

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**FRIDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 1922**

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FRIDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER, 1922.

The SPEAKER (HON. W. BERTRAM, *Maree*) took the chair at 11 a.m.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—SIXTH ALLOTTED DAY.

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

HOME SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT.

OUTDOOR RELIEF.

Question stated—

“That £52,072 be granted for ‘Outdoor Relief’”—

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): I should like some explanation from the Minister of the difference between the vote last year of £117,702 and the much reduced vote of £52,072 this year. Some explanation is necessary, particularly because I think it will be found from the Treasurer's Financial Tables that the amount actually spent last year was not less than £177,000. Some remarks were made last night as to the anticipation of the Government of better times and a reduction in unemployment. Personally, I think there may be other reasons for this reduction in the vote. We have on the business-paper an Unemployed Workers' Insurance Bill, and, perhaps, the Government are anticipating that they will be able to deal under that measure with a large body of people who are now receiving benefits under this vote.

I would also like to know from the Minister the number of prosecutions that have been instituted during the year against persons who have been receiving money from this vote and the number of convictions.

Mr. BRAND (*Burrum*): Like the hon. member for East Toowoomba, I think some explanation is needed on the amount of the vote this year, seeing that last year the amount actually spent was approximately £177,000. The Government are asking this year for one-third of the amount which was actually expended last year, and the Minister has not given any explanation as to why the amount asked for is so low. From our observations and knowledge, and from the reports which we read regarding the industrial position to-day, we can say that there is not going to be any decrease during this year in the amount of unemployment. Certainly, at the present time, because of the sugar harvesting operations, a large number of men who previously were unemployed are receiving work, but the big bulk of the cancutters to-day will remain in Queensland when the harvesting operations have been completed.

Mr. PEASE: No; they do not.

Mr. BRAND: There are not as many coming from other States as there were formerly. When the cane harvesting operations cease, we shall have the same amount of unemployment as existed last year, and it will need the expenditure of approximately the same amount of money. The August number of the “Queensland Industrial Gazette,” which is the latest publication of that journal, contains reports from union secretaries throughout Queensland which show that there is a considerable number of unemployed still

in the State. The opinions of those people prove that the prospects are not good for employment in Queensland. They have reported that they have something like 2,074 cases of unemployed on their books. In yesterday's paper there was a report stating that there is likely to be a further increase of 300 men in the number of unemployed, due to the closing down of the Lake's Creek meatworks. When you add to those figures the number of non-unionists who are unemployed, and those who follow occupations not covered by awards, you will find that we have in Queensland to-day something like 3,000 to 4,000 men who are unemployed. If each of those receives outdoor relief it will mean the expenditure of something like £1,000 a week, and if the state of affairs got no worse, we would expend the vote during the year. The Cairns report says that the prospects are not good; so does the Cloncurry report. The Gladstone report states that they are not bright, and that from Ipswich that they are bad. In almost every instance these reports from union secretaries point out that the prospects of employment are bad. When the cane crushing is completed thousands of people will be unemployed; and despite the fact that the Government are about to launch out in large railway construction undertakings, they will not be able to absorb the men who will be unemployed. We regret exceedingly that it is necessary to have even such an amount as £52,072 placed on the Estimates for outdoor relief, but it must be admitted that unemployment is really the result of the administration of the Government in power.

Mr. W. COOPER: Piffle!

Mr. BRAND: Hon. members opposite have proved it. “Hansard” shows that the Labour party, when in opposition, stated that it was the duty of the Government to look after the unemployed. I will quote what one of their eminent men said in 1914, when another Government were in power, and when the amount placed on the Estimates for outdoor relief was only something like £3,343 for twelve months. Mr. Lennon said—

“I want the Treasurer to understand that unemployment is worse than the bubonic plague or smallpox. It is worse than any disease that anyone can name. Unemployment is the curse of the working classes. It is the duty of the Government to do everything they possibly can to avert the disaster of unemployment to a very large degree in Queensland.”

Mr. Lennon definitely said that it was the duty of the Government to do everything possible for the unemployed. All the present Government are doing for the unemployed is to deflate men in the Public Service and then offer them rations to the extent of 5s. per week. Five shillings per week is not sufficient to keep a man properly fit so that he can work when he obtains employment. These men who are receiving rations will not be in an efficient state to perform work when they get it. The Government are not doing all they possibly can to provide relief. In 1915, shortly after the Labour party came into office the hon. member for Bowen said—

“He regretted very much that they had to distribute outdoor relief in a State like Queensland, but he was convinced that so long as they had production

*Mr. Brand.]*

for gain instead of production for use, so long would they have to give outdoor relief."

Have not the Government been in power for something like eight years, and have they not tried to buy the farmers' produce for use and not for profit? There is more unemployment in Queensland to-day than ever existed previously.

Mr. W. COOPER: No.

Mr. BRAND: The hon. member for Bowen further stated—

"They would have to continue the system as long as they remained under the present social conditions. He regretted the arguments used by the leader of the Opposition, who pointed out that the number of persons who received outdoor relief would increase."

The then leader of the Opposition recognised that under the administration of the Labour Government unemployment was certainly going to increase, and, unfortunately, that has been proved. Throughout Australia, wherever the Labour party has been in power, there has always been an increase in unemployment.

Mr. FOLEY: How does the hon. member account for unemployment in anti-Labour States?

Mr. BRAND: The hon. member for Bowen further stated—

"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."

On the statement of the hon. member for Bowen it is the duty of the Opposition to criticise the Government. I agree with the hon. member that, if a Government are in power for three years and cannot relieve unemployment, they deserve to be criticised; and the people should exercise their right at the ballot box and remove them from office. Only a few weeks ago the Premier in Townsville stated that no man worthy of being called a man should receive rations.

The PREMIER: I did not. I said that no able-bodied man should have to receive rations.

Mr. BRAND: The unfortunate able-bodied men cannot get work. Are they to starve? I admit that, so long as they are out of work, we must provide them with sufficient food to enable them to exist.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman is making a "Yes-No" speech.

Mr. BRAND: To-day that able-bodied man whom the Premier spoke of only a few weeks ago is unable to get work, and the Premier cannot find him work, despite the fact that he is borrowing millions of pounds to relieve unemployment. Unemployment has been largely brought about as a result of the policy that the party opposite have been trying to put into operation in Queens-

land. It is a policy that is not destined to bring about a stabilised condition of things in this State. We know that the Government are continually harassing industry in Queensland. They are continuously imposing little pinpricks to harass industry, with the result that people are not disposed to enter into undertakings that would give employment to a large number of men, because there is no stability in industry. This cursed perpetual lease policy is also the cause of unemployment.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope hon. members will endeavour to keep their remarks strictly to the vote under discussion. If we are going to have a general discussion on the Government's policy, I do not know where it will end. The hon. member must confine his remarks to the question of outdoor relief and the administration thereof.

Mr. BRAND: I accept your ruling, Mr. Chairman, but I was endeavouring to show that the policy followed by this Government has led to unemployment and has caused the necessity for this large expenditure on outdoor relief. I admit that the Minister in charge of the vote has a duty to perform to the people. I do not know whether he is of the opinion that this expenditure on outdoor relief should go on for all time, or whether he, as the representative of the Government, recognises that something should be done to relieve the taxpayers of Queensland of having continually to find such a large sum of money to provide relief for those unfortunate people who cannot get work. In order to prevent such a large expenditure for this purpose, the Minister should seriously consider the advisability of entering into such undertakings which will provide that those who receive outdoor relief shall give some return for what they receive. It is not right that any person in the community, more particularly the single men, should receive something from the Government and give nothing in return, and I would recommend the Minister to establish depôts in which good food and good clothes are provided for men out of employment, and which will see that they perform some work in return for what they receive. He could devote his energies towards entering on a system of partly ready-made farms and employ these men to get the land ready. I notice by the "Industrial Gazette" that all classes of workers are unemployed, including cooks, bakers, A.W.U. members, engineers, carpenters, plumbers, and others.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Unemployment is not confined to this State.

Mr. BRAND: The Government should go in for the system of establishing partly ready-made farms, and the men at these depôts should be given preference in the taking up of those farms, so that they would become self-supporting. I trust that the Minister will evolve a scheme like this, which will reduce the expenditure in connection with relief and be a great benefit to the taxpayer. During the period in which Labour has been in power in Queensland the vote has increased from £5,870 to £177,000 last year. Hon. members opposite have not fulfilled the promises they made when they were in opposition, that they would do something to bring about a state of affairs that would result in less relief being needed. Will the Minister explain why the Govern-

[Mr. Brand.

ment are only asking for an appropriation of £52,072, when they spent £177,000 last year?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: In due course.

Mr. BRAND: I submit that the reason why the amount is now reduced is because the Government wish to put a better complexion on the state of affairs and to lead the people to believe that the position is O.K. They do not know whether they may not be facing an election in a few weeks, and they want to be able to say to the people that they are now spending less on relief than they were before. We find that last year, while they only appropriated £117,000, they spent £60,000 over that amount. This year they are asking for an appropriation of only £52,072; but they will perhaps spend £150,000 more than they are appropriating. I hope the Minister will explain why this smaller appropriation is being asked for, and whether it is being done in order to put a good complexion on the state of affairs and lead the people to think that things are not as bad as they are.

Mr. PEASE (*Herbert*): I wish to correct some of the statements made by the hon. member for Burrum. In the first place, with regard to cancutters, the hon. member said that it was not true that they went South after the season. I am going to refer to what Mr. Brenan, the representative of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, said in the Arbitration Court the other day. He said that, generally, as soon as the season was over, the white workers went South. It was very difficult to get them to stay.

Mr. MORGAN: Some of them may have done.

Mr. PEASE: In that case, Mr. Brenan wanted to prove that he could not get white workers when the season was over. The hon. member for Burrum, because he wants to put his own construction on the matter, tries to make out that the white workers do not go South. I am also going to quote the remarks of Mr. Watson, of the Chamber of Manufactures, who is a recognised authority on these matters, and he is certainly not a supporter of the Labour party. At a deputation of returned soldiers, in connection with unemployment, Mr. Watson had this to say—

“As fast as we place our unemployed, others arrive from Southern States.”

The Queensland Labour Government is the only Government in Australia which is trying to cope with the unemployment situation. As the Home Secretary, in the able address which he gave last session on these Estimates, pointed out, the existing unemployment is absolutely the result of the war. The hon. member for Burrum twitted the hon. member for Bowen and other hon. members on this side with having said when they were in opposition that they would deal with the situation when they got into power, but the hon. member did not say that the war has occurred since then. The hon. member for Burrum also quoted the “Industrial Gazette.” I am going to refer to something in the last issue of the “Industrial Gazette,” which is well worthy of consideration by hon. members. It is pointed out in that issue that the world’s recognised authorities state that the unemployment situation is entirely the aftermath of the war. We also have to remember that, when the Home Secretary introduced these Estimates last

year, he pointed out that the big bulk of the money was not given to able-bodied men, but to mothers and children, particularly children who were left as orphans. The money was also given to destitute returned soldiers. What is the position of the soldier to-day? Since he has come back he has been scrapped. There is no doubt about that. If anyone goes down to the Returned Soldiers’ Bureau he will see the number of soldiers who are out of work.

Mr. MORGAN: Your Government are responsible for that.

Mr. PEASE: The soldiers have been scrapped, there is no doubt about that.

Mr. VOWLES: The Government will not give work to a returned soldier.

Mr. PEASE: We have given more work to unemployed men than any other State in Australia, and I am going to prove it.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS interjecting,

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope hon. members will obey my call to order. I must ask hon. members on my left to respect my call to order. We have got until half-past 10 o’clock to-night to discuss this vote. I hope hon. members will restrain themselves and give their observations on the different votes in the proper way, and they will find that that is much more effective than by making interjections.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): I rise to a point of order. I think that the leader of the Opposition should be made to withdraw that remark that the Government will not employ a returned man.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order.

Mr. BRENNAN: It is quite untrue, anyhow.

Mr. VOWLES: It is true.

Mr. PEASE: I have an extract here from the meeting of the returned soldiers, which reads—

“Mr. A. J. Russell, employment officer, said that hundreds of returned men were being attracted to Queensland by the ‘Distressed Diggers’ Fund.’ A wireless has gone throughout the Commonwealth among ‘Diggers’ that money for nothing was to be had in Brisbane.”

The favourable situation in Queensland has been made so by this Government going on with developmental work.

Mr. MORGAN: Show us where the Government have gone on with developmental work.

Mr. PEASE: If the hon. gentleman likes to come with me I can show him where there are 3,000 men employed on railway construction works who were not employed in January.

Mr. VOWLES: I suppose they are in your electorate?

Mr. PEASE: No; they are working throughout Queensland. We have men coming here from other States looking for work. The hon. member for Windsor said last night that any men in Queensland who really wanted work could get it. I came past the Returned Soldiers’ Bureau yesterday, and I saw hundreds of able-bodied men there willing and anxious to work, but they could not get it.

Mr. MORGAN: More shame to your Government.

Mr. Pease.]

Mr. PEASE: More shame to the would-be patriots who induced these men to go to the other side of the world, and then, when they came back, slung them on the scrap heap.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. PEASE: I will give you the comments of a Sydney paper on the present situation—

“There are thousands of young men who went to the war, spent years on service, and have never learned to work. Strangely enough, too, most of them got married during the war period, when ready cash was fairly abundant. They now provide the most prominent figures in the ranks of the unemployed. They are improvident, unfortunate, but they have to be reckoned with in future national affairs.”

The hon. member for Burrum said that the unemployment existed only in Queensland. As a matter of fact, it exists all over the world. The first act of the Fuller Government, which replaced the Dooley Government in New South Wales, was to appropriate £100,000 for the relief of the unemployed in New South Wales.

Mr. VOWLES: They were the unemployed left by the other Government.

Mr. PEASE: It was a New South Wales Government. What have we got to do with it?

Mr. MORGAN: You have more unemployed in proportion.

At 11.28 a.m.,

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

Mr. PEASE: I have another article here which shows the position of the unemployed in Victoria. It says—

“The cold weather adds to the privations of the unemployed, increasing daily. Hopefully, 400 or so, assemble outside the Trades Hall every morning.”

Where do these men go to when they want to get relief in Victoria? They do not go to the Victorian Tory Government. They go to the Trades Hall. Hon. gentlemen opposite decry the poor unfortunate unemployed in Victoria. If they go to the Victorian Government they get nothing, so they go to the Trades Hall, which does something for them. This is what a Tory paper says about the unemployed in Victoria—

“The officials of the Trades Hall are determined to do something to alleviate distress, and an unemployed committee and employment bureau are being planned. The Press offers poor consolation in the publication of sordid facts in connection with prevailing conditions, evoking any amount of sympathy, but nothing more effective.”

Mr. MORGAN: What is the name of that paper? It is taken from a Labour paper.

Mr. PEASE: No; it is not.

Mr. MORGAN: Well, give us the name of the paper.

Mr. VOWLES: And give us the date.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I rise to a point of order. Our Standing Orders provide that, when quotations are read, they must be laid on the table. That quotation should be laid on the table.

[*Mr. Pease.*

Mr. PEASE: Well I will quote from the “Brisbane Courier.” Following on that deputation, this is what happened at a conference of employers and employees, as reported by the “Courier”—

“UNEMPLOYMENT.

“ABORTIVE CONFERENCE.

“Melbourne, Friday.—Series of conferences between representatives of the Trades Hall Council and Employers’ Federation to try and arrive at some solution of the unemployment problem have proved abortive.

“The President of the Council (Mr. Holloway) blamed the existing system of competitive bargaining for the present state of affairs. The only thing he could suggest was a really scientific system of unemployment insurance with work so regulated that there would be something like regular employment for all. The first charge for unemployment relief should be on the industry concerned. If an insurance scheme was introduced, and a subsidy was necessary, the Government, and not the worker, should pay the subsidy. He thought the Queensland system was the only one which would meet with the approval of organized labour in Victoria.

“The Chairman (Mr. Ashwood), President of the Employers’ Federation, said the Trades Hall representatives had to make up their minds whether they would adopt an evolutionary or revolutionary mental attitude.

“The Trades Hall representatives, in their reply, submitted schemes for national unemployment insurance, workers’ compensation, motherhood endowment, and the erection of workers’ houses. ‘If you and your colleagues are prepared to stand for national schemes of this character,’ they wrote the employers, ‘then we will be pleased to co-operate with you, and have them made law. If you cannot see your way clear to do so, then we do not think it will serve any useful purpose to go any further with the conference.’

“The employers declined to take part in further discussions.”

That is what is happening in Victoria. I do not want to be a carping critic of Victoria. I realise, as is pointed out in an article in our “Industrial Gazette,” that the unemployment problem is world wide. It cannot be solved by Queensland or by [11.30 a.m.] Victoria. It is certainly the opinion of anyone who thinks that our Government have done everything possible to cope with it here. We have been twitted about the men who have been placed in work: we have been asked where they are. Since the 1st January this year, 3,000 have been placed in work at railway construction. The Government have gone in for a development scheme in the Burnett district, than which no better has ever been evolved in Australia. When the railway construction is finished, it is intended to put men to work on the farms; but whatever is done by the Government, the position is intensified by the fact that employers will not stand up to their responsibilities. It was necessary a while ago for the Australian Workers’ Union to approach the Arbitration Court on behalf of the cane-cutters in the Northern division

of the State with a request for preference to their members as against coloured labour, as the following report will show:—

“Mr. Hynes, representing the Australian Workers' Union, read an affidavit by C. Cook, Australian Workers' Union organiser at Innisfail, to the effect that seven Hindoos were employed by a South Johnstone grower supplying firewood to the mill, and four kanakas. With the exception of two gangs, woodcutters for Mourilyan mill were Malays. At the Colonial Sugar Refining mill at Goondi, five kanakas were in one camp and eleven Japanese in another, cutting wood for the mill. He knew of only one returned soldier cutting wood for Goondi.

“Mr. Brennan, advocate for the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, admitted that they had a number of Japanese and kanakas so employed.

“The President of the Court asked, ‘What inconvenience would it be to your company to give preference to returned soldiers and the Australian Workers' Union?’

“Mr. Brennan replied, ‘The members of the Australian Workers' Union cannot refrain from going on strike. We rely largely upon Japanese for our firewood supply.’”

Mr. VOWLES: Are they more reliable than white men?

Mr. PEASE: That is the position in the North. We find that the farmer who is making a good deal out of the sugar industry is not employing white workers.

I should like to quote a little from this article in the ‘Industrial Gazette’ on unemployment. It is a very fine article, and I commend it to the attention of every member of the Opposition. It states that unemployment has reached a world-wide state of acuteness, and quotes an article from the ‘World's Work’ of July this year, from which I make the following extracts:—

“The situation in Great Britain at present is a record of unemployment.

“The annual average percentage of unemployment is 16.3 per cent.; the nearest point to this was in 1879—11.4 per cent.

“The State Insurance Fund of Great Britain has had to borrow heavily from the Treasury to cope with the position.

“Several local authorities in Great Britain have lately declared themselves bankrupt, the cost of poor relief being more than they could bear.

“Great Britain has made greater efforts in the way of relieving unemployment than other countries, but it is feared the methods now in force must break down.

“In the final analysis, the unemployed question is a currency problem, and the legacy of the war. The real solution can only be in co-operation between the nations, leading to a mutual cancellation of war indebtedness. No single country acting alone can solve this problem, and no country can impose a solution, however beneficial, upon the other countries.”

That is the situation we experience in Queensland. It does not matter what we do in Queensland or what is done in any of the other States in Australia. If a cancellation of the war debts is not made, a

proper solution will never be arrived at; anybody who takes the trouble to think out the situation must realise the truth of that statement. But in Queensland, as Mr. Watson, the President of the Chamber of Manufactures—an able man who does not stand for Labour—is fair enough to admit, we have to cope with the unemployment of Australia, because of our peculiar conditions. According to the Opposition, anyone would think that any man could go to the Bureau and get a dole, but that is not so. I can give hon. members an instance of an unemployed man which was brought before me only the other day. A man was employed for years in one of the largest jam factories in Australia. He started in Victoria, and came to Queensland to open up business for his firm, and he did good business here for them. The factory closed, and he received one month's notice. He has six or seven children and his own house, which he had to sell, and he told me that he was on the bread line. He is not a drunkard. He said to me, “I have never had anything to do with the Labour party in my life; but now I am relying on charity from your Government to keep my wife and children from starvation.” I can produce the man for the leader of the Opposition, if he wishes. How can we cope with the unemployed when we have to cope with the unemployed of the other States as well as our own? Our seasonal occupations bring them here. Cane-cutters and shearers come from the other States, and, when those seasonal occupations cease, what are they to do? The farmers during the off-season employ Japanese and Hindoos. If the sugar-growers who are making so much money would employ white men in the off-season, there would be no unemployment in the sugar districts.

I am satisfied that, if members of the Committee will read that article in the ‘World's Work’ they will realise that this situation will remain as it is till the currency problem is solved. It is really a Commonwealth matter. If the Commonwealth Government could do something tangible, the position might be improved. They have now come along with a little road-building scheme. They made available a certain sum for roadmaking before; but when that was spent, the men were stranded again, and they are now at the Soldiers' Employment Bureau looking for work. They had only a little temporary work. These men are not capable of doing well at navvying work; they cannot do hard work. We are told, “Put them on the land.” You cannot put everybody on the land. A clerical man cannot go on the land; he looks for clerical work. The Employers' Federation of Queensland, as in Victoria, will not stand up to their obligations. The Labour party are the only party who are trying to do something. The Unemployed Workers' Insurance Bill, which will be before this Chamber shortly, is a true effort to grapple with the situation. It is all very well for hon. members opposite to say that we are not looking after the interests of the worker. We are doing our best. No greater problem confronts this Government than that of unemployment. We realise that it is a growing evil, and we have to do our best to stand up to it. As the Home Secretary pointed out last year, the big bulk of this money is used in keeping women and children from starvation. News of our developmental scheme has travelled and men are flocking here from other States.

Mr. Pease.]

If the State can absorb those men, look what fine citizens they will make. The Opposition are continually defaming the Government. The hon. member for Bowen and other hon. members on this side were sincere in the remarks they made in past years when they were in opposition. The war was not then on. Our Government have had to cope with the difficulty under unparalleled conditions. Never before in the history of the world has there been so much unemployment. Instead of the Opposition indulging in carping criticism regarding these doles, they should help the Government in what they are doing to cope with the situation.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): The hon. member quoted the remark of some authority on the sugar question regarding Hindoos and Japanese. I said to him, "Are they more reliable than the white men?"

Mr. WEIR: You said they were.

Mr. VOWLES: That is the direction in which hon. members are trying to twist my remarks.

Mr. PEASE: Mr. Brennan, of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, said they were more reliable.

Mr. VOWLES: What has been said by anyone else does not concern me. I want to scotch the suggestion that I have expressed that opinion. I could see hon. members opposite putting their heads together, and I concluded that that is the construction they will attempt to saddle me with.

I have listened this morning to figures quoted from no less an authority than the official labour organ of the Government—the "Industrial Gazette." It shows, on the authority—not of Tory individuals, but of union secretaries in the various districts—that on the date on which the figures were compiled there were in the various unions in Queensland 2,071 unemployed. A glance through the reports will show that a large number do not give figures; some say that the conditions are bad, some that they are fair, others that they are moderate. But very seldom do you find that the figures are given. Those which are given account for 2,071 men who are out of work. In addition to that, you have to ascertain how many non-unionists are unemployed. We know that big meatworks have had to close down in the Central district.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The total is a little over 3,000 persons.

Mr. VOWLES: I do not know where the hon. gentleman gets his figures from. Has he any record of the unemployment existing amongst non-unionists? We see that 300 meatworkers are about to be placed on the unemployed market.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: And there are 1,600 returned soldiers out of work.

Mr. VOWLES: So the figures must be getting into the vicinity of 3,500 unemployed.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Some of those are duplicate registrations.

Mr. VOWLES: What is the good of talking about duplication? What is the good of publishing these lists if the hon. gentleman is going to turn round and say that there is duplication?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I know a man who registered for employment in three different places in a week.

[*Mr. Pease.*]

Mr. VOWLES: We are told to excuse what the hon. member for Bowen said in 1915, because the unemployment we have to-day is the aftermath of the war. Did the Secretary for Mines not say, during the Paddington by-election, that within two months after his election the unemployment problem would be solved in Queensland? Unemployment is on the increase in Queensland, and we have 3,500 to-day unemployed. At the time of the Paddington by-election, what were the figures in regard to unemployment?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: A little over 3,000.

Mr. VOWLES: Now there are 3,000 unionists, while another 300 are coming on to the market, and we have not the figures regarding the unemployed non-unionists.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Over 3,000 came from other States.

Mr. VOWLES: It is all very well to apologise for the remarks of the hon. member for Bowen. If it is the aftermath of the war, I would like the Secretary for Mines to explain his position.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am going to do so.

Mr. VOWLES: In the face of the figures, I do not see how he can. I remarked a little while ago that the Government are not too sympathetic to the unemployed returned soldier. I was taken to task by the hon. member for Toowoomba, who rose to a point of order. I venture to say that we shall be able to show specific cases.

Honourable Members conversing in loud tones—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I repeat, for the special benefit of all members, that the "Hansard" staff are working under difficulties. I hope that hon. members will not make their task more difficult.

Mr. VOWLES: I think that we shall be able to show specific cases in which returned soldiers not only have been refused work, but have been refused the doles which are given to the unemployed.

Mr. DASH: Where?

Mr. VOWLES: The hon. member for Aubigny will relate the case of an Imperial soldier who was refused work, and he and his wife were refused rations. The reason was that he had had the temerity to write a letter to the Press expressing his opinion of Government methods.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Is his name Willis?

Mr. VOWLES: Yes. (Government laughter.) Will the hon. gentleman table all the papers connected with the case?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes.

Mr. VOWLES: I ask the hon. gentleman to do it during this debate.

Mr. HARTLEY: I bet the hon. member for Aubigny does not bring the case up.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Is it not rather strange that I could tell you the name?

Mr. VOWLES: He was an English war worker, and his wife was a war worker. They were receiving rations, and an order was given that they were not to get them. Why? Because the man had written a letter to the paper. That is the only conclusion that I can come to. I want those

papers to be placed on the table of the House. The Minister says that he will do it. I challenge him to do it, and let the public see the strength of this. It is all very well for us to criticize the Government and complain against this money being expended. We all admit that the Government must exercise charity in deserving cases. Wherever you go you will find that there are unfortunates who live on charity. Some of them make a business of it; others are forced to do so through their own misfortune. All Governments have to make provision for that class of person. In 1915 the amount which was necessary under a previous Government was under £5,000 a year. Under this Government it is necessary to find in the vicinity of £177,000 for the same purpose. The cause of this, to my mind, is, first of all, that encouragement is not given in many cases for those persons to get work. We are reaching the position that people regard it as a right to go and get these doles; and some prefer to do it rather than to look for work.

At 11.40 a.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. VOWLES: They are encouraged in many cases. I agree with the Premier that single men should not be given rations in the way that they have been given in the past. Work should be found for them. My claim has always been, both with respect to this matter and what I call "waste wages" in Government departments, that it would be better for the Government and for the coffers of the State if some return was obtained for the money expended on rations. We would then have some assets for the money taken out of the Treasury. If we only obtained 15 per cent. or 20 per cent. in results, it would be far better than receiving no value, as is the case to-day.

Mr. DASH: Give us some idea of what you would do.

Mr. VOWLES: Are there not many forms of public works which could be carried on in various districts? Instead of the men waiting for seasonal employment, they could be employed in connection with some of the big public works. They could be put on to do clearing and carrying out some of the earthworks in connection with the proposed railway lines. Some time ago a member of Parliament said to a man who had just come from the canefields at the conclusion of a season, "Don't draw your money out of the Savings Bank. Go and get rations."

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Was that one of the members of the Opposition?

Mr. VOWLES: No, it was a Government member.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Name him.

Mr. VOWLES: It was in Maryborough. If that system is going to be continued, it is going to breed a new generation of persons who will never work, but who will depend on the Government for their "tucker" free of charge. I sincerely trust that better supervision will be given to this department in future. We do not object to deserving cases of charity, but we do strongly object to one section of the community being heavily taxed in order that another section may be encouraged to live a life of idleness and without doing any work.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): The leader of the Opposition, with his crocodile tears,

pretends to extend to the unemployed and the workers generally his appreciation of what the Government are not doing. We have only to go back a little way to appreciate what was sought to be done at a time of great necessity, when the hon. member sat behind a delegation which went to England to prevent loan money coming here for public works.

Mr. VOWLES: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. gentleman in order in saying that I sat behind a delegation that went to England to prevent loan money coming here, when I have emphatically denied that before in this House?

Mr. BRENNAN: I accept the hon. member's statement. After all is said and done, we know that he has got to do as his masters outside tell him. He does not know anything of these matters personally; but, when his masters outside pull the string and say that he has to do so and so, he has got to do it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. gentleman will connect his remarks with "Outdoor Relief."

Mr. BRENNAN: I am showing why relief is necessary when unemployment exists. Had that delegation not gone to England, we would have been able to continue public works. There would have been some unemployment, because men would have come from other States, having been forced out of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia by Governments representing the capitalistic classes. They would come here because they would know that better conditions prevailed here. Lying statements were circulated in the South that Queensland was a Bolshevik State and men could get food here without working. It was also stated that men could come to Queensland where they would have to do no work and could receive high wages without doing anything. The people came here believing those lying statements.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman went down South.

Mr. BRENNAN: I never employed Chinamen.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The hon. member employs detectives. (Laughter.)

Mr. BRENNAN: If the other side employ secret agents, I will employ detectives. Had the hon. member for Pittsworth employed white labour instead of twenty Chinamen on his farm, there would have been twenty more men employed in a useful occupation. Owing to the slump in the cattle industry and in the mining industry, thousands of men were thrown out of work. Had those two industries been kept going, all the unemployment in Queensland would have disappeared, and thousands in the other States could have been absorbed. The leader of the Opposition said that the Government have refused to recognise returned soldiers, and that they were giving preference to men who were not returned soldiers. He suggested that 3,000 men should be discharged from the railways. Every railway employee who went to the war and came back was put back in the railway service. Ours is the only Government who stood loyally to their employees after they came back from the war. Hon. members opposite say that it is the duty of the Government to find work, and then, on the other hand, they say, "Why do you not discharge 3,000 railway employees?" It is impossible to please the

*Mr. Brennan.*]



Opposition. The Sydney "Daily Telegraph" of 22nd May, 1922, said—

"UNEMPLOYMENT BECOMING WORSE.

"POSITION AT NEWCASTLE.

"Where 7,561 men were employed at six large Newcastle establishments in April, 1921, there were only 3,444 employed last month. The unemployment question is most acute at Newcastle in consequence, but the situation throughout the State has grown worse during the last couple of months, according to official figures."

Since the advent of the Fuller Government in New South Wales, the basic wage has been reduced to £3 18s. per week, hours have been increased, and other privileges have been taken from the workers in that State, yet the workers cannot find work.

Mr. VOWLES: Did not the Arbitration Court do that?

Mr. BRENNAN: The Arbitration Court is abolished so far as the public servants in that State are concerned. The "Daily Telegraph" further said—

"The monthly report of the Government Labour Bureau gives the following statement of the position:—

In the metropolitan area, the estimated number of unemployed at the end of March was 6,000, and at the end of April this number has increased to 6,500.

In the country, it was estimated that at the end of March the number of unemployed was 7,000, and at the end of April this number had increased to 8,000. The increase in the metropolitan area is due to the influx of unemployed from other centres, and to the curtailment of a number of manufacturing industries due to the approach of the winter season.

The closing down of additional portions of the Newcastle steel works increased the ranks of the local unemployed, but many of these workers travelled from other parts of the State in search of employment. Notwithstanding the discharge of large numbers of men during the past few months at Lithgow, there was not more than fifty local unemployed at the end of the month."

The Melbourne "Age" said—

"WHAT THEY FOUGHT FOR.

"EX-SOLDIERS' SORRY PLIGHT.

"Maltese are being kept on municipal work in Melbourne and ex-soldiers put off."

Yet, hon. members opposite come into this Chamber and say, "We are the friends of the returned soldiers." The attitude that the

Labour Government took up in [12 p.m.] regard to the returned soldiers was that immediately the war was over the returned soldiers were told to get back into civil life.

Mr. MORGAN: No preference.

Mr. BRENNAN: There never was preference. The Employers' Federation have got on their platform "Preference to Returned Soldiers," but they say, "If we employ a returned soldier and he is not

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successful in his employment, we dare not sack him because we will lose customers." And because they are afraid to sack a returned soldier they dare not employ him, and the hon. member for Toowong knows that that is quite true.

Mr. MAXWELL: I know it is absolutely untrue.

Mr. BRENNAN: I know it is true. The returned soldiers say, "We dare not wear a badge, because, if we are wearing a badge when we go into a place seeking employment, we cannot get work."

Mr. MORGAN: They are not allowed to join the unions.

Mr. BRENNAN: That applies to every person. There is no use in anyone joining a union when there is no work for him in the union. The Government are doing the best they can for those out of employment. They cannot do impossibilities. Hon. members opposite want us to reduce this vote and give these people no assistance at all. They object to borrowing money for reproductive works. They say we are going headlong in debt, and we must not borrow further sums. They have no system at all to meet the situation, while the Premier has been responsible for the cotton-growing scheme. Premier Theodore is the man who devised the cotton scheme. I am going to quote a telegram headed "Soldiers' Employment, Melbourne Registrations" which appeared in the "Telegraph" of 16th May, 1922—

"Seventy-six men were placed in work through the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Employment Bureau last week. This might have been regarded as fairly satisfactory but for the fact that in the same period 219 new registrations were received. On Saturday 765 names were on the books. On the previous Saturday the number was 642."

Then, in the Sydney "Daily Mail" of 17th May there is a telegram headed, "Starving Ex-soldiers," which reads—

"The Returned Soldiers' League rooms were besieged this morning by returned soldiers in search of employment. Many told the secretary of the league that they had had nothing to eat since midday on Monday, and several declared that they had passed a very cold night in the Domain.

"The Cabinet this afternoon discussed the question of unemployment generally. A subcommittee was appointed to go into the whole matter on the reports which were before Cabinet with full power to make any further investigation considered necessary."

In the "Daily Mail" of 15th March, 1922, we find this—

"DAYS OF HUNGER.

"SOLDIERS' PITIFUL PLIGHT.

"The secretary of the Returned Soldiers' League stated to-day that the position of the men was pitiful, and was worse than ever. Some of the men, he said, had had nothing to eat for two or three days."

Just compare the condition of the returned soldiers in Sydney with the position of the returned soldiers in Queensland. While there are many returned soldiers in Queensland

who are out of employment, the position here is nothing like so serious as it is in New South Wales and in Victoria, and the reason for that is because we have a sympathetic Government in Queensland, and a Government who are not afraid to spend money in developing Queensland. We know very well that, if this Government went out of power to-morrow, hon. members opposite would curtail loan expenditure and go in for retrenchment in a wholesale fashion. We know very well that on the railways alone they would discharge 3,000 men.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Who said they would?

Mr. BRENNAN: Your leaders said there were 3,000 too many men on the railways. You have said that if you were here—

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: You had a pretty good run.

Mr. BRENNAN: You had a better run than I did.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I appeal to the hon. member to continue his speech and not to take so much notice of interjections, and I appeal to hon. members not to interject. All interjections are disorderly.

Mr. BRENNAN: Especially senseless interjections. This Government have done more than any Government in the world to deal with the question of unemployment. Last year the surplus of immigrants over emigrants was 4,000. Most of those 4,000 were workers who came from the other States, and if we have 3,000 unemployed in Queensland to-day, it is due to the fact that a large number of workers have come into Queensland from the other States during the last twelve months. The whole thing resolves itself into this—that the Government are still continuing their policy of development, and if the metal market and the cattle industry improve—

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: "H."

Mr. BRENNAN: I have enough faith to say that the cattle industry is shortly going to improve. This Government are not responsible for the failure of the English market or for what happened in the Argentine. During the war, the pastoralists got as high as 55s. per 100 lb. for their meat. Since then the price has come down to 14s. or 15s., but they got 55s. while this Government were in power; yet hon. members opposite tell us that the cattle industry cannot improve while this Government remain in power. It is ridiculous to hold the Government responsible for the slump in the cattle industry. The Government must not allow one deserving individual to go without being supplied with food. I for one would not stand behind a Government that would allow a hungry man to go without some rations if, through no fault of his own, he was out of work. In my electorate we have able-bodied men who are anxious and willing to work but who at times find themselves out of work. It is through no fault of the Government that they are out of work. It is because we have been going through hard times; but times are going to improve, and these workers will bear with the Government knowing that they will look after the welfare of the workers of Queensland.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): The hon. member for Herbert in his recent speech in this

Committee, in my opinion, was guilty of wilfully endeavouring to deceive this Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order in saying that an hon. member is guilty of wilfully deceiving the Committee, and I hope the hon. member will withdraw it.

Mr. MORGAN: If it is not parliamentary, I will withdraw it and say that the hon. member endeavoured to deceive the Committee.

Mr. HARTLEY: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member for Murilla in order in saying that the hon. member for Herbert endeavoured to deceive the Committee? It is not parliamentary to accuse any hon. member of attempting to deceive the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I would ask the hon. member for Murilla whether he made use of those words.

Mr. MORGAN: Words similar to them.

The CHAIRMAN: Then I hope the hon. member will withdraw. I take it that the hon. member has sufficient knowledge of parliamentary procedure to enable him to address the Committee without using unparliamentary language.

Mr. MORGAN: I will withdraw and start again. The hon. member for Herbert, by quoting information and refusing to give the name of the paper he quoted, was not acting in accord with parliamentary procedure.

Mr. PEASE: I will give you the name of the paper. As a matter of fact, the paragraph I quoted from was printed in last Sunday's paper and was taken from a Melbourne paper, but it did not say what Melbourne paper it was. I intend to find out what paper it was.

Mr. MORGAN: I am pleased to hear that. The hon. member should have made that explanation when he was challenged. When hon. members quote from a newspaper, the first interjection from the other side is, "What paper is it?" and "What is the date?" But the hon. member refused to give us that information, showing that he came here with imperfect information. Had we let the matter go without challenging the hon. member, he, by inference, would have caused people who read his speech to come to the conclusion that the information was obtained from some Tory paper in the South—

Mr. PEASE: It was taken from either the "Age" or the "Argus."

Mr. MORGAN: And that it was copied from a newspaper which was out to condemn the Trades Hall in respect of the unemployment in that State. The hon. member also endeavoured to lead the Committee to believe that the relief given to the people who are out of work is confined to the sick and infirm. We have not got the figures for the year which has just expired, and I hope that the Minister will give us those figures before the vote goes through. It is a pity we have not got the report; but this is only one of many instances in which hon. members are expected to discuss important matters without having the departmental reports to assist them. In looking over the report for 1921—I hope the hon. member for Herbert will listen to this, and will not

*Mr. Morgan.]*

attempt to try and lead the Committee to believe that the doles which were distributed last year were principally given to those who were in need owing to illness and infirmity.

Mr. PEASE: The Home Secretary is my authority. Why did you not reply to the Home Secretary last session?

Mr. MORGAN: I will give the figures which are contained in the report for 1920-21, and no doubt they will be similar, or greater, for the year just expired. In 1921-22 those who received assistance were 82 aged and sick men, 64 wives of aged and sick men, 226 widows, 74 deserted women, and 139 wives of men away, or a total of 585.

Mr. PEASE: How many families?

Mr. MORGAN: 1,584 families.

Mr. PEASE: How many wives of able-bodied men? Don't mislead the House.

Mr. MORGAN: Those families include the families of able-bodied men. There were 1,017 able-bodied men and 904 wives of able-bodied men who received assistance, showing that almost every one of those able-bodied men, with the exception of about 100, had wives who received assistance. No doubt they had families, which are included amongst the 1,500 families which received assistance. The able-bodied men and women who received assistance numbered 1,923, as against 585 who received assistance owing to the fact that they were wives, widows, deserted women, and wives of men who were away. The figures show that 1,923 able-bodied men and women were forced last year to seek assistance from the Government because they could not get work. The hon. member wished to infer that that was the aftermath of the war; but that is not so. I will admit that a great deal of unemployment throughout the world has been the aftermath of the war; but the war has been over for some considerable time; and, if we had had a Government in power who were out to assist industry, there would not have been the unemployment that there is to-day in Queensland. The trouble is that the Government have placed so many burdens on industry that a great many of them have ceased to give employment to the workers, whose families have had to receive assistance in order to keep the wolf from the door.

I blame the Arbitration Courts to a very great extent for the present position. The Arbitration Courts did not realise the fact that after the war there would be a slump in the prices of minerals, and that, unless the overhead charges and the wages receded in accordance with that fall in prices, mining operations could not be continued. The Arbitration Court judges, unfortunately, adopted the principle that, if an industry could not pay a certain wage, it should cease to exist. I think that is a wrong attitude to take up, and it is the cause of a great deal of unemployment in Australia to-day. The Court should have adopted the attitude that an industry should be allowed to remain in existence and give employment by reducing wages in conformity with any reduction which might take place in the selling price of the product of the industry.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: When did an Arbitration Court judge say that an industry should cease to exist?

Mr. MORGAN: Mr. Justice Higgins made use of the expression on one occasion that,

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if an industry could not afford to pay certain wages, it should cease to exist. The Secretary for Mines told us that in 1914 copper could be payably mined in Queensland at £60 a ton.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: At one time it was payable at £54 a ton.

Mr. MORGAN: That is the price which the hon. gentleman stated was paid before the war, and the industry was then in a flourishing condition. Owing to the war the price of copper went up, and likewise the overhead charges. Although the market price is actually £10 better to-day than it was in 1914 prior to the war, we find that the industry cannot now be carried on at a profit. The Minister admits that that is so. If the conditions were made similar to those which existed in 1914, would it not be better for all the men who are employed in that industry? Would there be the same number of unemployed in Queensland to-day? The Minister will admit that there would not. While you may increase wages and reduce hours of work in industries which find a market in Australia, the moment industries have to compete in the overseas markets they cannot continue to carry on under those conditions. The trouble is not with industries which have only to compete one against the other in Australia, and which are protected by high duties, but in regard to those industries which have to find a market for their products outside Australia. Those industries are not giving employment to the workers to-day, and that is the reason why we have such a large army of unemployed in Queensland and other parts of Australia. If all those industries were employing the same number of men that they employed in 1914 men would not be compelled to go to the Government for doles in order to keep their wives and families.

Mr. BRENNAN: What industries are you referring to?

Mr. MORGAN: There is copper mining, for instance. There is a good market for copper at the present price. This is only one of the matters appertaining to unemployment, and one of the directions in which the Government have failed. The Arbitration Courts throughout Australia have also failed to grasp the situation. The hon. member for Herbert stated that there was a large number of soldiers out of work. I deplore the fact that a number of men who fought for their country cannot obtain work at the present time, while others who did not go, but who shirked their responsibility, have got fine jobs and are retaining those positions. It is unfortunately a fact that hon. members opposite have not got any time for returned soldiers. The hon. member for Toowoomba himself admitted that he said to men when they came back from the war, "We do not intend to give you any preference. Take off your uniforms and become civilians."

Mr. BRENNAN: "And forget the war." Quite right.

Mr. MORGAN: That is what the hon. gentleman said. We know that that is the policy of the Labour party, and the fact that they went to the war does not convince the Labour party that they deserve any consideration over the men who stayed at home. Hon. members opposite cannot deny that

fact, so why blame the Employers' Federation or others because the soldiers cannot get work?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Why blame the Government?

Mr. MORGAN: The Government should give work to the returned soldiers, and should give them preference. In some cases when the soldiers do not belong to a union, they are told to go and get union tickets; but when they apply for tickets they are turned down. They are told that there are so many members of the union out of work, and the officials refuse to issue any more tickets. That is the reason why some returned soldiers cannot get work—because they do not belong to the union. If an employer gave work to a returned soldier who did not have a union ticket, the other men would say that he was a non-unionist and they would go on strike.

Mr. BRENNAN: Quite right.

Mr. MORGAN: Some of our friends opposite say that these statements are incorrect, but the hon. member for Toowoomba is courageous enough to admit that what I am saying is correct.

Mr. BRENNAN: They should join a union.

Mr. HARTLEY: The unions kept their dues paid up all the time they were away. Why should they not take out their tickets when they come back?

Mr. MORGAN: I admit that in some instances their dues were paid while they were away; but the members of the Labour party have never been sympathetic towards the returned soldiers any more than they have been towards the ordinary worker.

Mr. BRENNAN: We stand for the masses of the people.

Mr. MORGAN: The Labour party put the returned soldier in the same category as any ordinary worker who may be looking for a job. I have endeavoured to make suggestions to the Government to adopt some other policy than that of giving doles and getting nothing in return. If the Government had adopted my suggestions, we would have something to show for the money they spent last year in doles. We know that doles were paid to 1,000 able-bodied men. No doubt there were many capable men amongst them. My suggestion was that, instead of paying out £174,000 in doles to these men without asking them to do any work for it, it would be better to give them something to do. It is a serious thing to pay out all this money, and it is a reflection upon the Government that they have nothing to show for it. The Government cannot point to any public work to show that they got any return for the expenditure of any part of this £174,000. If the Government cannot get full value for the money they spend, they should at least get some value. I suggested last year that an area of land should be allotted for the unemployed. That land could be cut up into small areas and the unemployed put to work on it, ringbarking the trees and fencing in the different areas. The land could be made suitable for farms, and, if any of the unemployed wished to take up any of that land, they could do so. What would have been the result if that policy had been adopted last year? If we had spent £174,000 in the Dawson Valley last year, we could have paid £1 5s. an acre to the unemployed engaged in the work, and we would have got over 100,000 acres of land ready for

men to start cotton-growing. We would then have had something to show for the money spent. What have we got to show now? Absolutely nothing. The Government should go in for these matters in a practical manner, but they are continuing the same old practice of paying out doles. I quite admit that it is necessary to give some relief. We cannot let people starve. That practice was introduced, not by a Labour Government but by a Liberal Government. Years before ever there was a Labour Government men could go to the various police stations and get rations. No one can say that the old Liberal Government allowed men and women to starve. Such a thing cannot be proved, at any rate. But we never encouraged the loafer in any way.

Mr. HARTLEY: You fed them on blue peas.

Mr. MORGAN: This Government give doles.

Mr. HARTLEY: You gave them blue peas.

Mr. MORGAN: We succeeded in finding them work.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: You did not.

Mr. MORGAN: We succeeded in finding work for all the people who would work. The work on the railways will not absorb all the unemployed that we have got, so I suggest to the Government that they should map out a comprehensive scheme for the expenditure of the £52,000 we have got on the Estimates. If the Government had some businesslike scheme, there would be something to show for the money. The Government have failed miserably in their duty with respect to the unemployed. They have taken no steps to solve the difficulty. We know that there is a greater amount of unemployment in Queensland than in any other State.

Mr. BRENNAN: What about the Burnett scheme? That will absorb 3,000.

Mr. MORGAN: There are many men who cannot be employed on the Burnett scheme. There are many men who cannot work on railway construction, but they would be more useful to the State if they were put on other work instead of being given doles. The present system is no good to the State, and should not be tolerated any longer than is possible. We know that people are coming from the other States to Queensland because we are giving them doles.

Mr. HARTLEY: You came from Victoria yourself.

Mr. MORGAN: I came from Victoria to do work in Queensland and to provide work. I have always done work since I came here, and I have provided a lot of work for others. I had a certain amount of money when I came from Victoria, and I have spent it all in Queensland. I have done more for Queensland than many hon. members opposite who have lived here for years, but have done nothing but preach discontent and strife. That is what has brought about unemployment. Hon. members opposite preach strikes, discontent, and unrest in the different industries. Men who do that are certainly not public benefactors.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): Like everybody else, I regret that in a young State like Queensland it is necessary to provide relief for men who are not able to earn sufficient money to keep themselves in comfort in the

Mr. Hartley.]

usual avenues of employment. The discussion which has taken place does not encourage anyone to think that hon. members opposite have any suggestions to offer that will lead to a solution of the unemployed difficulty. I am very much in accord with the remarks of the hon. member [12.30 p.m.] for Herbert that a good deal of the stagnation of industry has been caused by the dislocation of the world's finances and by the huge levy that is being made on a young and undeveloped country in consequence of the tremendous destruction of property in the war and the price we are being asked to pay. If the patriots of this country, the people who love and believe in her destinies, are genuine and sincere, they will be able to make suggestions along lines that will lead to a solution. The drain of interest on war debts would alone be sufficient, if diverted to other channels, to give valuable and reproductive employment to every man who is at present out of work. The position only needs a little self-sacrifice on the part of persons who invested their money in war loans, for the purpose, as they were told, of making the world safe for them. If they will forgo the interest on their loans, enough money will be secured to provide work for everyone. I do not say anything about the money that was invested in the loans—that capital can be repaid—but the country cannot stagger on under its tremendous burden of war interest, and at the same time raise new money for developmental work.

I do not think it necessary to say much on the other questions that have been raised, except that I am satisfied from my knowledge of the administration of the vote, that it is done justly and upon exhaustive inquiry, and that in but few cases is it improperly paid away. But one particular instance has been brought before the Committee. Hon. members opposite have never ceased to try to cover up their sins and insincerity with the flapping and the waving of the Union Jack, nor have they ever hesitated to ambush from behind the returned soldier. If anybody is responsible for the neglect of the soldiers, it is the employing class. The men who tore up their scrap of paper are the employers, who have not put returned soldiers back in the positions they occupied before they went to the war. I listened attentively to the remarks of hon. members opposite, because I want to bring this particular case under the notice of the leader of the Opposition and the deputy leader, the hon. member for Aubigny. They are pretty slick at throwing slurs across the Chamber and accusing us of neglecting the interests of returned soldiers. They have ventured to submit a case of a returned soldier to whom, they say, relief rations have been refused because he has written letters against the Government. But, when we asked the leader of the Opposition for particulars, he said the hon. member for Aubigny would give them to us.

Mr. VOWLES: The Minister said he would table the papers.

Mr. HARTLEY: I said that I was prepared to bet the hon. member that he would not give them. If he is fair and square about the thing, if he has a charge to make on behalf of a persecuted returned soldier, let him get up and back it up.

Mr. VOWLES: We are waiting for those papers to be tabled.

Mr. HARTLEY: Why wait? Because the hon. member knows that it is a bogus charge.

[Mr. Hartley.]

If he had thought that we were unprepared with the ammunition to reply to him, he would have gone on. It is no good trying to sidetrack the matter by saying that the Minister has the papers.

Mr. VOWLES: I ask for the papers now.

Mr. HARTLEY: The hon. member said he has all particulars of the case, and now he is trying to fool the public and to curry favour with a certain section of jingoistic papers by endeavouring to show that the Government were persecuting a returned soldier and would leave him to starve.

Mr. VOWLES: That is right.

Mr. HARTLEY: And the minute he finds that we are armed with the particulars of the case he says, "You will be able to see them."

Mr. VOWLES: The Minister said he would table the papers, and I am waiting for him to do so.

Mr. HARTLEY: The hon. member said that the hon. member for Aubigny would give the particulars. I am challenging the hon. member for Aubigny to give the particulars. The hon. member should not make a charge unless he is game to stand up and substantiate it.

Mr. VOWLES: We are waiting for the papers.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is you who are making the charge.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*): I am surprised that so much heat has been introduced into this debate. Accusations have been made against a certain section for not keeping their pledges to the returned "Diggers." I do not know any man on the other side of the House who is associated with any committee which is trying to find work for the unemployed "Diggers."

Mr. HARTLEY: As a matter of fact, I was on the War Council till "Billy" Hughes's scheme knocked it on the head.

Mr. MAXWELL: If a thing is right, it is right irrespective of "Billy" Hughes or "Billy" anybody else.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We are dealing with it in a general way.

Mr. MAXWELL: And eliminating the "Digger." I want to say this also to hon. members opposite—that an opportunity was given to them, if they wanted to show their sympathy with the "Digger," to help him by putting their names down on a subscription list which has been opened.

Mr. PEASE: How many men on this side have money so that they could contribute?

Mr. MAXWELL: I am going to give some facts in refutation of a statement which has been made about employers. I did not want to do it, but it has been dragged out of me. When the returned "Digger" was looking for his rights in the matter of employment to enable him and his wife and family to live, statements were made that the "boss" had not "done his bit," and I issued a challenge through the Press to any "Digger" to come forward and prove it—not that I believed that it was impossible that some employer had not "done his bit," but so that I should be able, as chairman of the "Diggers" Unemployment Committee, to go to such employers and say, "Why did you not do your 'bit' by this boy?" That challenge appeared in the papers of the metropolitan area, and of all the cases I got in reply

I found only four men who had not received a "dinkum" deal from the employer. Their cases were thoroughly investigated, and the statements made by the men were found to be incorrect. Some of these men for some years previously had not held a position with the employer who, they claimed, had not treated him fairly. That was so in three cases out of four. The fourth case I have not been able to finalise, because I have not been able to get hold of the manager of the company concerned owing to his absence from Brisbane on a holiday. As chairman of the Unemployed "Diggers" Committee, I wrote to the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia, asking them to find out what "Digger" had not received a fair deal from his employer, and to let us know—not so that we might receive any kudos for what we were doing, but so that we could get these men back into their positions. This is the reply which I received, dated 25th July, 1922—

"I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 31st May regarding complaints from returned soldiers against employers who had not carried out their promises."

You will notice, Mr. Kirwan, that my letter was dated 31st May of this year, which goes to show that I did not wait until I had heard the debates that were to take place during this session of the Parliament. The letter continues—

"Your letter has been the subject of discussion by my committee, and I was instructed to have a notice placed on the employment board asking any soldier who thought he had been wronged to advise us. The following is a copy of a letter which has been forwarded me from our employment office:—

In reference to your communication enclosing the request from Mr. Maxwell regarding any unemployed soldier who thought he had been wrongly treated, I beg to advise that a notice to this effect has been on the notice board for a fortnight, and no complaints have been received."

The hon. member for Herbert this morning said that 100 returned soldiers were registered for employment at the Unemployed Soldiers' Bureau in Elizabeth street. A great number of these unfortunate unemployed men have been there. If they have seen this notice—which they would—and no complaints have been made, it gives the lie direct to the man who states that the employers have not "done their bit" towards these men.

Mr. PEASE: Will you say that that refers to the employers of Queensland?

Mr. MAXWELL: As president of an organisation to which I belong, I wrote to practically 7,000 employers or organisations of employers, asking them to "do their bit" loyally to the men who went over the top and enabled men like the hon. member for Toowoomba and the hon. member for Herbert to live in the liberty and freedom they enjoy to-day in this community.

Mr. FOLEY: That is worn out.

Mr. MAXWELL: It may be worn out, but it is just as well to emphasise it. I did more than the hon. member for Toowoomba did.

Mr. BRENNAN: You did?

Mr. MAXWELL: I will leave it to the public and to the "Diggers" to say what I did. It is a fearful state of affairs when we find that it is anticipated that £50,000 will be required to keep the unfortunate people who are out of employment.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Don't you think that the Commonwealth Government are under an obligation to the "Diggers"?

Mr. MAXWELL: Yes.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: They are discharging it, too. (Government dissent.)

Mr. MAXWELL: I am glad of that interjection. I and my colleagues approached the Federal Prime Minister and asked him to make available £250,000 for the employment of returned "Diggers"; and he did it!

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Haven't we done something?

Mr. MAXWELL: I do not know what you have done. I do know that during the time that the Philp and Denham Governments were in office the present Attorney-General (Mr. Mullan) and other hon. members now sitting on the other side dilated with no uncertain sound on what the duty of the Government was. They said that one unemployed man was a disgrace to any Government. It is essential that we should realise that there are unfortunates in our community who require relief.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You cannot say that the Attorney-General has no sympathy. Sympathy has been meted out to the returned "Diggers."

Mr. MAXWELL: I want to see practical sympathy. When the Nationalist party held the reins of government they were twitted on every occasion when there was unemployment; now we are informed that this unemployed difficulty is the aftermath of the war. The war has been finished some time. The Secretary for Mines, when he was a candidate for parliamentary honours in the Paddington electorate, said that after he was returned unemployment would be a thing of the past. To-day it is more acute than ever it has been.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I have my speech here.

Mr. MAXWELL: So have I. I have the hon. gentleman's little pamphlet, too. The hon. gentleman said that it was against the best interests of the community that there should be any unemployment. So it is. It behoves the Opposition, the Government, and every person in the State to do all they possibly can to create confidence.

Mr. HARTLEY: Will you support the remission of interest on the war loans, to give returned "Diggers" work?

Mr. MAXWELL: It behoves members on both sides, and the community generally, to do all they possibly can to create the confidence that is essential to obliterate for ever this unemployment. As the good old Book says—"The poor ye have always with you."

Mr. BRENNAN: The poor old dupes, too.

Mr. MAXWELL: It is necessary that these people should be protected. It is reprehensible that, for the year just closed, £177,000 should have been spent in doles, after seven years' administration by this Government. What have they done? They

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are offering the unemployed the socialisation of industries—the scrapping of industries—which will swell the ranks of the unemployed.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS interjecting freely—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I appeal to hon. members again, on behalf of the "Hansard" staff, who are doing a double shift. Surely hon. members should be able to express their views in the form of a speech.

Mr. MAXWELL: There is a cure for unemployment which will result in its obliteration, and that is to clear out the present occupants of the Treasury benches.

Mr. FORDE (*Rockhampton*): We can always admire any man's good deeds; but when he parades them for political purposes, and unceasingly tells us of his virtues in this Chamber in order to catch a few votes, it is particularly nauseating to any self-respecting man. We have heard the outburst from the hon. member for Toowong as to what he personally did to win the war. What has this little "Digger" from Toowong done for the returned soldiers of Brisbane?

Mr. MAXWELL: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. gentleman in order in saying that I was personally responsible for doing all this work?

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. gentleman denies that he did it, the hon. member for Rockhampton must accept his denial.

Mr. FORDE: I accept the hon. member's denial that he personally did not do much at all. He tried to get hon. members to believe that a lot of credit should come his way for what had been done on behalf of the returned soldiers in Brisbane. If the hon. member has done anything for the returned men, I am glad to know it, because the amount of unemployment amongst returned soldiers throughout Australia to-day is deplorable. There is more unemployment amongst returned soldiers in other States of Australia than in Queensland. The hon. member for Toowong tried to lead hon. members to believe that he was a friend of the worker, and that he is the good, sound democrat from the most conservative constituency in the metropolis. He was chairman of the committee which sent that infamous delegation to London to cut off our money supplies, which did more to create unemployment in Queensland than anything I know of. He was also a prominent person at the secret meeting of the Employers' Federation which was held at the Union Bank Chambers in the early part of this year. At that meeting the hon. gentleman, speaking what he thought, said—

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

This little "Digger" from Toowong said that they had to attack the workers and the unions and wipe out unionism.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will connect his remarks with the vote before the Committee.

Mr. FORDE: Yes. If hon. members opposite could bring into force what they indicated that night, there would be thousands and thousands of additional unemployed in Queensland. They would abolish all the unions in Queensland, and according to

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Brigadier-General Thompson, they would have a small band of military to put down industrial disputes. One hon. member opposite, the other day interjected, "To keep the workers in their proper place." If they attempt to do that, there will be considerably more unemployed in Queensland than there are to-day. The leader of the Opposition indicated that in a certain sphere of the public service three men were doing two men's jobs. The inference to be drawn from that is that there were hundreds and hundreds of men in the public service whom the Opposition would dismiss if they became the Government. A greater amount would have to be paid for relief, if the men were not to be allowed to starve. In his speech at Laidley the leader of the Opposition said that there were 3,000 men too many in the Railway Department. The inference is that, if he became Premier of Queensland, those men would be dismissed from the Railway Department, and there would be considerably more unemployed in Queensland, and the amount required for relief would be greater. I think it was the hon. member for Kennedy who said that the Government did not give preference to returned soldiers. To hear the hon. member talking, one would think that all the private employers gave preference to returned soldiers. An article appearing in the "Daily Mail" in connection with an appointment made by the Southport Shire Council states—

"A returned 'Digger' has written criticising the action of the Southport Shire Council in appointing the son of one of the aldermen as motor-lorry driver, when the policy of the council is supposed to be preference for returned soldiers."

The Southport Shire Council is a Tory council, and that is what some Tory councils do. Hon. members opposite say that the Government have not done the fair thing by the returned soldiers. At the third annual meeting of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League, Mr. J. F. Reid is reported in the Brisbane "Telegraph" of 4th March, 1921, as having stated—

"It was only fair that the other side of the question should be put. When he returned from the war the promises which were made to him by private employers before he enlisted were not kept. He secured a position from the State Government in the Soldiers' Inquiry Office, and instructions were issued that the utmost was to be done to employ returned soldiers."

He could not get a job from the conservative employers, but the Labour Government gave him a job, and told him it was his duty to endeavour to get employment for returned soldiers. Mr. Reid is reported as having further stated—

"In justice to the State Government it is only right to say that it had done its best to employ returned soldiers."

At the same meeting, Mr. J. R. Foster is reported as having stated—

"The strenuous time he was having as district secretary was mainly due to unemployment. Mr. Kerr had made the bold assertion that, with only two exceptions, private employers had honoured their obligations to returned men in the matter of employment. It might be that the employer had honoured his obligations to the extent of giving a man a

temporary job when he returned from the war, but he would find that in many instances the soldier did not hold the position for more than six months. I can quote specific instances of soldiers to whom I am trying to give 'a disgusting dole' to keep them out of the gutter. A list of employers who had not fairly treated returned soldiers should be published in our official organ, with the request that soldiers and their dependants should not patronise those firms."

The statements emanating from hon. members opposite to-day defending the way that their employer friends have treated the returned soldiers are misleading balderdash intended to deceive the people outside. Mr. Foster points out that jobs of a temporary nature were given, but within a few weeks or few months the soldiers were discharged and the employers took their own friends on again.

Mr. HARTLEY: That is the employers' attitude every time.

Mr. FORDE: I agree with the hon. member for Fitzroy. He came back from the South African war and found that the Tory employers would not do much for him. To show how the Commonwealth Government are dealing with the matter, I desire to quote the following extract from the "Daily Standard" of the 23rd April, 1922:—

"LITHGOW DISMISSALS.

"More men are being dismissed from the Lithgow Small Arms' Factory, 100 having received notices to quit. Included in the list are returned soldiers, maimed soldiers, and married men, while in many instances single men are being retained. A further 150 notices will be issued to-day. None of the thirteen foremen at the works, each drawing up to £500 a year, have yet been dismissed, the Federal Government's policy being to dismiss those on low wages."

I quote that extract to show how the Federal Nationalist Government is treating returned soldiers in the other States of the [2 p.m.] Australia. In one of the local papers of the 23rd April, 1922. I find the position in Melbourne stated as follows:—

"The position as regards unemployment grows worse day by day," said Mr. Harper, manager of the Returned Employment Bureau, St. Kilda, yesterday. Approximately 900 unemployed Soldiers had registered at his office since Monday, and only thirty-two positions had been filled. On the average 500 men called at Mr. Harper's office every day. Yesterday 494, a record number, applied for work between 10 a.m. and noon."

This shows that there are in Melbourne, approximately, 1,000 returned men looking for employment, and, surely, hon. members opposite cannot blame the Queensland Labour Government for that. It is something over which we have no control. There is not a Labour Government in power in Victoria. The Queensland Labour Government are striving to find employment for the unemployed generally. There will be, approximately, 2,000 workmen employed on the construction works in connection with the Northern Burnett scheme when they are

equipped to the fullest extent. Then there are the Dawson Valley water conservation and irrigation scheme and the Baralaba-Castle Creek Railway with the proposed extension to Delusion Creek. These works will employ a considerably larger number of men than has ever before been employed at one time in Central Queensland. Then, the Labour Government's guaranteed price for cotton will result in the employment of a considerable number of men in the growing of cotton and of others in picking it. One has only to look at the exports from Queensland to see that industry has not been stifled. The exports from Queensland last year increased by £200,000, as against a decrease of £8,500,000 from Victoria, and a decrease of £4,000,000 in Tory-governed West Australia. Furthermore, the figures show that, instead of the value of manufactures decreasing in Queensland, they are on the increase. In 1914, the total value of goods manufactured in Queensland was £25,400,000, and in 1920 the total value was £39,783,000, and the average amount to the credit of depositors in the Savings Bank in Queensland under a Labour Government is greater than it is in any State of Australia. I mention that to show that the workers are being better treated by the Labour Government of Queensland than they are in the other States. If the party opposite were in power, there would be further unemployment, and further relief would have to be given or the people would be left to starve.

One hon. member referred to the sugar industry. That industry also has prospered under Labour rule. In 1915, the year in which this Government came into power, the sugar industry was worth to Queensland £1,500,000, and in 1921 it was worth £9,500,000.

I am authentically informed that 25,000 people are directly engaged in the industry in Queensland. At the recent Sugar Conference it was stated that £6,000,000 are paid in wages every year in the sugar industry, giving employment, not only to thousands of Queenslanders but to upwards of 4,000 men from the other States of Australia who come here for the seasonal work.

Mr. FLETCHER: What has all this to do with outdoor relief?

Mr. FORDE: It has a lot to do with it, because, if we did not treat the sugar industry well, and give employment to these people, they would have to get relief. What annoys the hon. member is that the Government are keeping those people away from the relief depot in Alice street. One big business manager at a recent meeting of the Brisbane Chamber of Commerce—Mr. J. N. Devoy—said—

"It was necessary to have taxation, and manufacturers had done well during the last five years."

That absolutely disposes of the argument of hon. members opposite that we have stopped production and prevented enterprise from expanding, causing additional unemployment, which in its turn, they say, has made men go to the relief depot. I find that a good deal of money has been spent in Government relief for people other than the unemployed. There are some people who cannot work. Hon. members opposite would lead us to believe that there are thousands of people who will not work and who are living on

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the Government, which, they say, connive at that sort of thing. That is not so. From inquiries made, I find that forty-four aged and sick men, thirty-three wives of aged and sick men, and 172 widows get rations every month; seventy-three deserted women come along to the dépôt in Brisbane every month for relief, and 131 wives of men who are away from Brisbane also get relief from the dépôt. That makes a total of 453 who cannot possibly work and who get relief in Brisbane every month. If you multiply that number by twelve, you get 5,436 for twelve months. Will hon. members opposite say that we should not give relief to these people? These figures are for Brisbane only. I ask hon. members to think for a moment of the people in other centres like Rockhampton, Townsville, Toowoomba, and Gladstone who come within the category of those I have just referred to who are sick and infirm, many of them sick women who are unable to obtain work. They are getting relief, and will have to continue to get relief, because they are unable to work through physical disability. In some cases the Home Secretary to my knowledge has given relief to mothers with large families—State monetary aid amounting to the sum of £2 10s. per week, in the case of a woman with five children, being insufficient. It is impossible for her to carry on indefinitely on that amount, when she has to buy clothing for her little ones, and, consequently, she has to come to the State and ask for rations. In deserving cases that relief has been granted. The Minister is careful in those cases not to be extravagant. He tries to keep down the expenditure, but the assistance has been granted in some cases, and I think that it should be granted. In other cases there are old-age pensioners who are unable to live on their pensions, and in special circumstances the Minister has given them small relief in the way of rations. I believe that the people of Queensland will endorse the action of the Government in granting that relief. The Government, in order to minimise the expenditure under the heading of "Rations," established a store in Brisbane where rations can be obtained at the lowest possible price. It is authentically stated that it costs 19s. to buy rations outside which can be obtained in the store for 10s. Not only are there people in the category of those who are physically unable to earn their own living in Brisbane, but you will find a considerable number in other centres of the State.

To hear hon. members opposite speaking, anyone would think that Queensland is the only country where there are any unemployed, and that there are no unemployed at all in any other part of the world. We know that, as the result of years of devastating war, industries have been dislocated and there are large numbers of unemployed in every country in the world to-day. They are in much greater numbers now than in pre-war days. I have here some figures to show the numbers of unemployed in different parts of the world, and anyone studying these figures will understand the magnitude of the problem that exists for finding work for the unemployed. The figures I have before me show the numbers wholly and partially unemployed in Europe are:—Great Britain, 1,938,022; France, 16,207; Germany, 209,293; Holland, 83,723; Switzerland, 99,541; Italy, 606,819; Denmark, 92,702; Sweden, 16,884; Norway, 3,673;

Belgium, 85,264; Poland, 182,000; Czechoslovakia, 16,000. That shows that there are unemployed all over the world to-day, and in Europe alone, exclusive of Russia, there are 4,000,000 unemployed. The total number of unemployed in the twelve European countries which I have just quoted amount to 3,400,000. To the European total must also be added another 3,400,000 who are unemployed in the United States of America. There are no Labour Governments in power in any of the countries I have just quoted. That proves that unemployment is largely the aftermath of the war. The local newspapers indicate that in England there are millions of people on the verge of starvation. Surely the Labour party is not to blame for that! In Great Britain alone they paid out £58,600,000 in unemployed benefits during 1921. Just mark that—£58,600,000 as compared with the few hundred thousand pounds which we have spent in Queensland! There is more unemployment in Great Britain to-day than in any previous period since 1879. Yet hon. members opposite say that the war had nothing to do with unemployment. Of course, the war had a lot to do with it. It is well known that throughout Queensland to-day, owing to the high prices, and because of the very stringent tactics adopted by the wholesale merchants, the small tradespeople are not able to get their stocks on credit. The merchants demand cash, and because of this the retailers have also to demand cash from the workers, and that is forcing them to go to the relief dépôt to get their rations from the Government store. In normal times the small tradespeople would be able to give them credit. Many people used to be able to get credit for three, six, and nine months, and they were able to carry on, but they cannot do it now. If any class of the community is making a good thing in this period of trial for Queensland, it is the great wholesale merchants of Brisbane.

Mr. FLETCHER: It is a period of trial right enough.

Mr. FORDE: Yes, due to the aftermath of the war, and alleviated by this Government. If it were not for this Government, the people would be going through a most excruciating time. The Government are true to their principles. They are not like the hon. member for Port Curtis, who left the Nationalists because they would not give him the leadership of the party. I have had a number of complaints from unemployed regarding the handing out of relief, because it is considered the Government are not generous enough. The Minister is endeavouring to keep the vote down, but, whilst there are needy and hungry people in the community, we would not be worthy of the name of legislators if we allowed them to die by the wayside, in the way some hon. members opposite would do.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): Earlier in the day the hon. member for Burrum did me the honour of quoting some remarks made by me on the relief vote in 1915. I am quite satisfied, taking into consideration the youth of that hon. member, that, if he continues to read my speeches, there is no doubt he will develop on fairly sound lines.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and laughter.

Mr. COLLINS: When I think that a young man like the hon. member for Burrum, a

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native-born, born in this beautiful country with its glorious sunshine, has such old conservative ideas. I often fear for the future of Queensland and the future of the Commonwealth. I fear for the future of this country if the hon. member for Burrum is a sample of what Australia is now producing. The hon. member quoted from my speech, and I am going to make further use of the quotation he made. On page 2631 of "Hansard" for 1915-1916, I am reported as having said—

"This Government was now setting about to make a change, and he trusted as time went on that there would be no need to give outdoor relief. He had visited the dépôt, and it was one of the most disheartening things that a man could see. The day he was in Margaret street amongst the crowd he saw women with babes at their breasts getting relief in order to live. Surely they were not going to hold the Government responsible for that. 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."

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COLLINS: I am glad to hear those "Hear, hears," because that statement was made in good faith. Three years afterwards, in 1918, the armistice was signed, and I am not responsible for the terms of peace, which have brought nearly the whole world down on its knees, as it were. The terms of peace are responsible to a large extent for our inability to solve the problem of unemployment. Hon. members may ask me to prove my case, and I am going to endeavour to do so. Will anybody say that the terms of peace did not operate against the sale of Queensland meat in the markets of Europe? Who said, "Hang the Kaiser"? Who said, "We will not trade with Germany"? It was not the Labour party of Great Britain—where an election was practically fought upon the question of hanging the Kaiser—nor was it the Commonwealth Labour party, although the Federal election of 1919 was to some extent fought on the question of trading with Germany. The result of not trading with Germany and other countries is unemployment. Is there any member on the other side, including the hon. member for Burrum, who will say that one of the causes of unemployment is not our inability to sell our beef? Anyone who knows anything about North Queensland knows the number of men who were employed in the meatworks there when we were selling our meat to the Imperialists—the very Imperialists who said later on, "We do not want your beef. We can get beef from the Argentine." It was wanted only so long as it suited their purpose, or so long as the war lasted. That is the history of capitalism the world over. The fact that Great Britain was willing to forgo the payment of the money she had lent the Allies proved she recognised that she had made a mistake in agreeing to the peace terms of 1919. In common with the rest of the world, we are suffering from unemployment because of those peace terms. The hon. member for Burrum went on to quote another portion of my speech in 1915—

"He was convinced that, so long as

they had production for gain instead of production for use, so long would they have to give outdoor relief."

I have no hesitation in saying again that we cannot right the wrongs of centuries in one session of Parliament, nor yet in many sessions. It is a very difficult task, working as we have to work under the capitalistic system. It is true that we are in a transition stage, but it is a very slow process indeed. It is an evolutionary process. We are gradually trying to bring about a better organised system so as to do away with unemployment. Everyone knows that, in order to develop a new country like Queensland, from time to time we have to draw upon the accumulation of ages in the form of capital, and that we have to go to other countries to borrow the means to enable us to develop this State. Hon. members opposite who, as the hon. member for Rockhampton stated, stopped us from getting the £9,000,000 loan when the Premier visited London ought to be branded as traitors. I was going to say they ought to be hanged at the lamp-post, but I will not go that far. (Laughter.) Had we got the money at that time, the Bowen iron and steel works would have been half completed by now, and we would have had a large number of men employed there.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COLLINS: Hon. members on the other side did all they could to destroy the Labour Government. They are responsible to a large extent—not the whole extent, I am willing to admit—for the unemployment that exists in this State. We are not the only Government who have unemployed. Take Great Britain, with nearly 2,000,000 able-bodied men out of employment. Who governs Great Britain? Great Britain is governed by the blue-blooded crowd, and they have not been able to solve the unemployed problem. There is only one party that can, and that is the working class party in the different countries of the world. My friend, the hon. member for Fitzroy, interjected when the hon. member for Toowong was speaking this morning, asking that hon. member if he favoured doing away with the interests upon the war loans of Australia. That might help to solve the problem, because what we have to pay in interest to bond-holders we could then use in the development of this Commonwealth.

Mr. VOWLES: Are you in favour of that?

Mr. COLLINS: It was good enough for Great Britain to propose that to the different Allied countries quite recently. I just want to draw the attention of the leader of the Opposition to the fact that he is getting more conservative than the House of Lords. Fancy that hard-shelled Tory, Earl Balfour, making such a proposal! Had we done such a thing ten or fifteen years ago we would have been met with the cry that we were in favour of confiscation. Earl Balfour, seeing the state that the world is in at the present time from an economic standpoint, can see that something must be done to solve the problem of unemployment, not only in Great Britain but throughout Europe. Europe at present is standing at the edge of a precipice much more dangerous than was the case during the war. No one can tell what is likely to happen unless something is done to solve the problem of unemployment in the different countries of the world. We have done something in that direction; we have endeavoured to solve it

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so far as the economic position will allow us. We are dependent upon the world's markets to a large extent. That shows the complex state of society. It shows that it is going to take a long time for the world to regain its equilibrium. We are not responsible; we are suffering to a large extent from the aftermath of the war. I heard the hon. member for Toowong talking about the returned "Diggers." I know the history of all wars.

At 2.25 p.m.,

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

Mr. COLLINS: After wars, when patriotism has died, the men who have battled and built up the Empire are generally thrown upon the scrapheap or allowed to go into the streets and beg for a crust of bread. That is what is happening all the world over. The hon. member for Toowong and his colleagues belong to the employing class. Had they done their duty by the returned men there would not have been any returned soldiers out of employment either in Queensland or in Australia. It is no use the hon. member saying in this Chamber that we do not contribute towards the "Diggers'" fund. We do not belong to the employing class; we belong to the class which has to work for the employing class. Does the hon. member for Toowong think we possess large amounts of surplus cash and that we draw dividends from time to time? They are the people who control the capital of this State, and it is to them that the returned soldiers have to look for employment. What would be the use of a returned soldier coming to me and asking me for employment? I am like himself—I belong to the working class, and I am not in a position to employ him owing to the present state of society. A number of hon. members opposite belong to the employing class, and it is to them he should look for employment. The men who went to the war were promised that on their return employment would be found for them. I understand that every man who volunteered from the Railway Department and went to the war was found employment in the Railway Department on his return. The patriots of Queensland and the Commonwealth, who at that time professed to have a monopoly of patriotism, told the men that, when they returned, everything would be done for them. Why did they not keep to their contract, the same as the Queensland Government have done? If they had done so there would have been no unemployed "diggers" in Queensland or other parts of the Commonwealth. They did not keep to their contract.

Mr. VOWLES: If the resolutions of the Perth Conference had been carried into effect they would not have been here.

Mr. COLLINS: The resolutions of the Perth Conference were in accord with the expressions by Earl Balfour the other day, showing that we are teaching hon. members opposite all the time. They are a drag on the wheels of progress, and have no ideas at all for the benefit of mankind. It is very easy for hon. members opposite to get up and criticise what one hon. member referred to as doles. He ought to be ashamed to refer to such a thing as a dole. The class to which we belong has built up the Empire and made the Empire what it is to-day. The kings, and dukes, and earls, and lords, and all the snobocracy have built up nothing.

[*Mr. Collins.*]

They have only devoured that which the working class has built up. Do any hon. members opposite think that we, as a class, would accept relief unless we were compelled? We have been compelled, by force of circumstances over which we have no control, to accept relief. The working class has been forced to go for relief, not only in this State or the Commonwealth, but throughout the British Empire. The working classes are not responsible for the economic condition that exists in the world to-day. Hon. members opposite belong to a class which has governed mankind from time immemorial, and they have made a sorry mess of it.

Mr. KERR: The hon. member has not proved it.

Mr. COLLINS: I have proved it. The class represented by hon. members opposite are responsible for sending millions to the shambles and for the sacrifice of millions of lives. They are responsible for the famines in Russia, India, China, and other parts of the world. I am satisfied the time will come when the workers will be true to themselves and true to the Labour Government, when they will be able to solve the unemployed problem. It will be solved a great deal easier if we can get hold of the reins of government in the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth, and not the States, control the finances of this Commonwealth. Had the Commonwealth Government been true to themselves and done justice to [2.30 p.m.] the people of Australia at the close of the war, or when they knew peace was about to be proclaimed, they would have put on the market a loan for £100,000,000, and would have gone on with big public works throughout the Commonwealth and found work, not only for the returned "Diggers," but also for other men who wanted work. They have power to do it. We did not have power to do it. We were dependent on outside sources for our loan money. We were dependent a good deal on the Commonwealth for our loan money, and we were refused loan money for a time, both by the Commonwealth and by those outside. We have done remarkably well, considering the opposition we have had to meet with on the part of the opposing forces. The Commonwealth Government have been lacking in their duty, and I hope the workers of the Commonwealth and those who are out of work will realise at the forthcoming Federal elections that, if they want to solve this unemployed problem, they must take the reins of government in the Commonwealth. Does anyone imagine for one moment that we would not have been able long ago to go on with the Northern Burnett scheme had there been a Labour Government in power in the Commonwealth? But, in spite of the fact that a Labour Government are not in control, and in spite of the opposition brought to bear against us, we have endeavoured to solve the unemployed problem. Quite recently we put on the different railways in this State 2,700 men. In connection with main roads, we are employing about 400 more, or altogether 3,100 men.

Mr. VOWLES: It is time you did something.

Mr. COLLINS: What astonishes me is not how little we have done, but how much we have done, considering the difficulties placed in our way. What is the solution of the unemployed problem by hon. members opposite? Their solution is to reduce

wages. In the last issue of the "Stead's Review" there was an article showing that wages have been reduced in Great Britain by £300,000,000 a year. Did that solve the unemployed problem in Great Britain? Great Britain, notwithstanding the great reduction that took place in wages, still has on its books 2,000,000 unemployed. A reduction of wages is not the solution of the problem. A solution of the problem will be found in the people using their thinking faculties, in the people organising, and in the people taking possession, not only of the Government of this State and of the Commonwealth, but of all the other States in the Commonwealth. That is the solution. Give us control of the finances of the Commonwealth, and then we shall be in a position to solve the unemployed problem. I have always admitted that it is a difficult problem under our present conditions, with our seasonal industries, but we are not responsible for that. Let the responsibility be placed upon the right shoulders. To a large extent the system is responsible for it, and hon. members on the other side represent that capitalistic system which is responsible. We on this side represent the working class, and the working class ought to be proud of what we have done for them.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: That is played out.

Mr. COLLINS: Why, it is only in its infancy.

The bell indicated that the hon. member had exhausted the time allowed him by the Standing Orders.

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*): A good deal has been said on the question of outdoor relief, but not so much as might have been said in regard to the number of men coming from the other States and partaking of the relief that is granted by this Government. The Secretary for Mines made a very effective reply to his critics not so long ago, when he pointed out that the Government had dealt with the question of unemployment in so far as the men in Queensland at the time he made his statement were concerned. The men who are still unemployed in Queensland include, to a large extent, men who have come from the other States, and men who have been thrown out of work because of the employment of men who have come from the other States. I am not alone in this view. The "Telegraph" of 21st June of this year, in a sub-leader, says—

"INFLUX OF SWAGMEN.

"The influx of swagmen from the other States into Queensland is obviously a matter of grave concern. Considerable numbers of men from the neighbouring States are said to be making their way over our borders. If these persons were employable men, with a genuine desire to seek work and to settle in the State, but little, if any objection could be offered to their entry. But the chances are that by far the greater majority of these new arrivals belong to the unemployable class—they may be classed as industrial flotsam and jetsam. That is the great danger. These men have to be fed."

Mr. SIZER: Read the "Telegraph" of to-day on the same subject.

Mr. POLLOCK: If one chose to read the Sizer of to-day and the Sizer of yesterday,

he could find discrepancies, just as one in reading the hon. member for Port Curtis to-day and the hon. member for Port Curtis of yesterday would find discrepancies. The point is that, when these men come here, they have to be fed. What is wrong with the policy of the Government in feeding these men? Does the hon. member for Pittsworth suggest that he would not feed them?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I would say that they should have to work.

Mr. POLLOCK: The objection that has been raised is an objection against feeding these men.

Mr. KERR: Able-bodied men, yes.

Mr. POLLOCK: It is a question of whether these men should be fed or not, and whether they are able-bodied men or not. The question is whether they and their wives and children are or are not to be allowed to starve.

Mr. VOWLES: Are the wives and children coming with swags, too?

Mr. POLLOCK: I am not mentioning particularly those men who are coming from the other States. There are local men who are unemployed. Some of them are unemployed because men from other States have come here and have taken the jobs that have been offering.

Mr. VOWLES: Very few.

Mr. POLLOCK: I am going to show later on that the number is not very few. The question is whether or not the Government should feed men who are out of work through no fault of their own, and I say that every man should support the feeding of these men until some work can be provided for them. It is not as though no effort had been made to deal with the unemployed in this State, so as to relieve this vote. Efforts have been made, and have been successfully made, to a large degree to relieve the number of unemployed in the State. The Director of Labour, in his report, gives the following figures of the number of men registered as unemployed throughout the State during the current year—

January	...	...	...	3,531
February	...	...	...	3,857
March	...	...	...	6,522
April	...	...	...	4,761
May	...	...	...	3,974
June	...	...	...	3,173

I am not going to say that they are the whole of the unemployed. To be quite fair on this question, one must admit that the whole of the unemployed are not registered at the Labour Bureau, but those are the actual numbers of men registered. During that period the number of men who were found employment was 7,223, of which number 3,210 were sent to Government works, and the balance, 4,013, were placed in private employment. The Director of Labour also says—

"While the influx of so large a number of men from other States continues, it is impossible to fully and absolutely deal with the problem. Inquiries have been made and statistics collected in regard to this influx, and it is found that the number so arriving who have registered for employment during the past six months was 3,382."

*Mr. Pollock.]*

Yet in June the total number on the books of the Labour Bureaus in Queensland was only 3,173, so that it will be seen that 219 men more have arrived from the South than were actually unemployed in June. Does not that bear out the statement of the Secretary for Mines that there would be no unemployed by a certain date this year? With regard to the unemployed since that date, we have shouldered the responsibilities of the other States who have neglected them.

Mr. VOWLES: Are they seasonal workers?

Mr. POLLOCK: It does not matter whether they are seasonal workers, or whether they work in the industries all the year round. The fact remains that 219 more men have come from the other States than were actually found work for. That the Government are not alone in feeling the effects of this invasion of unemployed is apparent by an article which appeared in the "Crusader." Possibly this will appeal to the hon. member for Enoggera, who is one of the high priests of that organisation.

Mr. KERR: You are making a mistake.

Mr. POLLOCK: Mr. Watson is reported in the "Crusader" as referring emphatically to the position of the unemployed returned soldiers, and, inter alia, he suggests that during a period of six weeks from May to June, 1915, out of a total of 461 registrations only 227 were Queenslanders. Here is testimony from quite an unexpected quarter, showing that not only the average unemployed man has largely come from the other States where there are Liberal or Nationalist Governments in power, but that among returned soldiers alone, out of 461 soldiers, less than one-half were Queenslanders.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Conversely, will you have a look at New South Wales, and see how many Queenslanders have gone down there? The same thing is applicable to other States.

Mr. POLLOCK: I will leave that to the hon. member. If he wants to prove that, let him bring some figures which will prove it. I have not looked into that phase of the matter, and I do not believe that Queensland soldiers have gone to New South Wales looking for work. Only last year when I was travelling in the Gregory electorate, I interviewed the sergeant of police at Winton, and he told me that out of 145 men who had passed through the Winton Labour Bureau during that year, only about six were Queenslanders. That is another evidence of the influx of men from the Southern States. In the last sugar season men were coming from the other States until there were almost as many men as there were sticks of cane in those districts.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: They always do.

Mr. POLLOCK: If they always do, why complain that the Government have failed to provide for their unemployed, when we have hundreds of men coming from the other States looking for employment here? Is not that a commentary upon the Governments in other States who are friends of hon. members opposite? After they have come here what other alternative is there for the Government but to feed these men?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: But you feed them when you bring them here.

Mr. POLLOCK: Do they come from other States for the sake of getting a few "bobs' "

[Mr. Pollock.

worth of rations per week, and leave their wives and families to look after themselves in the other State? We who have been sufficiently long in the industrial movement know that men who come here from other States come largely for seasonal employment; but to-day they are coming to get any sort of a job at all. The fact that men are carrying their swags from other States is, according to the "Telegraph," sufficient evidence that these men are not coming here for seasonal work when they carry their swags here in December and January. There is no seasonal work in Queensland at that time. If they came for seasonal work, they would come in March, April, or May.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Is there not a good deal of work in December and January?

Mr. POLLOCK: Not seasonal work. The hon. member should know that there is no work of any consequence that cannot be done by the local labour available here in that period of the year.

At 2.45 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kirwan, *Brisbane*) resumed the chair.

Mr. POLLOCK: In the months of March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, and November there is plenty of seasonal work in Queensland, and the unemployed here, when these industries are in full swing, are practically nil. I believe that, with the Government's policy of railway construction, the settlement of the Burnett lands, the opening of the Bowen Coalfield Railway—when all these schemes have come into operation, Queensland will be almost unable to get sufficient men to meet the demands. I believe that, not wholly because of the expenditure of Government money but largely because of it, these lands will be opened up, and at least 5,000 settlers will be required, and each of those settlers will want to employ a man or a couple of men. Probably some of them will want to employ more than that and some none at all; but I am quite satisfied that employment will be provided by the carrying out of all these schemes for at least 20,000 men more than are employed to-day, and that is going to mean the mopping up of our surplus unemployed. If hon. members can say after that that there are unemployed in Queensland who have not been brought from other States, then they may be able to say with some degree of certainty that the Government have not been able to solve the unemployment problem. Mr. Denham, the late Liberal Premier of Queensland, told a deputation—and I dare say that he was expressing the opinion of his supporters in Parliament at that time—that God Almighty could not solve the unemployed problem.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Mr. Theodore can. (Laughter.)

Mr. POLLOCK: I am not attempting to set up the Premier or the Government as a kind of deity, but I think that this problem will be satisfactorily settled not many months from now. Regarding unemployment doles, we are not alone in the payment of money for relief. Great Britain last year, according to a cablegram which appeared in the "Telegraph" of 23rd July last has paid, as stated by Dr. T. J. Macnamara, the Minister for Labour, between the signing of the Armistice and 30th June last, the sum of £83,700,000 in

relief, and it will probably cost more than that before world conditions have settled down. "Stead's Review"—which, I take it, can be fairly quoted as a journal which is absolutely impartial—contains these words in its issue of 25th February of this year—

"One would have expected that the results of the Washington Conference and the Treaty with the Irish Free State would have strengthened the position of the Coalition. Apparently, however, the electors are more concerned with Home affairs, and especially the economic situation, than with world politics. At any rate, three recent by-elections, two in London and one in Manchester have resulted in handsome victories for Labour candidates. Certainly, the economic situation remains pretty desperate—the latest unemployment returns give a total of 1,892,000 totally unemployed (a decrease of 42,000 on the previous month) and with the addition of workers on short time this means that approximately 7,500,000 people or more than one-sixth of the population are eating the bread of State and private charity."

That is what is happening in England to-day. It further goes on—

"Those actually in employment have been gravely injured by sweeping wage reductions amounting during 1921 to £3,000,000, and affecting nearly 6,000,000 workers. Thus the minimum wage of the miner is now less than £3 a week."

It is no use reading any further because I would not be in order in continuing in this strain on this vote. The fact remains that nearly 2,000,000 are out of work in the old country, and there are 7,500,000, or one-sixth of the population, actually receiving charity from the State. It is not only in England that such a condition of affairs applies. The following question and answer appear in the same issue of "Stead's Review" from which I just quoted:—

"Question.—Can you give the latest unemployment figures for England and the United States of America?"

"Answer.—The figures for England for January were 1,933,400 actually receiving unemployment allowance, to which must be added a large number who are out of benefit, and a still larger number who are on short time. The latest official figures from the United States of America were 5,735,000 in August, 1921."

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: What is the proportion of the population?

Mr. POLLOCK: I suppose about 5 per cent.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: If you work it out, you will see that the proportion of unemployment in Queensland compared with the population is greater than it is in England and America.

Mr. POLLOCK: In England we know that 16 per cent. of the population are receiving charity from the State. I mention these figures to show that hon. members have not got much ground for complaint against the £177,000 paid for rations last year, particularly when it is recognised that that was caused through the closing down of one of the biggest industries in the State. Now

that the Mount Morgan mine has again started work, and now that the wool position is again stabilised—because it was uncertain at one time—and there is a prospect of at least some of the mines resuming operations in the near future, there is a prospect of the position being much better. Because of the starting of relief works by the Government there is a reduction in the amount of the vote, and this year it has been brought down to something like £50,000. I think that that is a remarkable achievement. Although there are some cases where abuses have taken place, it cannot be alleged against the Government that action was not taken against men who were not legitimately in receipt of rations. Everyone knows that, no matter what necessities are provided by the Government for necessitous cases, there is always some scoundrel prepared to take advantage of it. No doubt on many occasions the Home Department has had to deal with men for receiving rations while they were possessed of money. If any man knows of such cases, and does not take action by informing the proper authorities, then he is not a friend of the State and is no friend of the Government.

Mr. WEIR: The leader of the Opposition.

Mr. POLLOCK: The leader of the Opposition hears of that kind of thing and tells his friends, and tries to cast odium on the Government. Hon. members opposite always attempt to deal with the question in that way. The true friend of Queensland will, on every possible occasion, go to the proper authorities and give them information that will lead to any man who is so unscrupulous as to take advantage of the Government's provisions for assisting them in need of sustenance, being put in his proper place.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS (*Pittsworth*): Hon. members opposite are always talking about the progressive Government we have in Queensland at the present time.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Quite right.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: Most hon. members opposite have told us to look at the progressive Government we have got. If anyone will look up the history of the world, he will find that about two thousand years ago, judging from what we read in Roman history of that day, conditions existed which resemble very much the conditions in Queensland to-day. The Government started on these lines in those days, just as the present Government did. They deliberately robbed the primary producer of his just rewards. The Queensland Government did the same thing in 1915, and right up to 1918 they systematically imposed upon the primary producers—the producers of foodstuffs in this State.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: What has that got to do with this vote?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: It has a great deal to do with the relief vote under discussion.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: What you say is not true; but all the same it is nothing to do with this vote.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: It is absolutely true, and one of the State pensioners now getting £950 a year was the very man who took the foodstuffs away from the primary producers, including butter and other products.

*Mr. J. H. C. Roberts.]*

Mr. POLLOCK: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member for Pittsworth in order in referring to the Lieutenant-Governor as a State pensioner?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I did not mention who it was. I said there is a man in Queensland who is receiving a State pension.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the hon. member is referring to the Lieutenant-Governor, he is not in order in making those remarks.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I did not mention the Lieutenant-Governor.

Mr. POLLOCK: Whom do you mean? You tried to get it in by a dirty innuendo.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: For three or four years that man deliberately deprived the primary producer of his just reward.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman is not in order in saying that an ex-Minister of the Crown deliberately deprived the primary producer of his just reward.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I have not mentioned anybody yet.

Mr. POLLOCK: Speaking on the point of order, Mr. Kirwan, the hon. member for Pittsworth distinctly referred to an ex-Minister of the Crown. The person he refers to is the Lieutenant-Governor, and he said distinctly that this gentleman is receiving a pension. I object to the hon. member saying that the gentleman referred to is receiving a pension. There is no doubt to whom he refers, and I ask that the offensive words be withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member for Pittsworth is referring to an ex-Minister of the Crown, he is distinctly out of order.

Mr. POLLOCK: Make him withdraw it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Pittsworth, in my own hearing, made a definite charge against an ex-Minister of the Crown.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I did not mention anybody.

Mr. FERRICKS (*South Brisbane*): I rise to a point of order. I submit that the remarks of the hon. member for Pittsworth were a distinct defamation by innuendo. They would be considered to be defamatory in any court of law. The hon. member did not mention any name, but the description points to the gentleman to whom he refers. His remarks are distinctly out of order. Seeing that there is no doubt about the identification, the hon. member for Pittsworth should be compelled to withdraw it.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope hon. members will realise the difficulty of the position. The hon. member for Pittsworth distinctly denies having referred to the gentleman mentioned by hon. members on my right.

Mr. POLLOCK: Ask him whom he means.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Pittsworth denies that he referred to the gentleman whom the hon. member for Gregory and the hon. member for South Brisbane suggest, and he having denied that, I do not see that I can call on him to withdraw.

Mr. SIZER (*Nundah*): I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member for Gregory

[*Mr. Pollock.*

or the hon. member for South Brisbane in order in imputing motives to hon. members on this side of the Chamber?

The CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): I rise to a further point of order—that the hon. member for Pittsworth, instead of denying that he referred to a particular gentleman, simply said that he mentioned no names.

[3 p.m.] If he does not refer to the late Secretary for Agriculture, it is easy for him to say so. If he does not mean the present Lieutenant-Governor, I ask you to ask him whom he does mean. (Opposition laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: I hope hon. members will recognise that I cannot ask any hon. member to whom he is referring. The hon. member distinctly denied that his reference was to the person whom the hon. member for Gregory, the hon. member for South Brisbane, and the hon. member for Fitzroy believed him to mean, and the hon. member having denied that, I am in the same position as other hon. members—I must accept his denial.

Mr. POLLOCK: Why is he not man enough to say whom he means?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: In the time of the Roman Empire, first of all the primary producer was deprived of the opportunity to secure the full amount that was justly due to him for his foodstuff. We find exactly the same thing applies here. During the period from 1915 to 1918 many of the primary producers of this State were deprived of the opportunity to secure the full market value of their produce. A little later on in the Roman Empire they found it impossible to carry on, and the Government of the day, nearly 2,000 years ago, instituted a system of giving relief by means of rations or money payments, without asking for work in return. It was found as time went on that that practice was detrimental to the interests of the nation as a whole, and if you take the trouble to read "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," you will find that to a very large extent the fall of the Empire was due to the short-sightedness and absolute want of wisdom of the Government in doling out those rations and money. The system sapped the manhood of the nation, and there are members on the other side of the Chamber who know as well as I do that a similar practice is to-day sapping the very manhood of Queensland, for young, able-bodied men are able to secure rations and doles of money in order to enable them, as our friends opposite say, to live. We do not for one moment begrudge relief to people who are deserving of it. We do not believe that widows and others in want should be deprived of help; but it is altogether wrong that able-bodied young men should be able to travel about the country living more or less on Government allowances in the form of outdoor relief. I listened with very keen interest to the hon. member for Gregory, and heard him quote statistics which I believe to be authentic. In 1921-1922, £177,000 was distributed in this way, and that works out at 4s. 8d. for every man, woman, and child in the State. It seems to be quite unreasonable and altogether wrong, and what we have to get down to is the possibility of relieving unemployment by giving these men work. I honestly believe that nine out of

every ten who are receiving Government rations would be only too glad to get work and do it. On the other hand, let me take hon. members back to the year before last, when the harvesting operations were started on the Downs. There we had men who openly acknowledged that they had not done work for twelve or eighteen months, and that they had lived on the Government payments for six or eight months at a stretch, and that they were not willing to start work at less than £1 a day and five meals a day. It was a ridiculous proposition to put before the farmers. The Government did not consider whether it was not wise to try to bring about a state of affairs which would have allowed the farmer to employ these men at a reasonable rate of wages.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I suppose one man put up that proposition.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I do not know whether the hon. member is quoting from official figures or not, but I am prepared to say that if he is, it is a prevarication of the truth, or that he is talking about something he knows nothing about. Many men put up that "stunt," and if the hon. gentleman takes the trouble, he can ascertain that meetings were actually held at which resolutions were passed absolutely refusing to work for less than £1 per day of eight hours with five meals a day.

Mr. W. COOPER: Did the farmers pay it?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: When they were offered 15s. per day for a nine-hour day and five meals a day, with 25s. per day for stack-builders, I can give instances where they refused to take it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: An isolated case.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: It does not matter whether it is an isolated case or not. Our opponents are always willing to quote isolated cases. I am going to give instances where men refused to work for 17s. 6d. per day of eight hours, with overtime at the rate of time and a-half. And, therefore, I say, when the Government propose to bring about employment, the first thing they have to do is to remember that efficiency is what we require in our work. The Minister in charge of these Estimates knows that efficiency is one of the requisite factors in our public affairs.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I advocated that long ago.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I have not heard the hon. gentleman advocate it except to-day.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You have not read my Paddington speech. (Laughter.)

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: No; but I will later on. To-day it is almost impossible to secure competent farm hands or competent stack builders, no matter what you offer. Any hon. member opposite who is interested in primary production—I am sorry that there are very few who really take any interest in the small primary producer—will agree that it is almost out of the question to obtain the services of a competent stack builder—it is a lost art. Yet hon. members opposite tell us to pay unskilled labour from 15s. to £1 a day, and to provide five meals a day. If competent and efficient labour is available, employment will be found. The trouble is that the unskilled labourer is out of all proportion in numbers to the skilled labourer. I strongly urge upon the Minister and hon.

members opposite to go into the question of efficiency in all trades. I heard several hon. members opposite discussing the question of the unemployment existing among returned soldiers. I heard the hon. member for Bowen and one or two others say that nothing has been done by the Commonwealth Government for the returned soldiers. What have this Government done in the settlement of the returned soldiers on the land?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope that the hon. member is not going to discuss the question of soldier settlement. He will be quite in order in discussing the question of unemployment amongst returned soldiers generally, but the question of soldier settlement must be discussed on the Estimates of the Lands Department.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The Minister claims that the Government have done an enormous amount for the returned soldiers. It always appears to me that the returned soldier is the last man about whom hon. members opposite think. Unless he belongs to a certain Labour organisation, or is connected with the Labour movement, apparently the returned soldier is not to receive very great consideration from hon. members opposite.

Mr. W. COOPER: They do not say that.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I was very interested to see a "Liberty Fair" placard stuck up in the Valley stating, "Labour section only." I understand that the proceeds were to be distributed amongst some returned soldiers. Am I to understand that it is on account only of the Labour section of the returned soldiers, or are all the soldiers to be treated alike? Are the Minister and the Government prepared to differentiate between the returned soldiers and allow a "Liberty Fair" to be run for one section and not for the other? The thing is ridiculous.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope that the hon. member will not discuss "Liberty Fair." It comes under the Estimates of the Department of Justice.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: I was interested to hear the remarks of hon. members opposite about the high rate of interest being charged by banking and other institutions—those capitalistic institutions which, they say, are robbing the working man. Quite recently I had laid before me a case in which approaches were made to the Public Curator to secure a loan. A man wanted an advance of 60 per cent. of the total amount required. The Public Curator's office, about which we hear so much from hon. members opposite, wanted to charge 7 per cent. interest, the same as any other institution—a bit more, in fact, because they would not advance up to 60 per cent. of the amount required. The man was prepared to find 40 per cent. of the total, and he asked the Public Curator to advance him 60 per cent. The hon. member for Bowen almost had a fit to-day when talking about the capitalistic institutions which hon. members on this side are said to represent.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The Public Curator handles trust funds.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: That does not matter. Hon. members opposite are continually stating that we on this side are boodlers and heaven knows what else. Here we have an institution of which you yourself, Mr.

*Mr. J. H. C. Roberts.]*



Kirwan, and the Secretary for Mines are supporters, charging 7 per cent. One of the reasons given for the existence of unemployment is that the interest charged by the financial institutions is so great that people cannot secure the necessary accommodation to enable them to carry on. If by any chance the Government remain in power long enough to establish some big financial institution with millions of pounds behind it, that institution will be charging  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. more than any other financial institution in the State. When hon. members opposite quote this as one reason why there is unemployment, I am justified in saying that another reason is the fact that the Public Curator is also more or less a money-grubber, and is out to get every penny he possibly can.

Mr. GLEDSON: You know that it is not Government money which he is lending.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Are you referring personally to the Public Curator when you say that he is a money-grubber?

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The Minister knows that I am quite correct, but he does not like to say so. I do not know whether it had anything to do with the question of unemployment, but during the debate the hon. member for Toowoomba referred to me as having employed Chinamen. The hon. member for Toowoomba is a man whose word you cannot altogether take. Quite recently I was talking to one of his big supporters in Toowoomba, and that gentleman said to me, "Really, you do not want to take any notice of what the hon. member for Toowoomba says; his tongue is like a racehorse—it goes the faster the less weight it has to carry, and the further it goes the more unreliable it becomes." (Laughter.) When the hon. member for Toowoomba goes out of his way to make insinuations and innuendoes—I do not know whether he was in order, but you did not call him to order, Mr. Kirwan, and not a man on the other side rose to a point of order—I claim the privilege of saying that that is the opinion which one of his big supporters in Toowoomba has of him, and I sincerely trust that this House will have the same opinion of him.

I congratulate the Government on having reduced the relief vote from £177,000 to £52,000. I trust that during this year only absolutely legitimate cases will be given consideration. Widows and women who may be finding it hard to live are absolutely entitled to relief.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You will be the first to urge all the undeserving cases; you always do.

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The Minister always listens to them with a very frank smile. He is too good-tempered to put his foot down on any proposal. He always tells you in a kind way that he will see what he can do. He will admit that hon. members on this side do not put up any unreasonable cases to him. The Secretary for Agriculture will also admit we do not put up any unreasonable cases. We only submit cases that are in absolute need of relief, and I can assure the Minister that hon. members on this side would only be too pleased to congratulate him when we meet next year if he has absorbed the whole of the unemployed and more, as stated by the hon. member for Gregory.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman has not taken the trouble to ascertain how many have been absorbed.

[Mr. J. H. C. Roberts.]

Mr. J. H. C. ROBERTS: The trouble is that we cannot find out. If we came here and quoted official figures, probably some attempt would be made to try and get some of the public servants out of their positions. The Minister has the privilege of getting all the statistics and figures. If I went to the Under Secretary of the Home Department for certain figures to quote in this Chamber, what sort of a row would there be in the department? It is preposterous for the hon. gentleman to say that we do not take the trouble to find out. If he will give us the opportunity of getting the information, we shall be only too pleased to get it and quote it in this Chamber. There are many hon. members on this side who think that it is not worth while asking for that privilege.

Mr. BULCOCK (*Barcoo*): The hon. member who has just resumed his seat has been unfortunate in some of the points that he touched on. At the outset he attempted to compare certain conditions existing in Imperial Rome with certain conditions that exist in this State to-day. He said that the product of the farmers was confiscated by the Imperial Government to placate the multitude, and that our Government have done the same. I take that as an indication of how a different interpretation can be placed upon historic facts. In my opinion, the hon. gentleman has only paid a very superficial attention to this subject. Had he dived deeper, he would have found that the downfall of the Roman Empire was due to the militarism which existed in it, and, further, that the food supplies which were commandeered without payment from what he called the primary producers were commandeered for the support of the army; and, had the hon. gentleman continued his argument to a logical conclusion, it would have been a condemnation of the military system, which brought about the downfall of that Empire, and, if persisted in, will bring about the downfall of every Empire that continues along the lines adopted by the Roman Empire. The hon. gentleman said that young men travelled around the country in search of relief, and inferred that their primary intention and object in doing so was to find relief. It has often been my unfortunate privilege on the many occasions when I have been poking about the lonely parts of my electorate to camp with these same travellers. The relief which these men are in search of is, in a majority of cases, only a means to an end, that end being to obtain work. I can assure this Chamber that, when I have met men on the road like that, knowing that I have come a considerable distance, they invariably present this question to me, "Do you know where we can get a job?" proving conclusively that their object in travelling about is to find a job, and not to get rations, which they are undoubtedly entitled to while they are legitimately looking for work. The hon. gentleman said that during the harvest period on the Downs last year young men boasted that they had not done any work for a considerable number of months, and that they proposed to continue to get Government relief, as they had done in the past, and continue so to subsist so long as they could not have their claims fulfilled. I do not accept that statement. I do not believe that any body of young men have lost their self-respect to such an extent as to prefer to carry their swags round the

country, with all the privations that that occupation entails, for the sake of the meagre rations to which they are entitled. There is no harder work than carrying a swag. Hon. members who say that men prefer to carry a swag rather than work have a very poor knowledge of human nature, and they have no knowledge of what a "drum" feels like across one's back at 4 o'clock in the afternoon on a hot summer's day when the water-bag is empty. The hon. member also stated that stack-builders were standing out for 25s. a day, and then he went a little further and stated that they could not get stack-builders. Where is the logic in that argument? He said that they were prepared to pay stack-builders anything in order to get them. He also said it was a lost art, yet these men who do not possess the lost art were sitting down in Toowoomba demanding 25s. a day to perform that art. That, surely, is a contradiction! Perhaps one should not comment on that. I think it is in keeping with the ordinary method the hon. gentleman adopts when he rises in this Chamber. He said that the Government have not treated the returned soldiers well. The debate seems to have centred round returned soldiers. Quite recently the Southern papers agreed that the Queensland Government have done more for returned soldiers than any other Government. One gentleman who carries influence in the councils of Empire—I refer to our late Governor-General, now Lord Novar—when he was in Brisbane during his period of office, said that the returned soldiers had been treated remarkably well in Queensland. One prominent member of the Senate—and a Nationalist at that—said, "I have heard a lot of talk about the way returned soldiers have been treated in Queensland, and I expected to find things pretty bad there, but I must admit that they have had a pretty fair 'go,' or words to that effect. When the war terminated the Government did discharge the promises to which they had pledged themselves—that returned men would be reabsorbed in the public service on their return. The Government could not absorb those men who were promised by private enterprise that they would be given work when they returned from the war. The Government could not allow them to starve, and, because the employers would not loyally fulfil their obligations and stand up to the promises they had made to those individuals prior to their enlistment, they became a charge on the State by receiving rations. While we all regret that the promises and pledges which were made by the employing classes to those men were so lightly broken and so carelessly held, yet we recognise—meagre and all as it is—that the Government discharged their obligations to those returned men whom hon. gentlemen opposite are condemning to-day.

But I have more important matters to deal with than the rather rambling statements made by the hon. member for Pittsworth. During the whole of this session, and during the whole of every session [3.30 p.m.] that I have been in Parliament, the Opposition, true to their historic functions, and obeying the dictates of the newspapers who formulate their policy and instruct them in their line of attack, have opposed every action and every step of this Government. I recognise that it is part of the game of party politics, but I do not think the hypocrisy should go to the extent

that it has gone in this connection. I believe in fair and legitimate criticism. I have in my mind the recent New South Wales campaign and the promises that were made by Sir George Fuller and his time-serving henchmen, when they said that, if returned to power, they would eliminate the unemployed problem to a great extent by producing economic conditions favourable to the workers, rather than conditions that were adverse to the workers. In spite of those promises, we find that the volume of unemployment in New South Wales is greater to-day than it was when Mr. Dooley went out of power. We find, further, that those gentlemen stated, as hon. members opposite have said, that the wages were too high, and that the high wages were responsible for the volume of unemployment that existed. Ever since the Fuller Government have had the reins of office in New South Wales they have been ruthlessly slashing wages; they have been slashing at wages to a greater extent than any other Government in Australia; but they have not relieved the unemployed situation. They have got no more men working in New South Wales to-day in spite of the low wages. I say emphatically that, according to statistics, there is a greater amount of unemployment under the low wages in New South Wales to-day than there was when the Dooley Government were in power. It puts me in mind of a little thing I came across when reading one of the political essays of a man who, when he gets the recognition to which he is entitled, will be regarded as one of the greatest men of the last century. I refer to William Morris, the renowned socialist, artist, and thinker. I do not think that we have recognised the power and influence of William Morris in literature and in connection with social problems.

Mr. KERR: Hughes.

Mr. BULCOCK: The hon. member is trying to connect him with William Morris Hughes. It will be noticed that I distinctly referred to the eminent and renowned socialist and thinker, so that anyone would understand I was not referring to William Morris Hughes. I was referring to a gentleman infinitely his superior. This gentleman, William Morris, once—

Mr. MORGAN: Hughes. (Laughter.)

Mr. EDWARDS: Hughes trained you in your early politics.

Mr. BULCOCK: This gentleman, William Morris, speaking of the Conservative Government that was in power in Great Britain at that time, and discussing the question of an election and the promises made to the people, made this remark—

"That they mustered a large army by fulsome promise, filled it with high resolve, led the privates to believe their leaders stood for the sweeping away of all the horrors of our civilisation, rallied their army together, sounded the advance, and burnt down Paddy's pigsty."

What a beautiful climax! We had the same thing in effect in New South Wales during the recent campaign there, and, when all was said and done, their action was futile. The Fuller Government were returned and they repudiated every promise that they had made, and ruthlessly attacked the conditions of the workers, and failed to keep their

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promise that they would conserve their conditions if they were returned to power. We have had a good deal of discussion about the results of the war and the aftermath of the war. Hon. members opposite will agree with me when I say that, no doubt, Lloyd George ranks as one of the most eminent men in the world to-day, and his opinion is worthy of respect. The high and honourable position occupied by Lloyd George—that of Prime Minister of England—warrants us in taking some notice of what he has said. In September, 1919, in order probably to placate the multitude—and that is the general attitude of Conservative politicians—Lloyd George said—

“A new world was fought for and millions of gallant young men had fought for it, and thousands died to establish it. If we fail to honour the promise given to them, we dishonour ourselves. What does a new world mean? What was the old world like? It was a world where toil for myriads of honest workers, men and women, purchased nothing better than squalor, penury, anxiety, and wretchedness—a world scarred by slums and disgraced by sweating, where unemployment through vicissitudes of industry brought despair to multitudes of humble homes; a world where, side by side with want, there was waste of the inexhaustible riches of the earth, particularly through ignorance and want of forethought, partly through entrenched selfishness.”

He speaks of the two worlds—the world that was to appear as a result of a successful conclusion of the war and the world that was to be left behind. Yet we find hon. members, not in Queensland alone, but throughout the whole of the so-called civilised world, standing for a return of the pre-war conditions. We find them clamouring for pre-war conditions, meaning, as Lloyd George so effectively said, squalor, hunger, and want for thousands and thousands of people in the world to-day. I hope that we stand for something better than that. I am charitable enough to believe that many members of the Opposition would stand for something better than that if their opinions were not trammelled and hampered by the system they are pledged to support. The Prime Minister of England went a little further and said—

“We would be guilty if we failed in building up a new world where labour shall have its just reward and indolence alone shall suffer want.”

With that opinion I heartily concur. Then Sir Robert Horne comes on the scene. He is another gentleman who has considerable influence in the politics of the United Kingdom. He says—

“No man, whilst willing and able to work, should be allowed to starve. Any Government which ignored that principle would not long remain to conduct the affairs of this country, nor would it deserve to remain.”

Hon. members on this side of the House recognise the force of that dictum—that individuals who are prepared to work and are prevented from working by the force of the circumstances surrounding the complex system of civilisation to-day shall not be allowed to starve, and shall not be allowed to suffer for circumstances over which they have no control. There is one other matter

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that I should like to touch on in this connection. We all remember what was done some little time ago by the mayor of Poplar—one of the poorest suburbs of London—a suburb which in the main is populated by the working classes—men who are on the bread line, or, in the expressive parlance of our American friends, on the crumb line. These individuals, being unable to obtain work, were insistent in their demands that something should be done for them, and the mayor of Poplar rose to the occasion, and said, “These men shall not starve,” but the Government, composed of the prototypes of hon. members opposite, gaoled that man because he said, “Men shall not starve.” We find that in that suburb, even when the Government took control of this matter, it cost £7,600 per week to afford relief so that the people should not starve. Furthermore, according to the “Nineteenth Century” magazine for November, 1921, the cost for unemployment relief in Great Britain is to-day in the vicinity of £3,000,000 per week. That is a staggering figure.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is due to the aftermath of the war.

Mr. BULCOCK: Exactly—the aftermath of the war, over which the British Government or this Government have no control.

Mr. MOORE: Either the number of unemployed is wrong or your figures are wrong.

Mr. BULCOCK: In the opinion of that magazine my figures are correct. I am quoting from a reliable source, but I dare say that, if hon. members opposite had the opportunity, they would probably reduce that figure, to the disability and expense of the worker.

Something has been said with regard to interstate migration. It has been said that a lot of individuals come from the South seeking work in Queensland. I believe that in some instances, it is part of a conservative plan. With the proper organisation of labour it would be possible to stop the exchange of men who are doing the same type of work from one locality to another. You may have a shearer or shed hand in western New South Wales shearing in a shed there, and he has a shed to go to in Central Queensland. He has to leave the shed in New South Wales and incur all the expense of going to the shed in Central Queensland, while a man shearing in a shed in Central Queensland has, perhaps, as his next “port of call,” to go to some shed in Southern Riverina, or even as far as Western Australia. That position has come under my own notice. It must be possible to regulate labour in such a way that men whose people are living in a locality and trying to build up the population in our Western towns will have facilities for following their callings within that district, instead of being taken from one part of Australia to another, as they are at present. I have in mind a statement by the manager of one of the biggest pastoral shearing companies in Australia. He said it was a good plan to keep shearers and shed hands moving, because it kept them poor; and as long as you kept them poor they did not get the sinews of war and could not fight. I think that the hon. member for Murrumbidgee concurs in that opinion. I think the time has arrived when we ought to consider the distribution of work in its relation to the inhabitants of any given local area. I recognise that we cannot say that the men

in the area shall be employed exclusively in the work to be performed in that area; but there is something wrong in a system which causes men to travel from one part of Australia to another to perform certain work, instead of keeping the men who live in a locality to do the work required there. If we are going to have our Western country properly developed, it is necessary that the men and women and their children living there should be given sufficient money for the work the men are performing to enable them to stay there, and thus conserve our Western population. That would stop what is undoubtedly at present a distinct tendency to drift to the coast, because it is easier to get employment to-day at one of the shearing offices in Brisbane, Sydney, or Melbourne at a shed in the Western district, than it is to get work in that district if a man lives only 40 or 50 miles away from the station.

Mr. WARREN: You have brought that about.

Mr. BULCOCK: This has been brought about by several causes, the chief of which is that every time we go to the Arbitration Court we find the pay sheets are made as large as possible. The bosses endeavour to keep one lot of men working continuously going from shed to shed, so that higher earnings will be shown on their pay-sheets. On the other hand those individuals who are not fortunate enough to get into the running have to pass from one shed, say, in North Queensland to another in New South Wales or Victoria. Those who are continuously in the running are only a few of the workers concerned, so that in the Arbitration Court the employers will be able to show that the shearers earn big wages. A few may do that, but on the average, on account of the seasonal nature of their employment, the expenses which they have to incur bring their wages frequently to less than the basic wage.

We all regret the circumstances surrounding this vote. The trouble is as old as civilisation itself. We all have sympathy for the poor unfortunate individual who is obliged to come on the State for relief, and we should not have any condemnation, but rather pity, for these individuals, and we should be actuated by a sympathetic desire to remove the circumstances which cause these individuals to be dependent on the State.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): I would first of all like to refer to the general discussion which has taken place with regard to the unemployment of ex-service men. I think that the discussion has given a totally wrong impression, and generally a wrong atmosphere is created. The number of returned soldiers, or their families, who are drawing Government relief is very small, and I am quite sure that the officer in charge of the depot will bear me out in that statement. We find that of the 50,000 Queenslanders that went to the war, 40,000 returned to the State, and of that number 38,000 have repatriated themselves. They are occupying some of the highest positions in the State in their professional capacities. There are amongst them men who are managing business houses in Brisbane and other parts of Queensland. There are skilled artisans amongst them, and in every avenue you will find returned men doing their duty well as citizens. It is quite wrong for hon. members to harp upon the fact that unemployed returned soldiers are receiving relief rations.

Mr. HARTLEY: Your own leader brought it up. The leader of the Opposition charged the Government with not giving returned soldiers relief rations.

Mr. KERR: My description of the attitude of the Government to the returned soldier, to use an army expression, is that they are "hogging the soldier." I have listened very carefully to the discussion. On a number of occasions I have advocated that the quicker the returned man gets back to his civil life the better it will be for everyone concerned. A soldier himself will appreciate it much more if this atmosphere which has led to the belief that the returned soldier is a "waster" or a "fag-end" or a "loose end," is ended once and for all. He is none of these things. As a matter of fact, he has repatriated himself, and proved that he is capable of looking after himself, his family, and his affairs.

Mr. PEASE: Who said he was a "waster"?

Mr. KERR: The statement has not been made, but the inference is there all the time. The inference has been made by members of the Government. It is a regrettable and entirely incorrect inference.

Mr. PEASE: Rubbish!

Mr. KERR: I am not going to enter into an argument on that question beyond saying that the returned soldiers are not "fag-ends." They can settle themselves in life, and they have done so, and they are doing fairly well. When you come to think that a number of young men have been travelling round the globe, having no guidance for a number of years, and facing unusual conditions, and then they come back here and repatriate themselves, and resume life as in pre-war days, I think they have done very well when we find that we have only got about 2,000 unemployed here. Still, it is serious to think that we have got 2,000 unemployed. I hope that the State will make greater progress, and that we shall have more industries, and that all these men will be absorbed. I would like to know from the Minister how many returned soldiers and their families are drawing rations to-day. I think the number is infinitesimal.

Mr. RYAN: I know a lot of them.

Mr. KERR: I am sure you do not know a lot of them.

Mr. PEASE: There are hundreds of returned soldiers going round selling soap.

Mr. STOPFORD: Do you think the employers have done their duty to returned soldiers?

Mr. KERR: Yes, I do.

Mr. PEASE: You ought to be ashamed of yourself for saying that.

Mr. KERR: I have had more to do with them than the hon. gentleman. In all my experience I have only had one case brought under my notice where an employer refused to give a man his job when he returned.

Mr. PEASE: I will give you some more cases.

Mr. KERR: I am not going to say that such cases are non-existent; but if the hon. gentleman knows of any, I would rather he took action to have them righted instead of bringing them forward in this Chamber. I ask the hon. gentleman to give the returned soldier a fair deal. Do the right thing and let it drop, but do not bring it up in this House. If an employer is not doing the

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right thing, he should be forced to do it. I do not want to say more than that. I think the hon. gentleman would rather come here and block the returned soldier, but it is time these things were forgotten.

Mr. PEASE: Do you think the Commonwealth Government utilise the returned soldiers?

Mr. KERR: I do not. I would rather someone else took up the argument with the hon. member, because I have no desire now to refer to the returned soldier on this Relief Vote. We find that the sum of £52,072 is asked for outdoor relief, as against £117,702 appropriated last year. I place no reliance on the fact that we are asked to vote that reduced amount. It is not an indication that the Government are going to cease giving doles to able-bodied men in preference to giving them work. In proof of that I have only got to mention that £41,665 was appropriated in 1920, but the Government spent £73,860, or £37,195 more than was appropriated. In the following year a certain sum was appropriated by Parliament, and the Government exceeded it by £43,392. Last year we had the same old stall, but the sum appropriated by Parliament was exceeded by £59,317. Why should we believe this year that the parliamentary appropriation will not be exceeded? When I spoke on the Financial Statement, I showed how the parliamentary appropriations had been departed from. I think that this is something to put before the electors, so that the Government can say, "We have reduced these doles to £50,000 or £60,000." In face of the facts, no one is inclined to believe that only this sum will be spent. It is put there for the purposes of propaganda. I may be wrong, but we will see when the financial year is over. I sincerely hope that I am wrong. I think that one of the causes that has aggravated the unemployment in Queensland is the method adopted regarding apprenticeship.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: How many unemployed are there in Queensland now?

Mr. KERR: The statistics show about 2,000.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: There are less than that now.

Mr. KERR: I know one of the factors that causes unemployment, and it will be worse next year.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: What do you think of the Unemployed Workers' Insurance Bill?

Mr. KERR: I have read as much about that matter as the Minister, and I know as much about it as he does. I have already referred to various Commissions which have been appointed in connection with that question in different parts of the world. I know it has been tried for years. The other day I asked the Secretary for Public Instruction some questions in regard to the examination of trade apprentices at the Central Technical College. I am sorry to say that many of those who desire to become apprentices are not able to get work, and, directly or indirectly, they are drawing relief rations. They leave school, but there is nothing for them to do, and they have to get rations, but they do not get any work. In the last eighteen months there have been several examinations of trade apprentices. I find that 560 boys between the ages of fourteen and seventeen

years sat for those examinations between December, 1920, and June, 1922. Of this number 342 passed and 218 failed.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: One of your members "failed" them.

Mr. KERR: I believe he did, and I am very sorry that he did. I know that one of the practical subjects for carpentry was to be able to handle a saw, but when the boys were given arithmetic that was not connected with that particular job they failed to qualify.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You will admit that that is a very necessary qualification?

Mr. KERR: I am not prepared to admit that. We do not expect a boy just leaving school to be a carpenter. I expect that boy to be taken on by a man who will teach him. If I were an employer, I would go to a boy leaving school, and I would say, "You are a bright lad. Come and join me." I would then teach him his business. That is not what is happening now. A boy has to go through a full-dress rehearsal and all the paraphernalia of the Trades Hall. He has to submit certificates and all that sort of thing. The restrictions that are placed on that boy before he can get a job are tremendous. We should make a good artisan or tradesman of him and teach

[4 p.m.] him, and give him a chance in life. Many employers to-day have friends and would be willing to start their boys, but under the existing circumstances they have to take the boys they do not want, and so they do not bother. The other day I took a boy who happened to be a little over age down to the Valley to try to get him into a piano-tuning establishment. They did not want a boy specially, but they started him; and I venture to say that if he had not got that job he would have been drawing State relief. I have got it myself for such people under those circumstances. If they have to loll about at home for a year or two waiting for vacancies there is no other alternative.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not wish to restrict the hon. member unduly, but I would like to point out that, whilst he may use that aspect of the matter as an illustration or an argument, he will not be in order at this stage in discussing the whole subject of apprenticeship. He may do that on the proper vote.

Mr. KERR: I am using it as an argument—that, if they abolish this pernicious form of apprenticeship, the unemployment problem would not be so acute. Out of those 560 boys who qualified eighteen months ago, fewer than 100 got work, and the other 460 have to live. They go and draw rations, and I say that one way to ease the situation is to abolish these examinations, and let the employer engage any boy he desires. That would not wipe out all unemployment, but it would be a factor.

In this regard I have turned up the Budget of the present Federal Treasurer, Mr. Bruce, who has proved himself one of the best Treasurers the Commonwealth or any State has had. He says—

"The principle of unemployment doles should not be recognised. This principle the Government have rigidly adhered to, and whilst prepared to assist by the provision of productive work, will not countenance the introduction of doles."

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Mr. Bruce did not say that "off his own bat." He took it from the results of various conferences all over the world, and gave it as one of the first principles of decent State finance. He mentioned productive work, and I am reminded of what Sir Henry Barwell said at the Premiers' Conference about the construction of railways on the uniform gauge. He adopted the attitude that it was wrong to put men on railway construction to the prejudice of placing them in permanent employment in the industries of the State. That is where I differ from the policy of the Government. Instead of placing men permanently in the industries of the State, the Government would rather spend £10,000,000 of loan money in four years in employing an army of unskilled men, including would-be apprentices, at railway construction and similar work. This spending of loan money is only an emergency measure.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member will show how his remarks bear on the question of outdoor relief.

Mr. KERR: I am arguing that, if we do not place these men permanently in employment rather than keep them at temporary work, this expenditure must go on. I take it that it is our duty to point out how this expenditure can be avoided in future years, if not now. Here I should like to quote from the deliberations of an International Conference, held in 1913, at which Australia was represented. They came to the conclusion that it was desirable to—

"Consider whether public works should not be deferred until the slack season of the year or to a time more or less distant from crises or economic pressure."

The Government must have known during the war, when they spent that £10,000,000 of loan money, that 40,000 men would soon be coming back to take up the jobs which they had only temporarily left, and that those who had filled those jobs would go on the labour market. Would it not have been better to look ahead and not have carried out public works during the war, reserving our strength against the time of crisis afterwards, so that we would be able to absorb them, even if only temporarily, in good work, instead of paying out doles and giving rations? It may be said that this is wisdom after the event, but it has been done in some parts of the world.

Mr. PEASE: What would have happened to the men who earned that money?

Mr. KERR: I say that the Government should have conserved that £10,000,000.

Mr. PEASE: And left the men out of work.

Mr. KERR: In 1914 very few persons were unemployed, and 40,000 men went away. The Government must have known there would have been an aftermath. Any reasonable Government, not imbued with the idea of spending money and of vote-catching, would have known it, and this huge expenditure on doles would not have been necessary. This vote is not the only fund from which money is being paid out: there are many other funds, such as the War Council Fund.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*): I have listened with a good deal of attention to the discussion which has taken place. No one can doubt the great importance of the problem to Queensland. The large number of unemployed destitute people requiring aid

from the State is a great problem to which those who have the best interests of Queensland at heart should apply themselves, with a view to finding a scientific remedy for meeting the difficulty. I am not going to defend the ration system as being the best system of dealing with poverty caused by unemployment. I recognise that men who are destitute as the result of being unable to find employment must be provided with food and the necessities of life—ordinary common humanity calls for that. I have risen because of statements which have been made by various hon. members opposite—statements calculated to lead the people to believe that the problem of unemployment in Queensland is something tremendous, that it is out of all proportion to the population of the State, and that it is graver than that which exists in other States of the Commonwealth or in other parts of the world. I know that the destitution which is the result of unemployment is one of the after-effects of the war, due to the economic conditions prevailing throughout the world, over which this Government have no control. I also know that, so long as society is based upon the capitalistic system, so long will unemployment be a feature of the system, and society will have to deal with it. I wish to draw the attention of the Committee to the number of men who are unemployed. These are the latest figures which have just been obtained from the Director of Labour. They include all the exchanges and sub-exchanges throughout Queensland. Up to 21st August, 1922, there were 1,463 persons registered. That represents one-fifth of 1 per cent. of the population. In the United States of America there are 5,000,000 unemployed, which is 4.5 per cent. of the population. In Great Britain there are 2,000,000 unemployed, representing 4.5 per cent. of the population. Those figures are approximate, but they are from the latest returns which are available. So that, on the basis of comparison with the United States of America and Great Britain, the problem here is not nearly so severe as hon. members opposite would seek to make people believe. If our unemployed problem were as great as it is in Great Britain, we would have practically 35,000 unemployed in this State. We are fortunate in that we have nothing like that number at the present time. I rose to give hon. members that information as it is apropos of the subject under discussion.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): The hon. member for Enoggera reminded me very much of the quotation—

"When the devil was sick,  
The devil a saint would be;  
When the devil is well,  
The devil a saint is he."

The hon. member for Enoggera deprecates hon. members on this side in any way connecting the returned soldier with this vote. His own party are really the aggressors in that particular. For a specific instance, I quote that brought up by the leader of the Opposition, when he said that this Administration refused assistance in the way of relief rations to a returned soldier. I again impress upon the hon. member for Aubigny the fact that we are still waiting for the particulars of that case. The hon. member for Enoggera points out that we must have known that this business was coming forward and ought to have made provision. During the first year of this Government's administration, when the war was on, we had many organisations making provision for the repatriation of the

*Mr. Hartley.]*

soldiers. One fact must not be forgotten. Since the war started the employers generally took the fullest advantage they could of the condition of stagnation which was caused temporarily in industry to throw out of employment as many employees as they could; and that meant extra cost.

Mr. SIZER: And you reduced their wages.

Mr. HARTLEY: The same class as that to which the hon. member belongs reduced the wages in England by £6,000,000 per week—equal to 15s. 6d. per man. Although this hon. member has such a lot to say about reducing wages, I never heard him raise his voice in this House or out of it against the late wage reduction by the Government. He is not game to stand up now and say that he is opposed to the reduction made by the Arbitration Court.

Mr. SIZER: You said you would resign if the Government reduced wages.

Mr. HARTLEY: I said nothing of the sort; I said that, if the Fitzroy organisation required my resignation, they could have it—and that is a very different thing. The hon. member for Toowoong made some remarks about members of the Government not having been connected with any society or organisation which is engaged in assisting the returned soldiers to find work. The hon. member knows perfectly well—it is well known to anybody who has followed the administration of this State—that committees were formed by this Government before any other State in Australia formed them. I think you, Mr. Kirwan, were a member of the Brisbane War Council. The present Secretary for Public Instruction was a member of the War Council and also a member of the Wounded and Maimed Soldiers' Committee. The Secretary for Public Lands, the hon. member for Rockhampton, myself, and several other hon. members on this side were members of the Queensland War Council. Those councils did good work in the localities in which they were situated. The man who had been injured and could not follow his former occupation was given a training so that he was not thrown on the wage market, but became an operator and, in some cases, an employer. In every direction the War Council led the way in finding employment for the returned soldier. It was only when the bungling Administration which the hon. member supports in the Federal Parliament came along with their Repatriation Department that these councils were supplanted. Then things went down to the mud, so far as caring for the returned soldier was concerned. The responsibility is on the Federal Government and on hon. members opposite who supported such a half-baked scheme and such a screaming bungle. There is a good deal of justification for assuming that there has been corrupt administration in the Repatriation Department and the War Service Homes business; they pretty well stink throughout Queensland. Those things have the support of hon. members like the hon. member for Toowoong and the hon. member for Enoggera; they cannot get away from it. Through our administration of the War Council, in every centre where councils were formed vocational training classes were instituted in which soldiers were educated. We have had to close the office at the Intelligence and Tourist Bureau in connection with the boot-repairing business because there was too much work going through and not sufficient soldier operators to

cope with it; because they had been trained in the boot-repairing business and are now in little businesses of their own.

In order to try and regulate the work it has to be taken to the workshops at the Central Technical College. The wool-classing school will finish at the end of this year and nearly all the men attending the school will be qualified expert wool-classers. The hon. member for Toowoong complained that we had not contributed to any appeal on behalf of distressed "Diggers." Why should we? There should be no distressed "diggers"; they should have been catered for. If the system adopted by the Queensland Government had been allowed to operate untrammelled, it would have provided work. The bungling Administration which the party opposite support in the Federal sphere have made it impossible, and have pretty well crippled a lot of the operations of the Queensland Government. Why should we subscribe to a "Distressed Diggers' Appeal" in the "Courier," with its big type headings about soldiers starving? Whose business is it? Whose trouble is it? Who is to blame? The people who write the articles in the "Courier," the people who own the "Courier," and the class who support and buy the "Courier" are to blame. They are the people who are responsible, and who give their support to the rotten administration of the Federal Repatriation Department. It can be seen from the report of the War Service Homes Commissioner that it is quite evident that there is no greater example of gross incompetency and rotten dishonesty than in the administration of that department. We see what has taken place in connection with buying a large number of allotments for the erection of houses and the making of contracts that had afterwards to be cancelled and compensation paid. All this money should have been spent on behalf of the returned soldiers. Unemployment has been accentuated in Victoria. The contracts provided that 2,300 homes were to be erected, but after 500 had been completed the contracts had to be cancelled, because of the exorbitant expenditure and the bad administration of the department. In Queensland it was the intention to erect 1,500 homes for returned soldiers; but when less than 500 were erected operations had to cease because there was so much bungling. Under the administration of the Queensland War Council homes were erected under the Workers' Dwelling Act at a cost of about £500, whereas under the Commonwealth scheme they cost from £600 to £800. That is one item to the credit of Queensland. The finest example of crass bungling and rotten administration by the Commonwealth Government which led to so much unemployment in this State is depicted in the closing down of the Canungra mill owned by Messrs. Lahey Brothers.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: What has that to do with this vote?

Mr. HARTLEY: It has a lot to do with it. A lot of men were employed at the Canungra Mill cutting timber for returned soldiers' homes. But, when the mill was purchased by the Commonwealth Government, they did not cut a board and they did not build a home for returned soldiers. Had the mill not been purchased, returned soldiers would have been able to engage

[Mr. Hartley.]

in the timber industry and in the activities which would have resulted from the building of those homes. It was because of sheer rotten bungling supported by hon. members opposite that the mill was closed. The tram lines are rotting, and the bullocks that one time were used in the bullock teams have nearly all died, and a lot of timber has been left in the forest to deteriorate. That is what the rotten Administration backed up by hon. members opposite has done for returned soldiers. They have thrust them aside and left them in the gutter.

Mr. FOLEY (*Leichhardt*): The arguments of hon. members opposite throughout the debate appear to be a "Yes-No" argument. On the one hand they abuse this Government for issuing relief to many of the unfortunate individuals in the community, and, when they are pressed to the wall and challenged as to what they would do, they have to admit that in some instances they would do the same thing if they occupied the Treasury benches. The hon. member for Burrum was particularly "Yes-No" in his argument. He quoted a speech delivered by the hon. member for Bowen when this Government first took office. He quite missed the mark in making the quotation that he did. As the hon. member for Bowen stated, had the hon. member for Burrum read the speech right through, and if he would read more speeches of the hon. member for Bowen, the hon. member for Burrum would become quite educated and would probably see eye to eye with many things that the Government have had to deal with while they have been in office. Hon. members opposite have pointed out that seasonal occupations absorb a great number of men in Queensland for six months every year, and that those circumstances have been responsible for a lot of the unemployment that exists here.

Mr. MOORE: Does not the Arbitration Court fix the wages on the basis of a seasonal occupation?

Mr. FOLEY: Yes; I will deal with that later on. On the one hand hon. members opposite say that the seasonal occupations are a big factor in connection with unemployment, and then on the other hand they say that the maladministration of the Government has been responsible for creating unemployment. Why will they not be consistent in their arguments and level a charge supported with facts and drive it home and force the Government to rectify the maladministration which they claim the Government are guilty of? There are many factors which go to cause unemployment in every community in the civilised world to-day. We all recognise that Queensland is not the only State suffering from unemployment. Other countries that are developed along capitalistic lines more than Queensland are suffering to a greater degree from unemployment. Take the United States of America, with its large population and the prosperity and development which have taken place there since its birth as a nation, and compare it on a proportional basis with Queensland and her population, instead of a paltry 2,000 unemployed in Queensland, we should have from 35,000 to 40,000. The same thing applies to England and other countries in Europe to-day. Other hon. members have stated that the present existence of unemployment in our community and the necessity for issuing relief to

individuals in the community is really the aftermath of the war.

At 4.30 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN: Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 307, and of the Sessional Order agreed to by the House on 30th August, I shall now leave the chair and make my report to the House.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported progress.

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

#### SALARIES BILL.

ASSENT.

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

#### QUESTIONS.

##### APPLICATIONS FOR INCLUSION IN INKERMAN IRRIGATION SCHEME.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*) asked the Treasurer—

"Have any farmers in the Inkerman area applied for inclusion in the Inkerman irrigation scheme since the proposal was gazetted?"

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

"Yes; nine applications have been received, as follows:—

26th May, 1919—David Davies, No. 13 Block, parish Inkerman.

26th May, 1919—J. P. Passmore, portion 206, parish Leichhardt.

21st June, 1919—R. Trail and Sons, portion 618, parish Leichhardt.

8th February, 1919—S. Soper, portion 204, parish Inkerman.

12th December, 1918—A. H. Couper, portion 274, parish Inkerman.

12th March, 1919—J. T. Marshall, western part of portion 193, parish Inkerman.

23rd September, 1916—D. S. Horwood, portion 11, parish Leichhardt.

29th April, 1920—A. A. Ross, part of portion 300, parish Inkerman.

11th April, 1922—F. J. Mulholland, Reserve 37, parish Inkerman."

##### APPLICATIONS FOR EXCLUSION FROM INKERMAN IRRIGATION SCHEME.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*) asked the Treasurer—

"Have any farmers in the Inkerman area applied for exclusion from the Inkerman irrigation scheme since the proposal was gazetted?"

The TREASURER replied—

"After the proposal came into operation on the 1st December, 1916, six applications for permission to withdraw were received. Of these, two applicants were allowed to withdraw on account of their areas being unsuitable for irrigation, for the reason that they were grazing lands and more or less liable to floods. Four applications were refused."



ALLOWANCES PAID TO STAFF OF RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“What amount was paid for the year ended 30th June, 1922, in allowances and extras to the staff of the Railway Depart-

ment in the Southern, Central, and Northern sections, respectively, of the Railway Department?”

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Lacombe, *Keppel*), replied—

“The overtime paid to employees for the year ended 30th June, 1922, was as under—

—	Gen. Est. Chief Office.	Locomotive.	Traffic.	Maintenance.	Total Overtime for Division
	£	£	£	£	£
Southern Division .. ..	304	50,675	22,267	3,919	77,165
Central Division (including Mackay Railway) .. ..	..	16,691	8,909	2,738	28,338
Northern Division .. ..	..	13,929	4,991	2,757	21,677
Total for year 1921-22 ..	304	81,295	36,167	9,414	127,180
Total for year 1920-21 ..	1,167	119,401	49,753	7,853	178,174”

ADVISABILITY OF OBTAINING EXPERT REPORT ON COTTON GROWING CAPABILITIES OF COOKTOWN DISTRICT.

Mr. RIORDAN (*Burke*), in the absence of Mr. Ryan (*Cook*), asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“Will he consider the desirableness of sending an expert from his department to the Cooktown district to inquire into and report on the suitability of that district for cotton-growing?”

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

“Yes.”

ADVISABILITY OF OBTAINING EXPERT REPORT ON COTTON GROWING CAPABILITIES OF TOOWOOMBA AND HELIDON DISTRICTS.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“1. Will he have a report made of the lands between Toowoomba and Helidon as to their suitability for the growing of cotton?”

“2. If the report is favourable, will he make available an expert to give people of the district the fullest information?”

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE replied—

“1. There is no need for a special report upon this district, because cotton has already been grown there successfully.

“2. An instructor will be sent to give information as soon as present engagements permit.”

ALLEGED INDEBTEDNESS OF BUILDING TRADES GUILD TO STATE ENTERPRISE.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*) asked the Minister in charge of State Enterprises—

“1. Is the Building Trades Guild indebted to any State enterprise under his control?”

“If so, which State enterprises are so affected, to what extent, and at what dates were such liabilities incurred?”

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

“1. The guild is not indebted to any State enterprise under my control.

“2. See answer to No. 1.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: If the hon. member will look up the notice of question I gave yesterday, it will be seen that it was addressed to the Secretary for Public Lands and not to the Minister in charge of State Enterprises.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: The Secretary for Public Lands is ill.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: That does not affect the position; the question was addressed to the Secretary for Public Lands.

SPECIAL RAILWAY RATE TO TOWNSVILLE JETTY FOR COAL FROM BOWEN STATE COAL MINE.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE asked the hon. member for Bowen—

“1. Is he aware that his colleague, the hon. member for Mundingburra, is active in endeavouring to obtain a special rate of 6s. 11d. per ton (as against 12s. 10d. per ton to Townsville) for the conveyance of coal from the Bowen State Coal Mine to the Townsville jetty for shipment overseas?”

“2. Is not this the trade that has been dangled before the eyes of the electors of Bowen ever since this coal enterprise was entered upon?”

“3. Does he consider that this low coal freight rate to Townsville jetty for export will tend to promote the prosperity of the port of Bowen?”

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*) replied—

“1. I understand that Mr. Dash, the member for Mundingburra, with his usual commendable activity on behalf of his constituents, has been in consultation with the Minister for Railways on this matter.

“2. The export trade of the Bowen River coal is bound to pass through the port of Bowen, which has the finest harbour in North Queensland. With a view to coping with a large export trade in coal, the Government are at this moment helping the Bowen Harbour Board to provide the necessary facilities and coal-loading appliances which, when completed, will be the most up-to-date in Queensland.

“3. The low coal freight from the coalfield to Townsville jetty will not injure the prosperity of the port of Bowen, for the reason that it is the same rate per ton as has been fixed

as the rate between the coalfield and Bowen jetty. Bowen, naturally, has the advantage, because the coal consigned to Townsville jetty must be hauled 110 miles further than that consigned to Bowen jetty. Is there any further information on this important matter which the hon. member would like to obtain from me?"

**PRIZE TICKETS AND UNCLAIMED PRIZE MONEY IN "GOLDEN CASKETS."**

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*) asked the Home Secretary—

"1. Will he arrange to have all prize tickets connected with the "Golden Casket" reinspected by the Government Printer, and also arrange for an expert and chemist to examine the ink and other writings on same?"

"2. Has the Auditor-General certified, otherwise than the correctness of the accounts, as disclosed by the books; if so, to what extent?"

"3. Can he definitely say whether or not unclaimed prize money has been lifted just before the date when such money would revert to the Trust Fund or Treasury?"

"4. Has the Auditor-General investigated this item?"

"5. What is the total amount of unclaimed prize money ("Caskets" 7 to 52 inclusive)? Of this, what is the amount unclaimed representing prizes of £100 or over?"

"6. How many persons, if any, were notified that they had won prizes, but later, when they came to collect, were told it was a mistake?"

"7. What is the total amount of prize money from "Caskets" 7 to 52 that has been won by ticket-holders in the Southern States?"

"8. What is the amount received from agents and others in the Southern States for the sale of tickets for the "Caskets" 7 to 52?"

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*), in the absence of the Home Secretary (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*), replied—

"1. No.

"2. The Auditor-General inspects the books and accounts which, necessarily, includes vouchers and tickets.

"3. Yes. The bulk of the prize money is paid during a period of from five to six weeks after each drawing. It takes this period, because a number of prizes are won from various parts of Australia and outside Australia. After the lapse of a period of from six to eight weeks from date of drawing, prizes unclaimed are transferred to 'Unclaimed Prize Money Account.' Claims are received subsequently for these prizes, and, approximately, every second day a claim comes to hand. The prize is paid from 'Unclaimed Prize Account.' All prize winners who fail to collect a prize after a lapse of one month from the drawing are notified in writing, and should the prize still be unclaimed after another month, a second notification is forwarded. Three months after each drawing all unclaimed prize money is then paid to

the Home Secretary's Department, for transfer to the Audit Act Trust Fund.

"4. The unclaimed prize money account is periodically audited, as explained yesterday.

"5. £981 12s. 4d. Nil. No prize money of £100 or over has, up to date, remained unclaimed.

"6. The acting manager states that, so far as he and his officers know, none.

"7. Impossible to give this information at such short notice.

"8. No separate record is kept, and to give an accurate answer would take a considerable period to compile."

**PERMITS FOR GAMBLING.—ALLOCATION OF PROFITS FROM "LIBERTY FAIR."**

Mr. MOORE (*Murilla*) asked the Attorney-General—

"1. As he stated, in answer to a question by the leader of the Opposition on the 24th August, that he considered it unjustifiable that a daily newspaper should have its profits augmented (or its losses lessened) through the granting by him of a permit to conduct gambling concerns amongst the people of the State, will he take particular care that no more permits will be granted to such concerns where portion of the takings are to be allotted to such use?"

"2. Will he state what is the usual allocation of profits from "Liberty Fair," seeing that he stated that 15 per cent. to the Trades Hall board, 30 per cent. to the 'Daily Standard,' and 40 per cent. to the owners of the plant was not usual?"

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

"1 and 2. It is obvious that my reply to the leader of the Opposition on 24th August does not admit of the interpretation placed upon it by the hon. member. His questions are, therefore, based upon incorrect premises."

**USE OF CLOSURE BY PRESENT AND PAST GOVERNMENTS.**

Mr. MOORE asked the hon. member for Mirani—

"1. Is the hon. member for Gregory correct in the statement contained in his reply to the hon. member's question on Wednesday relative to the application of the 'gag' by the present Government—'That no member who showed a bonâ fide desire to intelligently discuss a measure had been "gagged" by the Government'?"

"2. Is there any comparison between the action of the hon. member for Mirani and the party to which he belonged on the Mines Regulation Bill in 1910 (quoted as a justification by the hon. member for Gregory) and the action of the present Government in their persistent suppression of the right to speak during this and last sessions?"

"3. Does he, during his fifteen years' experience of Parliament, remember any session in which there was such a huge percentage of applications of the 'gag' as during this and last session?"

"4. Has he noticed the personal nature of the latter portion of the hon. member for Gregory's reply?"

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*): I rise to a point of order on this question. My point of order is that the hon. member for Burnett yesterday gave notice of his intention to-day to ask this question of the hon. member for Mirani, and I ask if the hon. member for Burnett is empowered under the Standing Orders to transfer the asking of the question to the hon. member for Aubigny.

Mr. CORSER: I never gave notice of any such question. I gave notice of a question to the hon. member for Normanby yesterday.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*) replied—

"1. No; the statement is absurd on the face of it, as many questions have been 'gagged' by this Government without allowing any discussion whatever. Further, when discussion has been permitted, it is most remarkable that the 'gag' has been applied when an effective criticism of the Government is being made.

"2. No. This is one of the strained and illogical comparisons for which the hon. member for Gregory has become noted. As illustrating the inaptness of his reply, I might mention that in the case he refers to as a justification for the present 'gagging' by his party (the Mines Regulation Bill of 1910), the 'gag' was not once applied. There was full debate on the second reading, and two days were allowed for the Committee stage. In Committee, thirteen members of his party spoke on the first day and fifteen on the second, more or less frequently. Further, the then Premier (the late Hon. W. Kidston) offered the Labour party, who were then in opposition, a third day, in order that all the clauses of the Bill might be fully discussed, but the offer was refused.

"3. No; and the constant increase in the percentage of times that members are deprived of the right of speaking indicates that if the present leadership is allowed to continue, our Parliament will arrive at a stage where the immediate application of the 'gag' after the formal statement of the question will be the usual procedure

"4. Yes, and this is merely what those who know the hon. member would expect of him, and it exemplifies the old adage, 'when your case is weak, abuse your adversary.'"

#### APPLICATION OF "GAG" AND "GUILLOTINE" AND RESTRICTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Bremer*), without notice, asked the hon. member for Gregory—

"1. Who introduced the 'gag' and the 'guillotine' into the Legislative Assembly of Queensland?

"2. Who introduced the time-limit on speeches and the restriction on the number of days allowed for discussion of the Estimates?

"3. Is there any comparison between the action of the hon. member for Mirani and the party to which he belongs, on the Elections Act Amendment Bill of 1913, and the application of the closure by the present Government in the public interest?

[*Mr. Pollock.*

"4. What was the personal nature of the reply of the hon. member for Gregory to the question of the hon. member for Mirani?"

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*) replied—

"1. The old Liberal Government, supported by Messrs. Swayne, Corser, Appel, G. P. Barnes, W. H. Barnes, Bell, Petrie, and T. R. Roberts.

"2. The Kidston Government, by sessional order. These restrictions were later embodied in the Standing Orders of this House by the Denham Government, supported by the gentlemen mentioned in the answer to Question 1.

"3. No. The following members:— Messrs. Swayne, Corser, Appel, G. P. Barnes, W. H. Barnes, Bell, Petrie, and T. R. Roberts have a notoriously unbeatable record for stifling free discussion. They voted fifty-eight times in one night to 'gag' and 'guillotine' Labour members in 1913.

"4. I suggested that in view of the hon. member for Mirani having voted forty-five times in one night to stifle discussion by the Labour party, he should delegate the asking of such questions to someone not possessed of such a sticky political past. I regret for his own sake that he did not follow my suggestion. The hon. member for Burnett, who is now the 'questions proxy' of the hon. member for Mirani, voted eighty-seven times in eight days, and fifty-eight times in one night, for the 'gag' and 'guillotine' against the Labour party on the Elections Act Amendment Bill of 1913."

The SPEAKER: I take the opportunity of saying that the questions which have been put during the last few days relating to the closure and the replies thereto are indubitably contrary to the Standing Orders.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*), without notice, asked the hon. member for Gregory—

"Was the Mr. Corser, the hon. member referred to in his reply to the hon. member for Bremer, the hon. member for Burnett or the hon. member for Maryborough?"

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*) replied—

"The hon. member I referred to was Mr. B. H. Corser, who now asks the question."  
(Laughter.)

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

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): The hon. member for East Toowoomba asked the Home Secretary on 18th July last the following question with reference to the number of children who have been discharged from State control:—

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

And I would like now to supply the information asked for—

“Number of Children Discharged from State Control, 1st July, 1921, to 30th June, 1922.

Southern District	...	...	1,038
Central District	...	...	208
Northern District	...	...	212
			1,458

	Southern District.	Central District.	Northern District.	Totals.
(a) 14 years of age	230	76	56	362
(b) At request of parent or guardian	148	26	9	183
(c) On recommendation of Director	660	106	147	913
Totals ..	1,038	208	212	1,458

APPLICATION OF GOVERNMENT RELIEF—CASE OF MR. AND MRS. THOS. WILLIS.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*), without notice, asked the Minister acting for the Home Secretary—

“1. Will he, as to-day promised, place on the table of the House all papers, reports, and other writings referring to Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Willis in the matter of application for Government relief.

“2. Have any police reports been received by his department in this matter. If so, will he also table such reports.”

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): In the course of the debate the hon. member asked if I would table the papers in this matter. In the interests of the persons concerned I do not think it is advisable to make public the whole of the correspondence.

Mr. VOWLES: Will you give the police report?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member may see that for himself. I am not going to use the privilege of Parliament further to pull down some person who is in distress at the present time either through his own fault or through no fault of his own.

Mr. CORSER: Can hon. members see the papers?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Certainly, any hon. member can see the papers.

Mr. VOWLES: Is there any police report?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes.

Mr. VOWLES: Will you disclose the report?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I do not think it would be fair to the persons concerned for me to disclose the report. If the hon. member wants to see the reports, I can show them to him, but it will not be in the best interests of the parties concerned to disclose them.

APPLICATION OF CLOSURE TO MINES REGULATION ACT OF 1910.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*), without notice, asked the hon. member for Gregory—

“If his party contend that they were ‘gagged’ on the occasion he refers to on the Committee stage of the Mines Regulation Act Amendment Bill in 1910, why they refused the extra day which was then offered them by the Premier, the Hon. W. Kidston?”

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. gentleman is now seeking information about something which happened about ten years ago.

Mr. POLLOCK: I ask the hon. member for Mirani to give notice of that question. (Laughter.)

ALLEGED VENDETTA AGAINST GRAZIERS.

Mr. J. JONES (*Kennedy*), without notice, asked the Premier—

“Will the Premier inform this House how much longer he intends to continue his vendetta against the graziers of Queensland?”

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

“In common with all the speeches which the hon. member makes, his question is quite unintelligible to me.”

PAPERS.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Orders in Council under the Supreme Court Act of 1921 and the Magistrates Courts Act of 1921.

The following papers were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed:—

Annual report of the Department of Public Works for the year ended 30th June, 1922.

Annual report of the Under Secretary for Mines for the year 1921.

Report on the Mount Mulligan Relief Funds.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): With the permission of the House, I would like to make a personal explanation.

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

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The hon. member for Herbert, in his speech on Supply on the 30th ultimo, made many wild statements endeavouring to connect me up with certain Press references to the unfortunate position in which Queensland finds itself, appearing in the English Press. Without arguing as to the veracity or otherwise of the references in question, I wish to state that I am not responsible either directly or indirectly therefor, and any criticism that I have to make of this Government's mismanagement of affairs will be given in the frank and open manner that this Opposition invariably adopts. May I inform the hon. member that the circulation in Great Britain some few years back by his party of that wonderful compilation “Socialism at Work” is

*Mr. Elphinstone.]*

without doubt responsible for the references to Queensland he takes exception to. With regard to his remarks concerning a broken window upon my business premises, am I to assume that his admitted lurking around that neighbourhood has some connection with the damage? (Laughter.)

### SUPPLY.

#### RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—SEVENTH ALLOTTED DAY.

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

#### HOME SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT.

##### OUTDOOR RELIEF.

Mr. FOLEY (*Leichhardt*): When the last sitting terminated I was dealing with the statements made by hon. members opposite about unemployment in Queensland. Hon. members opposite say that the Government are responsible for the unemployment, but, seeing that unemployment exists in all parts of the world, we must realise that it is due to the aftermath of the war. That is really what causes most of the unemployment that exists, not only in Queensland, but throughout Australia. Every thinking person who is conversant with the history of the world knows what the effects of previous wars have been. At the termination of a war the nations are often in a bankrupt state, and that applies not only to the conquered nation but to the victorious nation as well. Prior to the last war there were millions of people in Europe in a fairly prosperous condition, but we have them now practically on the bread line. As a consequence, many of the primary products which are produced in Queensland, and which were previously exported to many of those European markets, are not now being produced to the same extent. I might refer to the position of the cattle industry and the mining industry in Queensland in support of that. The copper mines in the Cloncurry district, and in other parts of Queensland, have been closed down, and, while they are at a standstill, the workers who were previously employed in them are without occupation, though many of them have, no doubt, taken up positions in other industries. During the war the Imperial authorities spent millions of pounds in the purchase of Australian meat for the use of the troops. The result was that there was a big boom in the pastoral industry in Queensland and other parts of Australia, and everything was fairly prosperous for a time. But almost as soon as the armistice was signed a slump was caused in the cattle industry, and prices fell because there was a termination of all the contracts which the Imperial authorities had arranged with the Queensland cattle producers.

At 4.55 p.m.,

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

Mr. FOLEY: Owing to the slump in values in the cattle industry we find that many men who were engaged in that industry are also suffering from the effects of the fall in prices and from the financial institutions of Queensland as well. We find that where previously overdrafts were granted by financial institutions, and where the debtors had good assets, to-day those institutions are squeezing their clients and asking them to

reduce their overdrafts as much as possible, and in many cases assistance has [5 p.m.] been refused to those to whom it was necessary to enable them to employ labour and carry on production. An illustration occurred in my own electorate of an individual owning quite a large number of cattle and a fair number of sheep, with plenty of good assets in the way of a splendid run, so well improved that cattle in any part had practically only a short distance to go for water and feed. When the slump in prices took place—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member will connect his remarks with the vote.

Mr. FOLEY: I want to point out that some of the criticism of hon. members opposite is unjustified, and that we have been compelled to issue relief to many unemployed, not because of the maladministration of this Government, but owing to other factors which have been operating in the community. The individual of whom I spoke had been in the habit of employing somewhere about 20 men—there is no occasion to mention his name—and he got notice from the bank to "sack" his employees. He had a married couple working for him. They had to go also. The banks insisted on their client taking his boy from school and carrying on the work of the station with the assistance of his wife and boy. An allowance of £2 10s. a week was made him as wages for the lot. Previously twenty or more hands were employed. That is an instance of what the financial institutions of this State are doing to many men in the cattle industry, and it follows that men who are thrown out of employment as a result have to receive some assistance from the Government. We cannot allow them to starve or die by the roadside, nor can we allow their families to go without food; consequently, I make no apology for the granting of relief in deserving cases. Another local factor responsible for much of the unemployment a short time ago was the Federal Government's embargo on the export of coal. Another reason to which we can point in reply to hon. members opposite is the refusal of the Federal Government—who are a body of men with political ideas exactly the same as those of members opposite—to assist in the reopening of the Mount Morgan mine a short time ago, when thousands of men were facing unemployment. Another reason, which I think has been already mentioned, is the Federal Government's bungling in the purchase of the Canungra estate and milling plant, and their closing down of the latter a few weeks afterwards, thus throwing a whole community out of work and causing a rise of a considerable amount in the relief vote last year.

These are a few of the local factors which have forced our Government to issue relief to many deserving cases throughout the State. I quite agree with hon. members opposite that many cases of persons getting relief unwarrantably have been discovered; but that will happen when a great many men in different parts of the State are calling at the different stations and making pleas for assistance. It will occur in spite of the best organisation, and I understand that every precaution has been taken to guard against it. I claim that the Government are entitled to all credit for the way in which they have coped with the position, particularly in view of the fact that they are

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not responsible for the economic condition which has existed since the termination of the war, and the return of large numbers of soldiers to compete with other workers on a depressed labour market. Assistance has been given wherever practicable, so that men could be usefully employed and avoid the necessity of asking for relief. Take my own electorate alone. I was successful in obtaining an order for 20,000 tons of coal to relieve the position at Blair Athol, where men had been thrown on the labour market. No orders were coming from private firms, and the State had to come to the rescue till things brightened up, and the men are very thankful for that assistance. The Government have also granted to the company a special railway freight rate to enable them to quote coal on the world's market at a lower figure than otherwise would be possible, and so compete with other places which are producing coal closer to ports. In time the effects of that action will be felt. What we have done at Mount Morgan is well known. We have placed 1,000 or 2,000 men and their dependents in a much more favourable position than they occupied when the company closed the mine. We came to the rescue of the cattle industry by reducing freights on cattle and meat to enable the companies and the producers to jog along for the time being, at any rate, so that they would be able, if not to make a profit, then at least to meet expenses till better organisation is achieved, with a hope of increased values occurring in the meantime. A reduction of 20 per cent. in the railway freights was made in that case, and the reduction has been of great assistance, and I think has been responsible for the employment of quite a number of men who otherwise would probably have been forced to come to the Government for assistance. A reduction of freights has been made in other directions for the express purpose of giving assistance to primary producers, such as the reduction of rates on frozen meat, pigs, and cream.

Despite all the charges of hon. members opposite that the Government are responsible for the unemployment that exists, I contend that the big interests with which they are associated have been responsible to a large extent for bringing about the present position. A short while ago the Premier visited England to endeavour to procure certain loan moneys for the purpose of starting a big public works policy in Queensland. Certain individuals in this State visited England to obstruct the Premier and prevent his getting that money, and they were successful. I therefore claim that the big interests which hon. members opposite represent were responsible for bringing about that position. Yet hon. members on the other side have the audacity to stand up and say it is the bungling and maladministration of the Government that have been responsible for the unemployment. The thing is ridiculous. We afterwards got that loan money in a different market, and have since shown our *bonâ fides* by going on with the North Coast Railway and with the Burnett land scheme, the result of which will be that, not only will a great many men be employed who previously were unemployed, but that, in the near future, 5,000 or 6,000 people will be settled on the land, which will result in the employment of probably three men to every settler. We have other big undertakings which will be developed in due course.

Unemployment, which renders necessary the issuing of relief by this Government, will exist so long as we have the present social order. Anyone who has read up the history of the present industrial system will know that the capitalistic world always has seen fit to produce a surplus over and above the needs of the community. That surplus gradually accumulates, and every seven or ten years an industrial crisis is brought about. That will go on so long as the present system lasts. This is the only party which has an objective which will result in the establishment of a better system of society within the shell of the old. I might refer to one particular instance in the new objective that is often quoted in this House—the nationalisation of banking. It is quite apparent to any sane-minded individual that, if banking were nationalised, the Government in the Federal Parliament would have in their hands a powerful factor for eliminating unemployment which at the present time is controlled by individuals. Control of the banking system would enable the Government to establish industries where necessary, and as a consequence bring about a greater measure of employment and to a great extent eliminate unemployment.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I would like to make a few remarks, more particularly as the hon. member for Fitzroy has been throwing across at us the challenge that we were not game to stand up to a statement. A letter was handed to me two days ago in which certain statements were made, and I want to inquire into those statements. The Minister has tabled the papers, and I have glanced through a few of them, but I cannot see that the Government case is a particularly good one. There is no reason why an unfortunate individual should be refused rations because he happened to have a certain failing, and there is no reason why a woman should have her rations cut off because her husband happened to have a failing. When I get a letter from a person written in good faith and received by me in good faith, I have a perfect right to endeavour to find out the circumstances of the case.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I want to say definitely that I offered the woman a home.

Mr. MOORE: In the woman's own letter she says that you wanted to put her in the Salvation Army Home.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: In a Church of England home, if she wished.

Mr. MOORE: She said she would not leave her husband.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He has been a malingering for thirteen years.

Mr. MOORE: I am going to read part of this letter.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He writes a very good letter—we know that.

Mr. MOORE: The distribution of relief is, perhaps, affected by the political faith or the political views held by the man who applies for it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is not so.

Mr. MOORE: This man, we know, holds honest political convictions, and he has expressed them in the Press.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He was getting relief the whole of the time he was doing it.

*Mr. Moore.]*

Mr. MOORE: When he expressed them his rations were cut off. Mrs. Willis says in her letter—

“Because my husband has honest political convictions and dares to express them, they have denied us the necessaries of life.”

There is a paragraph about their being home munition workers who received the thanks of the Government and were given their passages back to Australia, from which they had gone. She has a widowed daughter with two children, and I think the case is a very hard one. She says further—

“As soon as we returned we put our case before Mr. McCormack, requesting him to try and find my husband employment and give my daughter State assistance; but he callously refused to do either. Again, my sick daughter pleaded with his department to give her State assistance, but the helplessness of her two little children did not appeal to them. When my husband attacked them through the Press and showed them up as socialistic impostors, they stopped him from obtaining rations.”

There, practically, is the whole point—a man is not allowed to express honest political convictions; if he does, his rations are cut off.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is not so. I take the responsibility for turning Willis down.

Mr. MOORE: She goes on to say—

“Recently my husband wrote to the Governor-General, Lord Forster, and told him all about our conditions and troubles. His Excellency sent a most sympathetic reply, and requested the Queensland Government to help us. Instead of helping us, however, they immediately issued orders to Mr. Hogan, of the Rations Department, to stop us from obtaining food. When we were deprived of the necessaries of life, I sought an interview with Mr. Jones, who consulted with Mr. McCormack, and this gentleman advised Mr. Gall to instruct us that rations could not be given to us—not even for myself, but I could go into a Salvation Army home.”

The police strongly recommended that these people should receive rations, and pointed out that the family are dependent upon the widowed daughter, and, if this daughter had not two children to keep, they would probably be able to get along; but as she had a father and mother to look after, they had to live under most distressing circumstances.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: If the hon. member will look through the papers he will see the relief they received. They have been pretty well cared for by the State.

Mr. MOORE: They were refused rations quite suddenly because they dared to express their political opinions.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No.

Mr. STOFFORD: Has he got a pension?

Mr. MOORE: I do not know. I only heard of these people the day before yesterday. They wrote me a letter containing a statement of facts, and I am putting it before the Committee.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why does the hon. gentleman not get a genuine case instead of wasting the time of the Committee?

[Mr. Moore.

Mr. MOORE: I am not going to be dictated to by the Secretary for Agriculture. He is not going to tell me what I have a right to do. What right has he to tell me that I am wasting time? The police inspector's report is to the effect that rations should be given. The case is a hard one and the people are in very straightened circumstances. I do not know whether the man has a failing or not. They are having a very difficult time in Queensland, and because he dares to express his political views I do not think it is fair that he should be refused rations.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is not fair for the hon. member to say that. I say definitely that it is not a deserving case at all. I offered to give the wife assistance and she refused to take it.

Mr. MOORE: By taking her away from her husband and putting her in a home.

Mr. VOWLES: It is the woman's duty to stick to her husband.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: There are more deserving cases.

Mr. MOORE: I have a perfect right to bring up in this Committee any case I like. The Government want to drag these people into the mud and then cast aspersions on their characters as an excuse for their callous treatment.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. gentleman will have to take the responsibility for dragging the characters of these people through the Committee. Does he not think the Government quite competent to discriminate between deserving and undeserving cases? There is a very damaging police report amongst the papers.

Mr. MOORE: There is a whole bundle of papers, but I have not time to go through them.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Why does the hon. gentleman bring the matter up when he has only read half of the papers?

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. FERRICKS: Are they residents of the Aubigny electorate?

Mr. MOORE: No.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to address the chair and not invite interjections.

Mr. MOORE: I am not inviting interjections, because I know they are disorderly. The honorary Minister, the Hon. W. Forgan Smith, stated that from inquiries made, the number of unemployed in Queensland last month was 1,463. The last “Industrial Gazette” shows, according to union secretaries, that there are 2,073 unionists unemployed.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: The unions register with the Labour Exchange.

Mr. MOORE: There is a discrepancy in the figures.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: I quoted the latest figures. The hon. gentleman is quoting figures for an earlier period.

Mr. MOORE: I quoted figures from the August issue of the “Gazette.”

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: It is not out yet.

Mr. MOORE: The hon. member for Leichhardt asked why we did not force the

Government to cease their maladministration. How is it possible to force the Government to do anything when they have three proxy votes in their pockets and they can carry anything through that they like with the assistance of the "gag," if they so desire? The Opposition can only get up and criticise and suggest where the administration is wrong. The hon. member for Leichhardt said that so long as the present capitalistic system exists there will be unemployment. A paragraph appearing in the Sydney "Worker" is headed, "What is the Red Flag?"

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: What has that got to do with the vote?

Mr. MOORE: The hon. gentleman was saying that under the present capitalistic system unemployment will exist, and I want to point out what would be the result under the system advocated by Mr. Boote, the editor of the Sydney "Worker."

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. gentleman will connect his remarks with the vote before the Committee.

Mr. MOORE: Most decidedly I will. Under the present system we have a large number of unemployed. I want to show, according to this paragraph in the "Worker," how there can be no unemployed to relieve if a measure embodying those principles is introduced.

[5.30 p.m.]

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is getting a long way from the vote.

Mr. MOORE: Other hon. members have been allowed to state that the capitalistic system under which we live to-day is responsible for the unemployment, and I wish to show what the position will be if hon. members opposite are successful in bringing about the communistic system which they support. Surely that will be in order!

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MOORE: The quotation reads—

"The red flag of the workers stands for revolution all the time; bloodless if possible, bloody if need be. It stands for the overthrow of priests and parsons."

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! I cannot see that that has anything to do with the vote.

Mr. MOORE: It goes on to say—

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member may not continue further with that quotation.

Mr. MOORE: That seems to me to be most unfair. Hon. members opposite have claimed that the social conditions under which we live to-day are responsible for the present state of unemployment. They say that if they can bring about a different state of affairs and introduce the communistic system of government, there will no longer be any unemployment; that the workers will only have to work two or three hours a day and that there will be no need for these relief doles. Unfortunately, last year the Government were compelled to expend £177,000 on relief, and this year we are asked to vote £52,000 for that purpose. I would like the Minister to tell us what was the amount expended on relief during the last two months, and whether there has been a reduction in

this connection since the end of the financial year, so that we may be able to judge whether £52,000 will be sufficient for the whole year. I do not see that there is any possibility of keeping the vote down to that amount when we know there is such a large amount of unemployment to-day. Hon. members opposite have stated that the present condition of affairs is owing to seasonal occupations; but, when the workers go to the Arbitration Court, this question is taken into account. The rates of wage in the shearing industry and in the sugar industry were fixed on a higher scale because those are reasonable industries.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: The first four months of the year are the worst months for unemployment.

Mr. MOORE: I am not questioning which months of the year are the worst for unemployment and which are not. I have now the August "Gazette."

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: That gives the figures to the end of July.

Mr. MOORE: You said it was not out. I was perfectly right.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You have not the figures to the end of August there. I gave the August figures.

Mr. MOORE: I made the statement here that the figures I quoted were from the August "Gazette," and the Minister contradicted me and said the August "Gazette" was not out, and now I have obtained it he wants to wriggle out of it by saying that they are not the August figures.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: I quoted the August figures. The figures you quoted were not the August figures.

Mr. MOORE: The Minister can get up afterwards and make his own speech and state exactly what he did quote. I took the union secretaries' figures for thirteen districts and pointed out what they were. I only desired to point out that the two sets of figures are misleading.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Nothing of the kind. I quoted the August figures.

Mr. MOORE: Naturally, the August "Gazette" could not give the August figures.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: I gave you the August figures, and you tried to confuse them by giving the July figures.

Mr. MOORE: I very much doubt whether they were the August figures.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: Do you suggest that I gave a false return?

Mr. MOORE: I do not know that they were the August figures.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: I got them from the officials. They go up to the 21st August.

Mr. MOORE: Then, we have still another week to go? I recognise that under certain conditions relief must be given, and we have had all sorts of figures quoted to-day to show that relief was only given to widows and orphans and that able-bodied men were not receiving relief. Yet we find that the biggest proportion of the amount spent in relief is given to able-bodied men; and no matter whether there has been a war or not, we should not have to find the amount of relief that was spent last year on men out of work. If the conditions were made attractive for people to come here, we would not have the present unemployment. We know that the

*Mr Moore.]*



conditions prevailing in Queensland to-day are not attractive to people who want to start industries, and they go to those States where they are not taxed to such an extent, and where the labour conditions are easier, and as a result we have unemployment in Queensland.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: How is it that they do come to Queensland?

Mr. MOORE: They do not come to Queensland; that is the unfortunate part of it. You have only to take the list of new factories and the number of employes to-day and compare them with the figures for the other States to see that they do not come to Queensland. Until we get away from this system of penalising industry, we shall have to find unemployment doles.

Mr. W. COOPER: The wage slavery system again.

Mr. MOORE: You can call it what you like. We know very well it is the system that has brought about the present condition of affairs. Even in the country districts we can see the result of the legislation of the last few years. The present conditions have not been brought about as a result of the war, because in the country districts during the war prices were high and there was an opportunity for the people to put a little money by, but, owing to the legislation that has been passed in the last few years, the improvement is not going on that should go on.

Mr. W. COOPER: That is only a parrot cry. I heard that thirty years ago.

Mr. MOORE: Then the hon. member ought to have learned sense by this time. If he was told the truth thirty years ago and has not yet learned that he is working on a fallacy, then he is not fit to be a member of Parliament. It is absolutely essential that the administration of the present Government should be altered in order to do away with unemployment and thereby prevent the necessity for this tremendous drain on the resources of the country in feeding the unemployed without getting any return.

Mr. W. COOPER: Your Government gave them pea soup.

Mr. MOORE: I know that the Labour organisations object to the present system. The members of the Bundaberg Australian Workers' Union strongly object to it and prefer to work. There are plenty of opportunities to go on with reproductive works close to Brisbane. Take the suggested irrigation scheme at Mount Edwards. That is quite close to the metropolis, and any work done in connection with that scheme would bring revenue to the State in a short time.

Mr. STOPFORD: You should not cavil at the loan expenditure.

Mr. MOORE: I do cavil at the loan expenditure. It is a tremendous waste of money to keep on building new railway lines at the present cost of construction. We have any amount of land along our existing lines that could be purchased and cut up for closer settlement. It is the greatest mistake in the world to borrow money at  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. or 7 per cent.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: You would have to borrow money to repurchase those lands.

Mr. MOORE: There is any amount of land that could be secured without borrowing at all, and land could be bought to-day at a cheaper rate than the price paid for it thirty

[Mr. Moore.

years ago. There is a railway line running through it. Between Roma and Mitchell there is some of the most beautiful land in the State which can be purchased.

At 5.40 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kirwan, Brisbane) resumed the chair.

Mr. FERRICKS (South Brisbane): Hon. members opposite have been continually railing against the expenditure of the Government under the heading of "Outdoor Relief," and this afternoon it has been quite a change to notice that, when hon. members on this side are prepared to demonstrate that the expenditure last year under this heading can be justifiably upheld, there is a complete absence of any genuine criticism from hon. members opposite; in fact, there is almost a total absence of criticism. On the contrary, there has been a complaint from the leader and the deputy leader of the Opposition that the Government are not going far enough in the distribution of outdoor relief. To be consistent, we would expect them to move for an increase on the sum of £52,000 set down for expenditure during the present year for outdoor relief. It is known to all hon. members that cases have not been entertained by the department after inquiries have been made into the circumstances of the applicants. I do not know anything about the case which has been quoted—I do not know where the people live, but I understand that one of the members of that family is earning £3 5s. a week. But there are harder cases than that which have been turned down, to my knowledge. The expenditure of £177,000 last year is referred to with assumed holy horror by critics in the Press. The critics are absent from the Chamber this afternoon. I think that one is safe in estimating that one-third of the amount expended is given, not to able-bodied men out of work, but it is given in very many cases to widows and their children, and to wives and mothers whose husbands may be incapacitated, and who would not be in a position to contribute to the support of the wives and children. Innumerable instances of such cases have come before hon. members. We must realise that, when the department in its wisdom has granted relief in the cases to which I have referred, it has not been rendered necessary by any action or want of action on the part of the Government. On the contrary, it has been rendered necessary by the action of the friends and supporters of hon. members opposite. Owing to the great increases in prices of commodities which took place during the war, and which are still maintained, the usual amounts given in allowances were found to be totally inadequate to tide the people over their times of trial, with the result that the Government had to incur on that account, as well as in other directions, an abnormal expenditure on outdoor relief. It is altogether unfair to make a comparison of the expenditure thus incurred with that incurred previously, for the reason that conditions and prices have altered so much that a comparison cannot be made on fair grounds. There are one or two aspects of this question which have not been referred to in this debate which I desire to touch upon. I am safe in saying that more than one-third of the total expenditure of £177,000, or about £59,000, has been expended in granting relief, not to able-bodied men who are out of work, so

that the real expenditure to families whose breadwinners are out of work, and to other individuals who are similarly situated, may be taken to be from £117,000 to £120,000.

**THE SECRETARY FOR MINES:** There are about ten classes, including deserted wives, widows, and families of men who are away, and other cases.

**Mr. FERRICKS:** The Minister will admit that I am quite safe in estimating that one-third of the expenditure has been incurred under the headings he refers to. I wish to repel the charge which has been hurled at the Government by hon. members opposite during the past two years that the money which is being given to able-bodied men is being wasted, that it is an incentive to loafing, and that it is debasing the recipients, and bringing about a lessening of the standard of manhood in the State. I refuse to accept that contention. I say that it is a great trial for any individual who is out of work—and we on this side can speak feelingly in that regard, because we have had the experience at one time or another of being out of work, and looking for work. Hon. members opposite have not had that experience.

**AN OPPOSITION MEMBER:** How do you know?

**Mr. FERRICKS:** If they had had that experience, they would not hurl the epithets at this side that they do. Hon. members opposite have been born with the luck which the hon. member for Bowen so characteristically referred to, which has deprived them of knowledge of the actual hardships of the people. During the expenditure of this money in the past financial year, hon. members may not have noticed the extent to which the population of Queensland has increased; and I am pleased to say that, during the past seven or eight years, it has increased more in proportion than in any other similar period. Comparing the census of 1911 with the census of 1921, we find that the population of Queensland increased by 20 per cent. The increase of population in New South Wales in that time was 21 per cent. The question has been raised as to whether a number of workers and their families do not come from the Southern States to Queensland and obtain relief, and whether it is not reasonable to assume that many Queenslanders go to the Southern States. Everybody knows that for those who have money all roads lead to Sydney; but for people who have no money Sydney or Melbourne is about the last place in the Commonwealth to be in. There has been an exodus to Sydney of retired Queenslanders, who made their money here, and have gone to live there, but that is the only way in which the population of New South Wales benefits at the expense of Queensland. During the past year, when this money was expended, the population on 31st March last had increased by 17,734.

If twice the sum that was spent on outdoor relief, or even five times the sum, were spent in bringing immigrants from the other side of the world, then the action of the Government would have received the acclamation of the very people who are condemning the Government for assisting the Australian-born and Australian-adopted subjects. When a man is out of work it is not to say that he is a unit in the flotsam and jetsam of society. I welcome the men who come here from the other States of the Com-

monwealth, because they are good citizens of the Commonwealth, and they will make good in Queensland. I prefer that system of immigration to the system of bringing immigrants from the other side of the world. While I am a whole-hearted Australian, I say that, while the other States of the Commonwealth are prepared to bring in a stream of immigrants, then Queensland is going to benefit by the departures from the other States of the Commonwealth. I am quite satisfied that many of the immigrants who are brought to the other States will eventually find their way to Queensland. I was in Western Australia with the hon. member for Bowen on a memorable occasion, and what struck me most in that State was the number of inquiries that were made concerning the prospects and outlook in Queensland for workers and intending settlers. Everywhere we went that was the question that was put to us. I see that Western Australia is going to bring in 75,000 immigrants a year. I venture the assertion that, if they bring that number in, and they do no better for them than they have done in the past, they will never hold them, and eventually they will come to Queensland. The hon. member for Murilla will remember a period of about ten years ago when there was an incessant cry in Queensland about the shortage of labour, particularly for harvesting the primary crops. Now that the excess labour is here, the very same people who howled for that labour are protesting against average assistance being given to these people. All this has a connection with the question of outdoor relief. About this time it will be remembered that the Scottish Commission visited Australia, and they issued a report under the heading, "Australia, its Land, Conditions, and Prospects, being the Observations and Experiences of the Scottish Agricultural Commission of 1910-1911." On page 143, under the heading of "Casual Labour," in the ranks of which the greater portion of this money for outdoor relief is expended, we find the Scottish Commission writing—

"The casual nature of much of the employment on farms, and the higher wages in the cities, are the main causes of the scarcity of labour of which so much is heard in the country; for men cannot be expected to appear in unlimited numbers wherever they happen to be wanted for the few weeks' work."

Hon. members opposite are very much like what is expressed by the Scottish Commission. They point out that it is no use employing a man only a few weeks and then getting rid of him as soon as that work has been completed. We heard a great deal about the Scottish Commission, but very little has been said about the report which that Commission issued, because it told the truth, and there were certain aspects of the question which did not appeal to hon. members opposite. It has been said by hon. members that undesirable effects followed the receipt of relief rations by unemployed people. I say that it is far more undesirable that men should have to steal or go hungry. I ask hon. members opposite, if they object to the expenditure of money for this purpose, what will they submit as an alternative?

**Mr. MORGAN:** Work. Give them work. Spend the money on work.

**Mr. FERRICKS:** The deputy leader of the Opposition thought that twice the amount could be spent by employing these at work

*Mr. Ferricks.]*

on an irrigation scheme on wages that would cover the cost of their upkeep. If that were done, hon. members opposite would not be satisfied unless every worker on every farm was working at the same rate. Hon. members opposite want men to work just for their "tucker," because they know that will bring wages down. Hon. members opposite believe in the doctrine preached by the late Sir George Reid, who said that he hoped that Australia would see the day when we would have such a crop of pauperism that industries would be able to be carried on profitably. Hon. members opposite think that men should be put to work for the cost of their rations.

Mr. MORGAN: Give them practical work.

Mr. FERRICKS: If the hon. member was able to get work done on his selection just for the mere cost of rations—

Mr. MORGAN: I would not expect it.

Mr. FERRICKS: But if it were done for the hon. member, every adjoining farmer would want the same thing on his farm. If you put men to work at Mount Edwards for the cost of their keep, farmers would want the men to work for them just for their "tucker." I am convinced that this Government will never do anything in the direction desired by hon. gentlemen opposite if they submit that as an alternative. Do those hon. members want these people to go hungry, or do they want their children to go hungry? If not, do they want them to steal?

Mr. MORGAN: We want you to give them work.

Mr. FERRICKS: Hon. members opposite have expressed themselves against the "Golden Casket," and they take exception to money being spent on outdoor relief. The deputy leader of the Opposition says that the money has not been expended efficiently, and does not go far enough. I think the expenditure is quite laudable, in spite of all the criticism that has been levelled against it. A lot of people are unfortunately situated, and if they are hungry it is the duty of the Government to see that they get food. I quite admit that the unemployed question and the issue of relief is a very big proposition, and it is not going to be solved by any artificial means or by any temporary expedient. While a slackness in industry remains it is the duty of the Government to do as they are doing. We must bear in mind the seasonal nature of many of the occupations in Queensland. We realise that in the case of four industries—sugar, meat, wool, and wheat—all have their work carried on at the same time. The only way that we can bring about a reduction of expenditure on outdoor relief is by propounding a system of land settlement, as is the intention of the Government under the proposed Burnett scheme.

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Brcmer*): In making a few short remarks on this vote, I should like to say that we have heard a good deal that is new and probably some that is not so new, and I should like to compliment the Opposition on the way in which they have endeavoured to hide the very few facts in their favour under a mass of

[7 p.m.] assertion. When it comes to asser-

tion, I think the Opposition to His Majesty in this Chamber stand upon a pinnacle in comparison with which Mount Everest fades into insignificance. The hon.

[*Mr. Ferricks.*

member for Enoggera, in the course of his remarks, made some statements as to the employment and the non-employment of returned soldiers. Speaking on this very subject less than two years ago, as recorded in the "Telegraph" of the 4th March, 1921, he made these remarks—

" 'It is useless and idle,' continued Mr. Kerr, after quoting statistics, 'as well as unjustifiable to accuse employers of not adhering to their contract in regard to returned men. They have not only done so, but in many cases have exceeded their obligations. Only in two instances do I know of such offenders, and in this connection I propose to deal with the chief one. This is the State Government departments, and particularly the Railway departments.' "

You see that was in March, 1921, and his remarks then practically agree with his remarks now; but the astonishing thing about it is that the hon. member for Enoggera was corrected on that first occasion—

" Mr. L. C. Morley said that one would be amazed at the stream of girls which came out of the Government offices at Desmond Chambers if he went there of an afternoon about half-past 4. It was a crying shame that the Commonwealth Government should employ so many girls there while soldiers were out of work. The positions held by these girls should be filled by returned soldiers. Every Commonwealth department in Brisbane was full of girls, who were doing the work of returned men."

But it was not enough that he should be corrected by the chairman of the organisation with regard to his statement that only one employer had failed, but the secretary, Mr. J. R. Foster, also found it necessary to speak—

" Mr. J. R. Foster, district secretary, declared that the strenuous time he was having in the Brisbane office was mainly due to unemployment. Mr. Kerr had made the bold assertion that, with two exceptions, private employers had honoured their obligations to returned soldiers in the matter of employment."

The hon. member said "with one exception"—

" It might be that the employer had honoured his obligations to the extent of giving a man a temporary job when he returned from the war, but they would find that in many instances the soldier did not hold the position for more than six months."

The hon. member was corrected in his statement, but what does that matter? Apparently it does not matter at all so long as you can repeat some old statements. At any rate, it does not matter much. So long as a few old facts are at their disposal, hon. members opposite bolster them up as much as they can and try to palm them off on the country as something new. I have been struck lately with the propaganda that is going on in a section of the metropolitan Press regarding the recipients and the manner in which relief is given. Just casually glancing through the papers in the library and turning up a paper here and there, without searching particularly for anything, I came across these remarks in the metropolitan

Press. The "Courier," of 17th May, 1922, has this—

"Why are there so many professional unemployed in Queensland and so many persons drawing pensions and free rations in this wealthy and gigantic State? . . . It is largely because they have no incentive to work and no desire to get on. Why should they work, they ask themselves, when there is a Government to fall back on? Doles and charity and free rations and the 'full result' of their semi-permanent mendicancy."

etc., etc. If that were alone, we might say it was an instance of the writer's liver being a little bit upset—that he had to take it out of somebody, and he took it out of somebody. But I find the following in the "Courier" of 23rd May, 1922:—

"How does the Queensland Government grapple so successfully with unemployment? Why, by using doles, grants, and free rations, of course! . . . In 1922, in Australia, to proclaim work as the solution of unemployment, unrest, and general inefficiency is to fly in the face of Karl Marx and cut oneself off for ever from the congregation of the self-righteous. Besides, it is so utterly foreign to the latest practice. Why should any work while they can live without working?"

The whole tenor of these extracts is that there is a desire to impress upon the people of Queensland that the people who are out of work at present and are receiving Government relief do it from choice and not from necessity. There is no attempt to disguise it; the full import is there. I find the following in the "Courier" of 7th July, 1922:—

"It has been reserved, however, for a socialistic Government in this enlightened age to proclaim that if men of a certain class do not care to work they may obtain a greater share of the delicacies of the season than even many of those who work laboriously. . . . It is natural that hard-working farmers, toiling long hours, with few recreations, might feel tempted to get to the cities and obtain enrolment on that Praetorian guard of socialistic supporters who neither toil nor spin."

That is absolute abuse of the people who are unfortunate enough to be out of work and are assisted by the Government in the matter of relief. We find the following in the "Courier" of 14th July, 1922:—

"The Minister for Works and State Enterprises is desirous of accounting for the expenditure of £174,000 in one year in assistance to unemployed and doles to those who prefer doles to food earned by honest labour."

On 23rd July, 1922, the following appeared:—

"There is a superabundance of work here for everybody in the State providing that the industries are placed on the same basis as those in other States."

These people desire to have the hours of labour lengthened and the conditions reduced to those which are obtaining in the worst State of Australia, so that the workers cannot enjoy the full benefits that they are receiving under the present régime. In the "Courier" of 1st August, 1922, there is the following:—

"There would be no unemployed in

Queensland of men who would take work, or if they are allowed to take work, at a payment according to value."

The inference is that the worker to-day is not giving value for the money that is paid to him; that, if he were paid according to the value at which he is assessed by the Employers' Federation, it might be taken that he could get work. In other words, if he would agree to take whatever the employers in this State cared to pay him without reference to any court whatever, there would be work for him.

Mr. MORGAN: What they can afford to pay.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Does it not seem to indicate that there is a little conspiracy to withhold employment until such time as the worker is forced by the exigencies of the situation to accept the offer of the employer? The "Daily Mail" does not adopt that particular method of dealing with the matter. Its articles are generally long-drawn-out sort of statements, and very airy, which are written by those wonderful correspondents who contribute to the "Window Column." One article states—

"Heard of a man the other day who is now a leading citizen in one of the big cities, who was employed as a labourer in a Government office where men toiled all night."

The next sentence is the sentence with the bite in it. It states—

"Every morning it was his task to gather up the empty bottles."

Do you get it? People who work for the Government and were employed all night consumed the contents of a number of bottles, and the empties were lying round about so that this man could make a start to make a fortune by gathering them up. That is a nice reflection to cast upon the public servants. Surely, one might expect something better from a paper of that standard. On 15th August, the "Daily Mail" stated—

"Touching the dolce far niente attitude engendered by Theodore and Company relief ration system. I had a nocturnal visitor lately in the shape of an old swaggie, 'humping Matilda' from Toowoomba to Cloncurry. At each stage of the journey he had the tucker bag replenished at the Government's expense. . . . A happy, care-free life, my masters! Why work or worry when one can get a beneficent Government to do both for one."

This poor, unfortunate "swaggie" had to go from Toowoomba to Cloncurry. Let us take the stages from Toowoomba to Longreach. Supposing he got over that part of the journey right enough—a care-free life, my masters, in which there is no worry! The first stage from Longreach is to Winton, a distance of 130 miles. When I did that stage per motor-car, I think there were three places where you could get a drink over the bar if you desired it, and four places where you could get a drink from a stream and no Government rations. During that stage of 130 miles water could be got at four places, and the man had to exist on 5s. worth of rations—a couple of lb. of meat and a couple of loaves of bread. A care-free life, my masters!

Mr. MORGAN: Station people will always give them something. (Government laughter.)

Mr. F. A. Cooper.]

Mr. F. A. COOPER: It is quite right for their masters, the station-owners, to give them rations; but when the Government give them the necessaries to keep body and soul together, it is wrong. When the poor, unfortunate man got to Winton he would have to struggle to Kynuna, a distance of 110 miles, on his few loaves of bread, couple of lb. of meat, and the sugar and tea that he got with the 5s., with no refreshment-place except three waterholes. A wonderful, care-free life without worry, and without any anxiety whatever! The next stage is from Kynuna to Mackinlay, a distance of 48 miles, with one waterhole, and then from Mackinlay on to Cloncurry, a distance of 80 miles, with one drinking-place 18 miles out, and the next drinking-place 56 miles further on. Along the track from Winton to Cloncurry there are dead men's bones—the bones of men who tramped that track searching for work, attempting to keep body and soul together, before the days of 5s. worth of rations to carry them on. Their bones are left there to tell the tale.

A correspondent in the "Window" column of the "Daily Mail," with that airiness which denotes that he had been all the way from the Botanic Gardens to Auchenflower, talks about the care-free life of a man "humping the drum" from Toowoomba to Cloncurry. To my mind there is only one place in the world fit for such stuff as that, and that is the "Window" column of the "Daily Mail." On 10th August, I find this in the "Daily Mail"—

"Amalgamated sons of rest—a society of persons with conscientious objections to work between meals. Members may be seen daily at their posts in Queen street."

Another reflection on the workers of this State who are out of work.

Mr. MORGAN: Is that not fairly accurate?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I know from your standpoint that it is true. From your standpoint any poor, unfortunate man who happens to strike an overstocked labour market is a loafer, and he prefers to spend his time leaning up against a post in Queen street to working. On 9th August there is another reflection upon the State employee as to the way he works—

"Now I know why it is that people have to wait anything up to two years for their telephones. We were having one installed the other day. Four men arrived about 2 o'clock with a huge bag of tools, and an equally fearsome coil of wire. After borrowing a ladder from next door they set to work. That is to say, one man mounted the ladder and began boring a hole while the other three looked encouragingly. 'Yera bit low, aint yer, Joe?' asked one. 'Through yet?' queried another. 'Shut up' added the third. The hole proved to be a bit too low. The second try was too high, and by the time they had struck the right place the wall was well ventilated. 'Half-past 4,' exclaimed 'Bill.' They locked the tool chest, tied the wire, and left. They came again the next morning at 10, and had the wires set by 3 in the afternoon. The whole job consisted in extending the wiring from the roof to where we wanted the 'phone.'

I have no hesitation in saying that no four men are sent out by the Telegraph Department, which is a Commonwealth department,

[Mr. F. A. Cooper.

to fix a telephone wire. I make bold to say that no foreman in a Commonwealth department is so negligent of his duty that he would not notice that four men on one job took one half of a day and practically the whole of the next day to fix the wires for one telephone. The Commonwealth department is a very strict department in the matter of time cards and the keeping of time, yet the "Daily Mail" reflected in that airy way on the workers of this department. The hon. member for Aubigny made a few remarks about some people who had been refused rations by this Government. I have glanced hurriedly through the papers, and I think I am right in saying that in 1919 these people received rations eighteen times. In 1920 they received rations twenty-two times, and in 1921 they received rations sixteen or eighteen times.

Mr. VOWLES: Why were the rations cut off?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: The rations were cut off twelve months ago because it appeared to those in charge that the family were in receipt of that much money that the rations could not be granted.

Mr. VOWLES: The police report did not say that.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: The report said that one member of the family was earning £3 a week. I have had people come to me who have been struck off the ration list. In one case a man came out from England. He was a barber and he could not get work at his trade, and he had to set up a place of his own. He had very little money, and consequently did not have a very elaborate saloon. He paid 8s. a week for the saloon and 8s. a week house rent, and he had a wife and six children, the eldest child being twelve years of age. I could not get rations for that man. The department said, "He is getting £1 10s. a week and is not entitled to them." This woman's daughter to whom I have already referred was in receipt of £3 a week to keep five of them, yet here is a man who is in receipt of £1 10s. a week, and he has to keep his family. Another case came under my notice where an individual was turned down by the police, who said, "This man is receiving £1 a week from a benefit society." He has a wife and six children. He pays 2s. a week contributions to the society; he pays 8s. for rent, and he has 10s. a week to keep the whole of the family. It was only with great difficulty that I was able to get relief rations for this man.

Mr. VOWLES: Don't you know that that girl is away from her people?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: No; I judge from the reports. I know that relief is a very difficult thing to handle, and I have the greatest sympathy for the officers of the department. I know they have difficult cases to handle; but although the system has been often abused, I would be sorry to see them refuse deserving cases.

With reference to unemployment and the part which it plays in the matter of the "dole," as it is called, I want to point out that the fault does not always lie with the Government.

The question of the employment of returned soldiers has cropped up. I want to state my little experience in the little town where I live, and I expect there is a similar experience in other towns. In my district there was a position vacant for a secretary to

the fire brigade. There was a number of applications for the position. It was a semi-public body, on which the underwriters, the city council, and the ratepayers have each a representative, and the Government have a nominee representative. A returned soldier applied for the job, amongst others. He was maimed and unable to do hard work. The only man who voted for him was the Government nominee. The rest of the board voted for a gentleman who was not a returned soldier at all. The city council had two jobs vacant—one as poundkeeper, and one as caretaker of the baths. I have nothing to say about the men who were appointed, but the Ipswich City Council, like other city councils that have talked preference to returned soldiers and about seeing a fair thing being done by the soldiers, gave both those jobs to men who were not returned soldiers. There were many applications for both the jobs by returned soldiers who were qualified to fill the positions. The hon. member for Toowong is here, and I dare say he knows of the case in the Brisbane City Council when he was a member of it, when they wanted a caretaker for Mount Coot-tha. There were returned soldier applicants, but I do not think the Brisbane City Council gave the job to a returned soldier. The Holman Government in New South Wales passed a wonderful Act called the Preference Act, to enforce preference to returned soldiers, under which anybody who had a job going and did not give it to a returned soldier could be grabbed and hauled before the court, and a zealous police officer grabbed a man who had transgressed and brought him before the court. That man happened to be a member of the wonderful institution called the "Millions Club." Of course, the clubman escaped, and there have been no prosecutions under that wonderful Act ever since. The Sydney "Bulletin," in an article the other day, spoke of the assistance given to hospitals, and referred to the returned soldiers as "those rather despotic creatures, the returned soldiers." We have a local body known as the King and Empire League, who were going to make the returned soldier do secretarial work, but, unfortunately, they were unable to get a secretary to do it. It seems to me that the case with regard to the distribution of relief is wholly and solely in favour of the Government. To have a heart, to have a feeling for your fellow-men, to keep people from absolute want and penury, has always been regarded as a decent thing; but it has been a peg whereon the Press who are opposed to the Government have hung many statements which are not true, and it has been a peg on which Opposition members have repeatedly misrepresented the facts. I am astonished to think that they entered on this debate with such a large heart. They should have known their weakness before, but they know by this time how soundly they have been thrashed, how fallacious their arguments were, and upon what shifting sands they built their foundations.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I was almost moved to tears by the remarks of the hon. member for Bremer about the hard things said by hon. members of the Opposition against the poor unemployed who had to "hump Matilda" from Toowoomba to Cloncurry. A poor unfortunate unemployed citizen made his way into my district

the other day. The unfortunate man also had his wife travelling with him, and they communicated with me. I took them in my motor-car to Gayndah to relieve them of some of the hardships of the road. Soon after we arrived at Gayndah these people were arrested by the police owing to previous unlawful actions of officers of the Government.

Mr. BRENNAN: What were they arrested for?

Mr. CORSER: I do not know what they were arrested for. I was just mentioning that hon. members of this side can show kindness to people who have to walk the roads with "Matilda."

Mr. STOPFORD: How did you know that the woman's name was "Matilda"?

Mr. CORSER: I said they were probably walking with "Matilda." I do not know that there was any cause for their arrest. I can tell hon. members opposite that hon. members on the Opposition side are just as anxious to take notice of the distress amongst people as they are. If you look up "Hansard" you will see the predictions made by hon. members of the Opposition when certain legislation was being enacted by the party now in power. We told them that, owing to their legislation and administration, they were stifling all incentives to thrift and industry. We told them that their actions would lead to unemployment because it would prevent people from extending their industries as they should be extended.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You said that, but you furnished no proof.

Mr. CORSER: The proof is here now—we have unemployment here now.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The unemployed are more numerous in Victoria.

Mr. CORSER: It was stated by the Labour Bureau quite recently that there were 6,000 unemployed here, so it is no good referring to other States of the Commonwealth. When this Government came into power one of the planks in their platform was that they were going to increase industry and wipe out unemployment in this State. Hon. members opposite said that the Tory States would have their unemployment but not Queensland when they introduced their legislation on socialistic lines, because there would be possibilities for the development of industries in Queensland. However, they failed to develop industry in Queensland and we have unemployed people here.

Mr. FOLEY: The Secretary for Mines proved what he said about the unemployed.

Mr. CORSER: The Secretary for Mines said during the Paddington election campaign that there would be no unemployment here in a couple of months, but that has not been borne out. It was all right for him to make that statement at that particular time, but the Government could not live up to it. I am sorry that we have had any unemployment in Queensland, but there is a good amount of work being provided for in the Burnett district just now. When that scheme was started and workers were being procured for the Burnett Railways, I made representations to the proper quarter, and, through the kindness of the administration, I was able to have Mundubbera adopted as a place where

*Mr. Corser.]*

labour could be secured through the Labour Bureau. I found that certain [7.30 p.m.] organisations were working against the opening of that bureau, but fortunately their representations were not successful, with the result that the bureau was opened in Gayndah. I found, however, that it was a bureau which only received names of unemployed and no action could be taken to secure men from it.

Mr. BRENNAN: Were they not registered first?

Mr. CORSER: The bureau was opened at my request, but I found it was only a bureau for registration, and not a bureau from which labour could be employed, so that I had to make further representations. Fortunately, those representations were successful, and part of the labour in that district is now secured from Mundubbera and part from Gayndah. But, although both of those bureaus have a considerable number of registrations, they have not adequately fulfilled the duty of finding work for the people who were hoping to secure it as a result of expenditure from the loan fund. The Government have £5,000,000 loan money to spend this year. They have not asked for more, nor have I ever suggested they should have less. When the Government say that more is necessary to employ the unemployed in the Burnett I am not going to vote against it. It is their place to see that the people are employed, and, if a little more money is necessary to enable us to reach a position where Queensland will have no unemployed, the Opposition will give it most favourable consideration, when they find what the scheme is. In the meantime, however, we are faced with this position—that last year £2,600,000 was asked for, and this year £5,000,000, and the Government have that amount to spend. While I hope that the unemployed in the Burnett will have a share of this expenditure, I sincerely hope also that all the people of Queensland who want work will be catered for in the expenditure of this exceptionally large amount of loan money. In doing that, I hope the Government will give the unemployed, whether in Brisbane, Bundaberg, Maryborough, or any other centre, work as near as possible to their homes. It is bad policy, for instance, to send people from Gayndah to the Northern Burnett, or from Gladstone to the Central Burnett and Mundubbera. And wherever it is possible, I hope that facilities will be given to enable their families to accompany them. I hope that this large expenditure—passed with the support of the Opposition—will result in the successful employment in reproductive industry of all the unemployed. I hope that none of the schemes of the Government will fail. Whatever they are, I trust that they will be to the advantage, and not to the detriment of Queensland, for I feel sure that every man who labours on the works constructed out of this large expenditure of loan money will be far more satisfied if he knows that his labour is going to be reproductive. In reviewing the whole question, we should remember that there are such things as works of a non-party nature, and, if we consider our loan expenditure in the interests of the unemployed from a broad national standpoint, and cut away all party feelings from our considerations, we ought to be in the position, not only to absorb all men who are seeking employment, but also to give greater confidence to the people of the State who

have money to invest, and who would, under safer and sounder administration, be prepared to spend that money, and so find private work for those persons who are now relying on the State.

We must also remember that after this £5,000,000 is spent the men who will be employed by it will require some other work. It is no use saying, "We are going to find you work this year, because it is near an election." They have more than an election to think of. They have their wives and families to consider; and I think it is the duty of any Government to provide ahead the means for finding work for such men; and they can do it by sound and safe administration of the State's affairs, thus inspiring that confidence which is so essential to the progress of industry, and creating conditions as favourable to the employer as to the employee, and making possible the development of our rural as well as our secondary industries in a way which alone will find suitable employment for all. If we do that, we are doing our duty to the unemployed, and not merely finding them work one year and throwing them on to the relief vote the next. I appeal to the Government to consider the matter on the broadest lines, in the interests of the wives and families of the men as well as of the men themselves, and adopt a safe policy of progress.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. A. J. Jones, *Paddington*): The hon. member who has just resumed his seat made a statement which might be very damaging to the Government, but he did not give the names of the persons to whom he referred, so as to give us any clue which would enable us to get the police to make inquiries. Anybody who knows anything about the administration, especially of the Police Department, knows that the police will not arrest any person or persons unless for some very grave reason.

Mr. CORSER: Did I make any suggestion otherwise?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No.

Mr. CORSER: It is just as well to make that clear.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member has made his statement, and I conceive it to be my duty to ask him to furnish me, as Acting Home Secretary, with the names and dates, so that I can inquire into the case, and bring the full particulars before the House, and then we shall see who is to blame.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. WEIR (*Maryborough*): There has been a greater amount of cant and hypocrisy during the discussion of this relief vote by hon. members opposite than there has been on any other vote. Who knows better than they do that the whole thing is due entirely to the system with which they have hedged us round? I extend my sincere sympathy to the man and woman who were unfortunate enough to travel with the hon. member for Burnett. They might have known where they would end. (Laughter.) I hope that the hon. member will get out of the position in which he has placed himself with the least amount of delay. I was not in the Chamber, but I was told that the leader of the Opposition again introduced into the House that old canard which he introduced in connection with Wando Vale—that some loafer

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at an hotel bar told Bill Jones, who told Tom Smith that he was told by someone on the canefields, who was told by somebody else, that a "bloke" in Maryborough said that some people there who had banking accounts were getting relief. I am told that the hon. gentleman did not connect me actually, but the insinuation was there. I want to say for his benefit that the statement is absolutely untrue. I hope he will take my word for it. I do not know the "bloke" that he is talking about. If there is any reference to me, as member for Maryborough, the statement is absolutely untrue. I never heard of it until the hon. member for Drayton mentioned it here last session by interjection, and I told him emphatically that I had never heard it before. I am also told that it appeared in the "Maryborough Chronicle." I think the hon. member for Wide Bay told me that. I did not see the "Chronicle," and I did not think it worth while to read it.

Mr. VOWLES: It appeared in the Maryborough papers.

Mr. WEIR: I do not doubt that—anything appears in our papers.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER interjected.

Mr. WEIR: Fancy me writing to a Tory paper to uphold my reputation! It is a thing that I have never done in my life. If I cannot stand up by my own efforts, I am not going to turn to the "Chronicle." I have never made it a practice to write to the "Chronicle." So far as the statement is concerned, I give it a denial right here and now, if it alleges that there is any connection with myself. The point I want to emphasise is the absurdity of the argument of hon. members opposite. On the one hand, they charge the Government with not having meted out fair treatment to a woman with children, because they did not give them rations after being satisfied that they had reached the standard of means when they did not need rations. On the other hand, they say that the people in Maryborough get rations when they have a banking account. Has there ever been a clearer case of one argument condemning the other! My experience in Maryborough is precisely the same as that of the hon. member for Bremer; and it is the same experience. I take it, as that of every member in this House. Anybody who knows anything about relief knows perfectly well that one of the conditions of getting relief is that the applicant has to sign a document to the effect that he is destitute. If a man or woman had a banking account and signed a document to that effect, he or she would be liable to immediate arrest. In Brisbane prosecutions have taken place—and wisely, I think—for abuse of the ration grant. I have said in Maryborough to the unemployed, and I say it now, that the police are not severe enough in some of these cases. I take the view that in some of these cases there is an inclination on the part of some people to impose on the ration allowance. I know that every big scheme has its imposters. My point is that the percentage of imposters is so small that they really do not matter after all. When I am home in Maryborough I am in attendance on Saturday and Monday at the Labour bureau promptly at 10 o'clock in the morning. I do not think there is in this Chamber a member who is fortunate enough to be so closely in touch with the unemployed in his electorate as I am. Having studied the thing closely and well for many

years, I do not honestly believe that there are 2 per cent. of imposters on the ration list to-day. I go further—I do not believe there are 2 per cent. of the unemployed who do not honestly want work; 93 per cent. of them want work. This question has been dragged in by the hair of the head, but I thought that, in decency, the soldier element in this House could have left the soldier "stunt" alone. They have dragged it to death, so why drag it again?

Mr. COSTELLO: Whose fault is it?

Mr. WEIR: Fancy a soldier saying it is our fault! Does he not know that the capitalistic class have used these men all through the ages and scrapped them? Surely he knows that!

Mr. COSTELLO: Now you have dragged them in the gutter.

Mr. WEIR: They are the class who promised to protect these men, and when they came back they left them to starve in the parks. Who knows that better than the hon. member? And that, despite all his influence as a politician. The same with the hon. member for Enoggera. With all their blather of what they did for the soldier, go round the corner and see the "Diggers" starving. I say the whole responsibility, so far as the unemployment of the soldier is concerned, rests entirely with the Federal Government. When these people sailed away they were told, "We will cheer you, thank you, kiss you when you come back." I was travelling to North Queensland in June, 1915, on the "Bombala." Some good ladies, who were comfortably situated in Melbourne, were walking up and down the boat at night singing this. I was one who objected to the sentiment, because I believed it was not honest. A good lady that I came in touch with said, "Don't you like this, Mr. Weir?" I said, "No, because I do not think it is true. When they come back you will pull your skirts away for fear of rubbing against them." They did pull their skirts away, and left the women who were left behind to starve, as they always do.

Mr. COSTELLO: You cannot blame this side.

Mr. WEIR: Of course I do. I blame you for supporting a system which does that sort of thing.

Let us look at the people whom the hon. member for Toowong represents—the employing class. We heard that those people would cheer the "Digger," thank him, kiss him, put their arms round his neck, and find him a job. They walked down to the wharf, said "Good-bye," and sailed him o'er the seas to take all the risks—which he took like a man. When he came back they said, "We will have a glorious Anzac Day to celebrate the famous landing on Gallipoli." They did—when it did not cost anything—they will do anything so long as it does not cost anything. But when it starts to cost something—when they find it will mean a few "bob" out of their pockets—and they have the few "bob," which they made out of the "Digger," bless you—this is what they do: The "Courier" of 18th August, 1922, has the following regarding the annual conference of the Central Council of Employers of Australia:—

"THE CULMINATING POINT.

"ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF EMPLOYERS OF AUSTRALIA.

"Fearing that the observance of Anzac Day must inevitably lapse into the recog-

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dition of such holiday merely as another opportunity for pleasure-seeking and recreation, and feeling that the occasion is one for solemn thought and reverential demeanour, the members of this conference strongly urge upon the Federal and State Governments the desirability and propriety of commemorating this sacred day on the nearest Sunday to 25th April in each year."

(Government laughter.) They want to commemorate the day on the nearest Sunday so that it will not cost them anything. If their Arbitration Court award provided for payment of time and a-half on Sunday, they would want to have it on New Year's Day or on the Scotsman's day, so that the Scotsmen would have to pay. Yet we have an element in the soldiers—that little tail end who shot down the "Standard" in the early days of the struggle—to tell us that the Government are responsible for the unemployment. Are there no unemployed among the soldiers in other countries which are not administered by a Labour Government? I recollect distinctly seeing a satire on "The Unknown Soldier." A soldier was sitting in the park for the third night on end and had not had a bite to eat. His feet and hands were numb with the cold. His collar was well up round his neck to keep out what little cold could be kept out. Everybody went by and left him on the seat. He was "The Unknown Soldier." No one wanted to know him because he was cold and hungry. There are hundreds of "unknown soldiers." They went to the front with the cry, "Your king and country need you." Nobody needs them now. The poor devils are down and out, and are on the scrapheap. There is another element in connection with this matter, and that is the use of the word "dole." It is like that blessed word "Mesopotamia." I have a vivid recollection of good men living on doles. Why, the Royal family have been living on doles for many years. There are a number of people in this community who have never worked for years and who are costing far more to keep.

Mr. MORGAN: Is the hon. member referring to the Lieutenant-Governor?

Mr. WEIR: I had not thought of the Lieutenant-Governor for the moment. I have bigger fish than that gentleman—we had one in our dining-room the other day. We have the same experience over the road. They are the cattle who are costing this country a large amount of money and who are not to be compared with the unemployed. They are the people who are the hardest to keep. When a sympathetic Government talk about keeping the other chap—the fellow who matters—the man who turns the wheels of industry—and his womenfolk from starving, we hear a roar. I have no complaints to make against this Ministry, but I say they have not gone as far as they should have gone. My own view is that, when we are in the position to do it, we should go still further. I think we can do something definite in the way of unemployment.

Mr. FLETCHER: That is worth knowing. I will remember the hon. member's statement that the Government should have gone further.

Mr. WEIR: The hon. gentleman cannot charge this Government with being so mean

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and so spineless as to run away from a statement like that. To-day we pay the handsome sum of 5s. to single unemployed men. We are not in a position to do anything better than that because of the present state of finance.

Mr. VOWLES: Give them work.

Mr. WEIR: Yes. To give 5s. a week to single men is not a fair thing. I know the Government would do more to-morrow if they had the finances; but at the present time money is not available. I want to see the Government do more for the unemployed. In Great Britain they are paying more per head than we have done or were game to do on account of our finances. If we follow Great Britain's example, we shall justify our existence in dealing with men out of work. A man does not suffer as severely as a woman. I have advocated the single men's claims, and I hope they will be improved when finances are better; but it is the children and the womenfolk who suffer most. I want to thank the sick Home Secretary for the work he did in my district in keeping "kiddies" from being cold and hungry. The position of things in Maryborough during this winter was such that nobody could be proud of it. People were living in homes of canvas at Croxdon Junction. There were men and women—some of them good citizens, and some known to the hon. member for Burnett—some with four or five children, including girls, in their families. They had to accept Government rations, and they were without clothes and had no blankets or comforts.

Mr. MORGAN: That is a very bad state of affairs to have existing under a Labour Government.

Mr. WEIR: That state of affairs exists under every Government, and no one knows it better than the hon. member. It exists in Victoria, the country he ran away from. I appealed to the Home Secretary, and I appreciate to the fullest extent the good work he did in clothing those "kiddies" during the winter. He sent up good under-clothing for the little ones, particularly for the girls and the womenfolk, and during the winter the parents were happy because they could go to bed at night and say that the "kiddies" were not cold or hungry. If that little bit of humane treatment has swelled the expenditure, I can quite justify what I asked the Home Secretary to do. I hope that, if there is any necessity to do that elsewhere, he will do the right thing first and not trouble about the expenditure, for it is better to incur expenditure than to have hungry "kiddies." I do not take my responsibilities very quietly. In a country like this we should be ashamed to have hungry children.

Mr. MORGAN: Yes, the Government ought to be ashamed of themselves.

Mr. WEIR: No Government will ever take the hon. member seriously enough to be ashamed of him. I do not fear doing big things in connection with these matters. I do not think that anybody will take fright at what the hon. member for Port Curtis might say. I do not see any reason why we should not welcome criticism. If we had not been honest in our endeavour to keep people from being hungry, we could have stifled discussion on this matter. I agree with the leader of the Opposition that the

people who come from the other States are Australians, and we have to do our best for them. If they bring their wives and families, it is part of our duty to see that they do not suffer while they are here. If we are going to incur greater expenditure in that way, then for God's sake give us greater expenditure to clothe the "kiddies" and feed the people.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*): I have already spoken on this matter, but I desire to scotch a statement made by the hon. member for Bremer. He referred to the appointment of a caretaker for the Mount Coot-tha Reserve during my term as mayor of the city. He said there were soldier applicants for the position, and asked what the mayor of Brisbane did. There was a family of two girls and a brother. They had lost a brother at the war. The remaining brother applied for the position of caretaker for the Mount Coot-tha Reserve and the two girls applied for the right to do the catering at the kiosk. The brother was appointed by the Brisbane City Council to the position as caretaker. He had volunteered for active service on three occasions and was rejected because he was under eighteen years of age. I think that is sufficient explanation of the statement made by the hon. member for Bremer. This man was the sole support of his two sisters; the brother had been sacrificed at the front.

I am glad that this discussion has taken the turn it has during the day in connection with the unfortunate unemployed "Digger." One would be led to believe that the treatment meted out by a section of the local authorities towards these unfortunate men has been bad. When the men associated with the Brisbane City Council in its various activities went to the front, the amount of money they received from the Australian Imperial Forces was insufficient, and during the time they were at the war they were paid the difference between their Australian Imperial Force money and the money that they would have received had they remained in their positions here. That is being continued at the present time.

Mr. GLEDSON: Was that money paid out of the pockets of members of the Council, or was it money belonging to the ratepayers?

Mr. MAXWELL: It is a funny thing when you get this. Men are blamed in one quarter for not doing certain things in regard to returned soldiers, and yet, when they do those things, the hon. member for [8 p.m.] Ipswich asks whose money they were paying out. Of course, there is only one fund from which that money could be paid. It was the ratepayers' money they were disbursing. I know a great many of the men associated with local government and with other walks of life have given a great deal more money out of their own pockets than hon. members opposite. I hope the discussion to-day will bear fruit and that the Government will do their "bit" towards the unemployed "Diggers."

Mr. HARTLEY: They have done their "bit." It is the Hughes Government you want to appeal to.

Mr. MAXWELL: The Hughes Government have been appealed to by the committee I have the honour to be chairman of, and we pointed out to Mr. Hughes the necessity for doing something big in this connection. He

granted £250,000 for preference to returned soldiers subject to £1 for £1 subsidy by the various State Governments.

Mr. HARTLEY: A good electioneering stunt.

Mr. MAXWELL: I am asked on the one hand to go to the Federal Government and ask them to do something, and then, when I show to hon. members on the other side what the Federal Government have done, we have the loud-voiced gentleman on the other side saying it is a good electioneering stunt. I say God send an electioneering stunt like that from this Government.

Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: The Government are subsidising the amount to the extent of £1 for £1.

Mr. MAXWELL: It is no good the Minister saying they are subsidising it £1 for £1. They do not know yet what the scheme is, so how can they subsidise it? Mr. Hughes has made certain statements, and the Premier wants to know something definite about those statements before arrangements can be made. I believe the Premier is going to subsidise it £1 for £1, but it is no good the Secretary for Public Works saying at the present time that the Government are subsidising it £1 for £1. I hope they will do so, and thus help to take a number of these men off the unemployed list and remove the slur from the fair name of this State.

Mr. STOPFORD (*Mount Morgan*): I am pleased to have the assurance of the hon. member for Toowong that the whole of the requirements of the soldiers will be met by the Prime Minister giving a miserable £250,000 to be spread over the whole of Australia and to deal with the 400,000 men who enlisted during the war. That is a magnificent sum of money, and I am sure that it represents the full amount that they can expect to get from the Nationalist Government who are in charge of the destinies of Australia. I desire to say, before I sit down, that the Nationalist Government are, in a measure, responsible for the position we find in every State in Australia to-day, which, fortunately, is not so serious in Queensland as it is in the other States. In Queensland the position is only what we could reasonably expect it to be owing to the dislocation of industrial life as a result of the great war.

I would like to draw the attention of the Committee to the changed tone of the debate on this occasion. On every former occasion that I have listened to hon. members opposite on this vote, the word "dole" has been used in a very sneering and insulting manner. When the Government sought to relieve the position and to anticipate what might reasonably be expected in the way of unemployment by the introduction of an Unemployed Workers Bill which dealt with the problem in a statesmanlike manner, hon. members opposite, when they were not afraid that they were on the verge of an election, did not hesitate to term it a "Loafers' Paradise Bill." On every occasion that they have spoken of the work of this Government in relieving the distress that is not peculiar to Queensland but is found in every portion of the civilised world to-day, they have spoken in the most insulting terms. I was speaking to a friend of mine the other day who recently returned from China, and he told me that in China it is the practice, if you rescue a man who is about to commit suicide, for him to hold you responsible for his upkeep

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for life. I do not want to rescue hon. members opposite from committing political suicide at that price, but I would be very pleased if they would get up and speak their minds freely in this debate, as they have done in previous debates. The hon. member for Dalby has stated that he finds fault with the supervision of this department. During the twelve months that the town I represent was plunged into idleness, I suppose I had more to do with the Relief Department than any other member of this House, and I want to say that, while the officer in charge exercised his just right in seeing that every case was properly inquired into, if it was found that a case was one deserving of relief, he was most sympathetic in dealing with it. One of the contributing factors towards unemployment in Queensland was that from our industrial life we removed 400,000 workers and sent them to the front; and not only that, but the Federal Government, in order to find the funds necessary to pay their share of the cost of the great war, passed certain legislation known as the War Precautions Act, and they utilised that Act in a manner that has resulted in stifling the industrial growth of Australia. It will be remembered that during the period they were floating their war loans they took advantage of the War Precautions Act to prevent any industrial enterprises being started in the Commonwealth. The Federal Government also took advantage of the War Precautions Act to prevent any extensions to existing sugar-mills and to prevent new sugar-mills from being erected in Queensland. As a matter of fact, Mr. Hughes, in the very first Sugar Agreement, included a clause preventing the Queensland Government from extending the sugar industry in this State. Has anyone thought for a moment what that meant to the big electorate represented by the hon. member for Herbert? Some of the finest sugar lands in Queensland are situated on the Tully River in that electorate. The South Johnstone Mill is taxed to its utmost capacity to-day; it cannot cope with any more cane than is at present being cultivated, and it cannot take the cane from the land reserved for soldier settlement.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: What have you done since that Act was repealed?

Mr. STOPFORD: We have built a railway since then, and we are doing everything possible in the direction of duplicating the capacity of certain mills, and the Government are appointing a Royal Commission to inquire into the question of extending the industry in order to cope with the new settlement that has taken place. After the repeal of the War Precautions Act this proviso was incorporated in the sugar agreement, and is operative, although the War Precautions Act went by the board. That is one of the factors which have contributed towards unemployment in this State. When the town I represent was plunged into idleness, I endeavoured to get land for 100 men with small capital who were willing to go directly on the land, but when I went to the Lands Department they had to confess that they could not place these men in group settlements. Hon. members opposite, or those who support them outside the House, were responsible, directly or indirectly, for the delegation which went to England to endeavour to prevent this Government from getting the necessary

loan money to give effect to their policy of railway construction and public works in Queensland.

Mr. BRAND: What did the Premier say when he failed to obtain money in England?

Mr. STOPFORD: He said that he was not going to sell the democracy of Queensland to obtain money in England.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. STOPFORD: That delegation was representative of the interests of hon. members opposite. The Premier came back to Queensland and appealed to the people. In spite of the fact that every paper in Queensland was loudly proclaiming that he could not get a majority, he was returned to power with a working majority, and was able to demonstrate that he could get loan money, and any delay in giving effect to the policy of development which he outlined in his policy speech was due to the delegation which hon. members opposite launched with a view to downing the Government.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Long before the delegation you were cautioned.

Mr. STOPFORD: There is an admission, that long before the delegation left Queensland we were warned that, unless we resorted to the old condition of things disclosed by the Secretary for Public Works, we would be told the class of legislation that we would be permitted to place on the statute-book. Long before the delegation went to England pressure was brought to bear upon us here by the financial interests, and, as a last resort, they sent a delegation to London to carry out their work there.

Another aspect of the question is the unfortunate condition existing in England to-day in regard to the mineral market. I blame the Prime Minister of Australia in another direction for much of the trouble existing, not in Queensland alone, but in the whole of Australia. I blame the Prime Minister for his bungling methods of handling Australian products during the war. It is known to everyone who has considered the position that Australian products were sacrificed. Australia suffered the loss of millions of pounds in connection with the disposal of their wheat, wool, and metals. Take the position of Queensland's rare metals. This has been ventilated time after time by the Minister in charge of the present Estimates, and I sincerely hope that before the debate closes he will expose once again the bungling methods of the present Prime Minister of Australia, who lost to the Commonwealth millions of pounds that would otherwise have been utilised to-day for the industrial development of the country and in absorbing many of the returned men who came from the war to find that their jobs had been filled and had to walk the streets, as hundreds of them are doing to-day. Take the position of the different mining centres in Queensland as shown in the records of the department. If you search the records of past years, you will find that in a year of average prosperity very little money is spent in relief in mining districts. Out of last year's vote Charters Towers got £3,300; Cloncurry, £1,180; Gympie, £1,500; Ipswich, £4,724; Marmor, £1,859; Mount Cuthbert, £1,295; Mount Morgan, £36,578; and Sapphire town, £1,598. The leader of the Opposition said

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that he did not object to what he was pleased to call "doles" going to those who were sick, old, weak, or afflicted; but what he objected to was that "doles" were being paid to single men out of the £36,578 which was distributed in Mount Morgan. During the twelve months the mine was closed down only eighty-two single men obtained relief, and they were men who had widowed mothers depending on them before the works were closed down. That is sufficient to show that the Government exercised reasonable care in seeing that the relief rations were given in deserving cases. I want to point out that the question of relief is not peculiar to Queensland. Take the position of Newcastle. I read a Newcastle paper the other day in which the mayor of the city, commenting upon the position existing there, said that he wished to God the steel works had never been built in Newcastle, because to-day there are 20,000 people in that city who are in need of relief. I am not saying that they are getting relief from the Government, because they have not got as sympathetic a Government as we have in Queensland. They are getting relief from the mayor and charitable organisations in Newcastle. What is the result? I have the records here, and I will quote from them to show that even this paltry sum is not at the disposal of everyone in Newcastle who needs it—

"A single man gets 4s. 6d. per week, a married man and his wife 9s. 9d.; with one child, 12s. 9d. per week; with two children, 14s. 9d. per week; with three children, 16s. 9d. per week; and with four children, 17s. 9d. per week."

If a man has eight children, the amount still remains at 17s. 9d. Hon. members opposite may well say that that is something in the form of a dole. But has not this State some responsibility towards the industrial soldiers who are thrown out of work through no fault of their own? Does anyone believe for a moment that the men I represent, who have been responsible for an expenditure of £36,000 from the vote which we are discussing, are pleased to be in receipt of rations? Does anyone believe for a moment that any of these men would not have preferred to go to work if it had been available? I venture to say that no one who knows the men I represent would level such an accusation against them. The leader of the Opposition has stated that he does not object to the expenditure of this money, but that he thinks the Government should have some direct return for it, and that the money should be utilised in finding employment for the men who are out of work. The hon. member is not serious in that; otherwise, his words on former occasions have conveyed a meaning to me that he did not intend. When this Government, and the Premier in particular, after ceaseless efforts were instrumental in bringing negotiations with the Mount Morgan Company to a successful conclusion, and when the Premier, in the interests of every man and woman in the State, had made an agreement that would bring happiness to the 16,000 people who were depending on the operations of that mine, what a howl of criticism went up from every Tory newspaper in the State!

What a howl from hon. members opposite about this expenditure, just because we were expending in relief a certain sum of money to supply a body of men and women with the

bare necessities of life! I am glad we were able to accomplish something that brought a measure of relief, not only to the men directly employed, at Mount Morgan, but to 16,000 people throughout Australia who were directly and indirectly affected by the closure of that mine. I regard that as an illustration of how money can be spent in a practical way, and yet hon. members opposite and the people who support them use that as something to flog the Government with. Take the Chillagoe mine and smelters in North Queensland. What the opening of the Chillagoe mine means can only be realised by those who live in North Queensland. I met an old resident of North Queensland, and he said no one could realise what the opening of Chillagoe meant in the North. He said that it meant prosperity to that portion of the State, and he also stated that it was a terrible loss to the whole State during the period that the Chillagoe works were closed down. He told me that for that action alone the Labour Government should be thanked for doing something which should win for them the support of every man and woman in North Queensland. Yet we find hon. members opposite continually harassing the Government, and continually criticising the Government because they anticipated that the opening of Chillagoe might possibly result in a small loss on the year's transactions. The Government were able to carry on operations at Chillagoe, and were able to absorb the unemployed population. Even if at the expiry of the year the balance-sheet showed a little loss, we were at least justified in the action we took in keeping the Chillagoe works open.

Mr. FLETCHER: It might be a big loss.

Mr. STOPFORD: The hon. member for Port Curtis is one who would lead a deputation to the Secretary for Railways and ask him to reduce the freight on starving stock, yet he stands up in this House and uses his voice against any effort the Government might make to help starving humans. Ever since the hon. member has been in this House he has been nothing but a speaking tube for the trusts and combines to express their thoughts in this Chamber. I cannot let the vote go through without tendering to the Government the thanks, not only of the electors of Mount Morgan, but of many other electorates, who have told me over and over again that it was nothing but the action of the Government, and their recognition of their responsibilities in such a humanitarian manner, that made it possible for the people to remain in Mount Morgan until that great industry started again.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I cannot let the vote go through without replying to the Acting Home Secretary. The hon. gentleman asked me to furnish the names of the two unfortunate people that I drove into Gayndah. I am prepared to give the Minister all the particulars to prove that my statement is correct, but I am not going to give him the names of the individuals, and allow him to expose them to the public and to members of this House. He has inferred that my statement was an attack on the police.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He did not infer that.

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Mr. CORSER: No such thing was intended by me. The police were doing their duty.

Mr. BRENNAN: How did you know they were doing their duty if they arrested poor people on the road?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The police would not arrest them without some good reason.

Mr. CORSER: I do not blame the police for doing their duty. An hon. member on the other side stated that an unfortunate man had to walk from Toowoomba to Cloncurry, carrying "Matilda," and he said that no member on this side would give assistance to people by the wayside. I merely gave expression to my views, to show that a friend of mine gave food and shelter to these people, and asked me to take them into Gayndah in my car, and I did so. That was to show that members on this side and our supporters do have some consideration for poor people on the road. But out of the good that we did evil came, because these people were arrested at Gayndah. Anyhow, I will give the Minister full proof of what I say, but I will not give him the names of the two people, to expose them to the public. I am going to defend those two people, and I do not want to divulge their names.

Mr. BRENNAN: You did defend them.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Minister does not want to divulge their names.

Mr. CORSER: I am quite prepared to prove that my statement was correct, and I will give the whole particulars to the Minister.

Mr. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): The hon. member for Burnett made a mistake in expressing any views at all about those unfortunate people whom he gave a lift in his car. The Minister did not ask for their names at all. If the hon. member for Burnett is so sympathetic towards those two travellers—those nomads who were on the road—why did he let the police arrest them without making further inquiries?

Mr. CORSER: Because I had left Gayndah.

Mr. BRENNAN: There is another tail to the story now. By the hon. gentleman's first statement he inferred that the police arrested these two people because they had no food.

Mr. CORSER: I made no such statement.

Mr. BRENNAN: He inferred that the police thought these two people were vagrants, and arrested them, and he says he is not going to divulge their names.

Mr. CORSER: I did not infer anything of the kind.

Mr. BRENNAN: I am taking your own words. You have a most peculiar way of making wild statements.

Mr. CORSER: You make wild statements quite readily. I make truthful statements.

Mr. BRENNAN: The Opposition launched the debate on this vote last night. The hon. member for Nanango started the discussion, and they made a great flourish, but to-night we find that members opposite have no argument at all. Why? Because we have stood up and exposed the hollowness of their arguments. Because we are doing that they are biting like cattle dogs.

[*Mr. Corser.*]

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman is not in order in referring to members of this House in that manner, and I ask him to withdraw that statement.

Mr. BRENNAN: I withdraw the remark because it is unparliamentary. I point out, though, that the cattle dog will not come at you face to face, but will get behind you and nip your heels. Hon. members opposite started this debate, and they are nipping now. They are annoyed because we have put up an argument on this vote to show that it is a sympathetic Government that is in power at the present time.

Mr. DASH (*Mundingburra*): I cannot let the vote go through without saying a few words, because a good deal of the money spent on this vote is spent in the district I represent. I strongly object to members opposite referring to the workers in the manner they have done during this debate. It is most remarkable that during this debate hon. members opposite have changed the tone of their criticism towards the Government with regard to unemployment and relief. Last year when this Estimate was under discussion several members of the Opposition referred to the men who were getting this relief as cadgers, loafers, and parasites, and also some innuendoes were thrown out in connection with this matter.

Mr. J. JONES: That is not true.

Mr. DASH: It is not a very large amount to pay to the unemployed workers of the State and their dependents, when you come to consider that a good deal of it is paid to people who have been thrown out [8.30 p.m.] of employment on account of the seasonal nature of some of the industries of the State, because we know that if there were not a certain number of persons in the State to carry on those industries, some of the farmers would have a very rough time. The Government have placed a large number of workers on railway construction works, and they have loaned to the local authorities a large amount of money so that they will be able to carry on other work in their own areas. Hon. members opposite talk a great deal about the amount that is paid to the unemployed worker, but they say nothing about the concession that is given to the pastoralists in the form of a reduction of railway freights to enable them to get their cattle to the meatworks cheaply, or to the farmers so that they may get their produce to market. They do not consider those concessions as doles at all; only the relief given to the worker is a dole.

Hon. members opposite also compare 1915 with 1922, but we know that the conditions in those years were altogether different, because in 1915 there were between 3,000 and 4,000 men in the mining industry at Cloncurry, and had that field kept going, there would have been no unemployed workers in Queensland to-day. Altogether in the mining industry in the North at that time about 5,000 persons were employed, besides a large number who were dependent on the industry. Prior to 1915, when the Tories were in power, the employers used to give work in the industries to local men; but immediately the Labour party got into power, everything possible was done to injure the Labour party by getting the Southerner to come up and do the work. A large number of men also came from the South to work in the sugar industry; and,

as the hon. member for Herbert pointed out, a large number of coloured aliens are still employed in that industry, although the work might have been given to white men. Then, again, in 1915 the storekeeper would give credit to the workers in the seasonal industries during the slack season, and the workers used to pay the accounts from the money they would earn during the season. Quite recently, too, a large number of unemployed workers has been coming to Queensland from the South because of the big shearing dispute in New South Wales, where the workers are striking against the award of the Federal Arbitration Court giving them 35s. per hundred as against £2 per hundred in Queensland. That £2 per hundred has been a big inducement to shearers, because several large sheds in New South Wales have been hung up. I see from a statement published in the "Courier" that a Southern shearing contractor has passed through Brisbane en route to Charleville with a number of shearers to do the shearing in that district. Contract-shearing has been the curse of the shearing industry in Queensland, as well as in other parts of the Commonwealth, because one team will go from Charleville to Winton and another team from Winton to Charleville, so that the "big gun" shearers from the South get the work instead of the local men, who have then to come on the State for relief.

The hon. member for Murilla said what a great deal this £177,000 would do towards settling people on the land! It would not settle many people on the land, and, in any case, a large number of workers would still be dependent on the State for relief, as well as a large number of persons who will never be able to work. If the Government were able to find work for the unemployed, they would gladly do it, because it is far better than giving them rations.

Hon. members opposite have also said that the Arbitration Court has been responsible for throwing a large number of men in the mining industry out of work. But no mining company other than the Mount Morgan Company has ever approached the court for a revision of the award, and we know that the mining companies at Cloncurry could not carry on, even if wages were reduced by one-half, because the overhead charges and the cost of material, coal, and coke are almost prohibitive. As the hon. member for Ipswich reminds me, they may be able to get cheaper coal from the Bowen coalfield; and if they do, some move may be made then by the companies, and I am satisfied that if they do open up we shall have no more talk about unemployment in Queensland.

I think it was the hon. member for Nanango who said that he knows of men who refused 14s. per day, and would sooner go to the State for relief than accept it. I do not think there is any truth in that statement, because it has been contradicted by the hon. member for Pittsworth, who said that the men who went to his district wanted work and not rations. And when hon. members opposite are challenged they are not able to give any names. They merely make statements and try to belittle men who are receiving relief. They do not go for relief because they like it. There is nothing more humiliating than to see a large number of men lining up for rations, and the Government would relieve their distress in any other way if they possibly could.

A good deal has been said about men getting work from the Government Labour Bureau, and the hon. member for Albert made a great fuss the other night about the method of engaging labour for railway construction. He also made the statement that the Government were in collusion with the unions, in order to make the men pay £2 each before they could get a job. There is no truth whatever in that statement. I am closely in touch with the union which supplies men for these construction works, and it has preference of employment in the awards of the Arbitration Court, and every facility is given to workers to get employment.

At 8.40 p.m.,

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

Mr. DASH: Every man has to be a unionist before he can work on those works, but, if he is not in a position to take out his ticket, they are prepared to allow him to contribute so much out of his first two or three pays towards the purchase of his ticket. He will then be able to get employment on those works. It is only right that he should contribute to the union funds, because the unions have been responsible for the wages and conditions on those works.

The hon. member for Albert said he would like to know what happened to the funds, and stated that no balance-sheets had been published. Every year since 1886 the Australian Workers' Union have published a balance-sheet, audited by certified accountants, and the whole of Australia and other countries were able to know the position of that union.

I am quite satisfied that the Secretary for Mines was quite right when, in his election campaign at Paddington, he said that the Government of Queensland in two months would be able to absorb their own unemployed. That was carried out. The Government have absorbed the number that was unemployed at that particular time, but a large number of men have come from the other States because they could not get employment there. I am satisfied that this year there will be no necessity for a large amount of relief to be paid out to unemployed workers. We hope that the land development and water conservation scheme, the completion of the North Coast Railway, and the commencement of other railways, will absorb a large number of men. I am pleased that great efforts are going to be made to push on with the North Coast Railway. It has been too long overdue. Had a railway been put through there in the days of Tory Governments, no doubt we would have been in a position to-day to have greater facilities for mining in the Cloncurry district. We know the large amount which is charged in shipping freights on coal, coke, and other materials from the South. The number of times the material has to be handled from the time it is shipped to the time it lands at Cloncurry, means very considerable expense.

It is to be hoped that the Government will be able to go right ahead with their policy. During this session we shall be able to test the Opposition with our Unemployed Workers' Insurance Bill. We shall realise then whether they are in earnest in trying

*Mr. Dash.]*

to relieve the unemployed of this State and assist the unemployed worker. We shall judge them by their actions. It is to be hoped that the workers will closely follow the references that are made when that Bill is going through. I am satisfied that the Bill will go a long way towards removing the distress among the unemployed. There will be no more cry of hon. members opposite about doles being given to unemployed workers. The money that is being paid out to unemployed is given by way of subsidy to seasonal industries; because, if those men were not in Queensland, the industries would not be able to carry on when the time arrived for their commencing work.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*): It has been somewhat interesting to listen to the speeches that have been delivered from the other side to-day and yesterday on this vote. It seems to me that hon. members opposite have pretty well exhausted every avenue of attack on the Labour Government, and this relief vote is about the last move on their part to gain some popularity among the workers of the State. As usual, the hon. member for Port Curtis has on his face that cynical grin to which we have become accustomed. I know how the hon. member feels—that with three or four square meals a day everything in the garden is lovely. To some hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children, not only in Queensland but also in the other States in Australia, and in the world generally, things are not so bright. The hon. member reminds me of an individual who was in practically the same line of business as that in which the hon. member has been interested for some years. During 1893, when work was pretty slack in the South, I sold about £10 worth of books for 10s. to secure a passage to New Zealand to get work there. I “humped Matilda”—as we call it here—along the road. I was absolutely driven to desperation by hunger. I called on a man of the type of the hon. member for Port Curtis. He was the owner of a very large, prosperous-looking station, with a splendid flock of sheep in his paddock and a lovely two-storied brick house. I was quite prepared at the time to undertake any kind of work that came along and to give a good day's work for a fair day's pay. Instead of getting a sympathetic reception when I told him the position I was in, and that I had a wife and two children whom I had left behind in Victoria and had gone to New Zealand to get a living for them, he greeted me with the same kind of cynical grin that the hon. member for Port Curtis has just now. That is quite typical of most hon. members on the other side who represent the boodlers' interests.

Up to a few years ago, prior to the inauguration of the wages board system and Arbitration Courts, whereby certain minimum wages were laid down, it was the greatest delight of employerdom to have twenty men available for every job that was going.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BARBER: Hon. members opposite still believe that the best condition that can prevail in the economic world is to have twenty men at least sitting in the gutter waiting for every job that is going. While we have got to carry on under the economic conditions now obtaining, even with a Labour Government in office this kind of business will prevail.

[*Mr. Dash.*

Mr. MORGAN: The Government have been in office eight years.

Mr. BARBER: That is quite true. I am quite satisfied that hon. members opposite will be as dead as Julius Cæsar before Labour will be relegated to that side of the House again. If they manage to peregrinate to this side of the House, it will only be for a division. It reminds me of an Italian story of where a schooner ran aground and the crew got on the “blither,” and when they were asked why they did so, they said “A short life and a merry one.” Whenever hon. members opposite get over here for a division it is only a very transitory stay, and they make the most of it and indulge in buffoonery. Hon. members opposite have characterised some of the unemployed as the greatest loafers in creation.

Mr. WARREN: That is not true.

Mr. BARBER: The hon. member might not say that, but he should be frank and call a spade a spade. We know exactly what they mean, and the crowd outside know what they mean. It would be almost impossible for certain members opposite to express themselves in any other way. Last session this House voted to certain men who, no doubt, had rendered valuable services to this State pretty fat pensions. I have spent a fair term in this House, and I have not got one-tenth of what was voted for some of those gentlemen per annum. I never heard hon. members opposite criticise the action of the Government when we pensioned off the judges—one to receive £1,250, and two to receive £1,000 each. What had they done more to deserve it than thousands of other people—the battler and the pioneer who, owing to the bad industrial conditions, find that during the last two or three years in many cases they are in want of the necessaries of life?

Mr. MORGAN: The Government are to blame.

Mr. BARBER: If the hon. member for Murilla had his way, they would have got their full salaries.

Mr. MORGAN: I wanted to reduce the judges by 5 per cent. last week.

Mr. BARBER: It is interesting to read Schedule B of the Estimates. There is a list of men who had a pretty good innings for many years while they were in the services of the State.

Mr. COLLINS: Are they getting doles?

Mr. BARBER: Certainly they are doles. They are drawing pay from the people of Queensland, and have been drawing it for thirty years, and pretty nigh forty years. I notice the name of one gentleman which will disappear this year. He was drawing a pension of £800 a year before I came into this Chamber twenty-one years and two months ago. I do not think he put in twenty years' service in the State. One man is drawing £1,250, one £1,000, two £834, two £667, two or three £500, two or three £450, and so on. We have not heard a solitary word from hon. members opposite or their followers in regard to the fat doles these men are receiving. You might as well call it a dole as the amount given to men for rations. It is pretty miserable of hon. members opposite to refer to the fact that in some centres in Queensland a larger amount is expended in the way of relief than in

other centres. I suppose that, outside of Brisbane, there has been more money expended in Bundaberg during the last three years for rations and outdoor relief than in any other part of the State. Satisfactory reasons, in my opinion, can be given as to why this should be done. Bundaberg is in one of the largest sugar centres in Queensland. The sugar industry has had a pretty rough "spin" during the last two or three years, which means that a large number of men have been thrown out of employment. At the same time we have had hundreds of men gravitate to Bundaberg from all parts of the Commonwealth and from New Zealand and Tasmania. That statement has been challenged by hon. members opposite. It has been definitely decided, in connection with employment on the Burnett Valley scheme, that only bona fide residents in Queensland who have their names on some electoral roll will be engaged. I inquired from the Director of Labour if it was possible to give me the approximate number of men who had come from other States and had registered at the Labour Bureau in Queensland. He gave me figures indicating the number of men who had made application for work and had registered at the Labour Bureau after stating that they had been residents for less than one month in the State. The figures are—

Ipswich	...	...	42
Toowoomba	...	...	15
Warwick	...	...	57
Bundaberg	...	...	38
Maryborough	...	...	15
Rockhampton	...	...	103
Brisbane	...	...	214

That gives a total of 484 men. If the figures were taken for a period of three months, that number could be multiplied three or four times over. If the figures could be obtained for the rest of the Labour Bureaus in the State that number could be easily doubled.

At 9 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair

Mr. BARBER: I want to say that, in common with the hon. member for Maryborough, one of the grievances I have in connection with the Relief Department in Bundaberg at present is that the amount being granted at the present time, particularly to the single man, is quite insufficient. While I know that the Government, with the money at their disposal, are doing the best they can, I hope they will reconsider the question of granting more than a ration allowance of 5s. a week.

I was much amused this afternoon at my friend the hon. member for Toowoong and other hon. members on that side. I have no objection to those hon. members who did a fair amount of work during the war period in connection with organising, recruiting, and other work that may be designated patriotic work, but I strongly object to those hon. members exploiting this business and trying to obtain "kudos." Hon. members on this side who did their little "bit" in that matter and encouraged our kith and kin to go to the front have never attempted to exploit this kind of thing. My regret at the time of the war was that I had not twenty-one boys whom I could send to the front; but, at the same time, I never attempted to exploit the returned soldier business when the boys came back. That is the attitude adopted by a considerable number of hon. members oppo-

site; but, when you compare their record with that of hon. members on this side, I think it can truthfully be said that members on this side of the House sent as many of their boys to the front as did hon. members on the other side; and, although we may have been pretty frank in our attacks on certain matters in connection with the war, we did not fail to encourage our sons to go to the front. To me it was a most terrible business altogether, and it is about time hon. members on the other side cut out any further attempt to exploit what they may have done during the war period. Honour is due to members on this side of the House just as much as to members on that side, but we do not "blatherskite" about it; we do not get into the limelight on these matters. We did our duty, and when we did our duty it ended there. We have never attempted to exploit the business for political or any other purpose. It is about time that kind of business was cut out. Hon. gentlemen opposite exploited the war business as long as they could, but the crowd outside have taken a fumble to it and now they attempt to exploit this relief vote to endeavour to make the crowd outside believe they are their friends.

There are two or three other things to which I would like to refer, but I think the vote has had a pretty good "spin."

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BARBER: That "Hear, hear" tempts me to proceed. Queensland, and the British Empire generally, during the past three or four years have voted not merely thousands of pounds but millions of pounds to certain individuals. We had a visit from the Prince of Wales two years ago. Queensland did handsomely during the Prince's visit here. Was there a solitary word from hon. members opposite when we had to foot the bill? Not a bit of it! When any distinguished visitors come to Queensland we always treat them handsomely. If the people of Queensland feel that they are justified in spending the taxpayers' money to entertain distinguished visitors who come to this great State of ours, I claim that, when the toiler is down and out and unable to work and his wife and children are in a condition of semi-starvation, he has a perfect right to receive assistance from the State. I claim, as one of the working class, that I have a just right to fall back on the State when I am out of work. Alfred Russell Wallace, in that splendid book of his entitled "The Revolt of Democracy," pointed out that no country in the world can allow the working class population to starve, and he illustrated his argument by statistics and by his forcible manner of expression, and showed that it was the moral duty of the State to see that no man, woman, or child should go without bread and the necessaries of life. That is the attitude that the Labour movement has always taken up; that is the attitude that I have advocated for over thirty years, and, if members of this party ever forget that it is their duty, no matter what the capitalistic class may say—no matter how strong their criticisms may be—to see that the workers get a square deal, then it will be time that the Labour movement is wound up. I am not afraid, as a Labour man, that the Labour movement will ever get to that stage. There are to-day tens of thousands of young men and women in Queensland and Australia—a country which they love—with far more advanced ideas than the ideas

Mr. Barber.]



of any member sitting on this side to-night, and those young people are going to see that in future the toilers of Australia get a fairer "go" than they have got in the past. I know that these sentiments do not sound very pleasant to hon. members opposite. They can call it Bolshevism, Nihilism, or any other kind of "ism" they like; but I know it "puts the wind up" hon. members opposite. I read a very interesting story the other day of a recently appointed judge in the old country. He was a bit nervous and panicky; he was one of the Tory class, like my friends the hon. member for Pittsworth and the hon. member for Port Curtis, who bow and scrape to the nobility, and talk of the toiler as "My Man" and of land as "My Property," and who value partridges and hares more than humanity. In commenting on a trial which took place the other week in London, a newspaper commented in this way—

"The cables say that Sir Thomas Horridge, of the English bench, has ordered knitting in court to stop. Mentally, Horridge is a typical mid-Victorian Tory. In physique he is a typical John Bull—florid, portly, but without the side-liners. As he looked from the bench at the scene below, memories of the knitting jurywomen of the Revolution would have flickered across his orderly mind—memories of those implacable 'Tricoteuses' who thronged all public assemblies in Paris, and only ceased plying their needles to shriek for the guillotining of an aristocrat.

"In a very mild way, similar things have been happening in London. 'At important trials, women knit almost continuously, and even when the death sentence is being passed.' England is pretty jumpy these days, and the old gentleman on the bench has probably been startled too. To speak in terms of the long-vanished period in which he thinks, he has 'determined to put down this sort of thing.'"

The younger generation of Australians are intelligent enough to profit by the history of the industrial and economic developments in Australia. They know the conditions that their parents have had to suffer, and, when they attain their majority, they will vote for the most radical party, and the Labour Government will be returned at the next election and be placed once more in charge of the Treasury benches.

Mr. W. COOPER (*Roswood*): I rise to congratulate the Home Secretary upon his action in regard to the vote for outdoor relief. It has been somewhat of a surprise to me to hear some of the statements which have come from hon. members opposite. I have no desire to read or quote any statements made by men who occupy positions amongst the capitalist class of Queensland, or even statements which appear in the Press of Queensland or New South Wales, because, after all, we can discount a great many of the statements made in the Press or by a number of public men. I am going to make statements of facts that have come within my own experience as a workman in Queensland for the last thirty-five years. Hon. members opposite have stated that the Government have been doing something which is detrimental to the workmen by granting relief to unfortunate men who have not been able to secure employment.

Mr. MORGAN: Owing to the Government.

[*Mr. Barber.*]

Mr. W. COOPER: I am pleased the hon. member has made that interjection, because I remember Governments in Queensland in the past, which were not Labour Governments, which supplied pea-soup to the unfortunate men who were out of employment, who were told that, if they did not like to take pea-soup and 4s. 6d. a day they could go out into a paddock and eat grass. Those were statements by men who held the same political views as hon. members opposite. I remember when the hon. member and those holding the same political views that he does permitted the banks of Queensland to close in 1893, and practically deprived men all over the State and in other parts of Australia of money which rightfully belonged to them, and who, when they made an application for the money they had placed in those institutions, were charged as much as 5 per cent. for their own money. These are the men who claim to-day to be the friends of the people—and particularly of the workers—because, labouring under a delusion, they think there will be an election very shortly. I may say that I worked for the Denham Government, and I remember the time when that Government were compelled to send unemployed men to the railway construction work that I was engaged on. At that time they were paying them the large sum of 8s. a day for doing navy work on the line. I also remember the time when these gentlemen thought that a sufficient remuneration for a man's labour was 4s. 6d. a day. When the Nerang railway was being built they were sending men down there and telling them "If you like to work there for from 4s. 6d. to 6s. a day, you can have work. If you do not like to do that, you can go out into the park or anywhere else and starve." I believe that every man is entitled to a living. If the country which he belongs to is not finding him work, he has a perfect right to make application for sufficient food to keep him and his dependants. I want to point out to the hon. member for Carnarvon that it is very evident that he never did a day's work in his life. He does not know what it is.

Mr. COSTELLO: I will take any man on on that side of the House at a week's work in a railway cutting. (Laughter.)

Mr. W. COOPER: The hon. member reminds me of a man I worked for at one time, who said, "Come on, I am going to show you how to work," and he came alongside me. He was a blacksmith like myself. He got his wheelwrights to make long handles and said, "I am going to weld axles with you to-day." That was the end of it. After two hours he said, "I am very sorry, but I have to do something down town." And he got away, and that was the last I saw of him. (Laughter.) I am quite satisfied that, if the hon. member for Carnarvon went into a cutting with a navy—and I will find a navy not as young a man as the hon. gentleman is—if the hon. gentleman does not have his back broken before eight hours are over, I am satisfied that I am no judge of workmen. (Opposition laughter and interruption.)

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member will confine his remarks to the vote for outdoor relief. (Laughter.)

Mr. W. COOPER: I am connecting my remarks with outdoor relief. I am satisfied

that, if the hon. member for Carnarvon went to work as a navvy, it would not be long before he would have to go out and receive outdoor relief.

Mr. COSTELLO (*Carnarvon*): Mr. Kirwan, I object to the hon. member saying that I would have to go out and get relief. (Laughter.) Now that I have got the floor I throw my challenge on the table to work with the hon. gentleman or anyone else on the other side.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS (to Mr. Costello): Sit down!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would point out to the hon. member for Carnarvon that he will have an opportunity of speaking when the hon. member for Rosewood has finished. (Renewed laughter.)

Mr. W. COOPER: I am surprised at the hon. member for Carnarvon rising to a point of order. I am satisfied that that is the only thing he will ever rise to. I want to point out to hon. members opposite the necessity for the Government of Queensland, at all events, providing relief for those unfortunate men who are unable to find work. I heard the hon. member for Pittsworth to-day making some wild statements in connection with harvesting on the Downs. He wanted to convey to this side of the House and to the people of Queensland generally that it was not possible for the farmers on the Downs to get men unless they paid them £1 per day. The hon. gentleman did not say what part of the Downs, and he did not say how many workmen he interviewed. Perhaps there were two or three old "dead-beats" who went along there to some friends of the hon. member, and perhaps they did not really want work. This House is so accustomed to the piffle of the hon. member that no notice is taken of him. If the hon. member had applied to my electorate for men to harvest the wheat, he could have got men for less than £1 per day.

Mr. COSTELLO: You mean Mr. Bebbington's electorate; not your electorate.

Mr. W. COOPER: If Mr. Bebbington is no better than the hon. member, he will not be able to win my electorate. (Laughter.) I can assure the hon. member for Pittsworth that men from my electorate went on to the Downs and obtained employment, and you can get others and they do not want £1 per day. The men who went from my district were pleased to receive 14s. per day. When they came back they said they were quite satisfied with the treatment they received from the farmers on the Downs. (Hear, hear!) It is quite right for the Government to provide outdoor relief for the men who cannot obtain work. Would it be a right thing from a humane point of view to refuse to give rations to these men and their wives and children? The Government are acting quite within their rights in carrying out a humanitarian policy to relieve distress in every direction. Hon. members opposite object to what they call the giving of doles, and say that we should provide some means by which these men can earn what we give them. There was £177,000 spent in outdoor relief last year, and hon. members opposite say that that should be spent in reproductive work. Take any swagman in Queensland starting to find work, how is he going to get it? A carpenter may receive some work from a friend at Cunnamulla or

Dalby, and he finds himself in the position that he has no money. What can he do?

Mr. MORGAN: He will get a free railway pass, and you know it.

Mr. W. COOPER: He may get a free railway pass. Previous Governments whom the hon. member for Murilla supported so long would never be so humane as to give him a free railway pass. This carpenter would start off with his swag and reach his destination, where he would be able to secure employment. On the road he would have to go into the various police stations and receive rations.

Mr. MORGAN: That is wrong; he would get a free railway pass.

Mr. W. COOPER: The hon. member is always so wrong in his statements that no one takes any notice of him. The hon. member suggests that the £177,000 should be concentrated on one job. How many men would that give work to, and in what time? As a matter of fact, the unemployed we have in Queensland would absorb £177,000 in less than a fortnight. You would have a concentration camp for a vast number of workmen, and there would be nothing for them to do, and that would cost about £1,000,000, and you would have the unemployed just the same. The responsibility of providing profitable employment rests with the Government. Do hon. members opposite think that no responsibility rests upon the employers outside the various State departments? Do they think that they are different kinds of beings to the Government? Are they not responsible for many of the men who are thrown out of employment to-day?

Mr. FERRICKS: They conspire to bring about unemployment.

Mr. W. COOPER: Have they not conspired to bring about unemployment, particularly since the present Government have been in office? Of course, they have! I remember when the war broke out in 1914 the Denham Government were in power. I was working on railway construction work, when orders came along to close down the work. Things looked black at that time, and the railway work was closed down. What would these gentlemen have done if they were in our position? Fortunately, they were not in power during the last seven years. If the Denham Government had been in power during the last seven years, instead of there being 3,500 unemployed there would be nearer 20,000, and there would be starvation in every direction. I am quite satisfied about that, judging by what I have seen of them in the past in Queensland and New South Wales.

I know that since I have been able to understand the industrial conditions of Queensland, as well as those of other States of the Commonwealth, I have appreciated what hon. members opposite [9.30 p.m.] would do. I was myself the victim of their spleen in the country to which I belong, and from which I was driven because of my political views. I am quite certain that the luckiest thing that ever happened to Queensland was the turning out of these gentlemen in 1915, and I sincerely hope that Providence will help this party never to allow them to return. (Opposition interjections.) I have been accustomed to blowing bellows in my time, and I never saw bellows worse than the hon. member for Carnarvon, who is interjecting.

*Mr. W. Cooper.*

Hon. members opposite have posed as the friends of the people, but I am quite certain that, if they ever had their way, instead of unfortunate persons being able to get relief rations to save their wives and children from starvation they would be begging in the streets, as they have been doing in England and other countries.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I remember a little incident that happened on one of our railways a little while ago, of which this debate puts me very much in mind. Some trucks of machinery had got lost, and, when they were found, they had the words "Ted's Circus" written on them. If the persons who did that on the outside of those trucks could see this Chamber to-night, they would write "Ted's Circus" inside it. (Laughter.)

Mr. CONROY (*Maranoa*): I am very sorry that there is any necessity for this vote, but at the same time I realise that there is justification for it, and I am very pleased to see that the amount is being so reduced. Last year when the vote was going through there was a great deal of opposition to it. To-day there has been similar opposition, and some references have been made by the hon. member for Murilla and the hon. member for East Toowoomba to prosecutions of persons who have been unjustifiably taking advantage of it. I think every member on this side of the Committee will agree that anybody who imposes on the authorities and gets relief to which he is not entitled should be punished.

I would just like to refer to some remarks made by the hon. member for Aubigny on this subject. Speaking at Oakey, as reported in the "Darling Downs Gazette" of 15th June, 1922, the hon. member said—

"Government relief, which on last month's figures has now reached £350,000 per annum—"

(Opposition dissent.) If the statement is not correct, I leave the hon. member to correct it. If I make a statement in this House I am prepared to stand by it; but that is not my statement, it is the statement of the "Darling Downs Gazette."

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: It is not correct.

Mr. CONROY: I got up principally to point out what Tory Governments have done in other States for the returned soldiers, who have been introduced into this debate. I would like to read here an extract from the Sydney "Bulletin" of the 15th June last—

"The Fuller Government, which came into office largely on the loyalty ticket, has a way that is all its own of delivering the patriotic goods. The first opportunity which the party got of showing its superiority to the Dooleyites on the preference to soldiers' issue was in connection with the formation of the Ministry. A whole herd of highly-qualified business and commercial M's.L.A. with bright records as fighting soldiers offered—Rosenthal, Jaques, Hugh Main, Bruxner, &c. They were passed over in favour of a gang of party hacks, who, with one exception (and he was given a fill-up job), have never risked so much as a push in the neck for the Empire. Last week an opportunity offered to give one of the many "Digger" accountants of New South Wales a fat job—that of investigating the Clyde Engineering Company's affairs.

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Treasurer Cocks (as vehement an Imperialist as any in the State during the recent election) could find no one more suitable to appoint than a native-born German. For some time the soldier settlers at Bankstown have been in difficulties with the poultry farms which the Nationalist party got so much credit for providing them with when the war-fever was on. A few days ago, under instructions from the Minister for Lands (Wearne), the fowls, pens, coops, &c., of some of the men were seized, while others have been evicted. Births are expected shortly in families which, as a result of the Fuller Government's astounding action, are faced now with destitution. The Dooley crowd had faults, and to spare, but on the whole they gave the "Digger" who was up against it a lenient spin; and certain it is that no Labour Minister got down to fowl-snatching. By way of a set-off against a deal of extremely sordid anti-Imperialism, the Fuller Government has issued a ukase that every school child must daily salute the Union Jack. It is explained to the children that the flag must be loved and honoured as a symbol of Government. But what are the real sentiments of a New South Wales child likely to be in regard to Government—the only Government it knows, the one which sent its father to the wars with the assurance that, if he returned, nothing would be too good for him, and shortly after he did return stole his fowls and kicked him into the street to starve?"

Everybody knows that the Sydney "Bulletin" is not a Labour paper. I shall make no comment beyond saying this: We have heard a great deal about returned soldiers during this debate, and at other times, and I would just ask them what they think would happen if our friends opposite were successful in reaching these benches.

Mr. RIORDAN (*Burke*): The workers throughout this State would be better pleased if they could get work in preference to rations; but, as work is not available, I think the Government are trying to do the next best thing. I do not know whether the Government are in a position to place every man engaged in the seasonal industries in North Queensland between the time the sugar season is over and the time the meatworks commence operations. I think that many of those men could be utilised on the mining fields in trying to revive mining in the different districts. I know many fields which would stand exploiting. Men who are used to mining could be tried on some of the old mining fields raising a certain tonnage of quartz. Perhaps some men could be kept going by that method. The Mines Department have been fairly generous to prospectors throughout North Queensland. My experience of that department has been that it has granted the prospectors' allowance in almost every case; and that has been responsible for keeping many men away from the relief depôts.

There is a point which I would like to raise in connection with the relief distributed in Brisbane as against the distribution in the country. Take the collapse of the mining industry in Cloncurry. Up to 5,000 men were affected directly or indirectly. Those men hung on, expecting a revival in the mining

industry in the Cloncurry district, on account of the general manager of the Cloncurry mines making a trip to the old country to try and find the capital to erect works there capable of treating low-grade ores. This gentleman—Mr. Corbould—was not successful in getting the money. Perhaps hon. members opposite may be a little responsible for that through their “stinking fish” cry.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They are a good deal responsible.

Mr. RIORDAN: They are a good deal responsible for the hostility which Mr. Corbould met. We all know that Cloncurry, when working, gave employment directly and indirectly to 8,000 men. Copper at the present time is somewhere about £70 a ton. I think those mining companies should be made to man their mines to the fullest extent, and that no exemption should be given to any mining field. It would give employment to quite a number of men if these people were forced to man the leases as they should be manned. People are holding claims there in which a peg has never been put. They could be properly worked by the miners and prospectors in the area. If one furnace was taken over, the prospectors could go along, produce copper, and sell at that price. They would produce it themselves, and sell it through the Government. They would then be getting the full result of their labour. A good number of men are out of work in the Cloncurry district. When I passed through Cloncurry somewhere about March, I think there were eighty-four men on the ration list. Those men were receiving 10s. a week ration allowance. Had Mr. Corbould been successful in getting the money to establish an up-to-date plant there for the treatment of ore, the Government intended going on with the construction of the railway line from Dobbyn to Mount Oxide and down the Gregory River.

We have heard a good deal of talk about giving men employment on irrigation works instead of giving relief. I think that the Albert and Nicholson rivers offer the opportunity for the cheapest irrigation scheme in Australia. Mr. Calvert made a report some two years ago in regard to that district. I am very sorry that the mining industry has suffered a slump, and that Mr. Corbould was unsuccessful in raising the money he went home to raise. So far as I know, he is still at home. I hope that before his return he will be successful. The raising of that money would give employment to a great number of men for many years to come.

The men who were waiting for the return of Mr. Corbould camped along the river. They were married men and single men, and they were in receipt of rations to the extent of 10s. per week. When it became known that Mr. Corbould had failed in his mission, these “chaps” at a moment’s notice were told that they must get on the track. It is not the fault of the police who administer the relief in the country districts; they have a difficult position to deal with, and I think on all occasions they try to be fair. I was responsible for getting the men in that district a 10s. ration ticket to start on the road, instead of the regulation ration ticket which allows a couple of ounces of tea, 13 oz. of sugar, 3 or 4 lb. of beef, and a couple of loaves of bread. They had to kick off from Cloncurry on the beat to Dobbyn, somewhere

about 80 or 90 miles, before striking another police station or another opportunity of getting rations. The Government gave the 10s. ration ticket to those who were going to walk out of it, and in other cases gave railway passes to the North Coast Railway, where there was a likelihood of work. Hon. members opposite sneer at the dole and sneer at the men who accept the dole. These men were not going to hang about on a paltry 10s. per week and so much for each child if it were possible for them to get work. Queensland is not alone in that position; every State in the Commonwealth is suffering, the whole of Europe is suffering, as a result of the aftermath of the war. We know that it is not because of the fact that there is a Labour Government in Queensland. In other countries where there are no Labour Governments they are holding their economic conferences and trying to get over the difficulty, and until such time as we are prepared to give credit to the nations that are bankrupt we are going to have stagnation in industry and men walking about willing to work without any right to work. A duty devolves upon any young country to make proper provision for the workers in order to prevent Governments having to provide a vote of this kind. We do not take enough interest in our children from the time they leave school. Children leave school at the age of fourteen, and if the parents are in any way lax the children are allowed to run about looking for work, and no effort is made by the Government to keep in touch with them. When a boy leaves school at the age of fourteen, some endeavour should be made through the Labour Bureau to place him in a suitable occupation or some useful trade, and if it is found that he is not suitable for that occupation or trade, the employer should be responsible for giving notice to the Labour Bureau, so that he can be taken back to school or placed in a secondary school until such time as he can be placed in employment which will be found to be so congenial that he will become a suitable and useful tradesman, instead of allowing him to go from shop to shop looking for work until he eventually becomes disheartened and sickened from getting knocked back from place to place. The same thing applies to men who are out of work from time to time. We know that the workers of Queensland are not desirous of going along for rations. I know them pretty well, and I know that since the present Government have been in power there has been a big squeal from the friends of hon. members opposite. In the old days they had plenty of labour marching from station to station looking for work. They were offered “tucker” on condition that they did a little bit of fencing or chopped some wood. If they did not do that they got no rations. It was by that method that the wages were kept down.

I would like to deal with the position of the hon. member for Burnett being able to pick up swagmen in his motor-car. I think it would be a very mean action if anybody was driving along the road in a car and passed a man without asking him to have a ride. On travelling down from Gregory Downs to Camooweal we came across a swagman beating along the road, and we asked him to get up in the car and have a ride to Camooweal or wherever he was going. He said, “No; he had no intention of getting in the car; he had never been in one, and he had plenty of time.” He said, “There

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is no hurry; I have got a job to go to in three months' time at Barclay Downs, and I can fill in the time by walking there." (Laughter.) Following behind our car was a car conveying the Attorney-General and the hon. member for Gregory. They volunteered to carry the man's swag. He said, "All right; you can take the swag to the well about 4 miles on and throw it off." The swag was taken; when the car indicated that it had gone 4 miles, no well could be seen, and the swag was placed down on the side of the road. Before the man arrived at the place the mailman came along, and, seeing the swag, took it in to Camooweal and reported that a man was lost and that he had found the swag. (Laughter.) A motor-car followed behind, and the swagman was forced into the position of having a motor-car ride for the first time in his life. (Renewed laughter.) The Secretary for Mines is always prepared to pay attention to any suggestion made to him by hon. members. I think the Government might exploit the Percyville field. The Minister will find, if he looks through the report on that field, that there are good prospects there. Some men have got as much as 2 oz. and 2½ oz. of gold. If that field was opened up, men would get work at the different "shows," and the field would probably develop. In 1914, or early in 1915, the Chillagoe Company intended exploiting this field, and went so far as to ask Mr. Denham, the then Premier, for a loan to construct a railway from the Etheridge Railway to Percyville. The Denham Government were unsympathetic, and allowed Chillagoe to close down and nothing was done. Evidently, the Chillagoe Company were dependent on the Percyville field to give them a new lease of life. My experience of Percyville, from coming into contact with practical and experienced prospectors, is that there are prospects of its developing into the Mount Morgan of North Queensland. I would ask the Secretary for Mines to do something in that direction, and continue the good work that he has done since he has been a Minister. The Etheridge field would give employment to many men and keep them from going for relief during slack seasons in Queensland.

If we can strike another goldfield like Mount Morgan, Gympie, Charters Towers, Croydon, or any of those places, we would be over all our difficulties in regard to relief. There is nothing like a goldmine to get Queensland out of her difficulties.

[10 p.m.] Gympie saved Queensland at one time, and on another occasion Croydon was responsible for saving the State and saving men from getting relief. We know that there always will be a certain amount of relief required while there is a humanitarian Government in power, because there is a certain class who cannot work. Through some disablement or other, they are not fit for work.

Mr. KERR: They can get the invalid pension then.

Mr. RIORDAN: I hope my hon. friend is never in the position of having to live on the invalid pension—a pension which since the outbreak of the war has been kept at 15s. per week.

Mr. KERR: It is not enough.

Mr. RIORDAN: Of course it is not enough, and yet the hon. member supports a party which would not increase the pen-

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sion in spite of the high cost of living. I know that the amount granted in aid of State children is not a very large one, and I wish the Government were in a position to make a higher grant in that connection. But they are more generous than the previous Government, and they have increased the grant by over 100 per cent. since they took office. I hope this will be a diminishing vote, and that next year Queensland will be so prosperous and work so plentiful that it will not be necessary to have such a large amount for this purpose.

Mr. RYAN (*Cook*): If there is one thing above another that is remarkable, it is the fact that hon. members on the Opposition side have not recognised that this is a diminishing vote, as has been pointed out by the hon. member for Burke.

Mr. VOWLES: That remains to be seen.

Mr. RYAN: Nobody recognises that fact.

Mr. T. R. ROBERTS: The Government expended £60,000 last year more than was voted.

Mr. RYAN: That was explained by hon. members on this side, and was due to the lock-out at Mount Morgan, which made it necessary for the Government to spend more than was voted. I am quite satisfied that there is not a member in this House who has seen the sights that I have seen in Australia. I have seen men standing in queues half a mile long in Bourke street, Melbourne, at the 8 o'clock rush at night, and the proprietor of the establishment coming out and calling, "one six, eleven" and so on just as if he were picking men to be shot. I have seen that in my little time, and I am not an old man. How many hon. members on the other side have seen such a thing? How many men have seen people in the big cities of Australia going into shops for soup at a penny a time? We do not see that in Queensland. At least I have never experienced it in Queensland and I hope I never shall; and, so long as we have a Labour Government in power in Queensland, we never will see it. I saw fourpenny feeds in Brisbane before we came into power, but we do not see them now because we give the producer a fair return for his products, and we assure the worker by arbitration a fair reward for his labour, so as to enable him to pay a fair thing for what he gets from those who produce food for him. I have been through Australia and have seen these things. It is very seldom that I see a swagman on the road now, whereas once in Queensland and other States in Australia, no matter what railway line you travelled on, you could see them by the score from the carriage window. You can now travel from Brisbane to Wallangarra through Toowoomba and Warwick, and it is very seldom you see one swagman going along. If you go out West now you can see shearers and other seasonal workers with their motor bicycles travelling along. They are in a position to do that through the Labour Government, and do not require to get relief.

Mr. FLETCHER: They do get it though.

Mr. RYAN: If they are not in a position to travel in their own motor cars, they can hire motors in the shearing districts at so much per mile.

Mr. FLETCHER: Is that not because there is more wealth circulating?

Mr. RYAN: It is due to the efforts of this Government.

Mr. FLETCHER: It is the same all over the world.

Mr. RYAN: It is not the same all over the world. Relief, we are told, is being given in Great Britain at the rate of £3,000,000 a day. There are members on the opposite side who have been born with silver spoons in their mouths. I was in a position on the Darling Downs at one time when one of those men who were born with silver spoons in their mouths was employing Chinamen to cut burr. Was it any wonder that our white workers should look for relief under those conditions?

Mr. FLETCHER: You get some good men amongst Chinamen, don't you?

Mr. RYAN: I have met some good Chinamen in the far North, but I have met some very bad white men in the Southern part of the State. Some hon. members opposite may not have been born with silver spoons in their mouths, yet they cannot understand why any man should want relief. They want to put him in the same category as the returned soldiers, for whose assistance people are going through the streets with boxes asking for contributions. It is degrading to see women on the streets with boxes appealing for subscriptions. If I assist any cause I give the money direct. I have stated that it is useless for any one to come to me with a box; I absolutely put my foot down on the practice. The system which allows women to go to the street corners and ask for assistance for any object is wrong. That is more degrading than the "Golden Casket," which I say is a good thing in regard to the purpose for which it is used, but I cannot deal with that matter now. The hon. member for Enoggera said that no returned soldier obtained any relief from this particular department.

Mr. KERR: I did not say anything of the kind. I asked what percentage of returned soldiers did receive assistance.

Mr. RYAN: I think the hon. member made a direct statement, because he said that the returned soldier did not look for this relief.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: And I want to say that we do not discriminate between the returned soldier and anyone else in giving relief.

Mr. RYAN: I understood the hon. member for Enoggera to say that no returned soldier obtained relief from the department.

Mr. KERR: I said very few did.

Mr. RYAN: A good proportion come from the North, particularly my own district. I have met returned soldiers and their wives who have settled in Brisbane, and, unfortunately, have not done too well. I had occasion to go with a returned soldier and his wife to the department and see that they got relief, so that refutes what the hon. gentleman said. The hon. member for Toowoong said it was remarkable that no member on the Government side was ever associated with a committee or organization that had for its purpose the betterment of the returned soldiers, or to find work for them.

Mr. KERR: Why don't you give it a rest?

Mr. RYAN: There is not a member on this side of the House who is not associated with some organisation that is doing something for the returned soldier.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: When the soldiers were away fighting, their industrial unions fought for them here and held the beacon up for them. They kept their dues paid up, and they kept their conditions up to the standard that they were before the soldiers left. When they came back they went into the unions again, and we are still fighting for them through the industrial unions.

Mr. KERR: Your unions are fighting them with preference now.

Mr. RYAN: I agree with the hon. member for Burke that the Secretary for Mines can do something to diminish this vote very much. On account of the condition of the meat industry and other industries not associated with mining, it is possible for men who were engaged in those industries to win their way back into the mining industry. We should give them assistance under the prospecting vote, and it will diminish very much the vote of £52,000 which is projected by the Treasurer in this vote.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): I am confident that not a single man on the Opposition side of the Chamber has for one moment taken up the stand that men who are out of work or who cannot find work should not receive the necessaries of life from the Government.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member who has just resumed his seat spoke about hon. members on this side who were born with silver spoons in their mouths. If you examine the members sitting on this side, you will find that most of them have sprung from the bottom of the ladder and have had to work their way up to where they are to-day. There may be exceptions, but the majority of members on this side have had to work hard in their time. I have known myself what it is to be out of a job. There is nothing so awful for a man as to feel that he wants work and cannot get it. The real trouble in Queensland to-day is that the Government have so controlled the affairs of Queensland that they have taken away the avenues of employment from many men who cannot get it to-day.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: In what way?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I will answer the hon. gentleman directly. Hon. members sitting in opposition do not object to men who are without food getting it from the Government, but we say that an employed man is very much better than an unemployed man.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: We all say that.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The better a man is the more anxious he is to receive work, instead of receiving what have been called doles. We have a right to get to the very foundation of the trouble. The Minister asked me why I stated that the Government were responsible, and I will tell him. The Government have so mismanaged the affairs

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of Queensland that they have created distress by their repudiation and other methods, and there has been an indisposition on the part of people to engage in some of those enterprises which would find employment for the people.

MR. PEASE: Why is there so much unemployment in the other States?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member, who is getting so fond of interjecting that I think we shall have to name him the "disturber of the peace," forgets that Queensland is the greatest State in Australia, and, if the Government had not created a feeling of want of confidence, not only inside but also outside Australia, conditions would not be as they are.

MR. PEASE: The propaganda of your side has created it.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The propaganda has been the propaganda of an evil name given to this State by the way the administration has been carried out. That is the cause of the unemployment, and nobody knows it better than the hon. member in charge of these Estimates. At the bottom of his heart he must know that these conditions have been brought about by the maladministration of his Government.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: No.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Is it not an awful advertisement for Queensland that, whilst an amount of £117,000 was voted last year, the amount spent was no less than £177,000?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: £174,000.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I accept the hon. member's own figures. To-day we have a paper estimate, and it would be very interesting to know how much has been spent on relief in these last two months of July and August. Even here in this very House, where we are keeping the staff working under extraordinary conditions, the girls who wait upon us in the dining-room have been retrenched as a result of the bad management of the affairs of Queensland.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I say emphatically that they have been retrenched, and that the Labour Government, by reason of their maladministration of the affairs of Queensland, have had to deal in a similar way with other employees whom they say they are out to assist.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: Has not your firm reduced wages?

HON. W. H. BARNES: No, I am thankful to say. We have followed the Arbitration Court in all cases.

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: That is what we have done.

HON. W. H. BARNES: And here to-night we are discussing outdoor relief, to the damage of the life of our workers in Queensland, and to the damage of the child-life of Queensland, which, after all, is the very best asset we have. And yet speakers on the other side are saying that the position is due to the delegation.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Quite true.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The delegation were not responsible. The high ideals which

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Queensland originally held were dragged in the dust by the Premier and hon. members sitting behind him, and all this led to destitution in the State.

MR. PAYNE (Mitchell): The hon. member who has just resumed his seat has taken upon himself to speak for the two sections of the Opposition. He said that not one man on the Opposition side has opposed this vote. Then, why have they been stonewalling it for two or three days?

MR. J. JONES: Why are you stonewalling it now?

MR. PAYNE: Because I have a right to speak. When hon. members opposite have been stonewalling for two or three days, surely I have the right to say a few words! That is the logic of the whole question—they are not opposed to this vote, considering there is less on the Estimates this year than there was last year, yet they have been stonewalling it for two or three days.

A good deal has been said about the unemployed in Queensland. The unemployed question is agitating the minds of the best people in every country to-day. There are more unemployed in England to-day than there ever have been in the history of civilisation. There are more unemployed in the other States than in Queensland. Anyone with an ounce of common sense knows very well that the unemployed situation in this State to-day is the aftermath of the war. Hon. members talk about the bad administration and the bad laws of this Government. What would they have the Government do—resort to the good old Tory days, when the hon. member for Bulimba supported a Government who told the people who were out of work to eat grass? The present Government are a humane Government. There is no doubt they have spent from this vote more money than has been spent by any other Government. I am quite satisfied that the average man who is worthy of the name of a man would sooner be employed than unemployed. The Government have gone into this matter in a very careful way. They found that, with the high cost of machinery and materials, they would swamp up in their purchase all the money available, and as soon as they started the job the funds would be exhausted and the work left unfinished and of no value. Rather than have that state of affairs, they decided that they would give to the people sufficient to keep body and soul together until times mended and they could start works of a reproductive nature which would continue for some time. What is the history of the parties sitting in opposition in reference to the unemployed in this State? Let any man take up "Hansard" and turn to the debates that took place in the good old Tory days fifteen years ago. He would find what that class of politician did. They treated the unemployed worse than the ordinary man would treat a beast of burden. The unemployed were told that they would have to scratch for themselves. They were not assisted in any way. When the Government were pinched for money they brought in a poll-tax, and they always struck at the man on the lowest rung of the ladder. Now they howl about this Government spending too much money in feeding men who want work. I do not believe a word that they say. I believe that 95 per cent. of the men who are out of work to-day who are physically fit and capable would much sooner be at work

than getting relief from this or any other Government. It is all moonshine for Opposition members to tell the Government that they are creating an army of loafers. I think it would take a good deal of dole to make the average Australian workman a loafer. I admit there is a certain number of men in the community, especially round the large centres of population, who have never done a useful day's work in their lives. A small percentage in the community will always be men of that type. I am satisfied that the Opposition have said very unkind things about the rank and file of the workers of this State. Such statements should not have been made by men worthy of the name of men. They called the workers of this State loafers. They said that they would sooner take doles than do a useful day's work. They are saying what is not correct. If they had a spark of manhood in them they would not talk about the wealth producers of this State like that. The workers of this State made it possible for men like the hon. member for Bulimba to build up large businesses in this State. Men went out into the back country and blazed the track and made it possible for some hon. members opposite to sit back in comfortable positions. To-day they come here and they call those men loafers. It is time that the workers of Australia woke up. Do hon. members opposite agree with the Fuller Government? Are they satisfied with what that Government are doing? Compare the treatment meted out to the workers in New South Wales with the treatment meted out to them in this State! Hon. members opposite are silent. Do they imagine that the workers of this State are going to take notice of what they say? They agree with what the Fuller Government are doing with the workers of New South Wales. They agree with what all Tory Governments have done. Only for the workers' organisations throughout Queensland the workers would be back to the good old days of 1891, when the employers would not give the ordinary bushman liberty to travel along the road. I know full well what the politicians did in 1891, and I know full well what they would do to-day if they could get on the Treasury benches. They are here trying to slobber to the workers of Queensland; but, if the workers of Queensland are going to be doped with the stuff I have heard during the last forty-eight hours from the Opposition benches, they will get all they deserve.

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*), who was received with Opposition laughter on rising, said: I am surprised at the amount of levity displayed by hon. members opposite. When an hon. member rises to address a few remarks on an important vote like this he should be shown a certain amount of respect.

Mr. VOWLES: Why does the hon. member not give the Minister a chance?

Mr. POLLOCK: If the Minister wants to reply I have no objection.

At 10.30 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN said: Under the provisions of Standing Order No. 307, I will now leave the chair and make my report to the House.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported progress.

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

## WATER POWER BILL.

### INITIATION.

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

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to make better provision for the utilization of water for the purpose of generating and providing electrical energy and water power, and for purposes incidental thereto and consequent thereon.”

The leader of the Opposition called “not formal” to this motion no doubt with the object of getting information as to the scope of the Bill. The Bill provides for the proper control of hydro-electric propositions in Queensland. The Government recognise that there are likely to be developments in that direction in various parts of Queensland, and it is proposed to provide the machinery for the creation of Boards by Orders in Council to control these operations. The functions of the Boards are properly set out in the Bill and are controlled in the public interests.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): The reason I called “not formal” was to get some information as to the objects of the Bill. I would like to know from the Minister whether it is proposed to grant a monopoly of the business.

The Hon. W. FORGAN SMITH: No. The authority is somewhat similar to the authority to grant power for electric lighting and such like.

Mr. VOWLES: Is it the idea to grant authority to local authorities?

HON. W. FORGAN SMITH: Yes.

Question put and passed.

## PRIMARY PRODUCTS POOLS BILL.

### INITIATION.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*): I beg to move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to provide for the constitution of boards representing growers of specified commodities and to confer powers on a board so constituted with respect to the marketing of the commodity for which it has been constituted; and for other consequential purposes.”

I think you ruled, Mr. Speaker, that this was not the stage at which to discuss Bills, but as the leader of the Opposition called “not formal” to the motion, I might briefly explain that the object of the Bill is to give the Government power to do by proclamation what they have done by special Acts in the case of the wheat pool and the cheese pool. It will save the necessity for passing a

*Hon. W. N. Gillies.]*



special Act. The banana-growers of the State have asked for a pool, and at present a ballot is being taken amongst the banana-growers, and the necessary percentage of the growers express their desire to have a pool and the Government think it is necessary under the circumstances. They will have power to do so under this Bill without passing a special Act for that purpose. The same will apply to other commodities.

Mr. MORGAN: Will this apply to meat, if necessary?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): The Minister is now asking for powers which he could have got by an amendment which was moved by the Opposition when the Wheat Pool Bill was before the Chamber last session.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The amendment moved last session was not in order.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at 10.35 p.m.