in timber royalties. When the present Government came into office the working man who wanted to build a home for himself could buy the very best pine for house-building at £1 6s. per 100 feet: to-day he has to pay £3 17s. per 100 feet for the same class of timber. That means a direct tax which the Government have put on every worker's home of nearly £100. The Government have taken £5,000,000 a year more from the taxpayers than previous Governments. There has, therefore, been £5,000,000 less to spend in industry. If that amount of money had been left in industry, there would have been no unemployment in Queensland to-day. It would have been spent on manufacturing our own raw materials, and there would have been plenty of work for every man at a reasonable rate of wages; but the Government have taken the money and wasted it. The bulk of the working people scarcely realise that every fresh loan is another mortgage on industry. The Government have gone very heavily into debt. They are like a farmer who mortgages his farm and increases his overdraft every year, and even borrows money to pay his interest. He can have a good time for a while, but the day of reckoning will come. He will find that he will have to pay the interest on the money borrowed, and that the interest is a first charge on the farm. It is exactly the same with regard to a nation. The Government are borrowing all they can, and taxing all they can. The Treasurer and other hon. members opposite say that the bulk of the £480,000 received from the land tax is placed on the business people, and a great deal of it in Brisbane. I quite believe that a great deal of it rests on the business houses in Brisbane, and that is responsible for the high price of clothing and the high cost of living in Brisbane and other places.

Mr. COLLINS: That is not true.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It is true. Who pays the land tax? You can put £10,000 on a business house, but the money has to be added to the price of the articles sold, and that is the reason why the worker is practically unable to live on the wages he is getting to-day. It is cruel to reduce his wages without reducing the cost of clothing and lightening taxation. The Government try to throw dust in the eyes of the electors by saying that they are going to spend part of the money they are borrowing upon irrigation schemes. Is there one irrigation scheme in Australia that has lightened the burden of the taxpayers? What is the experience we have had with the present Government? They started an irrigation scheme at Inkerman.

Mr. COLLINS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The taxpayers will not say "Hear, hear!" The Auditor-General tells us that the expenses of carrying out that irrigation scheme are so great that it will mean £7 per acre in water rates to cover the interest on the debt. In the Southern States £1 an acre is the highest water rate charged, and that is at a distance of 50 miles from Melbourne; and those people have the Melbourne market for their products, otherwise they could not pay £1 an

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acre. The average rate of assessment in irrigation areas is 5s. an acre.

The TREASURER: That is absolutely incorrect.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Can the hon. gentleman point to an irrigation area in Australia where that is not so?

The TREASURER: Yes; at Mildura it is higher than that.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: There is a very big difference between £1 and £7. The Premier knows that neither sugar lands nor any other lands can carry water rates amounting to £7 an acre. We will have to wipe off £3 to £4 an acre, and the taxpayer will have to carry it. The taxpayer has already got to pay £3 or £4 an acre rates for the scheme at Inkerman. If the Government are going to spend £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 in irrigation on the Dawson River, then before the scheme is completed it will cost £8,000,000 or more. That will put a further burden on the taxpayer. That will mean that for every suit of clothes purchased in Brisbane a man will have to pay an extra 3s. for the sake of having the irrigation area of the Dawson. That is what it means, and nobody can get away from it. When we are dealing with taxation we must remember that everything has got to come out of industry, and industry is the first charge on wages. When we realise that the irrigation works in Queensland will mean millions more in taxation, we know exactly where we stand.

Mr. BRENNAN: Did you say that industry is the first charge on wages? You are wrong.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I am right. If you manufacture an article the charge comes out of the industry.

The CHAIRMAN: Order? I hope the hon. gentleman will address the Chair.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The hon. member for Toowoomba has a very high opinion of himself to-night.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The day we celebrate."

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It may be the day we celebrate; but there is not a man on this side of the House who would like to celebrate such a thing.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: No man would ever dare to make such an offer to any member on this side of the House, as he would get knocked down if he did.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and laughter.

Mr. POLLOCK: The price is fixed.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It is a fairly big price.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will address the Chair and deal with the resolution before the Committee.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The Labour party used to be against borrowing; but now they are plunging the country into debt, and the interest on the national debt is rising every year by nearly £500,000. Since this Government took office the interest bill has been increased from £1,600,000 to £3,300,000. A good deal has been said about the benefit

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the primary producers are getting from the Government, but they are getting absolutely nothing but what they are paying for. As a matter of fact, they are paying £1 for what they could get for 6d. They are going to pay £1 for organising the Premier's way that I could do for 6d.

Question—That the resolution be agreed to—put and passed.

The House resumed.

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

The resumption of the Committee was made an Order of the Day for a later hour of the sitting.

The resolution was received and agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS.

VOYE ON ACCOUNT, £4,500,000.

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

The TREASURER moved—

"(a) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1922-1923, a further sum not exceeding £2,000,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland, exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.

"(b) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty on account, for the service of the year 1922-1923, a further sum not exceeding £1,250,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

"(c) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty on account, for the service of the year 1922-1923, a further sum not exceeding £1,250,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account."

Question put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to certain resolutions, and asked leave to sit again.

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

The resolutions were received and agreed to.

APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 1.

ALL STAGES.

A Bill, founded on the resolutions, was introduced, and passed through all its stages without discussion or amendment.

SUPPLY.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

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

Question stated—

"That there be granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1922-1923, a sum not exceeding £300 to defray the salary of the Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor."

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported progress.

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

The House adjourned at 10.20 p.m.