

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**FRIDAY, 18 AUGUST 1922**

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FRIDAY, 18 AUGUST, 1922.

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

QUESTIONS.

PRICES OF MEAT FIXED FOR BOWEN AND PROSERPINE.

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

“What were the prices for butcher's meat proclaimed at Bowen and Proserpine, respectively, by the Price Fixing Commissioner upon the date that the State butcher's shop at Mackay was opened?”

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

“Bowen—Beef, 3½d. to 1s. per lb.; mutton, 6d. to 10d. per lb.

“Proserpine—Beef, 3d. to 1s. per lb.; mutton, 4d. to 10d. per lb”

INQUIRIES *in re* MANUFACTURE OF MAIZE PRODUCTS.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Yanango*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“Will he have inquiries made by his department relative to the manufacture of maize products, with the object of helping towards the establishment of maize products factories in Queensland, thus ensuring a better return to the growers?”

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

“Inquiries have already been made into this matter, and the Director of the Primary Producers' Organisation, Mr. Macgregor, has been requested to make further inquiry in Victoria while en route to Queensland.”

UTILISATION OF PRICKLY-PEAR.

Mr. EDWARDS asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“1. Has his attention been drawn to an article in the ‘Daily Mail’ of 19th July, 1922, dealing with the various methods adopted in Texas, U.S.A., of feeding prickly-pear to stock, including singeing of the year with a portable gasoline torch and using pear in conjunction with cotton seed meal?”

“2. In view of the seriousness of the prickly-pear question and the probable extensive cultivation of cotton in Queensland, will he have full inquiries made into these matters?”

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK replied—

“1. Yes.

“2. Full experiments, including the use of gasoline torches for singeing pear, have already been conducted by the Department of Agriculture and Stock on the feeding of prickly-pear to stock, and full particulars are contained in the bulletin for stockowners issued by the department in 1918.”

COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA IN BUILDING WHEAT SILOS.

Mr. EDWARDS asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“Will he have inquiries made as to

the financial assistance rendered to farmers by the Commonwealth Government in the building of wheat silos in Western Australia, with the object of securing, if possible, similar assistance in the building of silos in Queensland for the storage of maize?”

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK replied—

“Yes.”

ARSENIC PRODUCED AT STATE ARSENIC MINE.

Mr. EDWARDS asked the Secretary for Mines—

“1. Is sufficient arsenic now being produced at the State Arsenic Mine to meet the requirements for the destruction of prickly-pear?”

“2. What is the price now charged for arsenic required for such purpose?”

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*) replied—

“1. Yes.

“2. £10 per ton, railage paid to the nearest railway station in the State.”

REMARKS OF MR. J. S. COLLINGS RELATIVE TO ARBITRATION COURT.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*) asked the Premier—

“1. Has his attention been drawn to the following remarks of Mr. J. S. Collings, State Organiser of the Queensland Branch of the Australian Labour party, relative to the Arbitration Court, published in the ‘Standard’ of 20th May, 1922:—

He felt quite sure that some day the workers would realise the absurdity of going, at great expenditure of time, energy, and money to a man like themselves called a judge, dressed up in a horse-hair wig and gown, in receipt of £30 or £40 a week, placing before him the most intimate details as to what they and their families needed to eat and wear, in order that this individual, whose weekly cigar and champagne account probably exceeded the basic wage, should decide whether 12s. 6d. or 15s. per day was a fair thing for those to live upon who produce all wealth, including the cigars and champagne and the horse-hair wigs?”

“2. Can this be taken as an official statement of the Labour party's opinion of industrial arbitration as now operating in this State?”

The PREMIER replied—

“1. Yes.

“2. Before answering this, I would like to ask the hon. member if he has read the speech of the leader of the Federal Country party, in which he said he had received a telegram from Mr. Edkins, of the Queensland Graziers' Association, asking him (Dr. Earle Page) to withdraw the censure motion then before the Commonwealth Parliament, on account of their sorry experience in Queensland? Can Mr. Edkins's communication be taken as the official attitude of the Queensland Country party?”

Mr. EDWARDS: Read it all.

## PAINTERS AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE.

Mr. VOWLES asked the Secretary for Public Works—

“How many men were put off the job of painting Parliament House just prior to last Easter holidays, and again, on or about 27th April, 1922, respectively?”

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

“No painters were put off prior to Easter holidays, but seven were put off on the 27th April, as the job was nearing completion.”

## PAPER.

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

Twenty-seventh annual report of the Auditor-General under the Supreme Courts Funds Act of 1895.

## SUPPLY.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

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

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.”

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I am pleased to offer a few remarks in regard to the Financial Statement. I have listened attentively to the criticisms made by the Opposition so far with regard to the Treasurer's Financial Statement, but I do not see that they have put forward any solid argument as to why they should take over the reins of government. We hear hon. members opposite talk about millions of pounds from time to time, but I am inclined to think that they are something similar to myself, in that they are more used to handling pence and shillings than millions of pounds. Until such time as they show more ability in their criticism of this Government, I think the people of Queensland will be well advised to let them remain in opposition. I noticed they complain about taxation. But, while they point out that the taxation in Queensland has increased from a little over £900,000 in 1914-15 to £2,500,000, they forget to mention that the population has also increased during that period.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Your figures are wrong. You said £2,500,000. It should be £3,500,000. You are only £1,000,000 out. (*Opposition laughter.*)

Mr. COLLINS: Hon. members opposite forget to mention that the population of Queensland has increased by nearly 100,000 during the reign of this Government. They do not point out to the people of Queensland that, when we came into power, there was no land tax, and we had to put on a land tax, which in my opinion is one of the most just taxes which can be imposed upon those who are able to bear it. What does the land tax really amount to?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Three shillings on every suit of clothes in Brisbane.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member does not understand the question. Land taxation is imposed upon the unimproved value of land, or, in other words, upon that which the community has created. Anyone who has

studied the unimproved values of land in Queensland must know that they amount to about the same amount as the money we have borrowed, or, in other words, the money that we have borrowed has, to a large extent, brought about what is known as the unimproved value.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to appeal to hon. members again, particularly on behalf of the “Hansard” staff and the Press, to conduct their conversations in a lower tone. Frequently complaints are made to me of the difficulty of correctly reporting debates, and I hope that hon. members themselves will assist by endeavouring to do as I ask. (*Hear, hear!*)

Mr. COLLINS: If we recognise that the unimproved value of land has been created by the community, there can be nothing wrong in the community taking portion of that which it has created. And that is the basis of taxation on the unimproved value of land. The latest report on the subject, which has been placed in our hands during the last twenty-four hours, shows that the bulk of land taxation is paid by fewer than 1,500 landowners, and the idea of the land tax is to bring land into use. The argument that the land tax can be passed on is all moonshine, in my opinion. There is nothing in that argument at all, for how can a man who owns a corner allotment without any improvements on it—in some cases allotments worth thousands of pounds, in different parts of Queensland—pass that taxation on to the people? It cannot be done. I say that if there is a just tax it is the land tax.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What about income tax?

Mr. COLLINS: The land tax is more just than the income tax, inasmuch as it takes back for the benefit of the community a portion of that which the community has created.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Which the community would not do themselves.

Mr. COLLINS: Hon. members on the other side talk about the taxation per head. Taxation is not per head. What the Labour Government have done in this State has been to place the burden of taxation upon the shoulders of those who are well able to bear it—that is, if you like to call it a burden. Rightly so too, and, if I had my way, I have no hesitation in saying that the taxation on the higher incomes would be increased. We need to get away from the argument which the hon. member for Oxley uses from time to time that the people are paying the taxation which has been imposed by this Government. Nothing of the kind! Taxation is being derived from the wealthy people of the State, and surely there is nothing wrong with that principle. During this session we have relieved the small farmer, to some extent, of land taxation. Compare our action with that of the Federal Parliament, whose proposals for this financial year were published this morning. The Commonwealth Government, to a large extent, represent the Employers' Federation of the Commonwealth; although they claim that they represent the people. A close examination will reveal how the Nationalists obtained possession of the Commonwealth Treasury benches—because they own the newspapers of the Commonwealth, and by reason of that fact they are able to fool the people. The Federal Government intend to raise the exemption in connection with the lower incomes to £200; but they have done

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the same with the higher incomes, thus looking after their very wealthy friends. The Commonwealth Government could well have afforded to look after the men who went out in defence of the Empire, instead of remitting the income tax—as they propose to do—in regard to the wealthy classes. They would have been doing a greater measure of justice had they looked after the returned soldiers and seen that every returned soldier was in employment. They have done nothing of the kind; they have done only what the Employers' Federation—who are their main support—dictated that they should do.

It is just as well to let the people of Queensland know the position in regard to this Employers' Federation and the power which it exercises on Governments. I claim that, to a large extent, it is the power behind the throne that dictates to hon. members opposite what they should do. From time to time we hear about the Trades Hall dictating to members of this party. The Trades Hall never attempts to dictate to hon. members of this party in the way in which the Employers' Federation dictates to hon. members opposite. I have here the report of the meeting of the Employers' Federation that has been sitting in Brisbane, taken from the "Daily Mail" of Wednesday, 16th August, 1922. I will read out the list of delegates for the information of the people of Queensland, so that they will know who are their friends and who are their enemies—especially the working portion of the people, who are the people who really matter; because I claim that it would not really matter if a lot of the people in this and the other States were not in existence, so far as wealth production and the building up of the State are concerned. This is the list—Senator G. Fairbairn (President of the Central Council of Employers)—I believe that gentleman was returned to the Senate in Victoria. Anyone can easily understand why he was returned; those who have been in Victoria know full well that those two Tory newspapers—the "Age" and the "Argus"—dominate Victoria.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: How do you account for Labour being in power in Queensland?

Mr. COLLINS: Owing to the fact that the people of Queensland are more intelligent than they are in any other part of the Commonwealth.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COLLINS: Let me proceed with these names—Messrs. Leslie Smith (Secretary), James McMahon, A. F. Waters, W. Brooks, M.L.C., and A. P. Wyly (Employers' Federation of New South Wales), T. R. Ashworth, and E. E. Keep (Victorian Employers' Federation), G. F. Hussey, M.H.R., W. T. Rofe, and A. A. Simpson, C.M.G. (South Australian Employers' Federation), W. N. Hedges, T. Maughan, and F. S. Andrews (Western Australian Employers' Federation), C. W. Campbell, R. H. Edkins (I think I have heard that name before), A. Watson, General Thompson (I think I have heard that name before), W. H. Green, M.L.A., and S. Benjamin—that is like our Governor's name; a very good name indeed)—(Queensland Employers' Federation). I would like to know if the "Green" mentioned here is the hon. member for Townsville?

Mr. GREEN: That is so.

Mr. COLLINS: I am sorry to see him associated with such a reactionary lot.

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The president of that federation in his address said—

"Before dealing with purely industrial questions I would like to bring before you our present social state as it appears to me. Thirty or forty years ago any citizen who had money could do almost exactly as he liked with it. Now it is very different, and we have advanced to what may be called a state of controlled capitalism. To-day we have the maternity bonus, free education, workers' compensation, old age and invalid pensions, and many other causes of direct and indirect taxation. While some of this expenditure certainly can be justified, I contend we have gone as far in this direction as human nature will allow us."

I want the workers of Queensland to make a special note of that. The Employers' Federation, in connection with maternity, invalid pensions, education, and so forth, say that we have gone as far as human nature will allow us. I am one of those who agree with that great Frenchman who said, "Hitherto it is questionable whether civilisation has reached the highest point of development." I claim that it has not. It is just as well for the workers of Queensland to know the true position and to know the forces that are opposed to them. I am afraid that they do not know the forces that are opposed to them. I suppose that, after the revelations made by the honorary Minister, Hon. W. Forgan Smith, they sat in secret. We have not got a full report of what took place at that meeting. For all I know, they came to Brisbane to jubilate over the defeat of this Government; but, in my opinion, the Government have not been defeated and are not likely to be defeated for years to come. We have the exposures from time to time showing how the parties opposed to the workers have blundered. Fancy people claiming to be fit to govern a State and making blunders such as are made by the Employers' Federation on the one hand and by our political opponents on the other! The president in his address, after dealing with profits, states further—

"A return to pre-war cost of production, which would be accompanied by a pre-war standard of the cost of living, is inevitable if Australia is to compete in the markets of the world."

Is that not contradictory to the statements that were made when the war was on? The war was supposed to be fought in the interests of democracy to bring about a better state of society, and here is this Senator Fairbairn, head of this great Employers' Federation of Australia, and the head of this one big union, making statements of that kind. Hon. gentlemen opposite from time to time sneer at the One Big Union that the working people are endeavouring to bring about. The employers have already accomplished and brought about one big union. I give them credit for that. It has been brought about with one object only, and that object is to crush the working classes.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Rubbish.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member for Warwick the other night made a comparison of the cost of construction of our railways. Does the hon. member for Warwick want us to return to those pre-war days when the wages were 5s., 6s., 7s., and 8s. per day?

That is what Senator Fairbairn and the hon. member for Townsville want to return to, because I have not noticed in the Press any protest by the hon. member that he does not want to return to pre-war days.

Mr. MOORE: We want to return to pre-war cost of living, too.

Mr. COLLINS: I am one of those who believe that there is no need to return to pre-war days. If so, what is the use of talking about all our inventive faculties and our wonderful machinery in connection with the production of commodities? If we only had the machinery in connection with production that has been used during the last few years in regard to destruction, we would not be talking about an eight-hour day, but at the present moment we would be talking about a considerably shorter working day. When the same brain power is applied to production that has been applied to destruction, then we can begin to call ourselves civilised.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You are not prepared to pay for brain power when you get it.

Mr. COLLINS: The working class have got the brain power. We have had to produce inventions from time to time, and the hon. member and his party belong to the class that generally exploit that which we have produced. When they say we are under the domination of the Trades Hall, it is just as well to remind them that they are under the domination of the Employers' Federation. I have here a cutting from the "Daily Standard" of Thursday, 17th August, which reads—

"During the debate on Supply in the House of Representatives yesterday, Dr. Earle Page caused amusement by reading a telegram he had received from Mr. Edkins, Graziers' Association, Brisbane, as follows:—'In view of the following points—namely, (1) the promise given by the "National" Government to reduce the price of sugar to the public on 1st November; (2) the recent juncture of forces in New South Wales and Tasmania, together with the public opinion expressed in South Australia and Victoria, do not warrant a continuance of opposition to the present "National" Government; (3) on behalf of the Queensland country interests, we would prefer your party to offer support to necessary legislation to assist the development of primary production; (4) any delay in meat bounties, or Meat Board bills, will be disastrous to our country interests, which require immediate relief; (5) our sorry experience in Queensland makes it imperative to check any possibility of Labour to regain power—we strongly recommend the withdrawal of the censure motion."

Mr. Edkins, of the Graziers' Association, Brisbane, had the audacity to wire to the leader of the Federal Country party that he was not to go on with his censure motion, but was to allow the Tory Government still to govern Australia; and then they talk about the influence exercised over this party by the Trades Hall or by outside bodies! We never yet have received a telegram such as that received by Dr. Earle Page, the leader of the Federal Country party, from Mr. Edkins. I have been informed that this gentleman gets a higher salary than even the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth.

Mr. RYAN: £3,500 a year.

Mr. COLLINS: Fancy a man getting £3,500 a year! What does he get it for? He gets it to look after the wealthy classes of Queensland. I want to point out to the workers outside that the reason the Government are receiving such bitter opposition at the present time is because of the fact that we are the one Labour Government in the Commonwealth, the one Labour Government in the British Empire, and the one Labour Government in the whole of the civilised world. In the opinion of the wealthy class, this Government must be destroyed. If capitalism can destroy the Government, it will stop at nothing to bring about that result, because we are a menace to capitalism in the Commonwealth so long as we are able to keep the Labour flag flying in Queensland. We have set an example, and the Labour party right throughout the Commonwealth will follow in our footsteps. The other night the Secretary for Public Works

[4 p.m.] mentioned the Employers' Federation, and the influence they used to exercise upon Tory Governments in the past. They gave away their own case. It is just as well to read it, and, as the late Hon. J. T. Ryan said, a good thing cannot be repeated too often. Mr. C. W. Campbell, the president of the Employers' Federation in Brisbane, speaking on 24th January, 1922, said—

"On many and many a night we have gone up to the House when the Liberal Government was in power and secured alterations in the legislation going through, which have all been for your benefit. They were in touch with us all the time the tramway strike was on."

I remember, when sitting in opposition some years ago, when the hon. member for Bulimba occupied a seat on the Treasury benches, that I pointed out that the then Government were only a committee of the Employers' Federation for the purpose of carrying out the dictates of that federation. The reason I am able to say that is because of my study of capitalistic development, not only in this State and the rest of the Commonwealth, but of its development throughout the world. Hon. members opposite may argue that we are, to some extent, a committee of the unions of the organised workers of Queensland. We do represent the organised workers of Queensland. They are the backbone of this party, and will continue to be the backbone of it.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It is pretty wobbly just now.

Mr. COLLINS: It is not wobbly. It was never more solid in its life. It ill becomes the hon. member to make that statement, because he has wobbled from the back cross benches right down to the place where he is now. (Government laughter.) He has wobbled from one party to the other, and God knows where he is going to wobble later on. I have kept straight on the whole of my life, and I intend to keep straight on.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Yes, you have not got a mind big enough to alter.

Mr. COLLINS: If I had a mind similar to that of the hon. member, which can pledge itself to one party and then shift to another party, I should say I had a very small mind indeed. I recognise that, having signed the Labour party's platform—

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: If I have not signed any platform or pledge, what then? We are not tied down like automata here. We are here to express our opinions.

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Mr. COLLINS: You are here to express the opinions of an outside organisation, of which you are the mouthpiece.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Nonsense!

Mr. COLLINS: A moment ago, I read from the "Daily Mail" that a person of the name of General Thompson was also represented on the Employers' Federation. That is the gentleman who is reported to have said—

"General Thompson: If you have a few regulars it is wonderful what they can resist. I have seen 500 men in the shearers' strike held up by seventy-five mounted infantry."

I want the public of Queensland to know that the people who are opposed to us are represented by hon. gentlemen opposite. Then, again, my reading of history has shown me what is happening in regard to the development of capitalism which is going on in the Commonwealth and in this State. As I said a few moments ago, capitalism will stop at nothing to gain its end.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What will communism do?

Mr. COLLINS: Hon. members opposite throw off at me from time to time about Karl Marx. I stand behind Karl Marx, who, if hon. members opposite want to know, is one of the greatest thinkers the world has ever seen or is likely to see.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What about Russia?

Mr. COLLINS: Russia has not reached the stage of development as outlined by Karl Marx.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It has reached a stage, and with what result?

Mr. COLLINS: At any rate, Russia is ruled by Bolsheviks—whom hon. members opposite have sneered at—who have been able to retain the government of the country since 1917. I suppose the capitalistic forces throughout the world have done all they possibly could to try and destroy Russia, but they have not succeeded up to the present. It is just the same with the capitalistic forces in Australia—I go beyond Queensland. I suppose that, when they met in Brisbane, they thought they would be over at the Bellevue Hotel jubilating on the downfall of the Queensland Labour Government, but it did not come about. Some of us know what capitalism will do; some of us know the history of it in other countries. I hold in my hand a book written by a man who was in the inside running of capitalism, which is entitled "Frenzied Finance," published in 1906, by Thomas W. Lawson, an American millionaire.

Mr. FLETCHER interjected.

Mr. COLLINS: Not like the hon. member for Port Curtis. He has never been in the inner circle of capitalism; he is not big enough to be admitted into the inner circle. This man was right in the inner circle of capitalism; and was, therefore, in a position to show what capitalism would do, and he has given a book to the world which it would be a good thing for the younger generation to read. I have a still more modern production called "The Brass Check," written by Upton Sinclair, dealing with the power which the Press exercises in the United States. For the benefit of the people of Queensland, I am going to quote from a chapter in "Frenzied Finance," headed "Bribing a Legislature." On page 150 the author says—

"At the head of Whitney's forces was

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his lawyer, George H. Towle, big of brain, ponderous of frame, and with the strength of an ox. A man of terrific temper, he knew not the meaning of the word fear. Nothing aroused him to such frenzy as to have to do with a legislator who unnecessarily haggled over the price of his vote or influence. On occasions when a lieutenant reported that Senator This or Representative That would not come into camp, Towle, with an oath, would say, 'Take me to him and I'll have his vote in ten minutes, or there'll be occasion for a new election in his district to-morrow.'

"Second in command was Mr. Patch, Towle's secretary and factotum, his exact opposite in every way. Where Towle was brutally straight to the point, Mr. Patch was as smooth an intriguer as ever connected himself with secrets by way of keyholes and transoms. It is a Beacon Hill tradition that for years Towle on final-payment day would have the members of the Massachusetts Legislature march through his private offices one at a time, and, handing each of them their loot, would proclaim: 'Well, you're settled with in full, aren't you? That represents your vote on—and on—.' Then he would loudly identify the Bill and the particulars of the service, while behind a partition with a stenographer would be Mr. Patch, who, after the notes had been written out, would witness the accuracy of the stenographer's report. When the Legislature assembled again, old members, the same story goes, would be requested to call on Towle to renew acquaintanceship. Then he would allow them to look over his memoranda 'just to keep them from being too honest,' as he gently phrased it."

On page 161 Lawson tells how Towle and Patch disappeared, and he says—

"'Tis writ that some crimes are so black and foul that they will not down, and when I read over what is written here I wonder if there will not some day be another chapter of 'Frenzied Finance' written by another pen than mine."

That is what capitalism is prepared to do in the United States of America. No wonder the Opposition are anxious to get rid of the Labour Government, because we know the capitalistic interests are behind them. One of the members sitting on the front Opposition bench admits that he is a delegate representing Queensland at the Employers' Federation. Another delegate is Mr. Eddins, who is the gentleman who wired to Dr. Earle Page, the leader of the Federal Country party, telling him to withdraw his censure motion in the Federal Parliament. What are the big interests which stand behind the Opposition? The big Pastoralists' Union is standing behind them.

Mr. FLETCHER: No.

Mr. COLLINS: Is it not a fact that, if hon. members opposite got into power, they would repeal certain legislation passed by this Government?

Mr. MORGAN: We certainly would.

Mr. COLLINS: I am very glad to have that interjection. Would they give an extension of leases to the pastoralists for another twenty years? If they did that, it would mean millions of pounds to the pastoralists. Would not that be the effect of them getting

into power? Would not they also give an extension of the franchise to the Brisbane Tramways Company? Do they deny that? I listened carefully to their speeches, and that is what they meant. What would it mean if they gave an extension of the franchise to the Brisbane Tramways Company?

Mr. MORGAN: Prosperity to Queensland.

Mr. COLLINS: We know that during the next twenty-five years the population of Brisbane will be something like 300,000 or 400,000. If the Brisbane Tramways Company get an extension of the franchise they will go in for further extensions, and in twenty-five years it will be worth £2,000,000 in profits to them. Those are the big interests represented by the Opposition. That is the power behind the throne. The money power stands behind hon. members opposite. No wonder they want to get rid of the present Government! The Labour Government may not have done all that was expected of them by the workers; but I want to say to the workers of this State that the members who sit on the Government side of the House belong to the working class. We are all of the working class. We have all had experience of the Governments of mankind quite recently. Even if we have made mistakes, we want to realise that our mistakes are their mistakes. They have made mistakes outside, and we who represent them in Parliament have on more than one occasion had to shoulder their mistakes. I admit that they have made mistakes outside, and I admit that we have not done all that was expected of us as a Labour Government by the workers outside. As I said a moment ago, our mistakes are their mistakes, and their mistakes are our mistakes. We are all one.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You are nothing else but a big mistake.

Mr. COLLINS: I am not going to take any notice of a silly interjection like that. If the hon. member makes an intelligent interjection I will try to reply to it. The interests of those who are behind the Opposition are such that they will not hesitate to do anything to achieve success. What do we see them doing in Italy? They are destroying the headquarters of the various unions and of the Labour organisations. We saw quite recently what they did in South Africa, where they sent up aeroplanes and dropped bombs on defenceless workers. We know what they are doing in New South Wales at the present time.

Mr. MORGAN: What did you do in Townsville?

Mr. COLLINS: We know what they are doing in New South Wales at the present time, where the Government are destroying that which has taken over a century to build up.

Mr. MORGAN: Your own Government shot down the workers at Townsville.

Mr. COLLINS: I want to say to the workers of Queensland that, in the event of the present Opposition getting into power, judging by the remarks made at the meeting of the Employers' Federation, more than likely they will repeal the Industrial Arbitration Act. They will also amend the Trade Unions Act. Why will they repeal the Industrial Arbitration Act? Because they believe in free and open competition. Why will they amend the Trade Unions Act? Because they want to prevent us from con-

tributing to political funds and from contributing towards the cost of running the Labour papers. If the Opposition get into power, they will go in for a vigorous policy of immigration. We have heard them complaining about the action of this Government in not going in for a vigorous policy of immigration. They want to go in for a system of immigration to bring about the state of things which I experienced in this State in 1883, when over 24,000 were landed on the shores of this State, and hundreds of men were looking for work without being able to get it. Those of us who were able to get work were paid only "six bob" a day.

Mr. MORGAN: That is the state of affairs that exists to-day. There are thousands of unemployed in Queensland to-day.

Mr. COLLINS: The president of the Employers' Federation explained his attitude very clearly when he said that they wanted to return to pre-war times. That is what Senator Fairbairn says, and he knows what he is talking about.

Mr. MORGAN: The workers were better off then.

Mr. COLLINS: The workers were not better off then. The workers of Queensland are better off under this Government than the workers in any other country in the world. The present is the golden time for the workers in Queensland.

Mr. MORGAN: Why are they always complaining?

Mr. COLLINS: They are not complaining. At any rate, this Government have done splendid work in that direction. They have tried to bring about better conditions so far as the workers are concerned. As I have already said, the Government have not accomplished everything; but we want to realise that for thousands of years—thousands of years, not hundreds—the patrician class—the wealthy class—have governed mankind. We realise that we cannot accomplish everything in the short space of seven years. I am quite satisfied that, when future historians start out to write the history of Queensland, they will refer to the Labour Government, and they will refer to this time as the "Golden Age" of the Queensland worker. The Queensland workers of to-day have the best conditions that ever existed in this State. It would be a calamity to the workers of this State if our friends opposite got into power. I sound a note of warning to the great working classes outside. We know that the children of Israel were wandering for forty years in the wilderness, and I make a forecast that, in the event of this Government going out of power, it will be forty years before a Labour Government will be returned to the Treasury benches again.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COLLINS. Our friends opposite would not hesitate to alter the franchise to suit themselves. They would be quite within their rights in doing that if the people were so foolish as to return them to power. We would not have the broad franchise that we have at the present time. Even if they did not alter the franchise, they would adopt other methods which would be equivalent to altering the franchise. They would do like they did in the Federal Parliament, where they introduced the preferential system of voting, which, in my opinion, was an insidious attempt to destroy the franchise without

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coming straight out and altering it. There are many ways of killing democracy, and that is one of the methods adopted by our friends opposite, because they are all one party.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I thought you said that I left one party and went to another. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. COLLINS: So I did.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: And now you say we are all one party?

Mr. COLLINS: Yes, when it comes to dealing with the matters that I have mentioned.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You do not know your own mind.

Mr. COLLINS: If I did not know my mind any better than the hon. member for Oxley, I would not know much. The hon. member belongs to the Mallock type. He always supports Mallock when he gets up in this House. He is quite welcome to Mallock, who is an excellent exponent of the capitalistic system which the hon. member for Oxley represents. I am willing to admit that the hon. member for Oxley is a good exponent of the capitalistic system and the capitalistic party which he sits behind.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What about you and me touring the State—you taking the one side and myself taking the other?

Mr. COLLINS: It would not be a bad idea. (Laughter.) The capitalistic party want to achieve the very things sought by the hon. gentleman.

Now I am going to give a quotation from Karl Marx, for the benefit of the hon. member for Oxley. On page 785 of his book, "Capital," he says—

"Capital is said by a Quarterly Re-

viewer to fly turbulence and strife, and to be timid, which is very true; but this is very incompletely stating the question. Capital eschews no profit, or very small profit, just as Nature was formerly said to abhor a vacuum. With adequate profit, capital is very bold. A certain 10 per cent. will ensure its employment anywhere; 20 per cent. will produce eagerness; 50 per cent. positive audacity; 100 per cent. will make it ready to trample on all human laws; 300 per cent., and there is not a crime at which it will scruple, nor a risk it will not run, even to the chance of its owner being hanged. If turbulence and strife will bring a profit, it will freely encourage both. Smuggling and the slave trade have amply proved all that is here stated."

I quite agree with that statement that—

"One hundred per cent. will make it ready to trample on all human laws;"

and I am also quite willing to admit that the writer is correct when he says that smuggling and the slave trade have amply proved all that he states. But our friends opposite can rest assured that the workers are awakening to the danger that threatens them.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Do not point. (Laughter.)

Mr. COLLINS: I am not pointing at any particular person, and anyhow, I would not waste my time pointing at the hon. member. Now I want to deal for a few moments with some of the work accomplished during the first seven years of the reign of this Government, giving in one column the measures passed for the benefit of agriculture and the man on the land, and in the other what we may call labour and industrial measures:—

*Agriculture and the Man on the Land.*

Sugar Acquisition Act.

Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act of 1915.

Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act Amendment Act of 1917.

Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act Amendment Act of 1921.

Diseases in Stock Act.

Brands Act.

Brands Act Amendment Act.

Diseases in Plants Act.

Fertilisers Act Amendment Act.

Fruit Cases Act Amendment Act.

State Produce Agency Act.

Rights in Water Act Amendment Act.

Co-operative Agricultural Production Act Amendment Act.

Stock Foods Act.

Dairy Produce Act.

Wheat Pool Act.

Cheese Pool Act.

Income Tax Act Amendment Act.

Land Tax Act.

Main Roads Act.

Railway Act Amendment Act (which meant the abolition of the Railway Guarantee, and the giving of relief for the man on the land).

Banana Industry Preservation Act.

Primary Producers' Organisation Act.

Land Tax Act Amendment Act.

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*Labour and Industrial Measures.*

Workers' Compensation Act (which includes minor's phthisis).

Industrial Arbitration Act.

Insurance Act of 1916.

Workers' Accommodation Act and Amendments.

Trade Unions Act.

Labour Exchanges Act.

Inspection of Machinery Act.

Inspection of Scaffolding Act.

Mines Regulation Act Amendment Act.

Wages Act.

Workers' Homes Act.

Factories and Shops Act Amendment Act.

Industrial and Provident Societies Act.

Fair Rents Act.

Profiteering Prevention Act.

Police Act Amendment Act.



That is a fairly good record for seven years of work for the man on the land. I question whether it has been equalled in any other part of the Commonwealth. We all know that the Regulation of the Sugar Cane Prices Acts have been of considerable benefit to the sugar-growers, inasmuch as last year the value of the raw product was estimated at a little over £9,000,000: a considerable increase above that of 1915. Then, by our Income Tax Act Amendment Act, it is possible for the man on the land to average his income over a number of years, and quite recently our Land Tax Act Amendment Act gave relief to the man who cultivates his own land up to £1,500 in value. That is something done for the man on the land, and I hope he appreciates the fact that this Government have done something. On the other hand, there are the labour and industrial measures.

Mr. MORGAN: Have you not forgotten one?

Mr. COLLINS: I may have forgotten half a dozen.

Mr. MORGAN: The Act increasing members' salaries. (Laughter.)

Mr. COLLINS: I voted cheerfully for that. At the same time it is just as well to tell the people the whole truth—that is, that we are now suffering a 5 per cent. reduction. Take the Act dealing with miners' phthisis. If any man deserves credit for that measure, it is the hon. member for Mount Morgan, who did a great deal of pioneering for it. Having worked for twenty-five years underground, I know some of the difficulties that beset the miner. Many friends of mine are suffering from this disease. Only last week I went to the State Insurance Office with one whom I have known for thirty-five years, and who, perhaps, in the next few months will have gone over the border, suffering from this foul disease. Surely we deserve credit for putting on the statute-book legislation dealing with miners' diseases. Then, did we not pass the Industrial and Provident Societies Act, to put those societies on a legal footing? Is that not something done more than any other Government in this State have done?

Passing from that, I want to deal with a few local matters, affecting not only the State in general, but my own electorate in particular. On page 39 of the Financial Statement I read—

“Already cotton-growing has been greatly stimulated in this State by the action of the Government in guaranteeing to the growers 5½d. per lb. for all seed cotton of approved quality grown by them. This guarantee was for three years ending 30th June, 1922. In order to still further encourage the planting of cotton, the Government have decided to extend the existing guarantee until 31st July, 1923—that is, by one month—to enable the cotton-growers to reap the advantage of the guaranteed price of 5½d. per lb. for the whole of the forthcoming crop, which ought to be harvested by the extended date. It is intended also to guarantee a price for a further period of three years ending 31st July, 1925. The conditions under the new guarantee will be different to those ruling at present, as the price will be based on the quality and length of staple of the cotton. The details have not yet been worked out, but for the

first year of the new guarantee period the maximum price will be 5½d. per lb. for seed cotton of 1¼-inch staple, of good quality and free from disease.”

In reference to that matter, I want to point out that yesterday I asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock the following questions—

“1. Will he have an examination made of lands on the Bowen Coalfield, and in other portions of the Bowen electorate, to ascertain their suitability for the growing of cotton?”

“2. In the event of the lands being suitable for the growing of cotton, will he send an expert to the district to give the necessary information to the farmers?”

And he replied—

“1. Yes.

“2. Yes, as soon as available.”

I want it to be made known that there is available for settlement in the Bowen electorate 500,000 acres of land.

Mr. GREEN: You don't want immigrants.

Mr. COLLINS: We want to settle our own native-born people on the land, and the hon. member for Townsville knows that, if the conditions are good, immigrants will come here. The United States of America get plenty of immigrants, one of the reasons, of course, being that they are close to Europe.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: And there is no Labour Government there.

Mr. COLLINS: Of course, there would not be any Labour Government there. Have I not been pointing out the influences of capitalism?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Yet you say the United States of America are prosperous.

Mr. COLLINS: One of the reasons is that they are only a few days' sail from large populations in Europe. At any rate, if we make conditions good here, people will come here, and that is what this Government are trying to do.

Mr. WARREN: They do not rush here.

Mr. COLLINS: They are coming here because the conditions are good. You have complaints about your returned soldiers not being able to get work. Is it not the first duty of the Commonwealth—not of the State—instead of remitting taxation, to use that income for finding work for returned soldiers? Your Commonwealth Government have done practically next to nothing for them. They were good enough to go and fight, but are not good enough to find work for when they come back. I hope that we shall see the cotton-growing [4.30 p.m.] industry expand throughout the State. If we had good conditions, we could have the population. I believe that, when you have good conditions, you have a high marriage rate. Gladstone said on one occasion—

“Tell me the marriage rate in England, and I will tell you whether it is prosperous or not.”

When we have a high marriage rate we have a high birth rate; and, later on, we shall have the native-born population to develop the State. I am not going to be carried away with the cry for millions. If that were so, India should be the most prosperous

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country in the world, followed by China, because there are many millions of people in those countries. Would anyone say that India is prosperous? I do not know so much about China.

I want to thank this Government for what they have done in the development of my electorate, especially in regard to the Bowen Coalfield Railway. I am very pleased to be able to inform the House that news quite recently came from the coalfield stating that it is expected that the rails will reach the State coalmine on the 29th of this month. Then we shall be producing coal for the supply of our Northern railway system. I am very proud of what the Government have done in the building of the railway and in the spending of £46,000 in the development of the mine—which, in my opinion, is the best equipped and one of the most up-to-date mines in Queensland. Maybe, as I interjected the other night, we possess in the Bowen coalfield one of the greatest coalfields in the Commonwealth. Before the advent of this Government it was lying idle. Other Governments could have built the railway, but they did nothing. I am sure that no one appreciates more than the Bowen people do what the Government have done in the direction of developing their hinterland.

I am pleased to find that the Mount Coolon goldfield is still making progress. Last year it produced 2,533 tons of stone for 1,369 oz. of gold, of a money value of £6,169. With greater crushing power, I have no doubt that it will become one of the principal goldfields in Queensland, and will add greatly to our gold production. I am very pleased to be able to inform the people of Queensland that, quite recently, we had another development 14 miles south-east of the coalfield, where a new gold find has taken place. A little while ago the prospectors of the new field sent to Charters Towers 9 tons 12 cwt. of stone for a yield of 25 oz. of fine gold, valued at £106. I am pleased that the Secretary for Mines quite recently informed the prospectors that he would advance them up to £150, on the £1 for £1 basis, for the sinking of a shaft to prove further that new gold find. I thank the Secretary for Mines and the Government generally for the good work they are doing in assisting the Billy Hughes Company to erect a battery on the Normanby goldfield.

Mr. CLAYTON: Is that in Melbourne?

Mr. COLLINS: No, it is in the Bowen electorate.

Mr. MORGAN: Why don't you bring in a Bill to change the name? (Laughter.)

Mr. COLLINS: We do not want to bring in a Bill to change the name; that would indicate a small mind. I am pleased that the Mines Department have reserved five head of stampers for the use of the public. More than likely we shall see in the Bowen electorate not only the development of a large coalfield, but, before another two or three years, the development of large gold fields.

I have been sorry to hear, from time to time, criticism from the other side of the House in regard to the Inkerman irrigation scheme. Irrigation at Inkerman is going to be a success; it is only the forerunner. I hope, of many more big irrigation schemes being carried out by this Government. I am satisfied that the Government are going to remain in power, and not only go on with the building of new lines of railway, but with irrigation schemes also.

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I hope, when the money market is a little easier, that the Government will go on with the iron and steel works at Bowen. It is no use hon. members on the other side prating, as they do from time to time, about the secondary industries. I heard a debate conducted at great length one night, when the Land Tax Act Amendment Bill was before the House, about developing our secondary industries. If this State is to become great, we must develop not only our coal but also our iron resources, and go in for the manufacture of steel, rendering ourselves independent of other countries. We all know that coal and iron have built up such countries as Germany, Great Britain, and the United States of America. If we develop our coal and iron resources, we shall build up this great State of Queensland and this great Australian Commonwealth.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. CLAYTON (*Wide Bay*): I am very pleased to have the opportunity of making a few remarks in connection with this Financial Statement. I predicted that the previous Financial Statement would be the last that the then Treasurer would have the opportunity of reading; and I venture to say that this will be the last delivered by a Labour Government in this House for a great number of years.

Mr. FORDE: Oh, no; you missed the 'bus the other day.

Mr. CLAYTON: I did not miss the 'bus. Looking at this Financial Statement, one is inclined to think that the sting is in the tail; because, on reaching the end of it, you see that it is estimated there will be a deficit at the end of the financial year of £576,840. If the director of a company were to produce to an annual meeting of shareholders a statement such as that which the Government have delivered, I am inclined to think the shareholders would put those directors out; and, if the electors of Queensland were given the opportunity, the men who at present are directing the affairs of this State would not occupy those benches again.

Mr. FORDE: We would get a much larger majority.

Mr. CLAYTON: After the Government had gone to the electors on the last occasion and told them what they had done for the man on the land, and what they had done in the sugar industry, many electorates in which sugar was produced turned down the men who claimed to have assisted them, and sent others here, because they knew that the men they were sending were sincere in their endeavours to do something for the man on the land.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Have you anything against what this Government has done for the sugar industry? Do you not approve of our policy?

Mr. CLAYTON: I am very glad that both sides of the House and the public of Queensland are doing everything they possibly can to keep the sugar industry in a prosperous condition. It is a pity that we cannot see eye to eye in a lot of other matters for the benefit of Queensland.

On 30th June, 1915, the public debt of Queensland amounted to £56,869,046. That figure represented the accumulated debt over a period of fifty-six years. During the period that this Government have been in power, up to 30th June, 1922, the public debt of

Queensland was increased to no less a sum than £85,691,223—an increase in seven years of £28,822,182. Yet the Government tell us that we are living in a land of prosperity! When this Government came into office our interest bill was £1,975,581, but up to the end of June, 1922, it had increased to £3,286,096, being an increase of £1,310,515. If our interest bill is going to increase at that rate and the present Government are, unfortunately, allowed to remain in power, I do not know what the condition of Queensland is going to be. For the year 1914-15, the amount of revenue received was £7,202,658, but the receipts last year reached no less a sum than £12,311,378, or an increase of £5,108,720. For the year 1914-15 the expenditure was £7,199,399, and for the year 1921-22 it was £12,499,970, being an increase of £5,300,571. The year that this Government obtained control of the Treasury benches there was a surplus of £3,259. Yet for the year 1921-22, after seven years of Labour Government, we have a deficit of £188,592.

Mr. FORDE: Quote the deficits of Tory Governments in other States.

Mr. CLAYTON: I will quote sufficient figures to satisfy the hon. member before I have finished. The total amount of surpluses under this Government up to 30th June, 1922, was £71,454. I suppose the hon. member for Rockhampton is proud of that. But we find that the deficits for the same period amount to £1,023,524, or an excess of deficits over surpluses for that period of £952,070. The position gets worse as time goes on. Although it is stated that we are on a wave of prosperity, it is estimated that the deficit this year will be £576,840, which will make the total amount of deficits up to 30th June, 1923, £1,528,910.

Mr. FORDE: The Tory Government in Western Australia for the same period had accumulated a deficit of £4,500,000.

Mr. CLAYTON: Prior to this Government assuming office, we saw that pamphlet which stated that finance was the test of good government. I ask you to apply that test to the party now in power. If that test was applied to the Labour Government and the Governments prior to the Labour Government, there can be no question as to which party has been for the benefit of Queensland, and which party has been to the detriment of Queensland.

Mr. FORDE: This Government could easily show a surplus if we increased freights and fare.

Mr. CLAYTON: I do not think the hon. member for Rockhampton goes into the Capricornia electorate to tell the electors the figures which I have just quoted.

Mr. FORDE: I tell the electors the truth.

Mr. CLAYTON: If the hon. member told the truth, he would tell them of the unfortunate position in which the Government have placed Queensland. For the year 1914-15, the amount of income derived from income taxation was £517,273, and in 1921-22 the amount had increased to £2,194,361, being an increase of £1,677,088. During 1914-15 there was no land taxation. That has been imposed by this Government, and last year the amount received in land taxation amounted to £480,518. That has been received from the man on the land. That is the way the Government have attempted to assist the man on

the land. Under this Government the amount of income from totalisator taxation has increased by £25,969; the income from stamp duty has increased by £233,335; and the amount of revenue received from licenses has decreased by £1,071—showing a total increase in revenue from those sources of taxation of £2,455,839. These figures go to show that when we apply the principle that finance is a test of good government, the position of this Government is a very sorry one. The Governor, in his opening Speech, said—

“It is clear, however, that to provide for new settlement on the large scale our State's unoccupied land and undeveloped resources justify, there must be a considerable expenditure of money in railway construction, road-making, and irrigation, and it is gratifying to know that there will be no difficulty in raising the funds for such extensive undertakings.”

I think the Government will be doing what they should do if they spend some of the money that they borrow or derive from taxation or otherwise on the construction of railways in some of our agricultural districts. We have large areas of agricultural land adjacent to our main railways, and I sincerely hope the Government will do something to connect those agricultural lands with those railways, and so afford assistance to the people who are already settled there. The Treasurer, in his Financial Statement, states—

“The sugar industry has been a very valuable standby to this State during the depression in other industries; it is natural, therefore, that the Government should be anxious as to the future of the industry.”

We are told that there is no depression in the industry, and here we have the Treasurer, in his Financial Statement, admitting that there is. The Treasurer further states—

“The Government have exerted their best endeavours to induce the Commonwealth Government to extend the sugar agreement for a further period—so far unavailingly. The economic importance of this industry to Australia is so great, and the consequences of its destruction would be so disastrous to the policy of white settlement in Northern Australia, that we are confident the Commonwealth Government will eventually approve of an extension of the agreement on satisfactory terms. Holding this belief, the Government have given consideration to the question of erecting additional sugar-mills in Queensland. There is sufficient milling power in Queensland at present to supply the needs of the Commonwealth of raw sugar if the full capacity of the existing mills could be utilised, but for reasons which are well known very few mills are supplied year in and year out with their full complement of cane.”

So far as the Southern portion of Queensland is concerned, we know that the mills are not supplied with their full complement of cane. We have mills in my district which, unfortunately, are not supplied with a sufficient quantity of cane to allow them to compete successfully. I refer particularly to the Bauple mill, which is in my electorate, and which is one of the Government central sugar mills. I have here the report of the general manager of central sugar mills in connection

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with the Bauple sugar mill, dated 30th June, 1921, which says—

“No crushing took place during the year 1919-20, and since 1916 the total cane treated was 106,564 tons, being an average of 21,313 tons per annum for the five years operating.”

The Bauple mill is capable of treating no less than 65,000 tons of cane per season, but, unfortunately, there is not sufficient cane grown in the vicinity of the mill to enable the mill to be worked successfully from a financial point of view. Not far from the Bauple mill there is a very fine stretch of country known as the Goomboorian Scrub, and the people there are most anxious to get railway communication so that they will be in a position to grow cane. It would be of great benefit to the Bauple mill if the Government could be induced to connect the Goomboorian Scrub by a light line with some point on the main railway so that supplies of cane could be railed to the Bauple mill. All the cane north of Bauple could be treated at the mills around Maryborough, and, if these Goomboorian lands were given railway communication, it would go a long way towards assisting the Bauple mill to get a full complement of cane. Quite recently I paid a visit to this scrub in company with Mr. Missing and Mr. Maika, of the United Cane Growers' Association of Bundaberg, and I would like to quote from a report that was made concerning our visit—

“The Goomboorian land is eminently suited for sugar-cane growing, and an estimate of 4,000 acres would be on the low side as to that which would be available without interfering in any way with banana-growing, and would also be clear of heavy frost. The flats, where frosty, could be profitably worked with cane similarly to the flats at Bauple. The proposed line to Bauple would be the Government gauge of 3 feet 6 inches, and not 2 feet as was proposed eleven years ago, when the project fell through owing to the Bauple mill only being able to take an extra 10,000 tons of cane, which was not sufficient to pay for the line. Moreover, timber was not taken into consideration in the earlier project. The hardwood timber resources of this rich district are practically unlimited, but the pine has been cleaned out. Owing to the high cost of hauling hardwood to the main line, trees containing millions of feet have been rung and are still standing. Across Tinana Creek, there is a small belt, estimated to contain 10,000,000 feet of yellow jacket and other hardwood, which would be available with railway connection to Goomboorian.

“The party received a warm welcome, Mr. Missing being an old acquaintance of the Rodney Bros. The others being introduced, all were invited to make themselves at home. Old times, when from twenty to thirty would be at the homestead for the purpose of mustering the stock, were recalled, and different experiences were exchanged. After tea and a smoko, a move was made for ‘blanket street’ when all were soon at peace and quietness with the exception of a few dingoes, who were evidently trying their vocal powers. Next morning, the party's horses, which were let go

overnight, were soon brought in, and, after getting on the outside of a good, substantial breakfast, the party started off for Mr. H. C. Cowie's retreat, passing through some very fine forest, the ridges being rich red soil. Mr. Cowie's property is 3,150 acres in extent, and contains several fine red soil ridges suitable for growing, whilst the Government estimate of sawmill timber is 4,500,000 superficial feet. Reaching Mr. Cowie's at 11.30, the visitors left their packhorse there, and made off along the main road into Goomboorian, where they met that gentleman returning with his mail. Returning with him, the midday meal, served up a la carte at his genial hands, was greatly enjoyed. After going into details of the trip, the tour was continued to Messrs. G. and J. Elliott's well-appointed homes at the foot of North Goomboorian Mountain. Mr. M. Webster was also met; and, having had afternoon tea, a start was made to go through the scrub around the mountain. On the way the party met Mr. J. Johnson, who, together with those named previously, was interested in their visit. On entering the scrub, the visitors were greatly struck with the enormous size of the messmate and closeness at which they grow. Thousands of them were to be seen of immense size, whilst other scrub timber was of great height and thickness. A fine ironbark along the track caught Mr. Missing's eye, it being reckoned on 80 feet to the first limb and 3 feet girth. The visitors passed through 2 miles of solid dense scrub, most of which is State reserve, the other being held privately by a Gympie resident. They then came out at the banana farm of Mr. A. Damm, which, in common with similar properties, is showing to perfection. The scrub soils so far met with were deep black, but on reaching South Goomboorian, chocolate to red was seen. Mr. A. Hansen was the next visited, after which came the parting of the ways until the next morning. Messrs. Clayton and Missing were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. A. Hansen, and Mr. Maika was accommodated by Mr. and Mrs. M. Webster. Mr. Hansen has 40 acres of bananas on the eastern slope of South Goomboorian Mountain, the soil being red volcanic, and of a very free nature, but it washes very little. Mr. Hansen is looking ahead, and has a small experimental plot on which he has three different sugar varieties of bananas, four varieties of sugar-cane, and Lisbon lemons.”

I have here also a copy of the evidence that was taken by the Royal Commission that inquired into the lands in and about that district in 1911, and there is no question that the feeling at that time was that the land there was eminently suited for the production of cane; but at that time the Bauple mill was not sufficiently large to treat the cane that could be produced in the district. Since then the capacity of the Bauple mill has been considerably increased. At the present time, cane has to be hauled over long distances to the mill; and, if cane can be produced on the land adjacent to the mill, it would have a better chance of being a financial success. A lot of the cane that is being treated at Bauple has to be railed from Pialba, a distance of 61 miles; and, if we could connect Goomboorian with Gunalda, it would bring

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the distance from Goomborian to the Bauple mill within 35 miles. Furthermore, if that line were constructed, it would not only be of benefit to this mill, but of benefit to the whole district. It is only about 16 miles from Gympie, and the road is in a very bad state of repair; and, if they got railway connection, the settlers would be able to travel to Gympie by rail, and would also have an opportunity of sending their produce to that centre. Quite recently the hon. member for Gympie, Mr. Dunstan, the hon. member for Cooroola, Mr. Walker, and myself waited on the Premier to see what could be done in connection with this matter, and we received a reply to the effect that the matter would be carefully considered, both by the Railway Department and the General Manager of State Sugar Mills, and that the general manager would be asked to report on the proposal, to decide whether it was practicable, and what it would cost. The people in the district are very enthusiastic concerning this railway, and I sincerely hope the reports will be of such an encouraging nature as to induce the Premier to grant this very fine stretch of land railway communication. Not only is the land eminently suited for cultivation, but it also carries an enormous quantity of timber. Hardwood is found in abundance; and, if the railway were built, the Government would derive a considerable revenue from the timber in the district, as it would enable that timber to be brought to a market.

In connection with outdoor relief, I would point out that in 1914-15 the amount granted in outdoor relief was somewhere about £5,000, while last year the amount placed on the estimates for this purpose was no less a sum than £177,000. In a State like Queensland, where we are told there is so much prosperity, it is appalling to think that such a large amount of money has to be found for the relief of men who, unfortunately, in many cases are not allowed to take employment. Furthermore, the person who gets relief must declare that he is destitute; and, if that regulation is carried out, we must have a lot of destitute people in Queensland at the present time. I would like to quote from a cutting from the "Alert," a paper conducted by one of the leading men in the Labour movement, a man who is game to get up and state what he thinks of the present Government, and to say it publicly or privately. In connection with unemployment rations, the editor of this paper says that the system adopted in connection with relief rations was wasteful and degrading; that where the applicant was able to work, work should be provided. He was satisfied that 90 per cent. of those seeking relief greatly preferred to work rather than receive rations as a dole; and, if a man was able to work and would not work, then he should not get relief. A meeting was recently held in Bundaberg by the Trades and Labour Council at which the system in connection with the distribution of rations was severely condemned.

[5 p.m.]

The following motion was carried at that meeting:—

"That this body of representative unionists emphatically protest against the humiliating method of ration distribution as being wrong in principle and demoralising in effect, and ask that in future rations should not be given free."

I notice that this year the Government has

reduced the amount on the Estimates for outdoor relief to £52,072. There cannot be much prosperity in Queensland when the Government have to put such a large amount on the Estimates for the relief of destitute people. It shows that the position of affairs is bad when they have to do that. We shall probably find when the end of the year comes, that that amount will have been considerably increased. What does the hon. member for Bowen say in connection with outdoor relief? Speaking on the matter in 1915 (vide "Hansard," page 2631) the hon. member said, in reply to the leader of the Opposition—

"Surely he was not going to blame the present Government for that. How could the Government be responsible for what had taken place in May or June? That was the effect of the past Governments, and the present distress was the effect of past Governments.

"How could they right the wrong of centuries in less than a session of Parliament? It was impossible for them to do it. They were going step by step, and if after they had been in power for three years the same number of persons had to get relief it would then be the duty of the Opposition to criticise them."

I think the hon. member will agree that I am doing my duty on this occasion, because, while only £5,000 odd was expended in relief in 1915, the amount expended last year amounted to no less than £177,000. Yet we had the present Secretary for Mines during the Paddington election campaign recently stating—

"They could now see the lining ahead, and within two months there would not be one unemployed man in Queensland who was willing to work."

I say that is casting a slur on many men who are unable to get work. There are many men in Queensland to-day who, owing to industries not being prosperous, are unable to find work.

The Government have no doubt done something to their credit in connection with the Forestry Department, but I notice that the Forestry Estimates have this year been decreased by £3,345. If the Forestry Department is going to be for the benefit of Queensland, I think it is unwise to cut down the Estimates; but I am inclined to think that the department is shutting up a lot of land adjacent to markets and railways which could be used for agricultural purposes. Just recently, in the Gympie district, the department has been rather busy shutting up 20,000 acres of scrub land in the Glastonbury district. I was opposed to the shutting up of that very fine area of Crown lands, as it could be used for agricultural purposes, and I sincerely hope that the Minister will do all in his power to have that land thrown open for selection.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: What land are you referring to?

MR. CLAYTON: To 20,000 acres of land in the Glastonbury district, adjacent to Gympie. I understand that 1 per cent. of the land in Queensland is now used for forestry purposes, and it seems pretty hard on the town of Gympie that 15 per cent. of that land should be in the Gympie district. Some people say that it is for the benefit of Gympie that so much land should be closed up for forestry purposes. We know that

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much of our land adjacent to markets and to railways could be employed in cultivation and in the settlement of people, and I think it is the duty of the Government to allow that land to be thrown open for agricultural purposes. There is plenty of land which is not close to railways or to market which could be utilised for timber reserves, and I think that the Government should move in that direction.

At 5.5 p.m.,

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

Mr. CLAYTON: At the present time the area of land held for timber purposes in the Gympie district is about 95,000 acres, of which 55,000 acres come under the designation of timber reserves, while the balance of 40,000 acres is classified as State forests. I sincerely hope that the Minister will see his way not to convert this land into a State forest, but to have it proclaimed as a timber reserve. In that connection, a deputation waited on the Minister the other day, and we trust that the hon. gentleman will grant the request of the deputation.

We hear a great deal from the Secretary for Public Lands in connection with the shortage of timber in Queensland. I do not know whether that is in keeping with some of the things which have been done by the Government lately. I understand that a short time ago some 500,000 superficial feet of first-class pine went out of Queensland in the log. By allowing timber to go out in the log, a lot of work is taken away from a great many men, who would otherwise be employed in the timber industry, not only in obtaining the logs, but in having the timber cut up locally. I think that it ill becomes the Government to export logs when we have up-to-date sawmilling plants in the Maryborough district and skilled men who are in a position to deal with the timber. When we send timber out of the State, it should be in a finished form. I notice from the Auditor-General's report that the Government have made a loss of over £256,000 on their State enterprises. I think that, if the money which has been invested in State enterprises had been spent in developing co-operation amongst the producers, a great deal more good would have resulted. We have co-operation in connection with our butter factories, which has been very successful, and also in connection with other classes of factories. I would like to refer to the report of the Queensland Co-operative Bacon Company, at Murarrie, which is an undertaking solely owned by the suppliers. The men who supply the pigs to the company get all the profit which is derived from the sale of the finished article to the consumer.

The report says—

"During that period 33,444 (or a weekly average of 644) pigs were treated—an increase of 7,551 over the same period of last year. The average price paid for baconers, including deferred pay, was 7½d. per lb. Due to the improvements made to handle pigs more promptly from start to finish, and the increased supply, a saving of £2,100 in working expenses was effected as compared with 1921. A pork delicacy canning plant was installed, and operations were commenced on 8th March, 1922, and the goods are giving satisfaction to buyers.

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"The balance-sheet shows that on 1st July last year stocks in hand represented £30,039. Purchases of pigs and manufacturing charges totalled £137,723; sales of goods totalled £157,312; and stocks on hand were valued at £25,354, leaving the balance to profit account (gross), £15,403."

I think this report reflects great credit on the manager and directors of that company. I am very proud to be associated with the managing director of that company, the hon. member for Coorooora, who is also a member of this party. I sincerely hope that the Government will take a lesson from us in connection with the working of the co-operative movement, and apply our methods to many of their State enterprises. (Hear, hear!)

The redistribution of seats is a matter to which we are inclined to give a little thought, especially members of this party, because we have been unfortunate in that we have lost four Country party seats through the action of the Commissioners. I realise that, if we can get to the country, we shall pull up that number by 50 per cent. at the very least. What strikes me as rather strange is the way the electorates have been distributed. The Gympie electorate, I understand, contains 5,013 electors, the Maryborough electorate 6,166, and Wide Bay 5,973. I cannot for the life of me understand why the Commissioners could not divide those electorates more equitably.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: They did not want to.

Mr. CLAYTON: I am inclined to think there is a method in the way the electorates have been distributed, but it goes to show that we were unfortunate in not having other men as Commissioners to attend to that most important work. Three new seats have been created in the metropolitan area. That goes to show the drift of the population down here. If the population is going to drift to the large centres, and we have the same Commissioners dealing with these matters, in time we are going to lose more Country party seats, and the metropolitan area will have greater representation than we have, and we shall have to look into the matter of proportional representation as suggested by the hon. member for Drayton the other evening. Three Commissioners were appointed by the Government, and at the time the redistribution of seats was taking place we had what was known as the Economy Board going throughout the length and breadth of Queensland sacking men and women from the Railway Department. The Government were trying to economise, yet they paid these three Commissioners, over and above their salaries, which were pretty substantial, a bonus of two hundred guineas each. That is the way the Government are treating the working man. They are looking after one section of the community, although they go on the platform at election time and say that there is only one section that they worry about. Some of them admit that they are class-conscious, and that they are only out to look after one class, and not all sections. I am very pleased to say that that is a striking contrast to the methods that are adopted by the Country party and to the methods that will be adopted by this party when we are returned to power at the next election.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BULCOCK (*Barcoo*): One would imagine, to hear the criticisms coming from hon. members opposite, that Queensland is in a very unhappy position. If hon. members will study the facts and figures of industry as we have them set forth in the Commonwealth Statistics, and as they appear from day to day in the various publications and newspapers, quite an opposite view is presented to the people of Queensland.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BULCOCK: It is therefore, apparent that hon. members opposite, in their dire necessity, are attempting to bolster up a cause that has no solid structure and no substantial foundation.

We have heard a good deal from hon. members opposite about the condition of the pastoral industry, and more especially, have they referred to repudiation in relation to some legislation that we passed in 1920. In regard to that repudiation, they said that there was no justification for the Bill that was introduced, and that the Government were imposing a hardship on an industry that could ill afford to pay it. In yesterday's "Courier" there were some eloquent figures, which very substantially dispose of the statements made by hon. members opposite concerning the want of prosperity in at least one big branch of the pastoral industry.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: What paper did you say—the "Courier"?

Mr. BULCOCK: Yes. I will quote from your paper afterwards on the same subject.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: What paper is that?

Mr. BULCOCK: "The Producers' Review."

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It is not our paper; you bought it.

Mr. PEASE: You are the only people who do any buying.

Mr. BULCOCK: I am not going to be drawn off the track by the hon. member for Drayton. During the last few days there were despatched from Blackall several trains loaded with wool. The first train took 330 tons of wool, the second 452 tons, the third 351 tons, and the fourth 336 tons; or a total of 1,472 tons. Nearly the whole of it came from the big pastoral holdings in the neighbourhood of Blackall, and it was trucked at a little wayside siding called Malverton, a little to the west of Blackall. It is necessary to take into consideration the value of those 1,472 tons of wool sent away from Blackall during the last few days. The "Courier," in its columns of yesterday, gave some estimate of the value of wool at Liverpool, where clean, scoured wool was quoted at from 49d. to 27d. per lb. The average is considerably higher than 27d., and up to 49d. for very fine wool. The "Courier" correspondent, telegraphing from Liverpool, stated that everything pointed to fine wool being required on a large scale in the future. These were not his exact words, but that was the effect of them. We know that the operation of buyers is very pronounced in the wool markets of the world to-day. We know that the restoration of the balance of currency between the various continental countries and Great Britain—Great Britain in this instance being the chief marketing centre of many of our high quality wools—will mean that the demand will be very keen. I have no hesitation in saying, as I said in

the first speech I delivered in this House, that the wool market will continue to be increasingly satisfactory. It is satisfactory and it will become more satisfactory as time goes on. When we consider that 1,472 tons of wool came from one little corner of Queensland, and that the market price is from 49d. to 27d. per lb., it will give you some idea of the value of the wool.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Is that scoured wool?

Mr. BULCOCK: It is clean scoured. Divide it by 2 and you will get the scoured wool. I am surprised at an hon. member professing to be a judge of wool making an irrelevant interjection like that. That brings me to another consideration, and it is a very essential one. I would point out that certain pastoral holdings in the Central Western and other parts of Queensland are falling due in the near future. They are of the type of holding which has produced the big quantities of wool which I have enumerated. The individuals controlling those big pastoral properties are not lightly going to relinquish such a very valuable income, more especially when you consider that their product is going to be more and not less valuable in the future. Within the next year or so huge areas of the best open downs country in Central Queensland are falling due.

Mr. PAYNE: Unparalleled country.

Mr. BULCOCK: Country unparalleled in Australia, as my worthy friend the hon. member for Mitchell interjects, for the purpose for which it is intended. It is free from pest, free from pear, running sheep without the intervention of any disease, a magnificent heritage for Queensland. Is it human nature that the people who are controlling this land should lightly relinquish it?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Why do you not relinquish these benches?

Mr. BULCOCK: If we relinquished these benches, the big pastoral companies, who are striving might and main to gain extensions of their leases, would assert their influence and demand that members now over there should grant those extensions, as was done in 1920. So soon as they got access to these benches, so soon would the policy which we have advocated of closer settlement in Central Queensland be destroyed.

Mr. MORGAN: The Denham Government cut up more leaseholds than your Government.

Mr. BULCOCK: The Denham Government extended leases, and do not forget that approaches have been made to members of Parliament to sound them as to their attitude upon the splitting up of pastoral properties. I am convinced that this Government must, in the interests of Queensland, cut up the big areas and put selectors on the land.

Mr. MORGAN: We are all of the same opinion.

Mr. BULCOCK: It is interesting to hear the hon. member make that interjection, in view of the fact that the head man of the Country party, Mr. Edkins—

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No.

Mr. BULCOCK: It is all very well for them to repudiate him.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You do not know what you are talking about.

Mr. BULCOCK: I know a great deal more of what I am talking about than the hon.

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member. The hon. member comes to Queensland, establishes himself here, and professes to tell this House what the true needs of Queensland are, speaking from the experience, not of a lifetime—as do most men in this House—but from an experience extending, after all, over only a few years.

Mr. MORGAN: He has more experience than you have.

Mr. BULCOCK: I am Australian-born.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE interjected.

Mr. BULCOCK: I think Queensland would be a better place for the absence of the hon. member.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BULCOCK: However, let me proceed. Hon. members opposite interjected that the closer settlement policy would be pursued if they had occupation of these benches. I would draw attention to the fact that Mr. Edkins, the unofficial leader of the Country party, would be opposed to any such proposal, because he stands, not for the small interests, but for the big pastoral interests in Queensland.

Mr. MORGAN: Did you read what Joseph Silver Collings said?

Mr. BULCOCK: Never mind what he said; I am responsible for what I say.

Mr. MORGAN: And so are we for what we say.

Mr. BULCOCK: You speak as a party.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: So do you.

Mr. BULCOCK: You all recognise that you must speak as a party.

Mr. MORGAN: So must you.

Mr. BULCOCK: At any rate, Mr. Edkins does speak for the party, because we all know how bankrupt of ideas they are without him.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: At any rate, your people could not buy him.

Mr. BULCOCK: We did not want to. We have had a good deal of criticism since we assembled this session of statements made by the Secretary for Mines during the Paddington by-election campaign. Hon. members opposite have said that statements were made by those engaged in the campaign for Labour that were not in accordance with fact, but were calculated to mislead the workers.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Is that not true?

Mr. BULCOCK: It is not true.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You don't understand.

Mr. BULCOCK: If my intellect were as low as the intellect of the patronising member opposite, I would admit that I did not understand it. When the Nationalist candidate opened his campaign during the recent Paddington by-election, he made certain statements, and I have before me a cutting from the "Courier," their own official organ, headed "National Policy; Helping Workers; Mr. Fisher Opens His Campaign," and containing the following statement:—

"Our opponents have said that we wish to reduce wages and abolish the Arbitration Court. That is a deliberate untruth made by the Government to mislead the electors. The National party stands for the preservation of the workers' present standard of living.

"This definite announcement of the attitude of the National party towards

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the wages question was received with approval by a gathering of electors in the Petrie terrace State school last night."

There is a definite expression of opinion from the Nationalists. They say through their mouthpiece, Mr. Fisher, that they do not contemplate any reduction of wages, yet only recently we had the interesting spectacle of the hon. member for Townsville moving a motion for a 10 per cent. reduction and securing the support of the Nationalist party.

Mr. GREEN: A 10 per cent. reduction of what?

Mr. BULCOCK: A 10 per cent. reduction of wages.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You know that is wrong. Correct it!

Mr. BULCOCK: Hon. members opposite belong not to an organisation of State extent, but to an organisation which extends over the whole of the Commonwealth; and it will be interesting to see what is being done in New South Wales to ascertain how far the Nationalist party policy, as outlined by Mr. Fisher when he was running against the Secretary for Mines in Paddington, has been justified or otherwise by results. Mr. Fisher said that it was a deliberate misstatement that the Nationalist party stood for a reduction of wages, or that the Nationalist party sought to interfere with the standard of living of the workers. Yet the same party in New South Wales are withdrawing the civil servants from the ambit of the Arbitration Court. The same party in New South Wales say, in effect, that the civil servants shall not have access to the Arbitration Court, but that the Cabinet shall adjudicate upon their salaries or wages.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: And they are reducing them.

Mr. BULCOCK: Of course they are reducing them; and I would be very sorry if the public servants of Queensland were left to the tender mercies of gentlemen sitting on the Nationalist benches in this House.

Mr. MORGAN: They were a lot better satisfied under that system than they are to-day.

Mr. BULCOCK: I will show as I go along whether they are better satisfied now or not. There is in New South Wales a big movement for the reduction of wages, and wages have been very substantially reduced. Have we reduced them in the same proportion as in New South Wales? Of course, we have not.

The hon. member knows that we [5.30 p.m.] have not. What is the good of trying to bolster up an argument by a false suggestion? Let me go a little further. Wages are being reduced very substantially in New South Wales. There is a serious proposition which is going to be put into effect in the near future, and the wages of the Police Force are to be increased by 1s. a day so long as the present discontent continues. Surely the Government of New South Wales must be afraid of the workers when they are going to increase the wages of the Police Force, in order that they may have a force, if necessary, for the violent subjection of the workers in the event of their resisting the reduction in wages which is taking place.

Mr. MORGAN: You suggest that the policemen in New South Wales are being bought?



Mr. BULCOCK: I do not suggest anything of the sort. I say they are being given 1s. a day more.

Mr. MORGAN: For what purpose?

Mr. BULCOCK: I leave that to the intelligence of the hon. member. Mr. Fisher said also that he stood for the preservation of the workers' present standard of living. Hon. members on the other side time and again have assured us that the hours which are being worked are too short. The hon. member for Oxley has had the courage to come into this House and say, "I stand for the extension of the average number of hours being worked by the workers."

Mr. MORGAN: To forty-eight hours—a good period, too.

Mr. BULCOCK: The hon. member belonged to the Nationalist party when he made that statement, yet Mr. Fisher, an aspiring colleague of his, was telling the people outside that the Nationalist party stood for the preservation of the workers' present standard of livelihood. Wages and hours are the two chief factors in determining the standard. It is obvious that, since the Nationalist party stand for an extension of hours, they must be attempting to undermine the present standard of living.

I would like to back up the statements I have made in regard to the manner in which the Nationalist party attempted wilfully to mislead the electors, so far as their attitude on industrial questions is concerned. We have sitting in Brisbane at the present time the Employers' Federation. From yesterday morning's Press it appears that they passed a resolution having for its object the restriction of the functions of the Arbitration Court and the limitation of the application of the Industrial Arbitration Act. While hon. members opposite do not go so far as Sir Henry Barwell—probably because they have not that gentleman's candour—of course they call it want of diplomacy—to come forward and say, "We stand for the wiping out of the Arbitration Court," it is quite obvious, in view of that motion which comes from their political bosses, that they want so to restrict and hamper the operations of the court as to make it a less effective weapon for the workers than it is to-day. Let us go further. When the Employers' Federation were discussing the wage basis, they moved a resolution which contained a protest against—

"the fallacious foundation upon which the present basic wage system of the Commonwealth and State arbitration awards is founded, as is evidenced by the widespread unemployment caused through the undue burden placed upon industry under it, and strongly urges upon these Governments the desirableness of amending the provisions of the various Arbitration Acts so as to place the foundation on a more equitable basis."

It reads nicely from their point of view; but let us analyse it. They say that the incidence of the basic wage is wrong, and that it wants remodelling. Never mind considering the principle under which the determination is arrived at; the main thing—perhaps the only thing—that matters, so far as the worker is concerned, is the amount of wage that he gets. Hon. members opposite, through their Employers' Federation, have said that the system on which that wage is determined is wrong. They have complained frequently

and bitterly, inside and outside this House, that the wages which are being paid to-day are staggering industry; and they suggest that the alternative is to reduce wages.

Mr. MORGAN: Don't the figures show that?

Mr. BULCOCK: The hon. member admits, by his interjection, that he is in the same category as those who stand for a reduction of wages. Those people say, "Let us remodel the basic wage." If it is to be remodelled, it will be remodelled according to their way of thinking, in the interests of the employing classes—which means, in effect, although they do not state it in so many words, that they desire to lower to a greater extent than is being done to-day the wages which are being paid. Sir Henry Barwell, in this connection, said that Courts of Industrial Arbitration, State and Federal, were hindrances to necessary economic adjustments, and should be abolished.

At 5.40 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. MORGAN: Your own party are against the Arbitration Court.

Mr. BULCOCK: The hon. member would be a happy man if he thought that this party were going to wipe out the Arbitration Court and give him, and other members of his party, freedom of exploitation.

Mr. MORGAN: The hon. member for Mount Morgan believes in its being wiped out; he said so.

Mr. BULCOCK: Let us deal with another phase of this economic problem. I am going to remove the ambit of discussion to Sydney. On 27th February of this year, a round-table conference, consisting of employers on the one hand and employees on the other hand, met in Sydney to discuss certain phases of industrial activity. Mr. Hughes stated that the cost of production had to be reduced, and therefore he was calling a conference to see if a basis could not be agreed upon. Certain unions took up the attitude that Mr. Hughes's statement was an ultimatum to the workers of Australia that wages had to be reduced. Some unions—rightly so, I think—refused to participate in the conference, which ultimately was presided over by Mr. Hughes. The Victorian, Queensland, and South Australian unions were not represented. Mr. Hughes said, not on one but on several occasions, that all parties must throw all their cards on the table—there was to be no ace up the sleeve, or anything of that kind. Certain organisations went along, believing that that was a fair and equitable basis for negotiation. Western Australia instructed its delegates to do certain things. The two most important for the purpose of my argument were that the delegates were to demand, during the sitting of this conference, a list of enterprises recapitalised on a watered basis since 1914, and, secondly, a table showing the nominal capital on which dividends are payable compared with the actual capital subscription. The employers refused to place their cards on the table, inasmuch as they refused to give the information that the unions sought. Of course, I recognise that the Employers' Federation would not allow their delegates to put all their cards on the table. What an appalling story of exploitation would have been unfolded to the people of Australia if it could have been shown, in terms of the second resolution I have quoted, how much nominal capital has been put into concerns, and how much watered capital or

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watered stock is represented in the various concerns of Australia to-day. The workers are not being exploited on a monetary basis alone; they are being exploited on the basis of the watering of stock, which is being carried on impudently and consistently. The workers protest against such a system, which exercises nothing but a pernicious influence over themselves and their families and over the social wellbeing of the community. Actuated by a high social ideal, the workers' representatives asked that the employers should be forced to disclose the little tricks and practices which they employ in order to bolster up the dividends that they are getting and make them high, although they do not appear to be high.

Mr. MAXWELL: What did Mr. Piddington say about the basic wage?

Mr. BULLOCK: Mr. Piddington said that the basic wage should be a great deal higher than the hon. gentleman would be prepared to pay. The employers at this conference stated that, owing to the high cost of production, a crisis was at hand, and Labour, in an honest endeavour to gain information on the question, said, "Give us some information. Show us some factors that are leading up to this crisis. Prove to us that a crisis is at hand, so that we may be able to negotiate with a full knowledge of all the facts in your possession." They said in effect, "We have met as equals, and as equals let us discuss this question." That was a most fair and logical attitude to take up. After a good deal of argument, both sides were asked by the chairman to submit concrete arguments and facts. The employers submitted the following:—

"No reduction of hours below forty-eight per week;

"Piecework where possible;

"Profit-sharing where feasible;

"Conference to abolish present courts and create a court of State and Federal judges."

You will see that things were to be "where possible," "where probable," "when it can be done." There was no straightforward admission that they were prepared to formulate a definite scheme. The proposition meant that, in its final analysis, it was left to the judgment of the individual as to whether he should allow a scheme to be introduced or not. There was nothing definite, nothing concrete, and nothing tangible. Labour rejected those proposals, and rightly so, too, as reactionary and nebulous. The hon. member for Murilla said that the workers were dissatisfied with arbitration. The workers at this conference said that, although they were dissatisfied to some extent with the present system of arbitration, they were not going to abolish it until some better method had been devised, and they did not consider that the employers' proposals embodied a better method of settling industrial disputes. That disposed of the employers' proposals, and the employees submitted theirs, which were that there was to be no reduction in wages or lengthening of hours; unemployment insurance as a charge on industry; and an effective share by workers in the control of industry. That was a practical solution standing out in bold contrast to the proposition put forward by the Employers' Federation. The employers pooh-poohed the idea, and said, "We refuse to discuss matters on that basis." I think

the "Round Table" sums up the position more cleverly than any other paper, when, reviewing the activities of this round-table conference, in its issue of June, 1922, it stated—

"The employers made a distinct error in tactics which under different leaders might have been avoided. They did not exhaust the possibilities of the situation. The workers had discussed the practical proposals of the employers; but the employers acted as if the workers had put forward no immediately practical proposals. Quite possibly discussion might have resulted in no agreement; but to refrain from it on the ground that the workers were Bolshevik merely gave an opportunity to the workers for effective propaganda."

The "Round Table" is a non-political paper of considerable standing, and that paper admitted that there were possibilities in Labour's proposals. It is apparent that, although the employing class recognised the validity and the justice of the claim put forward by the workers' representatives, and knowing that they had everything to lose, or that they certainly would not gain anything along the lines laid down by the workers, they adopted a sulky boy's attitude and refused to discuss the question. It requires no further elaboration save to say that Labour has proved itself capable in every aspect of activity of putting forward practical solutions of our present difficulties, in striking contrast to the nebulous proposals brought forward from time to time by the Employers' Federation and their agents. We have had a good deal of discussion about wages. I have been subjected to a continual running fire of interjections from hon. members opposite earlier simply because I made some reference to wages that did not meet with the approval of those hon. gentlemen. I have before me what I think one might honestly claim to be a human document. It speaks for itself, and shows up the effect of Labour policy in striking contrast to that practised by anti-Labour forces, who ruled the destinies of Queensland until Labour took control. I have before me a copy of the record of a railway employee in the Central-Western section of this State. This individual was born in 1860, entered the employ of the Railway Department as a labourer on the lengths in 1887, and severed his connection with the department owing to ill-health in 1922. Embraced within those figures, as one will see, is the history of an individual—a worker in this community—whom this Government is pledged to protect, and the very striking lessons that may be drawn from this record are such as to make me feel that it should appear in "Hansard." This individual entered the employ of the Railway Department on the 28th November, 1887, as a labourer in gang No. 61. I am giving these details because the man has resigned from the department and is beyond any harm so far as the activities of hon. members opposite are concerned. That individual entered the Railway Department on that date at a wage of 7s. 6d. a day, and worked for that wage until 1891, when he received 7s. a day. The lesson there is that in times of industrial difficulty and trouble he was given the "axe," and he was axed to the extent of 6d. per day. The year 1891 was a period of industrial trouble. In the year 1892 his wages were increased to 9s.

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per day, and in the 1893, when there was some more industrial trouble threatening, he was again given the "axe," and reduced to 8s. a day, and he worked at that rate until 1898. Notwithstanding all the vicissitudes of that long period, he received no recognition in the way of increased pay from the Government then in power, and in the year 1898 he got a rise to 8s. 6d. per day, which was increased to 9s. 6d. in 1899, and from 1899 to 1911 he received no increase at all. In 1911 he received a rise of 3d. a day. In 1915 he was working in gang 35 for 9s. 9d. a day, and on the 1st July, 1915, he was getting 10s. 6d. a day. He received a little increase in wages, which was not in comparison with the soaring cost of living during the period which intervened between 1914 and 1915.

In 1917, when, in spite of hon. members opposite or their prototypes outside this House, he was able to go to the Arbitration Court and get a just deal, an award was issued increasing his remuneration to 12s. 8d. per day. In 1918 another award was made, and he received 13s. 4d. per day. In 1919 he received 15s. 6d. a day; in 1920 he received 16s. 6d., and later in the same year, because the cost of living was still soaring, we again recognised his claim and he got 17s. 2d. per day, and on 1st March, 1921, under the basic wage this ganger received 17s. 6d. a day. In reviewing this position you see the different policies followed by the different Administrations. You can divide the rates paid for the life-blood of the worker into two distinct parts. He was doing the same-type of work all the time. In addition to those increases, we gave him accommodation when hon. members opposite refused it, and he was forced to work longer hours than under our administration; and, last but not least, this man has now resigned. His offences during the whole time he was in the Railway Department have been nil, according to the official record I am quoting.

Mr. KERR: Do you not know that 16s. a day was worth 23s. 7d. in 1902, having regard to the difference in the cost of living between then and now. That is a difference of 12s. 7d., and that man had not received increases to that amount.

Mr. BULCOCK: Consult "Knibbs" on the question.

Mr. KERR: I have consulted "Knibbs," and I know I am right.

Mr. BULCOCK: There has been a good deal of talk in this House of late about members on this side being dominated by outside influences. There is no body outside dominating this party; but hon. members opposite have only to look in the papers to see what happened the other day when Mr. Edkins wired to the Federal Country party that they were to support the Nationalist Federal Government. Hon. members opposite have been declaring all the time that they are in no way associated with the Nationalists. They have made that a prayer to the high heavens that the people will believe it. They have stated again and again that they are a separate political entity, and yet we find the chief executive officer of the organisation controlling the Nationalists wiring to the leader of the Country party in the Federal Parliament to allow the National party to get on or there would be trouble. Only the other day their chief executive officer informed the leader of the Opposition

that, if he did not do a certain thing and do it quick, something would happen.

Mr. VOWLES: Did I surrender?

Mr. BULCOCK: He surrendered, all right, or his sinews of war—his financial assistance—would have been cut off, and I believe he made a laudable attempt to obey the demands of that gentleman.

One of the chief sins of which the Government are accused is repudiation. We have heard a good deal about repudiation. Hon. members opposite have said, "Look at the Mother of Parliaments—the Parliament that has set all the precedents under which this State is governed. Look at the Mother of Parliaments and you will not find any examples of repudiation." The history of the House of Commons is a history of the repudiation of existing legislation by its repeal, and in essence that is all that we did.

Mr. MORGAN: Legislation—not contracts.

Mr. BULCOCK: I will show you where one of the greatest moral contracts that was ever entered into was repudiated by the Secretary of State for the Colonies and others quite recently. After the war, when labour conditions were under discussion, one of the principles laid down was that there was to be no exploitation of native labour, yet we find quite recently an Order was issued by the British Administration, through their responsible Executive, that compulsory labour was to be enforced in the Crown colony of Kenya in East Africa—that the natives were to be compelled to give a certain number of hours per week or per annum to the services of the State. There was a repudiation of a contract that involved the life and the well-being of lowly workers who cannot speak for themselves, and who have no representatives in the Parliaments of the world.

Mr. MORGAN: Do you know all the circumstances attaching to it?

Mr. BULCOCK: Yes; I have been reading the matter very closely. The covenant was that there was to be no compulsion of labour. Then, again, Mr. Lloyd George, an individual who has been loudly acclaimed time and time again by hon. members opposite, has repudiated a contract made with the British farmers. First of all he repudiated the Agricultural Act. The farmers were promised certain conditions if they put in certain crops; and, believing those conditions would be fulfilled, they put in their crops; but, before their crops were harvested, Lloyd George repudiated the contract. We find no protest from hon. members opposite, because once again labour was involved. In South Africa General Smuts repudiated the labour covenant that was arrived at by the League of Nations with regard to a forty-eight-hour week. He swept that aside and introduced a ten-hour day. Do we find hon. members opposite crying "Repudiation" on that score? No, because once again it was only the rights of the workers that were infringed. We passed an Act that is in essence just and equitable; but, because it attacked vested interests, and because it attacked the dividends of the wealthy sections, not only were we held up to execration in our own State, not only were we held up to execration in our own continent, but we were held up to execration in every part of the world, and the Premier, who is recognised to be one of the most able Premiers in the world, was refused financial accommodation in London.

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Why? Because his action attacked the capitalistic class, while these other individuals whom I have named attacked the lowly worker who does not control the Press. That is the secret of the attacks that have been launched against this party.

The hon. member for Merthyr last night stated that fifteen years ago the United States of America repealed the agricultural policy that this Government have initiated this session. That hon. member is liable to say anything if it suits him; and in this connection it is significant that during the present session in the United States Congress the anti-trust laws are being repealed, and it is intended to vest, in the Secretary for Agriculture, or the corresponding individual, the right to veto the activities of the agricultural organisations which have been formed on non-partisan lines similar in application to the institutions that have been launched in Queensland.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*): I am sorry to have to speak to-night, because I feel that we would be quite justified in refusing to pass the Estimates in view of [7 p.m.] the facts which have come to our knowledge during the last few days. I regret to say that personally I have no faith in the Premier of this State after what has happened during the last few days.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. PEASE: Yet your party wanted to make him their leader.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: As part of this money must go to pay the Premier's salary, I would be quite justified in moving a reduction by that amount when we come to the proper place for it. However, we cannot do that now. I never like to speak behind any person's back, and there are things which I am going to say which I would prefer to say in the presence of the Premier, but it is not my fault if he is not here.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: It is only a minute past 7 o'clock.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I and other hon. members have to be here, and the Premier has as much right to be here as we have. The position which has arisen during the last few days is only the climax of eighteen months' work. For the last eighteen months the friends of the Premier have been coquetting with the Country party to see what they were prepared to do.

Mr. PAYNE: Wrong.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I say that twelve months ago last Christmas there were four or five members of the Legislative Council who, to my knowledge, were soliciting members of the Country party to join a mixed party.

Mr. COSTELLO: It would have been a mixed party.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: There were members of the Council who wanted to know if there was not someone in our party who would resign and let the Premier have an easy seat if he had to go to the electors. (Government dissent.) I am talking about something that I know. I was sounded on that matter by no less than three or four members of the Legislative Council, and these men were working very hard. I do not blame these men, because I was one of those who at that time had faith in the Premier. I

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believed that he was associated with the highest ideals, and that he recognised his responsibility as a statesman. I believed that these things had made him change his opinion, that he had become a better man, and that he was becoming penitent and sorry for his actions, and that he was willing to turn over a new leaf. I was one of those who were willing—although some of our party were not prepared to go as far as I did—in fact, some of our party said that if the Premier joined the party they would walk out of it—but I was one who said that, if the Premier came in as any other member came in—just as the hon. member for Oxley came in, as the hon. member for Port Curtis came, and as the hon. member for Normanby came—I always said that, if a member came into our party clean and honourable, it would be all right. The hon. member for Normanby came into our party and said that he was sorry for his past actions, but he was going to leave the past and all his associates behind him. He said that he had tried to lead members opposite straight, but they would not go straight. That was how the hon. member for Normanby entered our ranks.

Mr. PEASE: Did you believe all he said?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: When the hon. member for Oxley and the hon. member for Port Curtis joined the Country party, they took their chance of any office there might be at a secret ballot of our party, which every man has got to face before he gets into office. No man would be admitted to our party under any other conditions than those that are clean and honourable.

Mr. PEASE: You don't expect us to believe that?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I am one who stands for clean politics. I believed that the Premier was repentant for his actions. I believed this as far back as the last meeting of the Council of Agriculture. At that meeting, one member said to the other, "You are very quiet." The second man said, "Yes, I have no faith in Theodore. I do not trust him." Another man said, "He is all right. If the extremists don't go his way, he is going to leave them. I have been with him for the last ten days."

Mr. PAYNE: Who said that?

Mr. HARTLEY (to Mr. Bebbington): That is someone who lives only in your diseased imagination.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: He lives in my electorate.

Mr. PEASE: You have not got an electorate. (Laughter.)

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Ask the Premier what farmers were down here consulting with him with the editor of "The Producers' Review" for eight or ten days before the Council of Agriculture was called together.

Mr. HARTLEY: They are creatures of your own imagination.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I can give the Premier the names, if he wishes me to do so.

Mr. HARTLEY: You are not game to give the names.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If I were to give the names of these men, they would not be elected to the positions that they occupy in the butter factories to-day. (Government dissent.) I am not going to mention their names,

because they have been tools of yours. This thing has been going on for the last eighteen months. There are thousands of citizens who have been driven to desperation by the extreme taxation put on them. They know the insecurity attached to this State, and they were prepared to do anything, almost, to get this Government out of power. While I do not believe in bribery or anything of that sort, and while I would not attempt to bribe a member to come over here, still, at the same time, when these men were driven to desperation through the extreme taxation and the fear of communism, we cannot blame them if they sometimes do things that they ought not to do. They were driven to it. They were led on by the Premier's friends and by the Premier's actions.

Mr. PEASE: You admit they really did it?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The Premier's friends rang up these men and asked them to go to a confidential meeting in his room. Messages were conveyed to men hundreds of miles from Brisbane for the purpose of leading them to believe that the Premier wanted them to consult with him. I do not know whether the Premier had anything to do with it or not, but these are things we have to look at. I say that the Premier's friends were willing and anxious, because they believed in him, as I did myself, to keep him with the party who were going to be in power; and they believed that the Country party were coming into power; so his friends wanted to get him over on this side so that he would remain to use his influence with the party that was going to be returned. They had no hope that the party opposite would remain in power. The country has lost hope in the hon. members opposite; it has lost faith in them. Their best friends have no hope of their continuing to occupy positions on the front Treasury benches. So they wanted a man like the Premier to come out from among them and get into decent company—(Government laughter)—to join a party in which they had faith, and who they believed were going to rule, and rule for all parties.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER interjected.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I believe that the Chairman would come with him. I do not think he has any more chance of coming back under the present circumstances than the hon. member who interjects. (Interruption.) The Premier's actions during the last few days have lost him every friend he had outside of communism.

Mr. BULLOCK: That is not so.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Communism rules to-day. The "Standard" comes out with great long headings—"Theodore True to Labour."

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: "Theodore True to Communism!" The Premier goes back to communism like a sow to wallow in the mire!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I call upon the hon. member for Drayton to withdraw that remark. He is not justified in comparing the Premier with a sow. (Laughter.)

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I withdraw and apologise, certainly; but I did not compare the Premier with a sow.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the hon. member proceed with his speech?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I compared the actions of the party and the people who sit with it in the communistic camp. (Interruption.) If hon. members disagree with what I have said, let us see what the Premier turns to, and see if we believe in him. We have the example of the South African revolt led by the communistic Council of Action. Can he deny that?

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Terrible!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If he denies it, let me read what is happening in New South Wales to-day—

"Sydney, 18th August.

"The New South Wales Labour Council has decided to fall into line behind the Council of Action, which will be called upon by the Labour Council to formulate a policy of action for the whole Commonwealth.

"The Labour Council has further decided to call upon all unions to withdraw affiliation from the Australian Labour Party, and then affiliate with the Labour Council, which, as a body, would affiliate with the Australian Labour Party."

The Labour Council—of which members opposite are a portion, and which they have to sign an agreement to assist. Now that the revolution has failed and men are getting punished for shooting down police who are employed to defend their country, we see the New South Wales Labour party, and the Australian Labour party, of which members opposite form a part, pretending to interfere with the responsible government of South Africa. Supposing we appealed to the people of Britain for protection against the tyranny of hon. members opposite, what would they think of it? Yet here the Australian Labour party are appealing to Britain to interfere in the responsible government of South Africa, because of the punishment of men for murder and revolution. That shows where their sympathy lies. There is a Council of Action in the Labour party in Australia, just as there was in South Africa. Let me show how they are connected with the Soviet in Russia. I will give a communication which has come to the Australian Labour party in Sydney, and is published to-day—

"COME AND JOIN US.

"SOVIET APPEAL TO AUSTRALIA.

"A communication was received yesterday at the Sydney Trades Hall from the executive of the Red Labour Union Internationale, whose headquarters are at Moscow. The letter states—

We are sending to the Melbourne All-Australian Trades Union June Conference our heartfelt greetings from far Moscow. We urge you to come out in joint action in an attack against the stronghold of capitalism. We ask you to send your congress delegates to the second coming of the Revolutionary Union, to take place in Moscow on the 20th November next, in order to deal jointly with the present tasks of the Labour movement in the whole world."

Here is where hon. members opposite are connected with it—

"The decision of your National Congress at Melbourne in June, 1921, shows that you have taken the right path. It is necessary for you to collaborate with revolutionary Labour organisations in other parts of the world."

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That is the kind of thing the Premier has returned to. We had reason to believe that he was modifying his opinion when he promised to assist the primary producers in preference to the socialists.

Mr. COLLINS: Did not Lloyd George associate with the Russian delegates at Genoa?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I am not talking about Lloyd George. There is another thing which the communists have done during the last two or three days—

“The workers in Messrs. Cleeves’ condensed milk factories in the West and Midlands have taken action to prevent closing down by the employers (writes the Dublin correspondent of the ‘London Herald’).”

“Reports to hand show that factories were taken over, and are working, in Clonmel, Kilmallock, Mallow, Knocklong, Carrick-on-Suir, Tipperary, and Bansha.

“In most cases the secretary of the local branch of the Irish Transport Union has been appointed manager. In Clonmel the red flag was hoisted over the premises.”

Fancy taking possession of industries and putting in the secretary of the union as manager! What on earth is going to happen to these works? How are they going to pay their men, or do anything at all? It means plain destruction. I regret that the Premier has abandoned all hope of assisting the producer and has gone back to his communistic friends. There might have been faults on both sides—I do not say that there were not. When the Premier had this confidential chat in his office he led his interviewer on step by step. This man was rung up and told that the Premier wanted to see him. He could not refuse to see the Premier. If the Premier rang me up I would certainly go and see him at any time.

Mr. PEASE: You would be very highly honoured.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Not now.

Mr. PEASE: The Premier said that he did not ring the man up, and hon. members on this side of the House are quite prepared to believe the Premier against the hon. gentleman.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It is one man’s word against another, and we have as much right to believe the one as the other. According to the Bible, King David wrote: “I said in my haste, All men are liars,” but he afterwards modified that by saying: “All men, excluding myself, are liars.” (Laughter.) The attitude adopted with regard to this matter is apparently on the same lines. The attitude now taken up by the Premier is that all men are liars except himself. We have the right to believe one man’s word equally with another’s. If I were invited to go into a man’s office to have a confidential talk, and somebody was hidden there taking down the conversation in shorthand, or in any other way, or if I was invited to the Premier’s office, and leading questions touching on the affairs of the day were put to me, and I was led on during such a confidential conversation to make a statement to rehabilitate the Premier with the Labour party, or make excuses for him, and I found that somebody had been behind a curtain or hidden in a box taking notes, I would feel myself justified in knocking him down or shooting him.

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(Laughter.) There are circumstances under which a jury would acquit a man for shooting another. I say that no man should stoop to the act of having someone hidden to report any confidential conversation, and then make that report known to the world. If he does so, he deserves the greatest condemnation that can be given him. I am very sorry that the Premier is not here to-night. It is his business to be here. I purposely waited until now so that he would be here. Henceforth, neither myself nor any man who has had any confidence in the Premier will place any confidence in him. Never again! It is absolutely impossible for him to show that he has any sympathy at all with the primary producers, or that he has any sympathy with anybody. He has forfeited that sympathy, and has returned to his communistic friends and his communistic policy. There I leave him. Let him go with them, and we shall have a revolution similar to the revolution experienced in South Africa. Let him go with the men who have asked the British Government to interfere with responsible government in South Africa! Let him go with those men who have trampled the British flag and every decent thing in the mud! Wherever he may go, there is certainly no room for him on this side of the House so long as we are here. (Government laughter.) He will be on this side when we are on the opposite side. (Renewed laughter.)

Mr. PEASE: He will always be on this side.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: He may be, but, if the electors hold the same opinion of him that I do, like a lot of hon. members opposite he will be left out in the cold.

Mr. PEASE: Opposition members have been denying these things, and now this man gets up and admits it. (Interruption.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. PEASE: He has put you all away. It is the best evidence we have ever heard.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I want to show what all their sympathy for the man on the land amounts to. I want to show the difference between what they took from him and what the previous Government took from him.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: They never had anything under the previous Government.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: In 1914-15 the income tax collected amounted to £517,273, and in 1921-22 it amounted to £2,194,361, an increase of £1,677,088. That accounts for a great deal of the unemployment in 1921-22. In 1914, although only a small amount was demanded in income tax, about £5,000 was spent in relief; but in 1921-22, when over £2,000,000 was collected in income tax, we find the Government spent £177,000 in relief, and men and families walking about in their hundreds are dependent on the Government dole instead of being dependent on work. There is the difference. Had that extra £1,500,000 been left in industry, those men would have been employed and there would have been no unemployment to-day. Now, take stamp duty. In 1914-15 the stamp duty amounted to £321,404, and in 1921-22 it was £604,739; an increase of £283,335. It may be said that we are not so much interested in the stamp duty. Are we not?

Mr. WEIR: What are they stamping?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If you buy something in the store they stamp it and put it

on to your goods. If the farmer, after a life struggle, leaves a little property when he dies, that has to be stamped. There is your stamp duty. (Government laughter.) They take in stamp duty money which the farmer's sons should have for their labour. Even a man's wages have to be stamped every month.

Mr. BRENNAN: No.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Don't you think I know?

Mr. BRENNAN: I am certain you don't.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It is quite evident that the hon. member never produced anything in his life except bad manners, and those are not taxed. (Laughter.) They need not stamp those. He has never produced anything by his labour that would pay stamp duty. Now, take the land tax. The land tax alone is £480,000 more than it was in 1914-15. In 1914-15 there was no land tax at all, and in 1921-22 there were over £480,000 collected in land tax. The hon. member for Bowen said that it is one of the most just taxes possible. I was speaking to a business man in Brisbane a short time ago, and I said, "You have to pay a land tax of about £8,000 on the [7.30 p.m.] premises you are occupying."

He said, "Yes." I asked him who paid it. "Of course," he said, "We have to draw it from the bank and pay it to the Commissioner of Taxes; but there is only one way to pay it, and that is to put it on the price of your goods." The hon. member for Bowen said that that is a just tax! It is a tax put upon every worker! Every worker's wife who buys some drapery and clothing for her children has to pay her share of the £488,000 land tax. That is the reason why the worker cannot live to-day. I say that the worker will not be able to live until this taxation is taken off. We should put into office a sensible Government who will do that. When we have taken the burdens off the workers they will be able to do something; but the taxation which is now imposed makes it impossible for them to live. We are taxing the worker up to the hilt, and it takes nearly all he earns to pay the taxation. Then we come to the question of selectors' rents. Hon. members opposite say that the Repudiation Act was just.

Mr. COLLINS: So it was.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Is there anyone in this House—either a member or a visitor who is listening to the debate—who agrees with that? Let me mention one case that happened.

Mr. PEASE: You are talking to the gallery.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I am talking to anyone who cares to listen. In 1914 a gentleman who was a member of this House bought a piece of country 100 square miles in area. When the time arrived for reappraisalment of the rent, he asked the Lands Department to reassess it, but they neglected to do so for something like four years, until 1918. During that time this gentleman had borrowed £5,000 from the bank. He had also put in some money of his own. He had put two artesian bores on the land, which were working successfully. Then, after water was obtained, the Lands Department reassessed his rent, and raised it by 50 per cent., which they were allowed to do under the Act, and

made it retrospective for four years. He paid the rent, and did not object to it.

Mr. PEASE: The Premier is here now.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I am sorry the Premier was not here before, but it is not my fault. To continue the case I was citing—the 1920 reassessment came round, and this man, who had had his rent raised 50 per cent., had it again raised 300 per cent., and made retrospective for six years. That was enough to ruin any man, and similar assessments did ruin many men. There was one firm here which represented a great many small graziers, which had to borrow £50,000 to pay the retrospective rents of these graziers. It was a most unjust thing. The Premier knows that some of the selectors had their rents raised 700 per cent., and it was made retrospective in some cases for seven years. No one will agree with such an unjust imposition on men who have gone into the country to develop it and make their homes there. We find that in 1914-15 the selectors' rents were £458,733, and in 1921-22 they were £710,723, an increase of £251,990. That does not include the rents on pastoral leases. The Premier shakes his head. I can get the pastoral rents from the official figures. The selectors' rents were, as I have said, £458,733 under the Denham Government, while under this Government last year they were £710,723, or an increase of £251,990. Did anyone ever know of such rack-renting before? The Government passed the Fair Rents Act to reduce house rents in the towns, but they have raised the rents of men who are struggling in the interior of the country by over a quarter of a million pounds.

Mr. PEASE: What is the number of applicants for new selections?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The income tax is partly responsible for the unemployment which exists to-day. Money has been taken from employers in income tax which would otherwise have been spent in employing workers.

Mr. PEASE: The income of 2,000 squatters was £4,500,000.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I will refer to what is called the land settlement scheme. What have the Government done in regard to that? The hon. member for Rosewood asked me the other day what other Governments had done. Other Governments made it possible for men on the land to own their own homes. They allowed them to get 160 acres of land at 2s. 6d. an acre, paying at the rate of 6d. an acre for five years, when it became their own. They also allowed a man to get 640 acres for 6d. an acre, with twenty years to pay it in. Those are the men who have stopped on the land, and they have been able to do that because they got their land on reasonable terms. The present Government take away the right of a man to get his own home. They simply give him a lease, which is merely a right to occupy so long as he fulfils the conditions that the Government may impose upon him—so long as he is willing to pay the rental, which may be raised on reassessment every few years. We find that the Government have raised the selectors' rents in some cases by something like 700 per cent. It is stated in the Act that the future rents shall be based on the value of unimproved land in the district at the time of the reassessment. If

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one hundred men go out into the wilderness and take up land which is only worth 1s. an acre, if these men form a community there and raise the value of the land to £2 10s. an acre, that is the price that the Government will value it at.

Mr. STOPFORD: If a railway is built there, it is the railway that creates the value.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: If men go into the country and in fourteen years the land improves in value to the extent of £3 or £4 per acre, these are figures which the Commissioner will accept as the value of the land, and the men who went out there are taxed for their own industry and for their own labour, although they are supposed to be taxed only on the unimproved value.

Mr. STOPFORD: What about a railway being built there? Does not that improve the value of the land?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The Government are not satisfied with raising the rents 500 per cent. or 600 per cent., but they increase the value of the land and tax the landowners for their own industry, although the Act distinctly says that the value shall be the unimproved value only.

Now we come to the efforts made by the present Government on behalf of the primary producers. They assisted to form the Primary Producers' Associations. The Secretary for Agriculture has said several times that the farmers are unorganised and could not help themselves, and he himself is going to take pity on them and organise them in their own interests. We know that the farmers brought the dairying industry up to a value of £6,000,000 a year. How could they do that if they were unorganised? The dairying industry grew up out of nothing, because at one time we used to import everything from New Zealand.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: When was the dairying industry worth £6,000,000?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Last year.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: And yet you say this Government ruined the dairy farmers!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Never mind about that. They produce £6,000,000 worth of dairy products, and yet the Secretary for Agriculture tells these people that they are unorganised and he is going to organise them.

What was the next effort? The next effort was to get hold of the editor of "The Producers' Review." When I was told about it nearly three years ago, I said to the farmers, "You are going to be sold like a donkey at a fair." I also said, "The whole influence of 'The Producers' Review' is being exerted in the interests of Mr. Theodore. The Labour Government has got 'The Producers' Review.'" I told them that "The Producers' Review" was doing the Government as good service as the "Daily Standard."

Mr. BULCOCK: You seem to be afraid of an honest journal.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The Minister threw dust in their eyes, and tried to make them believe that they were a down-trodden people, and that nobody cared for them and nobody would assist them. Now, what are the facts? The year before the Labour Government came into power the Denham Government advanced

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£1 per acre for all new land put under wheat, and something like 810 farmers took advantage of that offer. Then the Denham Government advanced £14,000 worth of seed wheat.

Mr. HARTLEY: Half of them never paid for it.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The Government paid 4s. 7d. per bushel for the wheat and sold it back to the farmers at a profit of 2d. per bushel. A drought came on then, and there was only half a harvest. But what did the Labour Government do when they came into office? Did they assist the farmers? No. True to the communistic principles, they practically seized the whole crop. But that was not the worst of it. They fixed the price for flour made from this wheat, which the Denham Government had advanced to the wheatgrowers. They fixed the price of flour made from Queensland wheat at £9 10s. per ton, while they fixed the price for wheat grown by black labour and imported into Queensland at £20 10s. per ton.

Mr. BULCOCK: Where do they produce black-grown wheat?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I got those figures from the "Government Gazette." They have been quoted in this Chamber before, and you will find them in "Hansard" and in the "Government Gazette," too, if you like to look in the library.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will not be guilty of tedious repetition.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The late Hon. T. J. Ryan once said, "There are things which are worth repeating over and over and over again." He was the Premier of this State when he said that, and he was a good man. I have a great respect for him, and I am following his example. I will show how the Secretary for Agriculture treated the fruit industry. The hon. gentleman went up to Dalby and said that the show was important, but it was nothing to the importance of the Government scheme. He said that the fruit industry was demoralised. Who demoralised the fruit industry? I will tell you quick. About twelve months ago about ten members of this party went up to Stanthorpe and made inquiries into the fruit industry. We made investigations as to how the industry could be assisted, and the hon. member for Carnarvon arranged with the Country party to deal with the matter, and we decided that, in the interests of the people of the Stanthorpe district, certain legislation was necessary. The Country party arranged to wait on the Premier, and, if the deputation did not take place, it was the Premier's fault and not ours. There were several deputations to Ministers, and it was agreed to include the legislation in the Governor's Speech. A paragraph appeared in the Governor's Speech at the opening of the session last year in which it was stated that the fruit industry should be assisted. What was that legislation to consist of? It was to give the fruitgrowers power to borrow money. Deputations came down from Stanthorpe and asked the Government for money. They wanted to be responsible for erecting cold stores at Stanthorpe to assist the fruit industry. The deputation came down from Stanthorpe when the House was sitting, and it waited here for over a week. And by and by it became evident that the Government were going to shirk their responsibilities. The Secretary for



Agriculture, who had received them cordially, began to give them the cold shoulder, and they became dispirited, so that the hon. member for Carnarvon decided to ask a question in the House. He asked me about it. He said, "You have the Act at your fingers' ends and know what they can do." I said, "It is your business; it is in your electorate," but I explained the provisions of the Act, and the hon. member asked a question as to what the Government intended doing—did they intend carrying out their promise in the Governor's Speech—did they intend passing legislation to enable these people to borrow the money? The answer was that the Minister had no knowledge that any men had entered into financial obligations believing that the Government were going to carry out these works. Seeing that the hon. gentleman made such an answer when a deputation had been down here for a week with him, I say that it was a deliberate lie, and nothing else.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must withdraw that statement.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I will; but I say it was an incorrect answer, all the same. I say that, when the Minister gave that answer to the hon. member, he knew perfectly well it was incorrect, because he had had the deputation here with him for over a week. I met the deputation myself in the street. One of them was a man who had given half his lifetime to the industry—he was nearly seventy years of age—and he was almost crying. He said, "I am afraid to go home." (Laughter.) There were soldiers' families there waiting for those cold stores and preserving works, so that they might pay their creditors and buy food for their children and clothes for their wives and families. Yet hon. members opposite can laugh at things like that. That was not the case with my friend. He was nearly crying. He said, "I am afraid to go home. I have promised them so much. The Minister promised me so much, and that the legislation would be passed." In spite of all that, as you know perfectly well, this House adjourned and went to the Melbourne races, and left those people to stew in their own juice. (Uproar.)

Mr. COLLINS: Not true.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I say you did. They left them to stew in their own juice, and went to the Melbourne races and left those people to starve rather than stay here for a day or two; and, when they came back, the Minister had the infernal cheek to go up to the Stanthorpe Show and tell them that their industry was demoralised. Who demoralised it? He did. Is it not demoralisation to promise the fruitgrowers £2,500 and then go away to the Melbourne races and leave the fruitgrowers' children to starve? What else is it?

Mr. POLLOCK: Get quite cool before you start again. (Laughter.)

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I am all right. I give any man on that side leave to say anything about me to-night if I have not done right. I have been in this House for twelve years, and I defy them to say that I have done anything dishonourable. (Disorder.) I defy members opposite to say that any man in this party touched anything in that way. We stand for clean and honourable politics, and any man who comes here

has to prove himself right, and he has got to keep right.

We come back again to the Primary Producers' Organisation Bill. I say there has never been a measure passed in this Chamber which has thrown as much dust into the producers' eyes as that measure.

Mr. BULCOCK: You voted for it.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I know I did. I told the people what I thought about it, and I said that, if the farmers wanted it, they had a right to have it.

Mr. BULCOCK: Then you are responsible for it.

Mr. PEASE: Did they want it?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: They said they wanted it. Nobody spoke to me about it. (Government interjections.) I want to say that the farmers to-day do not know what that Bill is. A good many farmers believe that they are going to have a vote for the Council of Agriculture. Nothing of the sort! The farmer has a vote in his local association, which sends a delegate to the district council, which sends a delegate to the Council of Agriculture. You have about four degrees. The Council of Agriculture keeps the farmer, the man who finds the money, five degrees away from the Government. At present he can appeal to his own member, and pull him over the coals if he does not get an answer in a week. When the organisation is formed, he will send a note to the local association, the local association will write to the district council, the district council to the Council of Agriculture, and the Council of Agriculture will go to the Minister, and by that time they will have forgotten all about the farmer, and the farmer will find that he has not got what he thought he had—that he has been sold like a dog in a fair. (Interruption.)

Here is another thing that I would like the farmers to know—that is, that the men who are enrolling as members of this Primary Producers' Association will be responsible, when the Government turn them over in about seven or eight months' time, for carrying on the organisation, the cost of which is now £400 or £500 a week, and will very soon amount to £1,000 a week. (Government interjections.) I was one of those who said that we should alter the

[8 p.m.] constitution of the organisation altogether. I tried to provide that, instead of organising all these districts and employing forty or fifty organisers to go about preaching socialism and communism for the Government at the farmers' expense, we should have representatives of our dairy-ying companies, of the Wheat Board, and of our already organised farmers' institutions. If we brought those men together, we would have a Council of Agriculture which would be valuable.

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

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I would like for a few moments to say a few things with regard to certain things that have happened during this week. It is not my intention to refer in any shape or form to a matter which is sub judice; but, so far as the Nationalist party are concerned—

Mr. BULCOCK: Another disclaimer.

Mr. TAYLOR: So far as the Nationalist party and the Nationalist organisations are

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concerned, I desire to say that they had nothing to do with the events that have taken place during the last few days.

Mr. BULCOCK: You said that about the famous delegation, too.

Mr. TAYLOR: All I wish to say is that, if we cannot get over on to the other side of the Chamber without adopting such methods, all I hope is that we shall stop here for the term of our natural lives.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. POLLOCK: How was it that Maxwell knew that someone was going over?

Mr. MAXWELL: I deny that.

Mr. TAYLOR: Every man in this Chamber—it does not matter what his politics are or on which side he sits—should be jealous of the honour of this Chamber; and any man who is not jealous of the honour of this Chamber should not occupy a place in it. If there are men who have done things which they should not have done, my wish is that they be severely punished. That is all I have to say in regard to that matter.

When one comes to consider the position financially which has existed in Queensland for the last few years—when one comes to consider that, when the Treasurer delivered his Financial Statement a few days ago, the best he could tell us was that on 30th June next he anticipated a deficit of £576,000—to say the least, I think it is an appalling statement for the Treasurer to have to make; and it is most regrettable that, in administering the finances during the last few years, the Government have not been able to make a very much better showing than they are doing at the present time. It would not be a matter of very great concern what the public debt amounted to provided we could show assets and reproductive works for the money which had been expended. Looking at our financial position, it is difficult to see where the money has been spent in a reproductive way or in the creation of greater assets. I have said many times that our assets are as valuable to-day as ever they were. One hon. member stated this afternoon that it is well to say certain things over and over again. In criticising the finances of this State, we find that it is necessary to repeat things over and over again so that the people may understand what the position really is. The Treasurer estimates that he will receive in revenue £12,202,000, which is about £70,000 less than the revenue which he estimated he would receive during the last financial year—which estimate was exceeded by £40,000 on total receipts amounting to £12,311,000. When one sees the tremendous expansion of revenue and expenditure, one needs to look round to find where the money has been spent. I will refer to the report of the Auditor-General on State enterprises for the year 1921. We have to repeat these figures time and time again, to show how money is being spent and lost. The Secretary for Mines, speaking a couple of nights ago with regard to the carrying on of the Government's mining activities in North Queensland, asked if it was not a good thing that they had been able, by carrying on operations in mining fields, to employ a tremendous amount of labour and so cause the expenditure of a large sum of money. There is something in the argument; but surely we could have found some direction

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in which that money could have been spent without incurring the colossal losses which have been sustained in mining ventures in North Queensland. Certainly, it has provided a certain amount of employment and has brought freight to our railways in certain areas, but it would have been very much wiser had the Government not ventured on those mining activities, but had searched to see where they could spend the money in developmental reproductive works.

The railway refreshment-rooms made a profit last year of £6,859. The total accumulated profits prior to that were £34,409, making the total at the end of last financial year £41,268. The Babinda Hotel had accumulated profits, to 30th June last year, amounting to £2,505—the result of four years' trading. Here are where the losses come in: On the State fish supply business the accumulated loss at 30th June, 1921, was £25,781. What did the people of Queensland—and particularly the people of Brisbane, for whom this industry was established—get? Dear fish is all they got; there was no cheapening of the cost. That sum of £25,871 could have been spent in a much more profitable way and have brought a very much better return to the State. The loss on the fish industry for the year 1919-20 was £8,458; and for the year 1920-21 it was £9,807. The loan liability to the Treasury was reduced in 1919 by £30,000 from surplus profits made by the State butcheries. By this payment a saving of £1,500 was made in the carrying out of that particular industry. In connection with the cannery—and other State enterprises—there was, unfortunately, a loss of £29,471.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: What did canneries of a similar nature lose that year? They lost £100,000—due to the same trouble as we experienced.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am not quoting other canneries; I am quoting the State cannery.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You must look at the other canneries as a basis for comparison.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am only pointing out what the State has done in connection with that enterprise. I do not want to be misunderstood in connection with the State cannery. I was one who spoke on the Land Settlement Committee for the establishment of a cannery, because I recognised that we had soldiers going on to the land to produce pineapples, which are a very perishable crop, and a crop which will not stand a lot of handling and knocking about; and, unless we were prepared by some means to erect a cannery to can their products, I felt that it was probable those soldiers would make a very great loss in their activities as pineapple growers. The Government have gone right outside of what, to a number of us, was the original intention of the cannery. When it was started the idea was that it was to be a cannery to deal with soldiers' products. That principle has been departed from, and the cannery, unfortunately, has made a very serious loss. I hope it will not be very long before it is re-established; but I am very much afraid, with the way things are at the present time, that it will be a long time before the loss is made good.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: There is no cannery in Queensland in a sounder financial position to-day. I had a deputation the other day from the private canneries.

Mr. TAYLOR: I understand that most canneries have had a bad time, but, if we had not gone outside of the original intention of this cannery, I do not think the loss would have been as much as it is to-day. Another activity that was started with a great flourish of trumpets was the State Produce Agency. That enterprise up to 30th June last showed a loss of £25,705. I defy the Minister in Charge of State Enterprises, or anyone else, to show any produce agency in the whole of Queensland that has made one-tenth of the loss made by the State Produce Agency.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Some of the produce agencies made very profitable sales through the State Produce Agency.

Mr. TAYLOR: Whatever profits they made, they made out of sales to the State Produce Agency. The State Produce Agency was out to buy produce without making any profit out of it.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: That was a very bad deal, and a deal that should never have been made.

Mr. TAYLOR: I admit that; but what sort of management was it that allowed a manager to spend £30,000 or £40,000 of the State's money? What sort of supervision was being exercised that allowed an individual to do that?

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: He had no right to do what he did.

Mr. TAYLOR: The Minister says that he had no right to do it. He was allowed to do it, and the money was found to allow him to do it. The money had to be found by the State to pay for the goods.

Mr. BRENNAN: He got the sack. Who made a profit out of it?

Mr. TAYLOR: The accumulated profits on the State butcher shops and the meat-works up to 30th June, 1921, amounted to £22,449. The loss for the year ended 30th June, 1921, amounted to £13,123. The actual loss on the year's transaction on State stations amounted to no less a sum than £194,147, less £58,271, which, the Auditor-General points out, was accumulated profit and reserve which had been devoted to reducing the tremendous loss made during that year on the State stations. If the Government had not lost their head over State stations and waded in the way they did, buying stations in every possible direction from north to south, they would probably have been able to show a small profit, or, at all events, a very slight loss; but, instead of that, they set out as monopolists in that particular industry, and, as a consequence, they simply lost tens of thousands of pounds to the people of Queensland.

Mr. BRENNAN: What did the people save in the price of meat during the war?

Mr. TAYLOR: The total losses on State enterprises for the year 1921 amounted to £272,523. The profits made on the Railway Refreshment-rooms and the Babinda Hotel amounted to £7,924, leaving a total loss for the year of £264,599. One hon. member this afternoon quoted from a book entitled "Frenzied Finance." When one comes to consider seriously the finances of the State of Queensland, and compare them with what they were seven, eight, or nine years ago, they will come to the conclusion that there

has been either "frenzied finance" or most incompetent handling of the State finances to put them into the position they are in to-day.

Mr. BRENNAN: No. The slump in the cattle market accounts for a good deal of it.

Mr. TAYLOR: I know that the slump in the cattle market accounts for a considerable amount of loss; but the hon. member who is interjecting knows quite well that, if the Government had adopted the prudent method which station owners adopt, instead of trying to maintain the price of cattle above what was really their market value at that particular time, with the result that the whole slump has fallen upon them in one year, probably we would not have had the loss that we have to-day. The Government have not exercised that prudence and foresight which stockowners and cattle-raisers exercise in connection with the assessment of the value of their herds and flocks when taking stock at the end of the year.

Mr. BRENNAN: The State stations have only been in existence for about a couple of years. The Government have only just started.

Mr. TAYLOR: I sincerely hope that the Government have just about finished. If this is only the start, what the Government hope to do in the future I do not know. Heaven only knows what is in store for us in the future.

Mr. BRENNAN: Nonsense.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: The hon. member has no occasion to look after the future.

Mr. BRENNAN: The future will look after itself.

Mr. TAYLOR: During the fifty-four years of self-government in Queensland, prior to the present Government taking office, the total public debt of the State was somewhere about £54,000,000.

Mr. BRENNAN: What was the public debt of the Commonwealth at that time?

Mr. TAYLOR: I am talking about Queensland. The hon. member, who is so persistently interjecting, knows perfectly well, and if he does not know I will tell him, that for four years and two or three months the Commonwealth Government had to maintain the Australian Imperial Forces.

Mr. BRENNAN: For destruction.

Mr. TAYLOR: If it had not been for destruction, the hon. member would not be here to-night. It is only because the men went to fight and the money was found by Australia that he is in this Chamber to-night in the comfortable position which he occupies, and he should realise that. If he would only refrain from throwing across this Chamber his senseless interjections, it would be very much more to his credit, and would add very much to the dignity of the debate.

Mr. BRENNAN: You wanted conscription.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am very thankful there were not many like you conscripted. (Laughter.) During the seven years and three months that the Government have occupied the Treasury benches, they have added to the public debt of Queensland between £35,000,000 and £36,000,000. We need not be afraid of the total debt of Queensland to-day. I am not at all afraid of the debt we owe to-day; but I am afraid

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and I am anxious in regard to the administration of the finances of Queensland; and, when one looks round and asks himself the question: "Can you point in what direction we have added to the assets of the State by this enormous expenditure of over £35,000,000?" it is a difficult matter to put your finger on the spot where benefits have been conferred on the people by that enormous expenditure of money.

The Premier and Mr. Fihelly, some years ago, wrote a pamphlet, and I would like to refer to that pamphlet, because such a change has taken place since it was written in 1915 in the attitude of the Premier and Treasurer.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: The world has moved on.

Mr. TAYLOR: Yes. This pamphlet was being sent out to the people of Queensland as a solemn warning of the maladministration of the finances of Queensland by the Liberal Administration at that time and prior to that date. The people of Queensland were told in this pamphlet that our debt per head of the population was over £80. The debt per head of the population now is £110, so I suppose it is all right. It was all wrong in 1914, but in 1922 it is quite all right to bring the debt up to £110 per head. That is the finance of the present Government.

Mr. RIORDAN: What about that war you were talking about?

Mr. TAYLOR: Then the people were asked this, "Do you know that a man, his wife, and family of four owe £490?" A pretty appalling condition of affairs to tell a man with a wife and family of four that he owed £490! But the latest figures are that a man, his wife, and family of four owe about £670!

Mr. COLLINS: We have got the assets.

Mr. TAYLOR: We have got the assets—I realise that. It was quite a wrong thing for a man, his wife, and four children to owe £490 seven years ago, but it is quite all right in 1922 for a man, his wife, and family of four to owe £670. Then they told us this—

"Do you know that a man who has a family of four pays £18 in interest on loans every year, which means 7s. per week?"

The figures now are that a man, with a wife and family of four, pays each year £27 in interest. The Government have put another £9 during the time they have been carrying on the affairs of this State on to these people they were sympathising with, and who were told that the Administration at that date were inflicting such tremendous burdens on them. Then they asked this question—

"Don't you think the system should be altered?"

They altered it all right; but they have not altered it in the way they wished the people to believe they intended to alter it. The people were told this also—

"That is Liberal finance. What do you think about it? Would you conduct your own private affairs on such a ridiculous basis and have any respect left?"

That is what the pamphlet written by the Premier and his colleague, Mr. Fihelly, said

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in 1915. Then, over the leaf they tell us this—

"Perhaps you now see why finance is supposed to be a very abstruse question. It would not do for the average man and woman to imagine for a moment that they could apprehend its subtleties and unravel its mysteries. They might find there were no mysteries at all. For instance, in one loan connected with a certain Australian State not a thousand miles from Queensland, an item appeared for car hire, £207. Is that instructive?"

£207 for car hire! Opposite that I have got the expenditure of the Premier on his trip home, £3,730, and the expenditure of Mr. Fihelly on the trip he took—about £1,800. Yet they find fault with the small expenditure of £207 for car hire! They further said—

"The Denham Government is fond of talking of its surpluses. The word 'surplus' sounds pretty and inviting. It argues sound and careful government. And, generally speaking, the ordinary elector does not analyse finance sufficiently to see the importance of it all."

They tell you there that surpluses argue sound and careful government. I would like to know what deficits argue. I suppose they argue unsound and unskilful government. The pamphlet goes on—

"Would you be surprised to know that the deficits of Liberal Governments since Queensland was made a separate colony, that is from 1859 to 1914, have amounted to £4,219,708, and that the much-talked-of surpluses have only amounted to £2,600,845."

You cannot be surprised when, considering the retrenchment you have suffered and are suffering, that something is wrong at the present moment. It is not necessary to go back sixty years. The present Government for six years ended 30th June, 1921, added to the stated deficit £834,933, and to the allegedly much-talked-of surpluses the exceedingly small sum of £71,455. They say—

"That means a total deficit of £1,618,865."

The total deficit of £1,618,865 has been increased by the present Government to £2,379,034, and that does not include the £180,000 for the year just ended. Then they say—

"Do you know from 1900 to 1914 the deficits amounted to £1,163,893 and the surpluses to £714,623? That is in fourteen years an accumulated deficit of £449,270."

This is their record for seven years. It only took the present Government six years to show deficits amounting to £613,000 and surpluses amounting to £71,455. That is in six years an accumulated deficit of £542,024. I am not going through the whole of the pamphlet, but it is most instructive and most interesting. They finish up with this—

"Finance is the basis of government."

Mr. BRENNAN: Hear, hear!

Mr. TAYLOR: The Premier and his Government apparently do not think so. They further state—

"It is also the test of Governments."

Mr. RIORDAN: Who wrote that?

Mr. TAYLOR: You know who wrote it. If it is the test of Governments, all that one can say is that the Government have failed abjectly in carrying out that which they advocated when they issued that famous circular in 1915.

Mr. BULCOCK: What about the £1,000,000 deficit in Western Australia?

Mr. TAYLOR: I am very much obliged to the hon. member for his interjection about Western Australia. The Western Australian sinking fund on 30th June, 1921, amounted to £7,641,000, and the accumulated deficits to £5,493,000—a surplus of £2,148,000. I have here the report of the Auditor-

[8.30 p.m.] General for Western Australia. The added interest and the contributions of the Government of Western Australia to the sinking fund every year are more than their deficits. For 1920-21 the increase in the sinking fund was £792,733, and the deficit for the same year was £686,725. The increase in the sinking fund for 1919-20 was £694,120, and the deficit for that year was £668,000. The addition to the sinking fund for 1918-19 was £586,000, and in that year the deficit was £652,000, or between £60,000 and £70,000 more than the sinking fund contribution for that year. In 1917-18, the addition to the sinking fund was £534,887, and the deficit for that year was £705,000. There have been two or three years since 1911-12 when the deficits were more than the additions that were made to the sinking fund. If the hon. member would like to check the figures, he will find them in the report of the Auditor-General for Western Australia, and he will find that what I have stated is correct.

Mr. BULCOCK: What about the period in which they suspended the operation of the sinking fund?

Mr. TAYLOR: I could not tell you about that. In criticising the last report of the Treasurer of Western Australia, the principal paper there said—

“We cannot each year face a deficit in excess of the sinking fund contributions, and we cannot for long face one equal to it.”

A sinking fund is initiated for the purpose of putting a brake on what might be called spendthrift Treasurers; but the Treasurers in Western Australia know the strong position of the sinking fund, and it has not been very much of a brake to them. They realise that they can go ahead, and that the interest and the contribution which is made to the sinking fund amount to more than the deficit which is likely to accrue from their administration. I hope hon. members will take notice of these figures, because we are continually having Western Australia thrown up at us. The contributions and the interest amount to more than the deficits.

Mr. BULCOCK: Don't you think that is financial juggling?

Mr. TAYLOR: There may be a little financial juggling or transposition of figures about it; but the fact remains that Western Australia is not in the deplorable condition which hon. members opposite would like the public to think. I think, in dealing with other States, we should quote the official figures as they are issued by the Auditor-General and those who have charge of the affairs of those States.

Mr. BRENNAN: Why is it that Queensland is the only State which could get a loan in America?

Mr. TAYLOR: The other States did not need to go to America. They were able to get all the money they wanted from the home land, where I hope all our loans will be raised in future.

Mr. PEASE: The home land itself had to go to America.

Mr. TAYLOR: With regard to the deficits of this State during recent years, taking the deficits which have been created during the régime of the present Government, if the Treasurer's estimate is anything like realised at the end of the year, we shall have an accumulated deficit of about £1,525,652. We have had an enormous burden of taxation inflicted upon the people of Queensland during the last few years.

Mr. COLLINS: Not on the people, but on the wealthy class.

Mr. TAYLOR: The taxation has been heavier than it has ever been before. Yet we shall be faced with this enormous accumulated deficiency when our accounts are made up at the end of next year. I think that it is time some alteration was made in the method of financing the affairs of this State.

Reference has been made by the hon. member for Bowen to the standard of living being reduced. It is not the standard of living that wants altering; it is the infernal standard of extravagance that has been created in Australia that is strangling us and causing a lot of our trouble.

Mr. BULCOCK: You want to cut people down to the bare necessities.

Mr. TAYLOR: No; the hon. member is saying that—not I. He knows that an extravagant standard of living has been created.

Mr. BRENNAN: By whom?

Mr. TAYLOR: Not by the hon. member; he is not extravagant unless on himself. Instead of people supporting Australian industries, and spending as much money as possible for that purpose, we find them going in for extravagant articles from abroad, and the money to pay for these articles has to be sent out of the State. Duty is certainly collected by the Federal Government, but this is one of the things which want altering throughout Australia. From the highest to the lowest we want to cut down that standard of extravagance, and get down to a more normal condition of living than that which has existed during the last few years.

Mr. BRENNAN: Why don't you apply to your wealthy friends?

Mr. TAYLOR: I am referring to everybody. The hon. member is one of my wealthy friends. Why does he not cut out the things he can do without?

Mr. BRENNAN: Like Adam and Eve.

Mr. TAYLOR: I would not like to see the hon. member dressed in a fig leaf. (Laughter.)

Mr. RIORDAN: Cut out the motor-cars.

Mr. TAYLOR: There was a time when we did not require motor-cars. The Premier could then go home in a tramcar, but it is not so now. The Premier has to have a motor-car to go home in. (Interruption.)

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The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would ask hon. members not to be continually interrupting. While the Chairman can stop some interjections, it is hardly fair to have a continual run of them.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. TAYLOR: Another matter referred to in the Financial Statement is the cotton industry. I think that everyone is pleased to see the development which has taken place in this industry. I thought that the Treasurer would have made some reference to the possibility of establishing mills for the manufacture of that cotton into fabrics in the State.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. TAYLOR: There are complaints made about Australia being a primary producing country only, and sending her products to other parts of the world to be manufactured there. If we want to see the cotton industry stabilised—and there appears to be a very satisfactory prospect in front of it for a few years to come—I think that investigations should be made to see if it is not possible to establish manufactories in Rockhampton and other towns near where the cotton will be grown.

The PREMIER: I might inform the hon. gentleman that a delegation of manufacturers is coming to Queensland, and they will wait on the Queensland Government and discuss that matter with us.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am very pleased to know that the Government are going to discuss that matter with the manufacturers of England.

Mr. RIORDAN: Your party were over fifty years in office, and you never established any manufactures in Queensland.

Mr. TAYLOR: I hope, when these men come here, that something will be done to assist the manufacturing industries in this State. Even if it costs £250,000 or £500,000, I think the money should be found by the Commonwealth and the various States in order to have more manufactures established in Australia.

Mr. STOPFORD: Give us that amount and we can start them at Mount Morgan, where we have all the facilities.

Mr. TAYLOR: You lost more than that amount on your State enterprises last year.

Mr. BRENNAN: You are advocating another State enterprise.

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not suggest for one moment that it should be a State enterprise. I suggest that we should give a bonus to the English manufacturers to encourage them to come out here and establish their secondary industries here.

Mr. BRENNAN: In Toowoomba?

Mr. TAYLOR: Yes, in Toowoomba. It will be money well spent, even if it costs £500,000. In dealing with the sugar industry, the Treasurer states in the Financial Statement—

“The Government deem it advisable, therefore, to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon the question of the number of new mills that should be erected and the most suitable locations.”

Mr. COLLINS: Hear, hear! Erect them in the North, which is free from frosts

[Mr. Taylor.

Mr. TAYLOR: The hon. member for Bowen says “Hear, hear!” He agrees with me to-night.

Mr. BRENNAN: You speak very good stuff at times.

Mr. TAYLOR: Thank you. I am sorry I cannot return the compliment. (Laughter.)

Mr. RIORDAN: You are not generous enough. You cannot even give away a compliment. You can only give away bonds.

Mr. TAYLOR: If the Government wish to find out which is the most suitable location for erecting mills, they have officers in the Agricultural Department who have sufficient knowledge and ability to say where the mills should be erected.

The PREMIER: We must let the local people give evidence before a Commission.

Mr. TAYLOR: Let them give evidence before your own officers. The experience we have had of Royal Commissions has not been too satisfactory. The men who have been dealing with the sugar industry in the department, assisted by the local authority men in the sugar-growing areas, and by the practical sugar-growers, will soon decide as to the most suitable locations. I know everyone will say that their place is the best site for a mill; but, after all the evidence has been collected, it should be settled by the officers of the department, and I do not see any necessity for the appointment of a Royal Commission in the direction indicated in the Financial Statement.

The PREMIER: Who is to collect the evidence if it is not done by a Royal Commission?

Mr. TAYLOR: Let it be done by the officers of the Agricultural Department associated with the sugar industry.

The PREMIER: We will appoint them as a Royal Commission, so that they can take evidence.

Mr. TAYLOR: So long as you do not appoint members of Parliament I do not care. I have no time for members of Parliament as members of Royal Commissions. I say that they are a most incompetent body of men to put on a Royal Commission.

The PREMIER: I quite agree with you, so far as the Opposition are concerned. (Government laughter.)

Mr. TAYLOR: The Premier agrees with me all along, only he is too frightened to say it. He knows that what I say is quite correct.

The PREMIER: The Royal Commission will not consist of members of Parliament.

Mr. TAYLOR: That is all right. I am sorry that there is no mention in the Financial Statement of what arrangements are being made in regard to maturing loans.

Mr. BRENNAN: They will be all right.

Mr. TAYLOR: We know that the £1,000,000 due to the Bank of England has been paid, and we know that Treasury bills amounting to £1,124,750 have been partially converted and part paid in cash; but we have no information as to what arrangements the Premier has made for the loans amounting to £1,762,000 which are maturing next year, or for the £13,000,000 which are maturing in 1925. Members of Parliament will recollect that, when Mr. Denham went home to

arrange about the conversion of the £11,000,000 of loan money, fortunately for Queensland, he was able to make a very satisfactory arrangement. Queensland is to be congratulated on the fact that we have had no loans maturing in the last few years. If the £13,000,000 which mature in 1924 had had to be converted or arranged for a couple of years ago, we should have found that the State would have been landed in millions of pounds extra interest during the term of both loans. I think it is necessary that arrangements should be made at the earliest possible moment to get the best terms we possibly can in regard to the £13,000,000, which we know we have got to convert, because we know we cannot possibly pay it. I hope the Premier will be able to give us some information as to the intentions of the Government in regard to maturing loans.

The PREMIER: I may say that at this very moment I am in conference with Sir Denison Miller on that very subject.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am very glad to get that information.

Mr. BRENNAN: You are surprised?

Mr. TAYLOR: I am surprised; but I do not mind that. I am an Australian and a Queenslander. (Hear, hear!) I want to see Queensland go ahead, and I want to see Australia become the finest country in the world. It is the finest country in the world. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. BRENNAN: Why defame it?

Mr. TAYLOR: I have never defamed it. The hon. member for Toowoomba has defamed it. In fact, he is the worst advertisement that Queensland has got from one end of the State to the other.

Mr. BRENNAN: I am a noble son of Queensland. (Laughter.)

Mr. TAYLOR: I want to see Queensland occupied by a prosperous and happy community. We want to see some changes brought about in order to help the people of this State. In so far as manufactures are concerned, we want to see that the men who are responsible for carrying on our secondary industries are not penalised by taxation, as compared with the other States of the Commonwealth. If we want this to be a manufacturing country, we have to do all we can to spread the taxation over as many people as possible. I find from the last report of the Commissioner of Taxes that there are 10,000 or 11,000 more people paying income tax than was the case in the previous year. I hope that next year there will be 20,000 more paying the tax. We are only going to get the prosperous Queensland which we all so earnestly wish for and so earnestly desire by increasing the number who pay the taxes. We cannot carry on all the activities of government in this State with the aid of a few hundred or a few thousand individuals. We want to have a large stream of immigrants coming in to fill our empty spaces. We want to develop our agricultural areas as much as we possibly can, especially where we have opened railways. In all my criticism of the Railway Department, I have never found any fault with the men in charge of them. I believe we have efficient managers in charge of our railways.

Mr. BRENNAN: And workers, too.

Mr. TAYLOR: No word has ever been said by me against the men in charge of the

Railway Department, because they are efficient railway managers. But I have said that there is too much political control exercised in the railway management in Queensland, and we have suffered on account of that. If our railway managers were given freer control of the great activity they are managing, then it would be better for Queensland in every way.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. EDWARDS (*Nanango*): In dealing with the Financial Statement, and particularly with the increase in taxation, I want to prove that the statements made very often on the other side of the House that heavy taxation does not hit the workers of the State hard is incorrect. That cry is repeatedly heard from members on the Government benches, particularly the hon. member for Bowen.

Mr. COLLINS: Hear, hear!

Mr. EDWARDS: I want to prove to that hon. member that the heavier the taxation imposed on the wealthy, the greater the burden, under our present conditions, that the workers of this State have to carry, whether they be farmers or industrial workers. We find that there has been an increase of nearly £30,000,000 in taxation since this Government came into power. In the first place, the man on the land has been largely responsible for that taxation. In hundreds of cases, I think I would be safe in saying that in thousands of cases, he has been forced to discontinue the employment of men to assist in improving his property. Then, again, heavy taxation imposed on the business man hits the worker also, because the business man naturally comes to the conclusion that to carry on in a businesslike way he must pass on that heavy taxation to the people who buy his goods, who are largely the workers in the State. Unfortunately, the man on the land is the largest buyer of goods from the business man. He has first of all to pay income tax on what he earns.

Mr. BRENNAN: And bank interest.

Mr. EDWARDS: Yes; he has to borrow from the bank to meet his income tax. Then he is hit with land tax.

Mr. COLLINS: 1,500 persons pay the whole of the land tax.

At 8.54 p.m.,

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Bromer*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Chairman in the chair.

Mr. EDWARDS: He is hit also through the goods he buys from the business man. The farmer or the man in the backblocks who is trying to improve the country is not placed in the same position as the industrial worker. For every article that the industrial worker has to buy the unfortunate producer has to buy twenty. He first of all has to feed his family and clothe them on exactly the same footing as the industrial worker. Then, while the industrial worker simply goes to his work and home from it, there is never a time when the farmer visits town or the city that he does not take home something to improve his farm, something which runs into ten times the amount of money the clothing of his family costs. That proves beyond a doubt that, if you impose heavy taxation, the industrial worker and the farmer help to pay it, but that the farmer is in a very much worse position than the industrial worker. Largely the heavy taxation and the need for

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confidence are the causes of unemployment in Queensland to-day.

Mr. BRENNAN: What about New South Wales with a Liberal Government?

Mr. EDWARDS: Yes, for two months. I consider that Queensland stands out above any other State in her need of development and the necessity of having no man unemployed.

Mr. PEASE interjected.

Mr. EDWARDS: Gentlemen like the hon. member who has thrown that interjection across the Chamber are the causes of this unemployment—men who are making big profits out of the workers and then come to represent them in this House.

Mr. WELLINGTON: Men like Bob Hodge?

Mr. EDWARDS: He was a good fellow. Here is a comparison of the way in which taxation has been raised during the régime of the Labour Government in Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES interjected.

Mr. EDWARDS: If I had to go all over the State of Queensland to get a seat, like the hon. member, I would stay out of politics all my life. The table I refer to is as follows:—

Source of Revenue.	1914-15.	1921-22.
	£	£
Taxation ... ..	954,457	3,420,296
Land Revenue ... ..	981,608	1,515,535
Mining Receipts ... ..	25,161	33,528
Railways ... ..	3,792,070	5,125,340
Other Receipts... ..	641,531	1,265,501
Totals ... ..	£ 7,202,658	12,311,278

Mr. COLLINS: Give us the proportional increase in population.

Mr. EDWARDS: A big percentage are unemployed. That shows an increase in taxation of £2,465,839; in land revenue of £553,927; in mining receipts of £8,377; in railways of £1,333,270; in other receipts of £623,970—a total increase of £5,103,720.

Does that not prove that the burden of taxation has been raised to an enormous extent during the reign of this Labour Government, and that the workers of this State—whether they be industrial workers or settlers on the land—are largely paying that taxation? There is no argument against it. The expenditure in 1914-15 was £7,199,399. In 1921-22 it was £12,499,970, or an increase of £5,300,571. I hold that this Government have had the handling of £5,000,000 more than was handled in 1914-15. What have they done with it?

Mr. COLLINS: They have handled it well.

Mr. EDWARDS: Where are the reproductive works in which the workers of this State should be employed?

Mr. RIORDAN: Go along the North Coast Railway?

Mr. BRENNAN: Go to Toowomba and see the progress that has been made there.

Mr. EDWARDS: There has been unnecessary expenditure such as this—motor-car for the Agent-General from February to June, 1920, £1,125; send-off to the late Agent-General and travelling expenses, £2,413; printing and distributing the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech, £2,733.

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The PREMIER: We would not pay that to distribute that Speech.

Mr. EDWARDS: There was a loss of £2,000 on the lime pulveriser sent to Rockhampton. So far as State enterprises are concerned, the hon. gentleman who is at the head of the State enterprises knows that they are a burden on the State. I am satisfied that, if he gave a fair opinion, he would say, "Let us get out of them at once." Every member of the Government would say that, if he thought there was a possibility of getting out of those things and saving their skins.

Mr. RIORDAN: Why did you make application for a State butcher shop?

Mr. EDWARDS: I did not; we do not want them up there.

Mr. DASH: Would you close them all up?

Mr. EDWARDS: I would get out of them the best way possible. Let them be handled on true co-operative lines. I am a firm believer in true co-operation, and have been opposed always to socialisation. I will quote a few figures to show the enormous increase in the expenditure on out-door relief. They show what the position of the State is financially and from an unemployed point of view—

	£
1914-15 ... ..	5,870
1915-16 ... ..	16,138
1916-17 ... ..	9,379
1917-18 ... ..	9,153
1918-19 ... ..	26,412
1919-20 ... ..	78,860
1920-21 ... ..	120,520
1921-22 ... ..	177,019

That proves that, from an industrial workers' point of view, the State is not in the position in which it should be.

Mr. BRENNAN: Why?

Mr. EDWARDS: Largely on account of the enormous taxation that has been imposed upon the people. Another reason is that the Government have constantly interfered in a socialistic way with private enterprise; they have attempted at every turn to set up socialisation by the establishment of State butcher shops and things like that. I am sure that hon. gentlemen opposite realise it. I am sure that the Premier realises the necessity for turning round and assisting, before it is too late, the industries which for the last seven years the Government have been attempting to break. When they came into office the Government thought that all they had to do was to impose taxation. They found that they were wrong, and that they had to work this State from a business point of view. Now, after the farmers, the graziers, and the pastoralists have put off thousands of workmen, the Government are discovering the necessity for taking money out of the Treasury to assist these people. That has taken place on account of the enormous population that is constantly moving from the country districts into the cities. To remedy that state of affairs, it is necessary to give the people in the country districts—and in the cities also, for that matter—a fair chance. Let there be confidence; assist with railway communication and in other ways those who are prepared to bring capital here and develop the State.

Mr. RIORDAN: You say that there is no confidence. Look at the building that is going on in the city.



Mr. EDWARDS: It is all going on in Brisbane; there is none going on in country towns to-day. The secondary industries of this State should be assisted in every shape and form. Whenever secondary industries have been attempted they have been blocked by Labour legislation. According to figures we find that factories have been erected in Victoria and other Southern States to an extent of more than 400 per cent. in comparison with Queensland. We find that little concerns, such as tanneries and other like industries, are being removed from this State to Melbourne, because they can be worked under better conditions.

Mr. BRENNAN: Why don't you go back to famous Victoria?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask hon. gentlemen to cease interjecting, otherwise I will take the steps provided by the Standing Orders.

Mr. EDWARDS: Every assistance should be given to establishing secondary industries in our State. I do not care what Government is in power, it is absolutely necessary that that should be done. We are sending a great deal of our raw material over the water to be manufactured in other countries. That not only means expense in connection with freight, but that thousands of workmen are employed on the other side of the water in the manufacture of our raw material. The manufactured article is brought back to this State, which means that an additional expense is incurred in freight. That state of affairs also exists in connection with raw material sent to the Southern States. We have hundreds of factories in New South Wales and Victoria handling such produce as wool, hides, tallow, maize, etc. All that raw material is produced plentifully in our own State, yet it is sent down to other States to be manufactured and to be treated, and then the article is sent back to this State to our own consumers.

Mr. BRENNAN: Why is that so?

Mr. EDWARDS: It is because of the legislation passed by the Labour Government. I am sure that the Government must realise that, from the point of view of the State, that is not a business proposition. The Government are realising to-day that it is necessary to remove as far as possible the burden of taxation from the producers of this State. The Commonwealth Government are often quoted by hon. members opposite as a Government who have done nothing for the producers; but we see by to-night's "Telegraph" that not only have they decided to reduce their salaries, but have decided to decrease taxation. The heading in the "Telegraph" reads—

"EXPENDITURE SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED.  
DECREASE IN TAXATION."

Mr. PEASE: Dr. Earle Page, the leader of the Country party in the Federal House, said that it was only a "bunch of carrots."

Mr. EDWARDS: The Premier this afternoon, in answer to a question, quoted a wire sent to Dr. Earle Page by Mr. Edkins. Unfortunately, the hon. gentleman did not quote the whole of it, but did what he did in connection with the report taken in shorthand by the person under the table in his office. I think it is only fair and just, particularly in the case of the Premier, that he should quote the whole of the wire.

The PREMIER: Does the hon. member stand by Mr. Edkins' wire?

Mr. EDWARDS: I certainly do not. I stand by the man who read it out in the Federal Parliament.

Mr. DASH: That man stands by "Billy" Hughes. Where does the hon. member stand now?

Mr. EDWARDS: "Billy" Hughes trained all the hon. members opposite. The whole of the wire should have been quoted in order that its true meaning could have been ascertained. The Premier did not do that when he quoted the wire sent by Mr. Edkins to Dr. Earle Page.

The PREMIER: I am afraid the hon. member is hopeless.

Mr. EDWARDS: I know the Premier will be hopeless after this week. Dr. Earle Page is largely responsible for what the Federal Government are now doing.

Mr. PEASE: They have been forced to do it, otherwise they could not carry on.

Mr. EDWARDS: The Country party in this House is largely responsible for the changed attitude of the present Government. The Country party is responsible for the Premier going out with a vote-catching primary producers' organisation argument.

Mr. BRENNAN: The hon. member opposed it.

Mr. EDWARDS: I did not. The Opposition made the measure as good as they possibly could. We improved it. The amount voted for the Department of Agriculture since 1919 is—

	£
1919-20	92,448
1920-21	121,652
1921-22	133,823
1922-23	178,971

That shows an increase of £86,487 in the vote in four years. The influence of the organisations in the country districts and the influence of the Country party in this House is responsible for the Labour Government coming forward with assistance to agricultural districts which has been denied during the seven years of Labour rule. It is necessary in the interests of this State, not only to build railways, but at every turn to encourage the development of our lands by different land laws, and to give the people confidence to build homes for themselves by giving them the opportunity of some day making their holdings freehold. I am satisfied that there is not one member in this House, whether he represents Labour or not, who does not like to know that some day the home he is working for will belong to himself.

Mr. COLLINS: How much did you pay in rent when you were in Victoria?

Mr. EDWARDS: I paid nothing in rent in Victoria, because I left it when a boy. I am sure that even the conservative member for Bowen would like to know that some day his home will belong to himself and not to the State.

On every occasion that the Labour Government have gone to the country they have tried to get a "bogey" or catch-cry in order to delude the electors and draw them off the real issue. In 1915 they went to the electors on the "cheap food" cry. They howled that from one end of Queensland to

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the other. On the last occasion they went before the electors with a cry about that awful delegation.

Mr. BULCOCK: What do you think about the delegation?

Mr. EDWARDS: I think that, if three men could stop the Labour Government from ruling Queensland, as the Premier stated from practically every platform in Queensland, then he ought to give up the reins of government to someone else who is prepared to govern the State in a proper way, so that confidence will be restored.

The PREMIER: The hon. member made a mistake. It was two men who tried—not three.

Mr. EDWARDS: On every occasion they have attempted to delude the electors by these bogey cries. But what do we find on this occasion? That the Premier deluded two men into his office. (Government laughter.) What for? For the purpose of getting a bogey with which to go to the electors.

The PREMIER: Do you follow Garbutt or Boyce?

Mr. EDWARDS: I follow my own conscience, and that is more than the hon. gentleman does. The other night the Premier dropped a bombshell, as he called it, in the House. He seemed very pleased with himself. He was under the impression that he had got his bogey cry on which he could again go to the electors, but to-night he does not feel like that at all. The bottom has fallen out of his bombshell, and to-night he feels very sorry that he ever introduced it. It is high time that all this sort of thing was given up.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: You had better give it up.

Mr. EDWARDS: If I had as much to give up, from that point of view, as the hon. member has, I would be out for the rest of my life. If this State is to become the great State we believe it should be—I am satisfied, in spite of all that has been said or not said by hon. members opposite, that they still believe in this great State—it is necessary that we should go to the electors on a fair and square issue, and not by everlastingly drawing these red herrings across the track to try and deceive the electors. In spite of all the things that have been done by the Government to keep in power, on every occasion where they have gone to the electors they have come back with their numbers considerably lessened.

Mr. BULCOCK: We increased our majority the election before last.

Mr. EDWARDS: What happened subsequently?

Mr. KING: It was an Irishman's increase the last time.

At 9.25 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. EDWARDS: I am safe in saying that, in spite of the gerrymandering that has taken place in connection with the country electorates, the next time they have to face the electors we shall be done with socialism in this House. It is quite impossible for the Premier to sit on the rail any longer, so far as the industrial workers and the farmers of this State are concerned. He must come out and show himself. It is impossible for a man, no matter how strong

he may be, to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds, as the Premier is trying to do to-day. He must make himself right with the industrial workers of this State and advocate what they stand for; that is, the nationalisation of practically everything produced in this State. The Premier cannot go to the producers of this State and say, "I believe in co-operation; I believe in you handling your own business." It is quite impossible for him to advocate that principle, because the industrial workers consider that they should get the produce of the farmers as cheaply as they possibly can. Will anyone say that it is a sound argument for the Premier to tell the producers that he is going to give them high prices for their butter, meat, and other products, and then say to the workers that they are going to get those products at the lowest possible rate? The Premier will have to come out in the open in a very short time, or else his name will be forgotten so far as politics are concerned in Queensland.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported progress.

The resumption of the Committee was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

[9.30 p.m.]

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ACT  
AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

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

"That the Bill be now read a third time."

Question put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 33.

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

Tellers: Mr. Dash and Mr. F. A. Cooper.

NOES, 33.

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

Tellers: Mr. Brand and Mr. Cattermull.

The SPEAKER: "Ayes," 33; "Noes," 33. The voting being equal, I give my casting vote with the "Ayes." The question is resolved in the affirmative.

The House adjourned at 9.35 p.m.

[Mr. Edwards.