

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 27 AUGUST 1924**

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**WEDNESDAY, 27 AUGUST, 1924.**

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Bertram, *Maree*) took the chair at 10 a.m.

**QUESTIONS.**

**WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, 1918-1923.**

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“As records show that prior to the present Government coming into power workers' educational associations were formed in all the States of Australia, will he state how many classes were in existence in Queensland for the years 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, and 1923, and the number of students enrolled for each of the years mentioned, together with the financial appropriation by Parliament?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. F. T. Brennan, *Toowoomba*) replied—

“The following are the particulars asked for in respect to tutorial classes, study circles, and enrolment of students for the years 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, and 1923—

		1918.			
Classes ..	5	Students ..	143		
		1919.			
Classes ..	8	Students ..	194		
		1920.			
Classes ..	6	Students ..	115		
		1921.			
Classes ..	8	Students ..	224		
Study Circles ..	2	Students ..	38		
Correspondence Students ..			24		
			Total ..	286	
		1922.			
Classes ..	8	Students ..	282		
Study Circles ..	11	Students ..	96		
Correspondence Students ..			319		
			Total ..	697	
		1923.			
Classes ..	19	Students ..	457		
Study Circles ..	11	Students ..	110		
Correspondence Students ..			520		
			Total ..	1,096	

“The annual appropriation by Parliament for the financial years specified hereunder was as follows:—

Financial Year.	Workers' Educational Association.	Workers' Tutorial Classes, Queensland University.	Total.
	£	£	£
1917-18	150	..	150
1918-19	400	630	1,030
1919-20	505	600	1,105
1920-21	400	1,210	1,610
1921-22	500	1,210	1,710
1922-23	1,000	2,000	3,000
1923-24	1,000	2,000	3,000

**AGENT-GENERALSHIP—ALLEGED STATEMENT BY MR. J. A. FIDELLY.**

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*) asked the Premier—

“1. Has his attention been drawn to a statement made by the ‘British-Australasian’ newspaper that the Melbourne ‘Age’ had published a statement made by Mr. J. A. Fidelity, late Agent-General for Queensland, ‘That the job was a sinecure, overrun with graft’?”

“2. Will he cause an inquiry to be made into the working of the Agent-General's office with a view to proving the accuracy or otherwise of such statement?”

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

“1. Yes.

“2. I do not think an inquiry is warranted.”

**ROLLING-STOCK IN USE ON QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.**

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“1. What number of engines (locomotive) are in use on the Queensland Government railways?”

“2. What number of carriages?”

“3. What number of wagons?”

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

“1. 708.

“2. 920.

“3. 15,599.”

**AMERICAN LOANS—SINKING FUND AND INTEREST.**

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

“Will he kindly supply the following figures for last financial year in connection with the first and second American loans, respectively—

1. The total amount of the Sinking Fund and the interest earned?”

2. The amount retained in America and the interest earned?”

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

	First Loan.	Second Loan.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1. Total amount of Sinking Fund at 30th June, 1924 ..	239,392 19 11	42,338 16 1
Total amount of Interest earned ..	13,334 13 1	1,237 5 9

“2. *First Loan*—Provision is made to have 100,000 dollars available quarterly in America. As no bonds were procurable at a price not exceeding par, this sum was on hand at the 30th June, 1924. Interest earned during the year amounted to £499 2s. 2d.

"*Second Loan*—Provision is made to have 50,000 dollars available half-yearly in America. There was no balance on hand at 30th June, 1924, as the whole of the amount allotted to the Sinking Fund during the year was used in purchasing bonds of the loan. Interest earned during the year amounted to £193 6s. I would refer the hon. member to Table G 6 of the tables relating to the Treasurer's Financial Statement for the year 1924-1925 for further information in connection with the American Loans Sinking Funds."

CRITICISM OF MR. CORSER'S SPEECH ON ADDRESS IN REPLY BY "QUEENSLAND PRODUCER."

Mr. BRAND (*Burrum*), without notice, asked Mr. Corser (*Burnett*)—

"Did he see in the 'Queensland Producer' of this week where his statements in Parliament regarding stabilisation had been misquoted for political purposes?"

"That he had insinuated that the Director of the Council of Agriculture had written certain letters to the Local Producers' Associations at the dictation of the State Government?"

"Would he please inform me which of his remarks in Parliament on the 7th instant could have induced Mr. Macgregor and the 'Queensland Producer' in question to make a political attack on one opposed to their Government?"

"What are his impressions of the Council of Agriculture, and did he receive a letter recently from Mr. Macgregor?"

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*) replied—

"Yes. I did notice in the Government journal, the 'Queensland Producer' of 20th instant—printed at the 'Standard' office—that I am accused of saying on 7th August in Parliament—

The butter stabilisation proposals are a political trap.

This accusation is unfair and untrue. I am reported to have said—

The Minister hides behind the Council of Agriculture in asking the Federal Government to do something he would not grant himself, and that was the right for the dairymen to have power to fix their own price for butter.

"I complain of the Director circularising Local Producers' Associations on Council official paper, written in the first person. I hold that the Director is the paid official of the State, and the business of the Council and its elected producers' members should not be traded upon by a paid official, who is a servant of the Minister of the Crown, the latter being chairman of the Council and pushed in by an Act of Parliament.

"I did not drag stabilisation into party politics. I condemn Mr. Macgregor for his actions in that regard.

"Mr. Macgregor and his paper are no doubt annoyed because I accused the Government of bringing about no stabilisation of prices, and no increase in prices as promised by Mr. Theodore when he provided for the organisation. Perhaps, also, his conscience pricks him regarding his neglect to assist the cotton-growers in

their fight for ration in contrast to my stand in this regard and my advocacy of their claim for co-operative control.

"My statement regarding the Council of Agriculture reads—

'Hansard' shows clearly that I and other members of the Opposition voted for a Council of Agriculture, but voted against having a Minister of the Crown as its chairman.

We believe in sectional organisation of various industries as against one organisation to deal with the whole of the industries.

"Mr. Macgregor wrote me. He misquoted my statements and similar misrepresentations are contained in the article published in the 'Queensland Producer' of this week.

"I did Mr. Macgregor the courtesy of replying, and request now that my letter be published in the same conspicuous place in the next edition of the journal in question."

APPRENTICESHIP BILL.

DISCHARGE OF ORDER FOR THIRD READING.

On the Order of the Day being called for the third reading of this Bill.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J. Mullan, *Flinders*): I beg to move—

"That the Order of the Day be discharged from the paper and the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of reconsidering new clause 26."

Question put and passed.

RECOMMITTAL.

(*Mr. Pollock, Gregory, in the chair.*)

On new clause inserted to follow clause 25, reading—

"Every employer shall be entitled to employ at least one apprentice"—

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J. Mullan, *Flinders*): I beg to move the following amendment:—

"At the beginning of the clause insert the words—

'Subject to any award of the court.'

The object of inserting those words is to secure the effective control by the Arbitration Court over all apprentices and the conditions under which they are employed. It might so happen that an employer would not have proper facilities to train an apprentice, therefore it would not be fair to a lad to be apprenticed to him.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): This is one of the most important clauses in the Bill and one which we have always advocated should be contained in the Bill. I do not think that the award of the court should have anything to do with it. I was pleased that provision was made that every employer should have the opportunity of having an apprentice, but now we are to have this restricting amendment which is going to destroy all that we fought for.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Does the hon. member insist upon employers having apprentices although they have no facilities to train those apprentices?

Mr. MOORE: No. We wanted to make sure that the small man would have the

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opportunity of training an apprentice. We wanted to assist the small shop in the country districts. This clause was received with great satisfaction by the people outside because it was recognised that it was going to give boys an opportunity of learning a skilled trade where they would otherwise be debarred. The whole object of the clause was to make it possible for one-man shops to take apprentices. The provision in the Bill is that every employer shall be entitled to employ at least one apprentice—

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Meaning where they have proper facilities.

Mr. MOORE: Take the man in the country who is a saddler or a tinsmith—he does not want more than the ordinary tools of trade with which to teach that trade. Those men are certainly efficient. It is not a question of having proper facilities—it is a question of restricting those men from the opportunity of training boys. I have looked through about forty awards in the "Gazette," and in nearly all the employer is restricted from employing an apprentice unless he has one or two journeymen employed, and in some cases more. That is going to debar one-man country shops taking apprentices, and will prevent the boys learning a trade in their own district.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Do you say hawkers and menders of kettles should have apprentices?

Mr. MOORE: Those men have not got shops, but they are certainly competent and good practical tradesmen. I know of many saddlers who go round the country who are very efficient. There are hundreds of cases in which one-man shops will be restricted under this amendment.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You want to give a man with no plant or facilities the right to train a boy.

Mr. MOORE: What plant do they want? When they are competent tradesmen they have their necessary tools of trade, and it should not be a matter for the Arbitration Court. Owing to the agitation by various organisations, the whole effect of the Arbitration Court has been towards restricting apprenticeship. We want to take away the power of the court to restrict apprenticeship and prevent a boy from learning a trade. The Secretary for Public Works admitted that this was a good idea and he offered no objection to the clause. Now it is proposed to bring in an amendment that will destroy the whole purpose of the clause. I strongly object to the amendment, because the clause as it stands is going to give our boys better chances of learning a trade than previously obtained.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): It would be very interesting indeed to know what has transpired since the Bill was passed through Committee to make the Minister in charge of the Bill alter his decision in this matter. It is quite apparent that a boy should have the opportunity of going into a one-man shop and learning a trade. In my opinion, if a man is in business and is able to carry on that business successfully, naturally he is a competent man, otherwise he would not be able to carry on his business. Under the circumstances mentioned by the Minister he would not be able to carry on his industry properly and he would not require an apprentice. I do not think this restriction should be put into the Bill. The position was made

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very definite by the amendment moved by the Opposition when the Bill was in Committee and which was accepted by the Minister, but now the whole advantage is to be wiped out and the control placed in the hands of the Arbitration Court.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: This is fair to the apprentice.

Mr. KERR: We want to be fair to the boys and give them every opportunity of learning a trade. I venture to say that, if we allow the clause as originally passed in Committee to remain, there will be many hundred more boys able to secure jobs as apprentices than if the amendment moved by the Minister is accepted. The provision is absolutely useless as amended by the Minister, and we may as well wipe the clause out altogether. This provision applies particularly to the country, as there are very few one-man shops in the city. The Minister should make some discrimination with regard to the country, more particularly in regard to blacksmithing. A blacksmith who has his smithy will have a full complement of plant and tools, and the original clause, as moved by the leader of the Opposition, will give him an opportunity to take on an apprentice in his smithy. I want to know why the Arbitration Court should have this authority. First of all, it has to deal with conditions and wages, and now it is to be given power to deal with the proportion of apprentices in any particular trade. I venture to say that we shall be doing a great injustice to the boys if we accept the amendment moved by the Minister. When we were dealing with the Bill in Committee this provision was looked upon as a very important one indeed, and I sincerely trust that the Minister will reconsider his decision. It is not at all likely that a man in business will not have the necessary tools and plant to carry on his trade.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: If you have any experience of country traders, you will know that many of them do not possess an efficient plant.

Mr. KERR: I have been round the country a good deal and have seen various tradesmen in one-man shops, and I venture to say they could very well employ apprentices with good results to the boys themselves and with better results to the State generally. I hope the Minister will not persist in his amendment and wipe out completely that which we fought for so hard in Committee. When the original amendment was moved by the Opposition in Committee it was looked upon by the Minister as being reasonable, but evidently someone outside has gone to the Minister. It is not wise that he should be influenced by someone outside the House to bring in an amendment preventing the employment of an apprentice in a one-man shop.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): Now that we have only one Chamber a different method of altering Bills passed by this House should be adopted. The Minister came along this morning, and on the Order of the Day for the third reading of the Bill being read, he called "Not formal." He then had the Bill referred to Committee and moved an amendment to an important part of the Bill. We ought to have some notice when important amendments have to be made on the third reading of a Bill. This clause, when it was passed in Committee, laid down very clearly that an employer should have

the right to employ an apprentice, and that an apprentice should have the right to be so employed quite independent of any outside body. When the Bill passed through Committee we decided that this provision should be law, quite apart from the Arbitration Court.

We know that there is an Apprenticeship Committee which will look into these matters and report on them from time to time. Then an indenture is made out, and the employer has to act up to his responsibilities. I do not see what the Arbitration Court can have to say to it. If the employer is not able to teach a lad his trade, he will not be acting up to his responsibility and can be called upon to explain. My attention has been drawn to the interpretation of "Employer" in the Industrial Arbitration Act of 1916—

"Any person, company, corporation, firm, or association employing or usually employing one or more employees, whether on behalf of himself or any other person."

That shows quite definitely the position so far as the employer is concerned under the Bill. I again emphasise the point that there have been hardships in regard to this matter. We have had cases cited in this Chamber where men who were quite competent to teach a trade to the youths of our State were not permitted to do so, and when this Bill was going through Committee we wanted to make it definite that that should not happen in the future. I still say that there is no need for the amendment moved by the Minister.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): It is very surprising that this proposed amendment has been brought on, especially when one considers that when the amendment of the leader of the Opposition was moved in Committee, the Secretary for Public Works, who was in charge of the Bill, fully approved of it. The matter was gone into by the Committee, and it was shown conclusively to the satisfaction of the Minister that the new clause would add to the efficiency of the measure.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The clause will still stand with this qualification.

Mr. TAYLOR: The clause will still stand with the proposed amendment of the Minister, which in my judgment nullifies quite a lot of the benefits which the clause was intended to confer.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: It makes it a better clause.

Mr. TAYLOR: We want to give all the encouragement we possibly can to the training of apprentices. We have an Apprenticeship Committee who are able to deal with these matters, but it is now proposed to bring the Arbitration Court into the matter. Surely the Apprenticeship Committee have the confidence of the Minister and the Government, and they will be able to show whether it is necessary or right that an apprentice should be indentured to a man who is running a small business in the country. All employers are not running large businesses in the towns. This will all come within the purview of the Apprenticeship Committee. The present proposal of the Minister will practically override the Apprenticeship Committee. If the Apprenticeship Committee cannot carry out its duties, the sooner it is dissolved the better; but I think

that it can carry them out. I hope the Minister will not persist in his proposed amendment. Like the hon. member for East Toowoomba, I think that this is an important Bill, and full notice should be given of an amendment such as this, so that we may consider it properly. It is sprung on us this morning, and we are asked to consider it without having time to go into the merits or demerits of the case. I think we should have some system which would give us time to consider an amendment of such an important character on its merits.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Harwick*): I oppose this amendment simply because it is going to limit to a very serious extent the scope of the Bill.

Mr. WRIGHT: In what way?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I am speaking in the interests of the country. The hon. member who interjects is simply a city man, and only concerned with what is taking place immediately around him.

Mr. WRIGHT: Don't you worry about that. I am as broadminded as you are.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I look wider than that. We look from the towns to the villages in the country, and we are considering the settlement of the country. We all know that there is a vast exodus of the young life from the country to the cities, and it is only by giving opportunities of employment in the villages, first of all, that we can prevent that migration. Otherwise the settlement of the country will be delayed, employment will not be found, and thereby the general development and progress will be interfered with. This is only one means of giving opportunities for employment, but it is nevertheless a mighty big means. Anyone interested in the development of the smaller centres knows that it requires all the encouragement we can give to it, and therefore it behoves us to give the lad in the country every opportunity that we can to remain and work there. I think that the Minister is making a very, very big mistake.

Some reference has been made to the necessity for teaching the apprentice; but it is the real practical experience which a lad will be able to secure, even by rubbing shoulders with other workmen, which will be a help to him. I hope the Minister will not insist on his amendment. I think that an apprenticeship scheme should meet with the general approval of all sides, and we are seriously jeopardising the scheme by this limitation.

Mr. KING (*Logan*): The amendment of the leader of the Opposition was accepted by the Minister and by all the members of the Committee. Not a voice was raised against it. Now, however, we are asked to consider a proposition which is altogether different. I am very anxious to know what has moved the Minister to alter his mind. There are some influences at work that we do not know anything about which are not going to make for the improvement of the Bill. The clause provides that every employer shall be entitled to one apprentice, and the interpretation quoted by previous speakers provides that, to be an employer, a man must have one or more persons working for him.

In addition, there is the safeguard provided by the Apprenticeship Executive, the Group Committees, and the Advisory Committee. One cannot help thinking that the

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Minister has shown a want of confidence in the Executive Committee. Why not trust them to carry out their duties without asking for the assistance of another body? This is a matter which does not come within the purview of the Arbitration Court and should not be within its jurisdiction, especially when we have all these committees safeguarding the apprentice. I hope that the Minister will be reasonable and not spoil what otherwise would be a good Bill.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): The amendment which has been moved by the Minister is certainly not going to help industry in the country. It is another injustice to the country lad. Evidently the Government are not worrying at all about the man on the land.

Mr. WRIGHT: What about the Council of Agriculture?

Mr. DEACON: That does not come into this Bill at all. Take the case of any man at Cunnamulla or anywhere else you like in the country who wishes to take an apprentice. Take also the case of the lad in the same place who wishes to become an apprentice. Do you think they are going to bother about going to the Arbitration Court in Brisbane? The Minister and the members supporting the Government must know that the people will not take the [10.30 a.m.]trouble to apply to the court, but will adopt some other course. It is intended that this Bill should work in favour of the lads in the town because the workers in the city are afraid that, if the country lads are taught their trades, they will enter into competition with them. This is a deliberate attempt to stop the teaching of apprentices in the country as far as possible. It is impossible for hon. members on this side thoroughly to consider an amendment sprung upon us at this late hour. It is all very well for hon. members opposite who, perhaps, have had orders to support the amendment. Some hon. members opposite are not allowed to exercise their own judgment, but the views to be adopted are placed before them.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toorang*): I certainly agree with previous speakers that hon. members on this side should have been given at least a day's notice of the intention to move this amendment. I consider that the amendment is a slight upon the Executive Committee controlling this scheme.

Certain questions were raised in connection with this scheme, but the Minister stressed the point that every confidence could be placed in that executive because it was composed of men selected from a certain source. What do we find this morning? We find the Minister in charge of the Bill desiring to bring in something which in effect is a direct insult to those controlling this scheme. I admit that it is difficult at times for boys in the country to be properly indentured, but it does not follow that, because there is only one man in a business, that employer will not give an apprentice as good a training as he would get in a shop full of employees. I only rose to protest against the springing of an amendment at this late hour. The Minister would be well advised to withdraw the amendment. It savours of something that is not too pleasant. There is more behind it than one can appreciate at present.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): When this Bill was introduced into the Chamber it was

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accepted by the Opposition in so far as it established the right and principle of a form of apprenticeship, but, in my opinion, it is ineffective inasmuch as it did not definitely specify the persons who were entitled to take apprentices. An amendment was moved by the Opposition, and it was taken into consideration and discussed on its merits, and unanimously approved by this Chamber. The amendment now moved has a direct negative effect to what was originally agreed to. The principle we agreed to was that every employer was entitled as a right to employ apprentices. Now we are saying that every person is not entitled to that as a matter of right, but is only entitled to it subject to some regulations under another Act. It appears to me that it is going to work harshly in country districts. I do not know very much about trade apprentices, but I know it is generally recognised in my own profession that a man who has had the privilege of serving his articles in the country has a greater general knowledge of his profession than if he had served his articles in a city and worked in a department and got into a groove. So far as trades are concerned, I quite understand that a man who has the right or the privilege of gaining greater efficiency in every department of his trade, as he would have in the country, has better prospects as to his future than he would have if he worked in a similar trade in the city, where he would be working in a groove. For those reasons I am opposed to the amendment. The principle whereby lads in the country would have the opportunity of being apprenticed to a trade and learning what they would otherwise have to go to the city to learn was a good one, but it might so happen that restrictions imposed by the court will prevent this.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J. Mullan, *Flinders*): Mr. Pollock, I beg to move—

“That you do now leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.”

There seems to be some contention about this matter, and, as the Minister in charge of the Bill is not present, perhaps it would be better that he should have the opportunity of being present and considering the matter.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Question put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported progress, and asked leave to sit again.

The further consideration of the Bill in Committee was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

## WAYS AND MEANS.

### FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

(*Mr. Pollock, Gregory, in the chair.*)

Question stated—

“That towards making good the supplies necessary to defray His Majesty's public expenses and making an addition to the public revenue—

There be charged, levied, collected, and paid stamp duty of the amount following:—

On every bill of exchange payable on demand or at sight, or on pre-

sentation, or in which no time for payment is expressed, the sum of twopence, in lieu of the sum of one penny presently chargeable on every such bill of exchange."

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): I desire to continue my remarks which I had not concluded when the House adjourned yesterday. I would like more particularly to deal this morning with the statements emanating from hon. members opposite in regard to the failure of State enterprises. It all depends on what they call a failure.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. GLEDSON: In the time at my disposal I will endeavour to show to the Committee and the people of Queensland that so far from State enterprises being a failure they are just the reverse. The State enterprises that have been established have certainly been for the benefit of the people of Queensland. Let us take State stations, as there has been quite a lot of talk about them. The State stations were acquired during a time of war, when there was quite a demand for meat and cattle were at a fairly high price. During the first year or so things were quite all right, and the results from the State stations were not so bad. Later on a slump came in cattle, and the price of cattle was marked down until this trading venture showed a nominal loss, although actually there was no loss at all. The hon. member for Aubigny, for the hon. member for Burnett, asked several questions yesterday as to the number of cattle sold and the prices obtained by the State stations. I do not know whether the hon. member expected to get the answers that he got. The questions were—

"1. How many head of cattle were sold from State stations during last financial year to other States, stating number respectively?"

"2. What was the average price realised, respectively?"

and the answers—

"1. 10,381 head from Dillalah and Keerongooloo Stations.

"2. 211 at £9 9s., 170 at £9 5s., and 10,000 at £7 16s. 3d.—on trucks nearest station."

If we consult the last report that was tabled in connection with State enterprises, we shall find that the average price set down for the cattle on State stations was £3 12s. 2d. per head.

Mr. VOWLES: Are you going to try to reconcile those figures with the figures that were given yesterday?

Mr. GLEDSON: The prices realised from the sales of cattle off the State stations last year ranged from £7 17s. 6d. up to £9 9s. per head. I say that the average price of the cattle was cut down, and that shows good business ability on the part of those concerned.

Mr. BRAND: You are comparing the poor class cattle with the fats.

Mr. GLEDSON: I am not comparing the £3 13s. 2d. cattle with those at £9 9s. 0d. We know that £9 9s. 0d. is not the average price. The prices £9 9s. 0d., £7 17s. 6d., and £7 5s. 0d. are for fats sold on rail and are not the average. At the same time the average price of cattle, taking fats, stores, and other cattle on the station, comes

to far more than £3 12s. 2d. We would find the average price of our cattle, if sold to-day, to be at least £2 above the price put down in the report—it would be at least £5 10s. 0d.

Mr. BRAND: You know nothing about it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. GLEDSON: I know that much about it. At Enoggera last week cattle brought 22s. a hundred. The cattle people of Queensland are doing exceptionally well, especially in the local market. In the local market cattlemen can get from 23s. to 22s. 6d. per hundred, and they are doing exceptionally well.

Mr. BRAND: You are quite wrong again.

Mr. GLEDSON: I say there is nothing to be afraid of regarding the State stations. The Government will be well advised to hang on to their stations, and, with good management, they will come out on top and give the lie to those people who say the investment has been a calamitous one. If the State cattle were sold at the market price to-day, we would show a profit on our State cattle stations, instead of having to write them down. It is good business to write them down because it places us in a better position than we would otherwise be in. (Opposition interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. GLEDSON: The increased price of cattle, combined with good management, would put us in the position of showing that our cattle stations are a good thing for the people of Queensland. The idea was not so much to make profits as to prevent the inflation of the price of meat to the consumer and the workers of Queensland.

Mr. COSTELLO: Your idea is to give the cattle away.

Mr. GLEDSON: Our idea has been achieved. (Opposition interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I remind hon. members that, although it is customary to allow interjections at times while an hon. member is speaking, it is not customary, and it is not going to be customary, for hon. members to cause an interruption. I ask hon. members to obey my call to order when an interruption is taking place.

Mr. GLEDSON: I repeat, the State stations were not obtained by this Government for the purpose of making a profit, but for the purpose of allowing the workers of Queensland the opportunity to obtain meat at a reasonable price. In that regard they have justified themselves over and over again. The idea was to have a line of cattle stations from the North of Queensland right down to the South, and to supply our own butcher shops throughout Queensland at a reasonable cost. That has been done.

Taking the figures that have been given to us, we find that during the years these State enterprises have been in operation they have saved the people of Queensland £4,250,000 in hard cash. That amount has gone into the pockets of the workers of Queensland, and it justifies the existence of these industries.

The State established an arsenic mine. They showed a loss on it, and it was called a failure! It was a failure so far as showing a profit was concerned, but it was not a failure so far as regards supplying arsenic

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for the manufacture of poison, which was sold to the farmers at £10 a ton to enable them to destroy prickly-pear and make their farms productive.

Now I want to deal with coalmines. I am not going to deal with them fully, because the hon. member for Bowen will probably be able to give some figures in regard to the Bowen Coalfield which will astound hon. members and will show what can be done by the State. We have a coalmine at Mount Mulligan. We are told that we have made a failure of that mine. The Chillagoe Company were working the Mount Mulligan coalmine and they made a failure of it. They were unable to keep going, and they had to hand the mine over to the Government, who have worked the mine successfully, and have been able to supply the Cairns Railway and the Chillagoe Smelters with coal from that mine. Although we have not made big profits out of the Bowen Coalmine, yet the public of Queensland, on account of Bowen coal being supplied to the Northern railways, have saved from £50,000 to £60,000 a year on the cost of the coal, which was previously being paid to shipping companies for carrying coal up the coast. Anybody who has any reason at all about him will admit that the establishment of State enterprises has been of the greatest benefit to the people of Queensland.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowoong*): It is somewhat refreshing to hear a speech like that which we have had from the hon. member for Ipswich. There are only two members on the Government side who have not taken up the funeral dirge sounded by the Treasurer in his Financial Statement. It is a great pity that the hon. member for Ipswich cannot convince the Auditor-General that the State stations and State enterprises are the success that he would lead us to believe they are. It was a most humiliating position for the hon. member to take up yesterday when he started to abuse the people who have motor-cars—people who follow another sphere of activity to that which he or I may follow—forgetting at the same time that they give employment and circulate a very great amount of money. I have not got a motor-car, but I do not envy the hon. member for Ipswich or any hon. member on that side having a motor-car. By all means let them have motor-cars if they want them. At the same time I resent very much the statement made by the hon. member. Generally he would lead us to believe that he has a different ideal altogether. He would lead us to believe that his ideal is to encourage people to live peaceably together and to love one another. But what do we find? In the House yesterday he preached a different doctrine altogether—a class doctrine. He said he was here for one purpose, and that purpose is to see that the workers get a fair deal. I want to tell the hon. member that he is not the only man in this Chamber who is prepared to see that the workers get a fair deal. There are other hon. members exactly the same as he is in that respect. I want to put the hon. member to a test, and see how far he and his colleagues are prepared to go to give some of the workers the fair deal they deserve.

It is only necessary for me to draw the attention of the hon. member to the condition of affairs existing at Blair Athol to-day, where men are working two or three days a fortnight trying to earn their living. If the hon. member is anxious to help these

men, there is the opportunity for him to do it.

Mr. GLEDSON: You help them to get to where there is work.

Mr. MAXWELL: It is not a question of the coal not being of high-grade, because the railway engine-drivers say it is the best steaming coal in Queensland.

Mr. HARTLEY: It is an evidence of the failure of private enterprise to compete with State enterprise.

Mr. MAXWELL: I want to tell the hon. member who has interjected that it is the interference of State enterprise which is preventing, by means which are not clean and right, a decent company from making a success of the venture.

Mr. HARTLEY: Quite clean competition.

Mr. MAXWELL: I say unhesitatingly, "No." If I can read between the lines, I can see what the game of the Government is in that direction. What they desire to do is to make things so infernally hard for the proprietors of Blair Athol that in time the finest coalmine in Australia will become the property of the State. If the hon. member for Ipswich desires to help the workers, as he says he does, there is an opportunity for him. There is another opportunity which will be given to him and his friends. I can only draw his attention to the Financial Statement and to the financial stringency which the Treasurer tells us now exists. Yet, if we look at the Estimates, we find that, notwithstanding the statements made by hon. members opposite, there are increases in a great many instances, while the basic wage cannot be paid to the workers in trades and callings.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAXWELL: I call that nothing but hypocrisy. It seems to me that the Government are prepared to do exactly what they blamed the Denham-Barnes Administration for doing—that is, giving certain rises in salaries to highly paid officials and not giving the men on the lower rung of the ladder even the basic wage. I want to make my position perfectly clear. I believe that the men who have received and deserve their increases are worthy of recognition; but what I object to and resent very much is the Treasurer or any other member of the Government coming to this Chamber and saying that owing to the financial stringency it is impossible to give a fair deal to the workers in trades and callings while there are others to whom they have given increases.

I have been told that with Baralaba coal the fires in the railway engines have to be cleaned after running 20 miles, while with the Blair Athol coal they can go 250 miles without cleaning. I am not setting myself up as a coal expert, but I am giving the information I have received from an expert who is using the coal and who knows what he is talking about, and he says that the Blair Athol coal undoubtedly is the best kind of coal.

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

Mr. MAXWELL: The Treasurer also talked about the unemployment which is rampant throughout Queensland to-day. Who is responsible for that? Only the Government. We remember the speeches which they made when they were in opposition. They attacked the members of the Denham-Barnes Administration in connection with unemploy-

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ment, and pointed out that one unemployed man was a disgrace to any Government; but what do we find since they got into power and had an opportunity to solve the problem? The position of affairs to-day in that connection is more acute than ever. It is disgraceful that a Labour Government should be in the position in which this Administration finds itself to-day. We were told that when the unemployment insurance scheme came into operation it would eliminate all difficulties, notwithstanding what we on this side of the Chamber told hon. members opposite. Our statements were treated with ridicule. Time has proved that, at any rate, hon. members on the other side have to sit up and take notice of some things we say, and have to admit that the warnings of hon. members here were absolutely correct.

I want to deal now with the statement made by the hon. member for Leichhardt yesterday in regard to the desirableness of introducing a co-operative industrial system into Queensland. I have a very vivid recollection of the formation of a Building Trades Guild in Brisbane, which was such a farce and such a failure that it hit up the Government for a good many hundreds of pounds. I want to know if it is the intention of the Government to advance the taxpayers' money to unions to enable them to start in opposition to private enterprise. If so, I say unhesitatingly that it is on a par with the other methods adopted by the Government, and that those methods are bush-ranging tactics; in fact, the Government go further than a bushranger. Any bushranger would leave you a shirt and a pair of boots to go home in, but the Government will not leave you even that. In volume exl. of "Hansard" for 1922, page 1314, I find that Mr. Elphinstone is reported as having asked certain questions, to which, after a great deal, we managed to get replies. Mr. Elphinstone asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

"It having been acknowledged by him as a fact that there is or was in existence a Trades Hall organisation known as the Building Trades Guild, which is in debt to the Forest Service Sawmills to the extent of £1,189, will he state—

- (1) When did the guild start operations?
- (2) Is it indebted to the Government for any sum other than £1,189 owing to the Forest Service Sawmills; if so, to what amount?
- (3) On what date or dates was the liability of £1,189 incurred?
- (4) What sum have the Forest Service Sawmills received from the guild?
- (5) What steps are being taken to recover the amount owing?
- (6) Is the guild still conducting active operations?
- (7) If so, are they still obtaining supplies from the Forest Service Sawmills, and on what terms?
- (8) Can he give any reason for the guild's inability to meet its obligations?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, in the absence of the Secretary for Public Lands, replied—

"The hon. member is wrong. I did not mention a Trades Hall organisation.

"1. I cannot say.

"2. Not that I am aware of.

"3. From April to December, 1921.

Hon. members will observe the contradictory nature of the statements. First of all, the Minister said that he was not aware that any money was owing by this Building Trades Guild, and then he admits that the liability was incurred between certain dates. The rest of the answer is as follows:—

"4. £578 5s. 6d.

"5. The affairs of the guild are in the hands of the Public Curator, with whom the Forest Service has lodged a claim.

"6. No.

"7. See answer to No. 6.

"8. This question should be addressed to the secretary of the guild."

I do not know whether the hon. member for Leichhardt desires to establish guilds on similar lines to that.

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Although I have not much faith in the Government, I have faith in a few hon. members opposite to know that they are not going to stand for any more of that kind of thing. There is nothing to prevent a body of men—all honour and all credit to them—starting a business of their own, but it is wrong for the Government to spoonfeed a number of individuals who desire to do anything like that.

Mr. FOLEY: Then we must be spoon-feeding the farmers to-day.

Mr. MAXWELL: What is wrong with that? The farmers have practically been ruined by droughts and pests and by this Government. That being the case, they have a perfect right to be assisted. We have a perfect right to do all we can for the man on the land, because he and his family are sacrificing themselves to make living better for people in the city.

The Treasurer's attitude in connection with the proposed increased stamp duty is a very paltry attitude. It seems to me that the Government have got right down to the lowest depths when they are increasing the penny stamp duty on cheques with a view to hitting the business man. Does the Treasurer realise his responsibilities? Do he and his colleagues know where this State is drifting? The Treasurer's Financial Statement was a most doleful Statement, and I can quite understand hon. members opposite appearing doleful about it, because it is a calamitous document. Does the Treasurer realise where this State is drifting under the burden of heavy taxation, all with a view to taxing individuals right out of business? What for? To encourage a system which has failed. I would like to ask the hon. member for Ipswich what would be his position if he went to a bank manager with a balance-sheet like the balance-sheet in connection with the State enterprises? Would he be able to convince that bank manager that his business was on a sound financial basis? I venture to say that if he attempted to do so, the bank manager would get someone from Goodna to come down and take the hon. gentleman in charge. The financial position is appalling, and the pity of it is that the Government have not risen to the responsibilities of their position. The hon. member for Warrego told us that certain conditions were obtaining because of the locking up of money through the exchange position, and then he indulged in a regular tirade of abuse against institutions that

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helped the Government when they were in trouble.

Mr. BEDFORD: I did not abuse them at all. I gave the figures, which were sufficient abuse.

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. gentleman's comments during his speech would lead any man of ordinary intelligence to believe that he was endeavouring to damage those institutions. If the hon. gentleman made such statements outside he would probably be given an opportunity of proving them.

Mr. BEDFORD: I have written and signed that statement outside.

Mr. MAXWELL: It is all very well for the hon. gentleman to say that, but the document that he signed does not carry the weight with some people that it seems to carry with a section in this Chamber.

Mr. BEDFORD: The newspaper in which it was printed carries sufficient weight to be prosecuted for criminal libel.

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. gentleman in writing in the Sydney "Bulletin" on 3rd May, 1923, said:—

"For reasons of long-lived and still robust sentiment I am sorry to hear the 'Bulletin' joining a chorus of such wretched voices as the Sydney 'Morning Herald,' the 'Argus,' and their smaller political imitations."

Mr. BEDFORD: Why did the "Bulletin" join with those other papers.

Mr. MAXWELL: I will tell the hon. gentleman why. Because it realised the position of affairs that was being brought about by a Labour Government, and because it realised that it was not in the best interests of Australia to have a Labour Government.

Mr. BEDFORD: That is not so.

Mr. MAXWELL: There may be others who agree that the hon. member for Warrego possesses the capabilities of a financier. I know that the hon. gentleman is an author, a poet, and a company promoter, but I have yet to learn that he is a competent financier. Judging by his speeches in this Chamber, it cannot be claimed that he is. The hon. gentleman comes into this Chamber and asserts that he is competent to tell the Opposition and the country that good has been done by the Labour Government, and that the financial institutions are responsible for the great losses that have been sustained by this Government. The hon. gentleman took to task a number of pioneers of this country, who did better work than he ever did in pioneering the western parts of the State, and blazing the track for him and others. In the "Bulletin" of 24th January, 1924, in reply to a statement made by the hon. member for Warrego, "Dampier" says:—

"Verily this was the live ass kicking the dead lion."

That was the opinion of the "Bulletin" at that time. On 31st January, 1924, Mr. O. C. Cabot, in the "Bulletin" says:—

"Bedford is an ass, and the foal of an ass."

Mr. BEDFORD: They are my own words in connection with Mr. Cabot.

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. gentleman poses as a financial expert, and endeavours to take up the cudgels on behalf of this spendthrift Government. The "Bulletin" of

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8th November, 1923, in speaking of Queensland said:—

"Under Theodore's rule the richest of the six States secured the lowest place for railway earnings, the lowest for area under cultivation in proportion to population, the lowest for progress in manufactures, and the lowest for the size of the workers' share of factory output. It came lowest save one for its contribution per head to the common or federal fund, and lowest save two for savings bank deposits per head, top place for unemployed and top place but one for debt."

The hon. member for Warrego is quite *au fait* with the manner in which the editor of the "Bulletin" dealt with him. It did not take him long to answer the hon. member for Warrego, because in the same edition of the "Bulletin" he says amongst other things:—

"The threadbare tale about Queensland having so much more railway in proportion to population than other States is irrelevant."

The hon. member for Warrego was taking up the cudgels on behalf of his Government and attempting to excuse them for their spendthrift policy, for their waste of money in State enterprises and general maladministration, and for allowing the railways to drift into the financial abyss that they have done. The hon. member wrote in very flowery language. It looked very nice, and I was beginning to think that there was something in his argument until I read the reply of his critic, who went on to say—

"The point is that, whether large or small, Denham and Co. made it the best paying system in Australia, and Ryan, Theodore, and Co. made it the worst, the slump starting with their first year. Westralia has more railway per inhabitant, yet produces better results. The other figures are mere verbiage."

In dealing with the question of repudiation, the article says—

"Of course, as Mr. Bedford says, 'no lease was broken,' if smashing the rent covenant into atoms wasn't breakage. And, of course, Denham meant to do the same thing, if Mr. Bedford says so, the Federal Chief Justice having apparently resumed bar practice sufficiently to advise on the matter. Queensland, in 1921-1922, raised more than twice as much land revenue per head as the Australian average (£2 0s. 3d. against an Australian average of 17s. 5d.) as the result of its repudiation, but it had the usual deficit, and the game didn't seem to pay, after all.

"I wonder if Mr. Bedford thinks he is doing his patron any good by his figures, and I wonder if Mr. Theodore thinks Mr. Bedford is doing him any good."

Is it any wonder that I in my humble capacity in this Chamber doubt the financial ability of the hon. member for Warrego after a paper which he uses so much of late deals with him in such a vilifying way? Whatever opinion we may have of the hon. member's literary attainments, we cannot accept him as a financial critic. (Laughter.)

I have here some pamphlets that were issued by the present Administration during that wonderful time in 1915 when we were going to have upon this earth a new heaven

and a new earth if they were returned to power. A Labour Government were returned to power. How have they kept their promises?

Mr. BEDFORD: And they continue to be returned; hence your tears.

Mr. MAXWELL: I believe the hon. member is going to be their "Jonah."

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: Can you imagine the whale swallowing him? (Laughter.)

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. gentleman knows more about him apparently than I do, and he probably will be able to tell him more than I can on that point.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order! I ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. MAXWELL: I will do so, Mr. Pollock. I am sorry. I intended to address myself to the Chair, but I was drawn off the track. I have a pamphlet here which is headed—

“THE HIGH COST OF LIVING.

“WHO IS TO BLAME?”

This pamphlet was issued by “E. G. Theodore and J. Fihelly for the Campaign Committee of the Queensland Labour Party.” This pamphlet states—

“The cost of living is constantly on the increase. The increased prices affect the commonest necessities of life, such as meat, sugar, bread, fish, flour, butter, kerosene, boots, clothes, and rent.

“Meat.—The price of meat is regulated and influenced by the squatters, the big butchers, and the controllers of the beef trust. All these people are staunch Liberals. The Liberal Minister for Agriculture fervently hoped that the price of meat would go on increasing!

“Sugar.—Ordinarily the price of sugar is fixed by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. All the directors of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company and all the shareholders are thick and thin supporters of the Liberals.

“Flour and Bread.—The price of flour is fixed by the Millers' Association; and the price of bread is fixed by the Master Bakers' Association. Both these bodies are emphatically Liberal in their politics.

“Rents.—Housing accommodation in the towns and cities is mostly in the hands of wealthy landlords who have raised rents unmercifully. Rack-renting landlords are all Liberals.

“More Housing.—A few years back, the Railway Department established a sawmill, and the profits of the first year almost covered the capital cost. Workers' dwellings are very largely being erected on every side, but the Liberal Government will not construct them by day labour and supply the timber from a State sawmill. That would cheapen the cost and interfere with the huge profits of the timber ring and the contractors and builders who are Liberal stalwarts.

“Fish.—The price of fish is controlled by a fish ring. They have been the cause of many boat loads of fish being thrown into the sea in order to keep up the prices. The members of the fish ring are blatant opponents of the Labour party.”

We have had an experience of this Government dabbling in the fish business, and they struck stinking fish when they struck that business. We all know that their venture in this direction was not a success. The Government were honest in abandoning that enterprise, but they have not been honest in continuing other enterprises that were worse even than that enterprise. Then they ask in this pamphlet—

“WHAT IS THE REASON?”

“Middlemen, manipulators, and cornerers, and the members of rings and trusts are those who are mainly responsible for increased prices. And these individuals are the backbone of the Liberal party.

“From a purely impartial point of view, don't you think it remarkable that all of these people are bitterly opposed to Labour. Doesn't the fact require explanation? In the old days when there was no Labour party the food monopolists and their brethren fought amongst each other under various leaders. To-day there is a Labour party fighting for the rights of every citizen.”

The people know that there is a Labour party! The unemployed know that the conditions as existing to-day are far worse than in 1915. They ask for bread and are offered a cigar. (Laughter.) The pamphlet goes on—

“To-day there is a Labour party fighting for the rights of every citizen; and the power of the Press, the power of monopoly, and the power of money are ranged against them. The ‘Courier’ and ‘Telegraph’ no longer take opposite sides, and the erstwhile followers of Griffith and McIlwraith are unanimous in agreeing to oppose the cause of Labour.

“Don't you think this extraordinary? Have you ever reasoned the matter out? After all, the reason is clear. It is this—

The Labour party will endeavour to cheapen the cost of living by attacking the causes of high prices;

By regulating trusts and combines;

By destroying injurious monopolies;

By putting in jail the cornerer of supplies;

By preventing the destruction of wholesome food; and

By establishing better methods of fruit distribution.”

Mr. TAYLOR: Who wrote that?

Mr. MAXWELL: It says—

“Compiled by E. G. Theodore and J. A. Fihelly for the Campaign Committee of the Queensland Labour Party. If you want to keep down the cost of living vote for the Labour candidate.”

What do Knibbs's “Commonwealth Statistics” say? That from July, 1914, up to the present time the increase in the cost of living in Queensland amounts to 54.2 per cent. This increase is the second highest of any State in the Commonwealth. I want to show the hypocrisy of these people who would lead us to believe that they do not believe in hypocrisy.

Mr. COLLINS: Buranda gave you your reply the other night.

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Mr. MAXWELL: Another pamphlet says—

“LIBERALISM'S CONSPICUOUS COURAGE.

“HOW THE DENHAM GOVERNMENT FACED  
THE GREAT CRISIS.

“*The Art of Preference Scientifically  
Developed.*”

“One would imagine that the wealthy squatter and landholder would have been made to pay their share. Not so. The only solution the hopeless Denham Government could find was to stop all increases to public servants. In regard to the highly-paid civil servants this was a reasonable policy, although in itself quite inadequate. In so far as the badly-paid men and women were concerned—those who had scarcely a living wage—it was a cruel policy.”

I wonder if the Treasurer and his colleagues are listening? These are the pamphlets they circulated, yet the condition of affairs to-day is worse than it was during the Denham-Barnes regime.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. MAXWELL: Men cannot get the basic wage to-day, and, irrespective of what the Assistant Minister says, the cost of living was considerably lower then than it is to-day, while the spending power of the sovereign was considerably greater. It is just as well that we should remind hon. members that we have such pamphlets as these to show that they are not doing those things which they promised. We have an example in the Estimates which were tabled last week, where increases are being given to a section of public servants—which are deserved—while the unfortunate man on the bottom rung of the ladder cannot get the basic wage so that he can enjoy reasonable comforts of life.

They go on to say—

“We find, however, on close inquiry, that the Denham-Barnes Government had no intention of penalising their highly-paid friends, and the increments were only refused those on moderate salaries.”

And then they go on and give the list of those who received certain increases in salaries. They practically said to those men and women who were the voters of Queensland, “If you put us in, there is going to be nothing like that in the future.” Yet we find the same thing that they attributed to the Barnes-Denham Government going on to-day. I want to know what attitude the Government now take in the face of those statements made at the hustings.

My friend the hon. member for Bowen interjected a few moments ago that the people of Buranda gave me their answer. If the people of Buranda are satisfied with a Government such as this, I have nothing to say to them, but I want to say to the people of Buranda and of Queensland that the longer the Government continue in power the worse the position becomes. That is not only my opinion, but the opinion of the workers' bible—the Sydney “Bulletin.”

Mr. WRIGHT: Rot!

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: The monopolists' bible.

Mr. MAXWELL: Hon. members opposite go to the Melbourne “Age” and the Melbourne “Argus” for extracts to suit themselves, and now, because I am going to quote

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something that the “Bulletin” says, they say that paper is no good. It is no good because it has found this Government to be no good—because it has found this Government is ruining the best State in the Commonwealth of Australia. We have it from the Treasurer and his able lieutenant, the Secretary for Public Lands, that we have reached the limit, and that it is impossible to give the basic wage to certain men in certain departments. But it is not impossible to give the Agent-General an increase of £250 or to increase the salaries of certain other men. Under the caption, “Some Consequences of the Theodore Government,” the “Bulletin” of 19th April, 1923, said—

“Queensland has had many rousing experiences during its eight years of Theodoreism. It had the Townsville ‘Red insurrection’; the Mount Morgan strike; the ‘darg,’ or whatever it might be called, which stopped the copper industry; the great rage of Theodore when London people refused to trust the Government with another £9,000,000; the Yankee loan, and Paul Freeman. But of genuine prosperity it has had none, and during Theodore's time it isn't likely to have any.”

It is not I who say that.

Mr. TAYLOR: But you believe it.

Mr. MAXWELL: I certainly do.

Mr. WRIGHT: No one would suggest that you did not.

Mr. MAXWELL: I have further quotations from the “Bulletin,” and I think it is just as well that they should be quoted. It is a most unfair thing that it should go out from this Chamber that the Government are in their present position owing to the war—they had a war some time ago; they dropped that, and now they attribute the position to financial stringency. With a view to keeping the blinds over the eyes of the unfortunate workers, they say that it is essential to control the financial institutions of the Commonwealth—that to do so it is necessary to put a Labour Government in power in the Federal arena. I say that it would be a case of “God help Australia” if men like that got on the Treasury benches of the Federal Parliament.

Mr. COLLINS: It would be a case of “God bless Australia.”

Mr. MAXWELL: We must profit by their example, because all we have to do is to examine their works. Those works show that in the expenditure of money by the Government there has been a wilful waste. It is all very well for the hon. member for Ipswich to take up the cudgels on behalf of the Government and to point out that the State enterprises have been a success. That is all twaddle. I remember that, when the Treasurer was asked questions in regard to those industries, he said that in face of their experience and of certain information received they would have to reconsider the system. In dealing with the question of cost they have put their fingers on the pulse of the whole thing. But the question of cost does not matter to them. Whether the money is squandered or not does not matter. The Government are up against a dead-end. Not only are the Theodore Government passing through the phase of altering their opinions, but the same thing was experienced before by William Kidston; Peter Airey

experienced it; Andrew Fisher experienced it.

Mr. COLLINS: Andrew Fisher was a true stickler to the Labour movement.

Mr. MAXWELL: Then why did they refuse to endorse him as a Labour candidate on the other side of the world? It is no good talking that way. Andrew Fisher then was not the Labour man he used to be.

Mr. COLLINS: He was one of the finest Labour men that Australia ever produced.

Mr. MAXWELL: The Government should wake up to a sense of their responsibility and face the financial position fairly and squarely, and not come here and say, "We want to have the right to borrow another £9,000,000. We want to get as much money as we can to throw into the sink." By doing that they are only hindering the finest State in the Commonwealth of Australia. The "Bulletin" of 3rd January, 1924, in an article dealing with the Queensland railways and finance, says—

"Queensland has £25,000,000 of old debt to renew within a couple of years, and it is only going to be renewed at a greatly increased rate of interest. The burden which this represents is so heavy that there should be a cessation of borrowing for new works until the State has grown in population and wealth. In addition to the 5,905 miles of railways already existing, there were (in 1922-23) 574 miles under construction. Surely, for a population of 800,000, this thing for the present has gone far enough! When 800,000 people owe £88,005,001, or about £110 per head, and their interest bill eats up nearly 30 per cent. of the public revenue and about £23 per annum of the income of every head of a family, there should be no need to preach a homily on the need for pulling up. The abyss that lies ahead should do that very effectively."

The "red pamphlets" issued by the Theodore-Fihelly combination of 1915 pointed out the supposed defects and errors of previous Governments, and the hon. member for Warrago termed the position a "bad old legacy" left to Labour by previous Administrations. Queensland owes a great deal to those former Governments. When they were in power, prior to the Commonwealth taking over the post and telegraph and telephone services they had the responsibility of carrying on and developing those services—and their accumulated loan expenditure was only £52,000,000.

I have a vivid recollection of the occasion when Sir Thomas McIlwraith wanted to secure a certain loan and was turned down. He did not cry or groan over it, but he took his gruel.

Mr. COLLINS: You also have a recollection of the bank smash of 1893.

Mr. MAXWELL: This Government will eventually have to take from the people of Queensland a far worse and more poisonous dose than had Sir Thomas McIlwraith when he failed to secure that loan.

That is one side of the issue. This pamphlet pointed out to the people of Queensland that up till 1915 previous Governments had spent £52,000,000 of loan money, and then during nine years of Labour they themselves increased it to £88,000,000, and, as the hon.

member for Windsor pointed out yesterday,

I would not be a bit surprised [11.30 a.m.] if they squander another £20,000,000 and brought the public debt to over £100,000,000 before long. I wonder if the Government realise that we are a small populated State. Some hon. members on the other side have said we are calamity howlers. If the definition of "calamity howler" is a person who points out the dangerous traps there are for this Government to fall into, and who points out to the Government the wrong way they are going—if that is the definition of "calamity howler"—all right. Who is the better judge of what is required and how to control the business of a community such as this, and who better to advise, if it is not the business man and the financier? What did the leader of the Government do? I have a vivid recollection that, when it was suggested that Mr. Fihelly should be appointed Agent-General, hon. members opposite said that Mr. Fihelly possessed the whole of the qualifications necessary for an Agent-General because he would be able to deal with the renewal of loans and the flotation of loans as he had had business experience. What happened? The Treasurer—and rightly too—I am not finding fault with him—went home to consult with the financiers and the business men, and he was successful.

Mr. COLLINS: Don't cry over it.

Mr. MAXWELL: I am not crying. The hon. member for Bowen is one of the wailers.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: He is not a wailer.

Mr. MAXWELL: He is one of the wailers who did not like it, but I am very glad to say he was "tuned up," and at the present time he sings a little bit better. I was one of those who, when the Treasurer went away, wished him every success. I congratulated him when he came back, and I was sincere in my congratulations.

Mr. COLLINS: What! After sending the delegation that retarded the progress of Queensland?

Mr. MAXWELL: There is one thing that was stopped, and that was the waste of money that was to have been spent in the hon. member's electorate in connection with the State iron and steel works. I really and truly do not know what has become of the gentleman who was appointed to deal with that matter. This "red" pamphlet says—

"Loans may be very necessary for reproductive work, but is it any wonder that our public debt amounts to £52,000,000, and that our debt per head of our population is over £80?"

Now, it is still going strong and soaring very, very high. In the same pamphlet they say—

"Just ponder on the awful stupidity of a policy that permits of receiving about £11,000,000 of money, paying back in interest sixteen and a-half millions, and still owing just about £12,000,000. That is the sort of Liberal finance that caused the great bank smash of 1893."

I do not subscribe to that statement. I wish we had a Government such as that on the Treasury benches to-day. But, taking them on their own statement, with this example of so-called Liberal mismanagement as a warning, is it not a wonder that they did not take heed and conduct the government of the country in such a way as not to bring

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about the present state of affairs to-day? They said, "It is the producer who pays and the worker who suffers." We know that very well, and there is no need for me to enlarge on it.

Now I come to this imposition of what is looked upon as a paltry tax. I say the duplication of the stamp duty is an infamous tax. It is getting at the business man all the time, and, when the Treasurer is in straightened circumstances and desires to replenish the Treasury to carry on his wild-cat schemes and State enterprises that are not paying, whom does he go to? He goes to the business man; he goes to the so-called capitalists and financial institutions for money, and he does not talk then—he is very, very quiet then—about what he is going to do. But at the Emu Park Labour Convention in March, 1923, in connection with the "Red Objective" and the socialisation of the means of production, distribution, and exchange, Mr. J. V. MacDonald—whom I take to be ex-Senator MacDonald—said—

"There were ways of getting their ends by way of taxation of driving capitalists out of the business."

And Mr. Theodore said—

"They were all aiming at one objective, although they might have different ideas of the way of obtaining it."

I ask the Treasurer if this increase in the stamp duty is one of the ways he has of doing it? I say here and now that the business community are practically strangled, and in making that statement I am not a calamity howler. I am a man who has been in business and I know the position; and there is no man more conversant with the position of affairs to-day than the Treasurer. He has mixed up with the financiers in England, and he knows the exact position of affairs. The Secretary for Public Lands has told us so, and there is no need for me to stress that point. The Treasurer and the Secretary for Public Lands have both stressed it, and in the face of that, the Treasurer, after delivering his Financial Statement, moved—

"That towards making good the supplies necessary to defray His Majesty's public expenses and making an addition to the public revenue—

There be charged, levied, collected, and paid stamp duty of the amount following:—

On every Bill of Exchange payable on demand or at sight, or on presentation, or in which no time for payment is expressed, the sum of two-pence, in lieu of the sum of one penny presently chargeable on every such Bill of Exchange."

Is that one of the means of getting at the individuals through taxation? The Government taxation is unbearable. Men with their homes in the various local authority areas are taxed right up to the hilt, and the Treasurer and others opposite have said "It is the worker who suffers; it is the producer who pays." If we get right down to bed-rock, they pay all the time. It is not a Financial Statement such as the one delivered by the Treasurer the other day that we as a Parliament want. We want a Financial Statement that is going to inspire the people; one that is going to give to the people, not only in this State but in the Commonwealth and to the people overseas

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the confidence that is so necessary so that we shall be able to say to them, "We have sufficient confidence in our own country and in ourselves. We think it is the greatest country upon the face of the earth." Instead of that, a funeral dirge such as the Financial Statement is presented to us. I certainly hope that wiser counsels will prevail in the Cabinet; that Ministers will see the error of their ways, and that they will see that the taxation heaped upon the business man, the pastoralist, and the commercial man is becoming absolutely unbearable. I do not know whether the Treasurer has received any intimation from the Chambers of Commerce objecting to this tax, but I am in a position to say that the Chambers of Commerce throughout the length and breadth of Queensland object to it. Of course we may have it said by hon. members on the other side that it is only a small thing; but it is the last straw that breaks the camel's back, and not only that, but it retards advancement and fails to give that confidence in the country that is so essential. Go to your architects and contractors! Ask your architects how many plans for buildings they have on their desks. How is it possible for people to invest their money in a State such as this when they are going to get taxation on taxation, which is going to tax their business and tax their property out of their hands? Unless the Government wake up and realise their responsibilities, irrespective of the militant section that is driving them forward and driving this State to destruction—unless they do that I am very much afraid that the people of this State will be in for a most terrible time, and the position of unemployment will not be what it is to-day, but men will be walking the streets and walking the State of Queensland by the thousand looking for something to try and keep their bodies and souls together.

Mr. WRIGHT (*Bulimba*): I desire to congratulate the Treasurer on the Statement he has presented setting out the finances of the State and showing a small surplus. However small that surplus may be, it means that Labour as a Government has been able to carry out the financial obligations of the country on sound lines, despite the criticism which has been hurled across the Chamber by hon. members opposite during the last few days that we are a spendthrift Government. When one takes into consideration the difficulties which have beset all Governments, particularly during the past two years, we are all forced to admit that the Treasurer is deserving of congratulation on being able to live up to expectation and show a surplus.

During the debate a considerable amount of time has been taken up by hon. members opposite in discussing the position of the public debt of Queensland. They have inferred that our public debt has been increased in alarming proportions. Personally, I am not much concerned with the growth of the public debt so far as it has gone in Queensland, as I am optimistic enough to realise that the State has sufficient assets and potentialities to enable it to carry an even much greater public debt than we are carrying at the present time, although I realise that it is a matter in which great care should be exercised, and that the growth of population also should be taken into account. The fact that the public debt of Queensland has been dealt with by so many Opposition members led me to take the trouble to make

a comparison of the growth of our public debt with that of the other States of Australia. The only comparisons I have been able to make are for the years 1921-22, 1922-23, and I challenge hon. members opposite to deny their accuracy. I have taken them from the "A B C of Statistics of Queensland," which are compiled by the Registrar-General, and I have compared them with the figures relating to the public debts of the various States of Australia.

For the year 1921-22 the increase in the public debt in Queensland was smaller than the increase in either New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, or South Australia. I will give the respective increases—

State.	Increase.
	£
Victoria ... ..	9,462,850
New South Wales ... ..	7,083,169
South Australia ... ..	7,100,008
Western Australia ... ..	3,526,076
Queensland ... ..	2,313,773

The increase in the public debt per head of population, which appears to me to be a fairer way to show the comparison, works out as follows—

State.	Public debt per head of population.
	£ s. d.
South Australia ... ..	11 6 4
Western Australia ... ..	6 2 5
Victoria ... ..	4 5 9
Tasmania ... ..	2 2 6
New South Wales ... ..	1 12 7
Queensland ... ..	0 2 9

Every State in the Commonwealth shows an increase, which is quite natural, and it is not peculiar to any country, particularly where there is much undeveloped land. The figures I have quoted show that our Government are seized with the fact that they have a large territory with a mere handful of people, and are spending according to the ability of the people to meet the additional interest charge. I want to go a little further and show the amount of the increased interest charge on some of the public debts of these States. The increased interest charges for the same year for three of the States are as follows:—

	£
Queensland ... ..	104,620
New South Wales ... ..	396,322
Victoria ... ..	491,704

The increased interest charge on the public debt alone, worked out per head of the population, is as follows:—

	Per head.
	s. d.
New South Wales ... ..	2 0
Victoria ... ..	4 7

while in Queensland there is an actual decrease in that taxation of 1d. per head. That, of course, is explainable by the fact that, although our interest charge on the public debt is higher for that year, our population has increased to such an extent that it wiped out any per capita increase. I merely quote these figures in reply to the hon. member for Toowong, who a few minutes ago endeavoured to castigate the Government for the increase in the public debt generally.

The hon. member for Wynnum had the bad sense to interject during the reading of the Financial Statement at the time the

Treasurer was reading the estimated expenditure, particularly in connection with agriculture, by saying, "Poor Agriculture!" He thereby inferred that the Government had done nothing, or had done much less than previous Governments had done, for the benefit of agriculture. Again, I have taken the trouble to analyse the position, and I have made a comparison between what the Government have spent on agriculture during their nine years of office as against the expenditure under this heading by the Tory Government in the nine years prior to this Government taking office. The figures are interesting and illuminating. In the nine years from 1906 to 1914 the Tory Government spent £555,329 on agriculture. Since 1915 the present Government have spent £1,004,700 on agriculture, thereby exploding the statement of hon. members opposite that this Government have done nothing for agriculture. To go further and taking the expenditure by this Government on the various departments, I have gone very closely into the matter and have compiled a table from the figures in the Treasurer's Financial Table C2 in 1915 and 1924, respectively. I find that the total expenditure on the Home Department from 1906 to 1914 was £5,841,770.

During the life of this Government we have spent on the same department, £11,031,549; I intend later on to deal with various sections of that department, and I would ask hon. members of the Opposition, if they were here, in what direction they would curtail its expenditure. I would ask the leader of the Opposition whether he can point to any expenditure on the department which could be reduced. The department includes the sub-departments of the Relief of Aborigines, Charitable Institutions and Grants, Health, Hospitals, Insanity, Lazaret, and Police. Take the expenditure on Hospitals for the Insane. In the nine years from 1906 to 1915 the Tory Government spent £601,129 and this Government spent £1,478,415 in a similar period. The increased expenditure was not due to any great increase in the number of patients. I suppose that, if the figures were gone into, it would be found that only a very small percentage of the increase in expenditure has been due to a greater number of patients, because the Government have not spared expense in the care of the patients or the staff. Hon. members opposite perhaps will be surprised to know that under the Tory Government during nine years a sum of £103,107 was spent upon the Health Department as compared with £304,302 by this Government in a similar period. That shows that the Administration on this side have done their duty to the people in the State in attempting to make it less easy, at any rate, to be stricken down by illness or disease. I would ask hon. members opposite again if they are prepared to curtail the expenditure under that item.

Take the expenditure on State children. The Tories spent in nine years £418,114; and the Labour Government, from 1915 to 1924, spent £1,463,029. There you have an increase in nine years' operations of over £1,000,000. It must not be forgotten in this connection that this Government placed the natural mother on the same plane as the foster mother. That fact in itself shows that they have done much to make the lives of these unfortunate children brighter than they were, and to fit them to take their rightful place in life. Members of this party stand

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for the betterment of the condition of the mother, and I regard this section of the work as one of the most important, and I take this opportunity, as a new member, of congratulating the Government on the wonderful work they have done in making conditions better. Their care for these unfortunate children merits the very highest praise.

Or take the expenditure on "Relief of aboriginals." This also is an important section of humanitarian work. The increased amount spent in making the lot of the aborigines brighter is shown by the fact that in nine years the Tory Government spent £135,857, and Labour in a similar period expended £318,694. Are the Government to be charged with extravagance here? Or could go much further with the many items of the Home Secretary's Department, but I shall content myself with a couple more. Take the Lazarét. From 1906 to 1914 the Tory Government spent £41,185, and this Government from 1915 to 1924 spent £63,879, showing a big increase, which has resulted from more humane administration by a more humane Government. Yet we are constantly having to listen to the criticism of the Opposition that the money is being wasted, although at the same time the leader of the Opposition has told us that he desires money to be spent in a more liberal way. Our expenditure has gone up enormously. We have done what we could to make the conditions as happy and comfortable for the unfortunate patients in this institution as it is possible for them to be.

At 11.48 a.m.,

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

Mr. WRIGHT: We have heard a good deal of late in this House of what the Government have done for the Police Force, and what the Opposition would do if they were the Government.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: What did they do when they had a chance?

Mr. WRIGHT: I am going to tell the Committee what they did. The hon. member for Enoggera, speaking on the Police Act Amendment Bill, said that, if the police wished to get a fair deal and higher salaries, they should put his crowd on the Treasury benches. The figures I am going to give are authentic—they are again taken from Table C2 of the Treasurer's Tables for 1914-15 and 1923-24—and will show beyond a shadow of doubt who are the friends of the police. The proof the pudding is in the eating, according to the hon. member for Enoggera, but the police ate to the full under Tory administration in the past, and still were in a very lean condition when we took office. During the last nine years of Tory rule the expenditure on police was £2,008,628, and during the succeeding nine years of Labour rule £3,213,960. I only hope that the police themselves will read these figures culled from official sources, so that they cannot be denied or contradicted, and if they do so I know quite well that they will understand thoroughly who are their friends.

Then take the Education Department. Opposition members are continually crying out for more schools, and are continually claiming that the Government have not done the right thing by them. I myself am anxious that the Minister should give most

favourable consideration to the requests from my electorate for more State schools and more accommodation, which have been, and probably will be, brought before him for consideration. Part of my electorate is what might be called a fast settling district, and at the present time the accommodation is very limited. It is, in fact, totally inadequate, and one or two additional school buildings are absolutely necessary before very long. I hope that the Minister will give sympathetic consideration to those requests when they come along. Hon. members opposite are never backward in making their demands on the department, and some of them are loudest in the criticism of what they call a spendthrift Government. The former Secretary for Public Instruction was most sympathetic to country members in their requests for schools, even at the risk of neglecting the towns. To get back to figures, let me quote the amounts spent on education by the respective Governments, which, of course, include the increases in pay to teachers, as was pointed out a few days ago, very fully by the hon. member for Rockhampton. From 1906 to 1915 under Tory rule an amount was spent of £3,806,279, and from 1915 to 1924 we spent £9,095,591.

Are the Opposition really desirous that the Government should economise in this department? If that is so, then will hon. members opposite be more moderate in their demands for more teachers and more schools? It can be claimed that there is no direct return to the taxpayers from the money expended by the Department of Public Instruction, but

hon. members opposite in all [12 noon] their criticism would not be likely, neither are they game, to suggest the curtailment of expenditure in the department I have referred to. Expenses have soared very high, but I am satisfied that the people of Queensland recognise the value of providing the best education for all.

I would now like to deal with the meat industry. That industry plays an important part in my electorate, in so far as it provides employment for a large number of my electors, and consequently the success of that industry is of great interest to me. I am satisfied that we have reached a very high standard indeed in connection with the slaughtering and the handling of meat in the meatworks, and I do not think any great improvement can be made in that direction. The employees in the meatworks of Queensland to-day have no superiors in the world. Speaking more particularly of the beef section, I am of the opinion that there would be a considerable extension of operations in that section if proper methods were adopted by cattle owners in improving the breed of their stock. In other words, they should go in for scientific breeding. It is no use the cattle owners of Queensland or Australia expecting to capture the beef trade of Great Britain or any other country if they are not going to keep pace with the methods adopted by their rivals in Argentina and elsewhere. They will have to spend money to secure the type of cattle that will mature quickly. It stands to reason that, if you are able to secure a breed of cattle that will mature quickly, and you can realise the same amount on bullocks of three or four years of age as you can realise on bullocks of four or five years of age with the same amount of natural feed that is required

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to bring them to a marketable condition, there must be a considerable saving. It would not take very long before you would have double the returns. All the co-operation in the world will not get over the difficulty or solve the meat problem if the stock is not of the best quality. I was interested this morning in reading the report of the Acting Agent-General for Queensland. In dealing with the meat industry, he says:—

“The amount of imported beef marketed at Smithfield last year—12,815,375 cwt.—is the largest in the history of the trade. Of the total, 60 per cent. was chilled, 39 per cent. frozen, and 1 per cent. fresh. Argentine supplied approximately 76 per cent. of the amount, Uruguay 9 per cent., Australia 7 per cent. frozen, New Zealand 6 per cent. frozen, and the balance was supplied by the United States of America, Denmark, and other countries.”

The position is that Australia is supplying only 7 per cent. of the frozen beef imported by Great Britain. When one realises that approximately 39 per cent. of the meat imported by Great Britain is frozen beef, and that that is the only class of beef that we can supply, we can only come to the conclusion that something is radically wrong. The Acting Agent-General further states:—

“The year under review has been another disappointing one in the frozen meat trade. The belief that the war would have induced a large consumption of meat amongst certain of the Continental nations, and that in consequence there would be an assured market for a long time at a remunerative price, has been rendered illusory, the long period of unsettlement in Europe having demoralised the exchange and made trade impossible. The year's importations were chiefly from South America, and amounted to 223,000 tons, or 100,000 tons more than in 1922. In 1914 Australian beef sold in Smithfield at an average of from 3½d. to 4d. per lb., and was retailed at an average of 7½d. per lb. At the close of 1923 the Smithfield price was 3½d., and the retail price 9d. The cost to the producer, including cold storage in London, is estimated at 31-10d. per lb. The difference between that and the Smithfield price of 3½d. to 3¾d. cannot pay the producer. It is doubtful if the difference between the Smithfield and retail price at present, compared with the 1914 figure, is realised to the producer.”

The whole difficulty is in the cost of handling and marketing overseas. It is altogether outrageous to estimate the cost of handling, commission, cold storage charges, etc., at 31-10d. per lb. I hope that the new Agent-General will devote his time and energy—I believe he will—towards securing a reduction in all these charges. In speaking on the Address in Reply last year, I suggested that the only solution of the meat problem was in doing business in Great Britain direct with the Wholesale Co-operative Societies only, thereby saving a proportion of the cost of handling, commission, etc. The less meat is handled the better condition it will be in when it is placed before the consumers in Great Britain. I hope that the new Agent-General will give his earnest and prompt attention to this

industry, the success of which is of great importance to our State, and I sincerely trust that something will be done along the lines that I indicated on a previous occasion.

Mr. RIORDAN (*Burke*): After listening to the speeches of the hon. members who occupy the front benches opposite and their cry as to the woeful Budget presented by the Treasurer, one would think that it was really necessary to bring in the undertaker. The attitude of hon. members opposite is to be wondered at at a time when the country is faced with a depression. They have raised a howl against the Government. First one hon. member and then another has got up with the cry that the country was “broke” and was on the verge of ruin. All the time they are attempting to discredit the State and the Government. One knows that the outlook may not be as bright as we would like to see it, but the outlook in Queensland is no darker than it is in any other State in the Commonwealth, or in any other country in the world. During the past nine years hon. members opposite have raised a continual cry with a view to discrediting their own State and to injuring it. This is a well-known fact. Even when the Prince of Wales was in Australia they had the little fellow almost afraid to come to Queensland because of their cries that Queensland was a Bolshevist State. Hon. members have only to take the fact that 77,000 people were in attendance at the opening day of the Exhibition a week ago as indicating that the country was never more prosperous than it is to-day. They have not referred to that fact during the whole of their criticism. On the same day that there was a record gathering at the Exhibition, the second largest crowd that has ever attended the races in Brisbane was present at Ascot, and a record amount went through the totalisator. If this is a form of ruin, then the people will be looking for more ruination of this kind. The friends of the hon. members opposite were never better off than they are to-day. They have only to go down Queen street any night and opposite the Wintergarden and His Majesty's theatres they will find from 100 to 150 motor-cars lined up outside those buildings. I can assure hon. members that none of those motor-cars belong to the “wage slaves.”

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Don't you make any mistake about that.

Mr. RIORDAN: The hon. member for Albert made some mistakes in the criticism, or, rather, the woeful cry, that he uttered yesterday. He did not mention that the Federal Government are prosecuting Sir Sydney Kidman for the recovery of unpaid taxes amounting to £150,000.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Quite right, too.

Mr. RIORDAN: If the Government had more sympathetic official heads, there would be a lot more prosecutions of this nature. The friends of hon. members opposite are hidden behind the Labour Government through the heads administering the policy of Labour. It has been said that the squatter and the pastoral industry have been ruined, but during Show week did we see the poor squatter in Brisbane doing the rounds in his moleskin trousers, and his women folk going about in old turkey red dresses? (Laughter.) I will take a Sunday paper and allow it to give its version of the poverty that hon. members speak of. In describing a function that took place on the night of the opening of the

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Exhibition at the home of "Mrs. Squatter," it says—

"Nothing more brilliant was ever seen in Brisbane than the lighting, decorations, and frocking of 'Mrs. Squatter's At Home' on Wednesday night. The special floor for dancing was constructed on the tennis court, polished and decorated for the occasion."

Such a dancing floor could not have been put down for less than £300 or £400. A crowd of "wage slaves" and a crowd of Bolsheviks that hon. members opposite speak of were looking over the fence. Let these people bear in mind that this is the sort of thing that brought about the French Revolution. This sort of cant and humbug of hon. members opposite is not going to go down with the people outside. The whole of their criticism is directed towards discrediting the Government. During the last nine years the Government have made three appeals to the people, and on every occasion they have been returned with increased majorities. The newspaper in further describing this function of "Mrs. Squatter," states—

"Thousands of daffodils and tens of thousands of roses were employed in every conceivable way as decorations. Lights were set in the heart of pink silk roses, and chains of floral lights and rosy lanterns stretched across every foot of the grounds. The supper tables were a feast of beauty, with their tall crystal candlesticks, pink shades, and hosts of daffodils. A French cap, an expensive souvenir, and balloons to match the colour scheme were set before each guest."

Mr. FARRELL: Was that Mrs. Whittingham's evening?

Hon. J. G. APPEL: What about some of your own ladies who were also giving functions?

Mr. RIORDAN: It is a matter of concern to the hon. member that since this working-class Government came into power the wives of the workers have got a little pleasure and comfort.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Why not?

Mr. RIORDAN: We have only to remember their attitude towards them in 1912, when they were fighting for better conditions from the American Tramway Trust.

Hon. J. G. APPEL: Remember what your Government did to the strikers in Townsville.

Mr. RIORDAN: The hon. gentleman cannot make any such charge against this Government, and the workers outside will not swallow it. The newspaper goes on—

"The champagne supper was served by a staff from Rowe's and the National Hotel.

"The whole of the verandahs were draped with flags, and all the mantle-pieces and every available place in the interior was decked with masses of lovely blooms which perfumed the night air.

"To match her artistic home with its rose decking, the hostess wore, etc.

"The narrow French streamers thrown at supper-time were most effective. A huge crowd stood outside the grounds and watched the guests arrive and looked at the beautiful scene, while the strains of the band served many for an impromptu jazz.

"There were over 300 guests, and the frocking was most extravagant."

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This shows that the frocking was not the frocking of the old squatter days—of the old mole-skin trousers, flannel shirt, and turkey red dress. The frocks were probably imported from France, or some other foreign country. After "Mrs. Squatter" had given her evening, it was up to our old friend, the bushman, to return the compliment. He arranged for the decoration of the lounge and ballroom at Lennon's Hotel, showing that the bushman since the present Government have been in power can hold his own with "Mrs. Squatter." I take it, though, that the type of bushman at Lennon's Hotel was not the type of bushman one would meet in the Gulf, or out West.

Mr. FARRELL: Or on the railway construction works.

Mr. RIORDAN: The dear fellows, after nine years of Labour administration, were in a position to give a most extravagant turn-out and almost to outdo "Mrs. Squatter" in entertaining. Really, thirty of our dear old bushmen entertained over 300 guests in Lennon's Hotel, and the Sunday paper has this to say about it—

"The Countrymen's Association (most of the station men of Western Queensland staying at Lennon's) gave the most original dinner party of Exhibition week last night. The eastern lounge of Lennon's was reserved for the function, and the decorations included every symbol of country life, from aeroplanes to horses and sheep. The tables were set in a forest of gum trees and the lighting was specially done by the Wintergarden Theatre, and before each guest was a sheep, cow, horse, or farmer's wagon (several of the symbols were babies' cradles placed before the girls whose engagements were recently announced). (Laughter.)

"Speeches were wild and woolly, and May Dobbyn's band played all the selections country people loved. After the dinner the guests danced among the tables, wearing all manner of fancy caps. Mrs. Squatter's party wore quaint Chanticleer caps imported from Paris. Neville Lyons declared the last part of the Exhibition revels easily eclipsed all the others. Their guests were the prettiest women in Brisbane."

I suppose they cannot cavil at that last statement. (Laughter.)

At 12.22 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. RIORDAN: If that is an illustration of the ruination brought about by this Government, then I say let us have more of it. We realise that the cattlemen have had a bad time, also that the Government have met them on every conceivable occasion and have given them more than a fair deal. To realise that desire hon. members opposite have tried by their speeches to raise the tears of the people concerning the ruination of the squatters outside. The ex-leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for Windsor, said when speaking yesterday—

"The Premier's Budget Speech was full of dolefulness; more so than anything he has seen delivered to the House."

Apparently during the last nine years that very hon. gentleman and his party have been responsible for the position with which we are faced to-day. They have done

nothing but decry the State and use the type of propaganda that we heard used during the Address in Reply and on the Financial Statement. When the opportunity occurred, their disloyalty allowed them to go so far as to arrange a delegation to visit the other side of the world in 1920, with the purpose of destroying the credit of this State and of forcing the State to pay a higher rate for any money required. How far they were successful in their mission is known to the people of Queensland. In 1920, owing to that delegation, the Government were cut off from the London money market. When that party found that the Government were in a position to get money elsewhere and that their poisonous propaganda was of no avail, they set out in an attempt to bribe and corrupt hon. members on this side. We all remember how, after that delegation and after we had secured money from America, how the friends of hon. members opposite set about with their boodle to bribe and corrupt hon. members of the Government. They did this because the Government had a majority of one only. The people of Queensland now know how successful they were. One member of this party did go across the floor and throw in his lot with "boodle." The other—

Mr. DEACON: I rise to a point of order. I understand the hon. member to insinuate that hon. members on this side of the Chamber tried to bribe hon. members of the Government. I do not think the hon. member is in order in making that statement.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sorry that I did not hear the remark. Did the hon. member for Burke make that remark?

Mr. RIORDAN: I did not insinuate at all. I said that friends of hon. members opposite endeavoured to bribe and corrupt hon. members of this party. That is well known. As a result there was a prosecution and conviction in 1922.

I remember quite distinctly that, when I came into this House in 1918, the Government were controlling the State Savings Bank. Friends of hon. members opposite and some of those hon. members themselves were connected with the run caused on the bank in that year. Their propaganda throughout has been a deliberate attempt to bring about by the weight of wealth the destruction of the prosperity of the people of Queensland.

The people of Queensland have decided on three occasions by overwhelming majorities in favour of this Government, and this Government will carry on despite the cries of the Opposition. To-day hon. members opposite are bewailing the financial position, and one wonders how the State, in the face of all this propaganda and the bad advertisement of the Opposition, is in the solvent state in which we now find it.

Queensland has not been forced into the position of having to make the financial cuts that have been made in other States. This year Queensland is spending the same amount as was spent last year—over £14,000,000. That is not so in New South Wales and the other States. We find ourselves in a better position than those States, despite the fact that hon. members opposite say that there are thousands and thousands of unemployed men in Queensland. There are only 4,000 unemployed registered to-day,

and 780 of those are registered as from New South Wales. In Sydney there are from 5,000 to 10,000 unemployed.

I shall now take the position of the late Nationalist Government in Western Australia. Before they went to the country that Government was so financially bankrupt that they had to arrange for a temporary loan from New South Wales to defray election costs and to pay the public servants for the year. When Mr. Collier went into office he found that the Nationalist Government had arranged to borrow £500,000 in the endeavour to tide over the trying times in which they found themselves. We have only to view the results of recent elections to give an illustration of the popularity of Labour Governments throughout the world. New South Wales is practically the only black spot left on the map of Australia. Once an appeal to the people is made in that State I think we shall have a complete "White Australia," so far as the States are concerned. Mr. Bruce and his Federal family are continually wrangling amongst themselves and holding conferences, but they cannot fool the people much longer, and are practically at the end of their tether. As soon as the people get an opportunity to deal with the Bruce-Page alliance, I predict that we shall have a Labour Government in power in the Commonwealth.

Regarding unemployment and the claims made by hon. members opposite in this connection, one remembers that, when the Secretary for Public Works, on the introduction of the Unemployed Workers [12.30 p.m.] Insurance Bill, outlined the unemployment insurance scheme, our friends opposite, on the suggestion of "old Granny Courier," labelled the Bill "The Loafers' Paradise Bill." A nice way to refer to the workers! The men who follow seasonal industries in Queensland are practically the best workers in the world. They are willing to work, but cannot get work in Queensland at certain periods of the year on account of the seasonal occupations. The men employed in the sugar industry can come along and knock out at the most a couple of pounds a day during the season, which is a very short one, and some provision should be made by industry to tide these men over the slack period. Take the meat industry. The meat works only operate for a few months in the year, and then the worker in that industry is thrown on to the street, no more use to the boodler—no more use for exploitation—and he is left with a few pounds in his pocket that he may have got during the two or three months' run in the meatworks. This Government made an honest attempt to make some provision to help the worker over this period of slackness. The Unemployed Workers Insurance Act is one of the most effective pieces of legislation passed by any Parliament in the world, and the working of it up to date has been most satisfactory. Better conditions prevail in this country in regard to unemployment than in any other country in the world. We do make some provision to assist the man who wants to work but who cannot get it during a slack period. It is the function of the Government to look after these workers, and not to allow any company like the Colonial Sugar Refinery, the American Meat Export, or the Queensland Meat Export to exploit them for two or three months in the year, and make no provision towards their upkeep

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during the period when they cannot get work. Something might be done in the way of increasing the payments from the fund to unemployed workers in certain districts. Take my own district, for instance: A man employed in the shearing industry cannot get accommodation from the sum at present granted from the fund, and the Government should increase the payments from the fund to give the unemployed worker an opportunity to get a roof over his head during the slack period. It is all very well to say that 15s. a week will see a man through, but 15s. a week does not go too far nowadays. It never did go too far, but it does not go as far to-day as it did in the past. The scheme has been in operation only twelve months, and I think the Unemployment Insurance Committee have done very well, but I would like to see them give consideration to the provision to establish colonies or settlements for the unemployed. That is to say, provide them with land where they will have a reasonable opportunity of getting off the labour market and hitting out for themselves. The Empire Parliamentary Committee considered many schemes for development and migration. Amongst them was one for taking whole families out to certain dominions and establishing them in village colonies. The men were to be sent out first to clear the land under expert advisers, for which purpose important labour-saving devices were to be provided. When the crops had been sown, and the houses, schools, and other buildings erected, the women and children were to be sent out. To meet the cost of this, loans at a low rate of interest were to be negotiated by the respective Governments, the repayments of which, with interest, were to be made by the migrants, spread over a period of twenty-five or thirty years. This scheme should be put into operation by the Government or by the Unemployment Council for our own unemployed. That council might make arrangements with the British Government to raise a million of money to put into the Unemployment Insurance Fund, and, after we had prepared farms and got our own people into industry and producing, then they could make arrangements to take some of the surplus labour that the British people are faced with to-day. Although our friends opposite want to claim that Queensland is the only State that has unemployment, we know that unemployment is rampant all over the world. I must congratulate the Government on the efforts they have made in regard to relieving unemployment, and during my travels from one end of the State to the other I have heard expressions of satisfaction from the workers with the assistance given during the slack period.

Another matter that hon. members opposite refrain from mentioning is the workers' compensation paid by the State Insurance Office. We know that great progress has been made since the Government came into power in regard to the claims paid under the Workers' Compensation Act, but it is foolish for us to sit down and rest on our oars. Workers' compensation will stand development, and an endeavour should be made to get those who are totally or partially incapacitated back into industry. The State Insurance Office should adopt some scheme to get these men into a calling for which they are adapted. Many permanently and temporarily incapacitated men could be use-

fully employed in the different industries if they had an opportunity of being trained in those industries, and it is the function of the State Insurance Office to get the injured workers back into a profitable calling as early as possible. If they do this, then these men will be better citizens to the State and better to themselves and their families. Our workers' compensation is one of the best in the world, and there have been very few complaints in regard to it. The employer does not have to pay the money to the injured worker. The injured worker makes his claim on the Insurance Commissioner, with the result that we have had very little litigation in regard to claims. The Insurance Commissioner deals with every claim on its merits, and most sympathetic consideration has been given to the injured workers. Workers' compensation in other countries under private enterprise is not at all satisfactory, and the payments are not nearly as liberal as the payments in Queensland. The "International Labour Review," in an article dealing with workers' compensation, says—

"The total number of cases under the Workmen's Compensation Acts taken into court in Great Britain in 1922 was 5,345. Many of these, however, were applications for dealing with allowances already granted, and many were settled out of court or otherwise disposed of, so that the total number of original claims for compensation finally settled with the cognisance of the courts was only 3,042, which represents less than 1 per cent. of all cases compensated occurring during the year. There were 25,580 cases in which memoranda of agreements and informal arbitrations were registered in the courts.

"These cases were only 6 per cent. of all cases compensated. Thus it appears that the great majority of compensation cases are not subject to judicial supervision.

"The total number of cases under the Employers' Liability Act, 1880, taken into court in the whole of Great Britain was thirty-five. The figures have steadily diminished since 1907, when the number of cases was 583, and clearly show that the remedy provided by the older Act has been falling into disuse since the Act of 1906 came into full operation. The average amount of damages awarded in fatal cases was £229 and the average amount in disablement cases was £59, as against £220 and £15 5s. respectively under the Workmen's Compensation Acts."

From that it appears that in fatal cases the average amount paid was £229, and in disablement cases £59; but it is quite different in Queensland. Under our Labour Government some provision is made to enable the dependants of a worker who has been fatally injured to start in business or to carry on in some other way by giving £600 at death and £750 to totally injured workers.

Another matter which is causing great concern to the people of Australia is the enormous growth of the public service. People in the country are wondering where this expenditure is going to stop. There was an article in "Truth" last Sunday, which showed the growth of the public service in the Australian States from 1900 to 1922. In 1900 the number of employees in

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the public service was 89,831 and the salaries paid £11,735,815. The number of employees in 1922 was 246,818, and the salaries paid £58,474,292. Then the figures for the Commonwealth service were given—

“Commonwealth employees do not include Commonwealth Bank or Commonwealth shipping line, but include railways, defence, and employees at Cockatoo dock yard—

“In 1917-18 the figures were—  
 Government employees ... 236,092  
 Salaries ... .. £33,072,411

The question arises as to whether the taxpayers of Australia can carry such an enormous service. Are we getting the best results from this service? Our primary and secondary industries might well be extended. We have our young people either growing up to be public servants or “wood and water joes,” through our failure to extend our secondary industries. We have here one of the greatest industries in the world—the woollen industry—and there are practically no woollen mills operating. We are sending our wool to the other side of the world to be manufactured into cloth, and then sent back here to be sold to us at double and treble what it should cost us.

I notice also that the Irrigation Department is making efforts this year to bring about a more satisfactory distribution of water. Matters with regard to water, bores, etc., had really been in the hands of the squatters up to the advent of this Government and the establishment of the Irrigation Department. The Irrigation Commissioner has found it very difficult on some occasions to get sufficient water from flowing bores to water the land of selectors who take up country resumed from the squatters. In the matter of subartesian bores, no matter how much water may be there, there is no authority under the present Act in connection with non-flowing bores to see that the selector gets a reasonable supply from the squatters.

I think that the Department of Public Instruction and the Department of Public Works have been very generous in regard to schools so far as the country districts are concerned. Right from one end of the State to the other we can see new schools being erected and teachers provided. Where there are not sufficient State schools provisional schools are provided until the time arrives when the erection of a State school is justified. No difficulty has been experienced by people in the country districts in that regard, and no one appreciates the action of the Government more than the people living in those districts.

The hon. member for Bulimba referred to the treatment of meat and to the position of the workers engaged in the meat industry. A great deal has been said regarding the meat worker and his attitude to the meat companies. During the war period, when the British Government guaranteed to the meat companies any loss on meat sent from their works, the companies were prepared to carry on under any conditions; but immediately the guarantee was taken off they set out to fight the workers in connection with a reduction of their wages. The workers submitted to a reduction, but further disputes arose, forced on by the boss, and appeals were made to the Arbitration Court for the deregistration of unions. There are always two sides to a case. Some of the gentlemen in control of meat-

works in Queensland might very well be dealt with by their companies instead of the line of fire being always in the direction of the worker. The workers tried to meet the companies when the slump occurred in the industry, but the companies have never given an increase to the workers without an appeal to the Arbitration Court. The only time the companies voluntarily appeal to the Arbitration Court is for the deregistration of a union.

In conclusion, I hope that before the year passes away the State will be faced with a brighter outlook, that the exchange position will have righted itself, and that it will not be difficult for the Government to get money out from England to put into operation their progressive policy. Those who think, and whose mission is not to try and mislead the public outside, know that the Government have started works which are of a progressive nature. We have only to take the Dawson Valley irrigation scheme and the development in Bowen district as an illustration of that. Since the advent of this Government greater progress has been made throughout Queensland than was made during the whole half century in which the party represented by the Opposition sat on the Treasury benches.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): It is very difficult to criticise the Financial Statement, because we do not know whether before the end of the year it is going to be this Statement which will govern the financial position or whether there will be a new arrangement. We know from statements made in the Chamber by the Premier—and from statements made by a gentleman who would be the Premier—that there is a great difference of opinion as to whether the Government's policy is the right one. From present indications it is evident that the Government have come to the conclusion that their policy in the past has been a failure; they have come to a dead-end. Will the hon. member for Burke deny that the effect of the Treasurer's Statement is that Labour has come to a dead-end? (Government dissent.) I take it that the Treasurer knows more about it than hon. members behind him. There is the difference between the two sections.

The TREASURER: You are misleading.

Mr. DEACON: Before I finish the Treasurer will see that I am not misleading. One party is frightened of going on with expenditure. They desire economy and careful management and borrowing as little as they possibly can. The other party are afraid of nothing. I sympathise with the Treasurer and the members of the Ministry in their difficulty in getting sufficient money to carry on. Some of their followers will not be satisfied. Those hon. members seem to live in Dreamland or in Wishland, and remind me of the old rhyme—

“I wish the rivers were full of milk,

I wish the lakes were iced spongo cakes;

I wish the seas were bread and cheese.

I wish roast beef would grow on trees.”

(Laughter.) They are all the time wishing.

With reference to the Unemployment Insurance Fund, it seems to me that the Government have not kept their promise. It was understood that the employers had to contribute one-third, the workers another third, and the Government another third;

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but, if you will look at the actual amount subscribed by the Government, you will find that it is £10,900 short of their quota.

The TREASURER interjected.

Mr. DEACON: That is shown by the report of the Secretary for Public Works. He does not give the Treasurer credit for having paid an equal share with the employers and employees. Then, again, the hon. member for Burke, who spoke just before me, said that never before was there so much difference between the different classes of the people; never before were there so many poor ones and so very many wealthy ones. He spoke about the waste of money by the wealthy class; but the waste of money is not confined to the very wealthy people; it affects other classes. Look at the shearers and many other working men and see how they throw their money about. They work hard for a few weeks and then throw away in a day all they make. That goes on all over Queensland, and it is not only the wealthy who waste their money and desire to make a big show. They are just as bad in their method of spending money as some of the wealthy—and there are wealthy men on that side of the Chamber, some very wealthy men—and some of the very wealthiest men outside are backing them up.

There is one respect in which I do not agree with the Treasurer, and that is in raising his money. He proposes to impose new taxation. First of all, there is the cheque tax. That will come mostly from the country districts. The people in the country districts pay a large number of very small amounts. They do not keep much cash, but pay their debts by cheque. Most of that new taxation will be paid by country people. They cannot pass it on, but in the city the business people will be able to pass it all on. Then take the increase in railway freights and fares. The Government expect to get a fair amount from that. The business people will again be able to put their extra freights on to the market price.

It is not so much bad management on our railways as the conditions imposed by industrial awards that have caused the Government to increase the freights and fares. The

Railway Department has some [2 p.m.] difficulties in making the railways pay. A train is run to Pittsworth on Saturday, arriving there on Saturday morning and leaving Saturday afternoon. Immediately after its arrival at Pittsworth it has to return to Toowoomba to take the driver, fireman, and guard back to their homes. Practically speaking, the department has to run a special train to bring the three men back to Toowoomba, and in doing so they cut the Pittsworth district out of a Monday morning train. I went to the Railway Department about the matter, and I was informed that it was cheaper for them to run a special train than leave the train at Pittsworth until Monday morning, because under the award they would have to pay the employees on the train at overtime rates the whole of the time they were away from home. The department could easily pay the board of these men, and still be in pocket, and at the same time supply a convenience to the residents by running a Monday morning train. The amount of board to be paid is not the trouble. It is the overtime rate to be paid when work is not done. The men would not work on Saturday night or Sunday, but

they would have to be paid overtime simply because they were away from home. There are cases like that in different parts of the State which put the Railway Department to a great deal of expense, and there is no sense in it. The men themselves would not object to being away from home for a Saturday night, provided their board was paid; but the unions go to the Court and claim payment for all these little points, which makes the working position very unsatisfactory. All this adds a burden to country residents, and on several branch lines the service is very unsatisfactory. In fact, the service is unsatisfactory on almost every branch line, simply because the department has to take into account the extra amount to be paid when the men are away from home. Several times I have heard the Minister say that he believed in constructing railways to develop the country, the expenditure incurred therein to be borne by general taxation. That is a sound proposition, because, after all, the money comes out of the pockets of the people, and it does not matter so much, provided the country is being developed, whether the expense is borne by taxation applicable to everybody, or whether it is borne by the producer. We should levy on the whole of the people to raise revenue to develop the country. The Government propose to revert to the system of raising freights and fares. It is proposed roughly to raise something like £900,000. Whether it be an increase in natural growth, the fact remains that there is to be an additional £900,000.

The TREASURER: The hon. gentleman's figures are a bit weak.

Mr. DEACON: The only benefit the country gets from it is about £100,000 to be spent on the eradication of prickly-pear, about £30,000 in works carried out by the Department of Public Works, and £130,000 in remission of rents for prickly-pear and cattle holdings. The remission in rent is not altogether relief, because the Government could not get any more rent from that country than they have now fixed. The country will only receive about £260,000 from the increase in revenue, which will probably amount to £900,000. That is not a fair proportion of expenditure. We are having more and more money spent every year in the city. If any new works are commenced or new schools erected, it is the city that receives the benefit while the country stands still. So long as that state of affairs continues no real prosperity can be expected. We have been living up to the present on loan money and have not been developing the country in the manner we should. The Government could have taxed four big classes in order to bring in increased revenue, if it was required. They are the big publicans, the big drapers, the big speculators, and the big sheep men. All those classes, because of the high prices ruling, are sharing in the present prosperity. There is only one of those classes that the Government propose to tax by increased railway rates, and that is the wool industry. It would be equitable if the Government had increased the income tax a little, because the whole burden would have been spread over the whole of those classes. The Government, however, under their proposal to increase the railway rates, are unduly placing a high tax on the country. While anticipating increased receipts from the railways the Government have given no indication that

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they are going to provide increased facilities for loading by the construction of sidings at country railway stations. These facilities would save time and money to the producer and give him more time to work on his farm. It would mean increased production and an increase in revenue to the Government. The Railway Department is not able to satisfy the demands upon it for increased facilities at country stations. The department would have its revenue very much increased if it had the money to expend in providing such urgent facilities. The Government are going to take a lot more money from the taxpayers, and I hope that they will give some attention to this important matter. I heard the hon. member for Ipswich and other hon. members say what they would do when they got the control of the financial institutions. One hon. member said that they would then lend money out at the rate of 2 per cent. or 3 per cent. Their friends in Russia grabbed the whole lot and could not solve the problem, because they are now going round the world seeking backing for loans to pay their debts.

Mr. HARTLEY: Who did that?

Mr. DEACON: Some of your friends in Russia. We all know very well that the money at the disposal of the banks is borrowed by those banks and they have to pay for it. If you lend that money out at 2 per cent. or 3 per cent., after paying the expenses of the bank, you could not pay the original interest on that money. It is no use a man lending out money unless he can get a satisfactory return. It is useless to talk of lending money at 1 per cent., 2 per cent., or 3 per cent. The Government have control of the banks to a certain extent: they control the savings banks, and they cannot lend money out at less than 5 per cent.

Mr. MORGAN: They can spend money on ventures that do not return 1 per cent.

Mr. DEACON: Therefore, they control finance to a certain extent, though not in a direction that is helping the country. They have been borrowing money very freely and paying 6 per cent. for it. The position regarding the banks is that in 1919 the banks held the people's money to the extent of £36,782,000, of which amount they had invested in Government securities £1,418,156. With the exception of that amount the money was available for general purposes.

In 1923 the banks held the people's money to the extent of £59,360,800, and the amount invested in Government securities was £18,549,043.

That gives the reason for the tightness of money at present. Every country district is suffering from tightness of money. Government securities at 6 per cent. are too attractive for the investor, and so the man in the country cannot get any money. The banks are controlled to such an extent that the tightness of money is stopping the development of the country.

Mr. HARTLEY: You mean the banks are stopping the development of the country.

Mr. DEACON: I mean the Government. Hon. members overlook the fact that I pointed out that the surplus money was invested in Government securities. During the last four years an enormous amount has gone into Government securities. The Government have had to appeal to the banks to lend them this

money: they have practically forced them to subscribe to the Government loans.

Mr. BULLOCK: That applies to the Commonwealth loans.

Mr. DEACON: It applies to State loans, too. Why, even in my time, we had a Bill brought into this Chamber threatening that if a Government loan were not subscribed, it would be enforced. There was a compulsory provision in that measure, and we heard it defended by every hon. member on the other side. They see now what they have done. The Treasurer and the Secretary for Public Lands pointed out that if they did as some of their supporters wanted them to do and increased the basic wage, they would have to take it out of the pockets of other working men, and give it to the working men who are supporting the Government. The public generally are in such a position that they find it difficult to borrow money to carry on their operations. That position has been brought about because of the amount of money the Government have borrowed in Queensland.

The Government imposed on public servants purely a class tax, just the same as the land tax is a class tax. They picked out a particular class of public servants and imposed on them a tax of 5 per cent., which is not paid by any other class except the landholders.

Mr. COLLINS: Less than 1,000 people pay land tax.

Mr. DEACON: It does not matter who pays it, it is purely a class tax. Because they pay that tax they are not relieved from the payment of other taxes. They still have to pay their income tax, and they still have to pay every other tax imposed by the Government and this 5 per cent. in addition. The public servants can see now the injustice of a class tax. It is unjust to single out any particular class in the community and put on a tax which is more than their share, and which is in addition to their other taxes.

Mr. HARTLEY: You mean Sir Sydney Kidman.

Mr. DEACON: The hon. member knows very well whom I mean.

Mr. HARTLEY: I would like to pay that £135,000 that Kidman has to pay; I would not growl.

Mr. DEACON: I was hoping that this session we would have some consideration given to the land tax. It is absolutely unfair to pick out any class of people and make them pay a special tax. The land tax is a tax on a man's capital. If he borrows capital he has still to pay on that. A man may nominally own £3,000 worth of land. He may have a mortgage on that of £1,500, but he is taxed on the full amount. No exemption beyond the £300 applies to him.

Mr. DUNSTAN: Why does he not take up a leasehold?

Mr. DEACON: It is almost impossible to take up a leasehold. If a man has his money invested in freehold—if he invested it before this Government came into power—what is he to do with it? Throw it up?

Mr. HARTLEY: No; he can convert into leasehold.

Mr. DEACON: Let us take some cases that were converted. For instance, on a

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repurchased estate, they would allow a selector to convert it into leasehold in fifteen years at 5 per cent.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER:  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

Mr. DEACON: If the hon. member thinks it is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., he is mistaken. It is 5 per cent. on a repurchased estate.

The TREASURER: As a matter of fact, where a man pays 5 per cent. it is on a new valuation and not on the original price.

Mr. DEACON: The Treasurer is quite wrong. Only the other day I approached the Secretary for Public Lands with a deputation asking that Maryvale should be re-valued at the end of fifteen years, starting from the time it was first taken up. It has not yet been decided whether that can be done.

Mr. DUNSTAN: Did you ask for conversion?

Mr. DEACON: I asked to have a revaluation made.

Mr. DUNSTAN: With a view to conversion?

Mr. DEACON: No, it has been converted. All the money they have paid in from the beginning was to be taken into account in determining their rents, but it was 5 per cent. on their original capital, and they asked that the first period of fifteen years should start from the date of selection. It has not yet been decided by the Department of Public Lands whether that can legally be done.

Mr. HARTLEY: That does not apply to an ordinary freehold selection. You can convert that into leasehold if you want.

Mr. DEACON: In connection with a perpetual lease selection, the rental of which is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the capital value, it is only the first holder who gets the benefit. When he comes to resell—

Mr. BULCOCK: Why should he sell?

Mr. DEACON: Because he has a good thing on in selling. A long lease with a low rental of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on a small capital value is a good thing on the market. A number of those perpetual leaseholders realise that they can get an enhanced value.

The TREASURER: I thought members on your side said that it was not a good security because you could not get an advance on it?

Mr. DEACON: It is not good security to borrow on.

The TREASURER: It was said to be a worthless security.

Mr. DEACON: So far as the ordinary banks are concerned, it is a worthless security. It is a good thing to sell the lease. It does not matter about getting security, you can simply sell your lease. That is the case with some perpetual lease selections. People simply take them up with a view to holding them for five years without bothering about improvements, and then sell them. It is just the same in connection with grazing leases. If you take up a grazing lease for a long period at a low rental, it is worth something on the market. The man who gets the benefit is the original selector. I suppose the Government have found that out in connection with perpetual leaseholds.

Mr. COLLINS: What is your remedy?

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Mr. DEACON: To make it freehold. A man is more likely to develop a freehold and make it productive.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. DUNSTAN: It is pure fallacy.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. DEACON: I got away from the question. At a rental of 5 per cent., if a man has to pay the original value in twenty years, he would have no further advantage than he had when he started. Some landholders who took up land under freehold tenure have engaged to pay the Government the full value of the land, but as soon as they get it paid the Government start to take it all back again by the land tax. If the Government members, instead of simply fighting amongst themselves about their little differences of policy, would only work together, things might be different. I do not think the Ministers have been so much to blame. I realise that in many cases they have had things forced upon them by their supporters. They must have felt many a time that, if they had been allowed to use their own judgment and had their own way, if they had not been forced along by a majority in the caucus to do things they did not really wish to do, their position and the position of the country would have been much better than it is. I do not hope that anything will come out of the present split in the Government ranks. I do not hope that there will be any improvement so far as the Government policy is concerned, because I can see that the members who are against the policy of the Ministry have the biggest backing outside. I do not think any good will come of the present endeavour of Ministers to straighten things out and put things on a sounder footing. I believe that they are endeavouring to straighten things out, but with the position as it is, I am quite sure that it will end in nothing.

The hon. member for Ipswich referred to the price of cattle and the position of the State stations. We all know that there has been a waste of money in connection with the stations, but it did seem extraordinary to hear the hon. member say that because some bullocks brought £9 and some £7 per head, the average value of the cattle on the State stations was anything like that figure. It must be remembered that we bought some of the stations at so much per head of stock, including cows, calves, and everything, and that the average price we paid was more than the present price of a fat bullock. It is absurd to say that, because a fat bullock brought something like £7, that is the average value of the cattle appearing on the books. It must be borne in mind, too, that the average annual turn-off is only one in seven.

Mr. BULCOCK: How does the hon. gentleman expect the State stations to be in a good position when other cattle stations are in a bad way?

Mr. DEACON: Does the hon. gentleman admit that the State stations are in a bad way? Hon. members opposite contend that they are in a satisfactory position.

Mr. BULCOCK: The cattle industry is in a bad way.

Mr. DEACON: Everybody knows that the cattle industry is in a bad way, and the



State stations are in the same bad way as all other cattle ventures; but why not say so?

Mr. BULCOCK: The State stations are not in a worse position.

Mr. DEACON: The Government have attempted to prove that they are in a satisfactory condition by creating fictitious book values. The cattle have not [2.30 p.m.] been taken at their market value, as should have been the case. The country is not told the true financial position of the State stations, yet we have hon. members opposite saying that they are worth the value as disclosed in the books. It would be much better at the earliest possible opportunity to get rid of all the State stations and put the country to the use that it is intended for—the settling of people. The State stations are of no benefit to the country, and it is of no benefit to the country to have large areas locked up even if you call them State stations. They have not assisted in any way to cheapen the price of meat, and no sensible man could argue that the holding of a large number of cattle will reduce the price of meat. We should look back on the past and realise that the average price for meat in Brisbane to-day is 7d. per lb. Hon. members opposite have argued that the existence of State butcher shops has caused the reduction in the price of meat, but that is a false idea to entertain. Only the other day the Premier of Victoria, in addressing the housewives of that State, said that the Government were in sympathy with them in connection with the high price of meat, and he pointed out that in Queensland in consequence of the establishment of State stations and State butcher shops the highest price that was being charged for meat in Queensland was 3½d. per lb. We all know that the highest price in Brisbane to-day is 1s. per lb., and the average price is 7d. per lb. The fact that the State is holding stations and breeding cattle does not make the slightest difference in the price of meat to the consumer.

Mr. HARTLEY: Does the hon. gentleman think the State butcher shops should be closed?

Mr. DEACON: Of course they should be closed. What use are they? We are not making any money out of them. We are not helping the worker or any one else to get cheap meat by keeping them.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: On the same argument we should close the Department of Agriculture, because we are not getting anything out of it.

Mr. DEACON: The Department of Agriculture is rendering great assistance, but the State butcher shops are helping nobody. It is not cheapening the price of meat and has never done so.

Mr. BULCOCK: Meat would be dearer if the shops were not in existence.

Mr. MORGAN: Why did the Price Fixer refuse to fix the price of meat in Brisbane?

Mr. HARTLEY: He did not want to hit the cattle owners too hard.

Mr. DEACON: I am not talking about the cattle owner. Hon. members opposite claim that they look after the interests of the worker. In the old Tory days before this Government came into power meat was cheaper than it is to-day and cattle were

dearer. The producer got more for his cattle and the worker got cheaper beef. That was the case all over Queensland.

Mr. MORGAN: The middleman is making the profit now.

Mr. DEACON: To-day the worker is paying more for his beef, while the grower is getting less for his cattle, and the difference between the price paid by the consumer and the price received by the producer is greater than it has ever been before.

Mr. HARTLEY: You are wrong.

Mr. DEACON: I am not wrong. We have seen the time under a Tory Government when meat was sold at 3d. per lb., but it has never been sold at that price since Labour has been in office.

Mr. MORGAN: And cattle were never so cheap as now.

Mr. DEACON: The waste of public money is not only confined to State stations and State butcher shops. The time has arrived when we should take stock of all State enterprises and cut the loss.

Mr. COLLINS: Do you include the railways?

Mr. DEACON: I said the time has arrived when we should take stock of all State enterprises and cut the loss of those which are unprofitable and are not helping the State in any way. I do not say for one moment that we should discontinue public utilities. If State enterprises are a public utility they should be kept going; but when they are neither one thing or another, and instead of helping anybody are placing an additional burden on the State, besides employing a lot of men who cannot earn their wages in them, it is better to wind them up. The Government should have left the mining industry of North Queensland to private owners. If, instead of engaging in the Chillagoe and other State mines, they had given opportunities to the miners to work those mines, and crush the ore, it would have been much better, not only for the miners but for the State.

We have had about nine years of long endeavour by this Government to improve the position of the worker. My experience among working men has taught me that their ambition, or at least the ambition of every worker who is worth anything, is to be independent, to be his own boss, and to set himself up in his own little business. The Government have not in any way attempted to help him to achieve that ideal. It has been their attempt to keep him on the level of a wage-earner. The working man under previous Administrations always had a chance to own his own business, and we would assist him to do so by co-operation. We know what co-operation has done for the farmers. It has enabled them to secure the ownership of various businesses and to save money. None of them has been a burden on the State. If we could do the same for the working men in this State, it would be much better, not only for them but for the welfare of the whole community.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I have listened to many speeches from hon. members of the Opposition in the hope that I would learn something in regard to what they would do in the event of their occupying the Treasury benches. I have waited since the debate commenced to try to get some indication in that direction. In my opinion, it would be the greatest calamity that could happen to

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Queensland if they were to become the Government, inasmuch as so far their criticism has been of a destructive and not of a constructive character. Years ago, when we were in Opposition, we used to deliver speeches that were of a destructive nature, but we also tried to deliver speeches that were of a constructive nature. I have followed the debate on the Financial Statement fairly closely, and I find that the one cry of hon. members opposite is against taxation. They claim that our industries will be ruined or that we shall stop the development of those industries. The leader of the Opposition said that money was being taken from the avenues of natural development. I do not know what the hon. member means by that. Then we had the hon. member for Warwick stating that we are strangling many of our industries. Later we had the hon. member for Toowoong crying out about taxation stopping the development of the country.

I claim that that is not so. We find that nothing we can do will satisfy the Opposition. When we had a deficit of £184,979 for 1922-1923 we were criticised and told we were not fit to manage any State. Now that we have a surplus of £12,707 for 1923-1924 we are still criticised, and it is said that we are an extravagant Government in the matter of expenditure.

Mr. VOWLES: How much did you get over your estimates?

Mr. COLLINS: So far as the attitude of the Opposition is concerned there is no hope in the future for mankind. While we might not have done all the things expected of us, the people have nothing to look forward to should the present Opposition get into power—which I do not anticipate.

Mr. MORGAN: Why did you want to supersede the Premier?

Mr. COLLINS: Some time ago, recognising that this debate was coming on, I wanted to get some information that I could use during the debate, and I wrote to the Registrar-General the following letter, dated 14th July, 1924:—

"I would be pleased if you would kindly supply me with the following information:—

1. The number of pastoralists and pastoral companies who have paid income tax since the inception of the Income Tax Act.

2. The total amount on which income tax was paid.

3. The amount of income tax and percentage to total income taxpayers.

4. The total wealth production or estimated wealth production in Queensland per year since the inception of the income tax.

"I would also be glad if you could let me have the different years separately.

"Trusting you will be able to supply me with the above information at your earliest."

On the 23rd July, 1924, I received the following reply:—

"In reply to your letter of the 14th instant asking for certain information in respect to Queensland statistics, I enclose herewith documents which give the particulars you require.

"I regret that I am unable to give you figures previous to 1907, as they are not available."

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These are the tables supplied—

PASTORALISTS.				
Year.	No. of Tax-payers.	Total Taxable Income	Tax.	Percentage of Total Tax paid other than that paid by Companies.
		£	£	
1902				
1903				
1904				
1905				
1906				
1907	1,371	2,148,347	59,528	46.21
1908	1,273	1,902,059	52,699	42.04
1909	1,603	2,477,879	69,046	48.25
1910	1,731	3,029,397	86,775	47.55
1911	1,459	2,315,922	65,076	38.98
1912	1,767	2,602,429	71,704	38.77
1913	2,152	3,716,218	105,648	44.81
1914	2,258	4,059,985	116,106	47.02
1915	1,826	2,828,662	157,457	44.34
1916	2,522	4,084,531	231,013	54.41
1917	3,193	5,663,948	329,147	56.73
1918	2,938	4,944,994	389,312	61.33
1918-19	2,513	3,640,830	452,534	51.23
1919-20	2,457	4,610,023	607,389	48.81
1920-21	2,058	3,951,371	368,610	35.37
1921-22	1,156	2,286,735	301,309	34.57

PASTORAL COMPANIES.				
Year.	No. of Tax-payers.	Total Taxable Income.	Tax.	Percentage of Total Tax paid by Companies.
		£	£	
1902				
1903				
1904	27	329,869	14,671	14.6
1905	28	487,612	21,300	21.29
1906	36	584,946	26,291	25.39
1907	39	931,053	43,331	33.85
1908	38	759,577	35,192	29.15
1909	44	975,086	49,339	33.28
1910	38	872,656	41,733	25.83
1911	41	817,829	39,828	23.97
1912	41	836,494	38,730	20.08
1913	57	940,369	45,272	21.47
1914	57	1,357,149	62,065	26.44
1915	51	1,021,890	68,855	18.87
1916	63	1,268,735	78,377	23.52
1917	61	1,600,146	96,274	26.09
1918	64	1,858,383	150,267	34.9
1918-19	70	1,530,502	207,644	26.07
1919-20	68	1,351,704	174,137	18.98
1920-21	70	1,453,384	227,207	25.93
1921-22	48	1,480,415	228,593	26.81

WEALTH PRODUCTION OF QUEENSLAND.

	£
1907	22,881,266
1908	22,825,356
1909	25,558,831
1910	29,413,098
1911	28,222,990
1912	36,285,138
1913	43,747,857
1914	44,268,876
1915	41,947,276
1916	43,225,954
1917	49,043,916
1918	48,691,699
1919	49,699,435
1920	62,311,588
1921	60,278,602
1922	60,201,865

There are many people who are under the impression that the pastoralists are not in the position that these tables show, but, according to the income tax returns, these people have always been on a good wicket.

Coming to the question of wealth production, which is linked up with the prosperity of the State, we find that according to these statistics the total wealth production for Queensland for 1915—the year this Government took office—was £41,947,276, and for the year 1922 the total wealth production was £60,201,865, or an increase of a little over £18,354,589.

Mr. MORGAN: An increase in value but not in quantity.

Mr. COLLINS: There was an increase in wealth production of a little over £18,000,000. That is the reply to the hon. member for Windsor, who in criticising the Government pointed out the increase in revenue. It would naturally follow that there would be an increase in revenue, because we find that in the year 1914-15 the population of the State was 676,707, and according to the latest figures available in the Treasurer's tables the population now is 811,168, or an increase since 1914-15 of 134,461. No one would imagine for one moment that the revenue of Queensland would remain stationary with such an increase in the population. No one would imagine for one moment that the requirements of the people would be less. The requirements of the people are continually increasing. While the wealth production has been increasing by leaps and bounds, unfortunately for the mass of the people the wealthy class in Queensland has also been increasing by leaps and bounds. I am one of those who believe what Sir Samuel Griffith said in 1888—that "the great social problem of the present age is not how to accumulate wealth but how to get a more equal distribution of it." That is what this Labour party has got to do. It has to bring about a more equal distribution of the wealth that is produced in this State of Queensland. That is not only a problem for Queensland, but it is a problem for the Commonwealth and for the whole of the civilised world. It may be that it will be a more difficult problem to solve than some of us think, but we are not going to bring it about by being in any way timid. Timidity leads nowhere. I remember saying in 1914, when the Federal Labour Government was in power, that "timidity marks the actions of all Labour Governments," and that is really what happens at times. We begin to get timid owing to the criticisms that come from the Opposition side, and owing to the fact that we become conservative through reading such newspapers as the "Daily Mail," the "Courier," and the "Telegraph"—papers which circulate widely throughout the State. While I read these papers very carefully from time to time, I am not influenced by the articles that appear in them.

I said a moment ago that the problem is the same as that which was pointed out by Sir Samuel Walker Griffith in 1888. I heard him myself use the words that I have just quoted. Queensland is a State which is teeming with wealth and natural resources, and I question if there are any other 811,000 people on the face of the earth who are producing such an enormous amount of wealth. But to bring about a more equal distribution of that wealth, to give the

masses of the people more of the wealth that they produce, should be the aim and object of this party, and, if we do not do that, we are failing in our duty. I am willing to admit that we have gone a long way on the road, but I am not one of those who are going to get into the doldrums because certain things have happened. We have had to climb many hills and overcome many obstacles in the past, and the work of statesmanship is to overcome all obstacles. That is what the Labour party has to do. What do we find the position in Queensland to-day? When we turn to the income tax returns for 1922-23 we see what the position is. This is a reply to the hon. member for Toowoong, who said that we are ruining these poor people—these poor income taxpayers! I am taking incomes from £1,500 upwards—

—	No.	Taxable Income.	Tax Paid.
		£	£
From £1,501 to £3,000	777	1,567,296	151,761
From £3,001 to £6,000	240	969,952	141,331

That is a small income—I suppose the hon. member for Nanango has an income similar to that. (Laughter). From £6,000 and upwards—poor fellows! Just fancy incomes of £6,000 and upwards! Still they are getting the sympathy of the Opposition. We find the position with regard to them to be—

—	No.	Taxable Income.	Tax Paid.
		£	£
From £6,000 and upwards	115	1,344,417	227,532
Total	1,132	3,881,665	520,624

Now let us take companies—

—	No.	Taxable Income.	Tax Paid.
		£	£
From £1,500 to £3,000	130	286,803	33,180
From £3,001 to £6,000	105	428,385	54,088
From £6,000 and upwards	180	5,037,096	732,389
Total	415	5,752,284	819,657

Those 1,132 persons and 415 companies have a combined income of £9,633,949; in other words, they take nearly one-sixth of the wealth production of the country. Let me read that again, so that it will get at the back of the minds of the Opposition—those companies and people took nearly one-sixth of all the wealth produced in Queensland. Well might Archbishop Duhig, as reported in the "Daily Standard" to-day, cry out about the social conditions of the world. That is one of the causes of the bad social conditions of the world—a state of society which allows 1,132 persons and 415 companies to take nearly one-sixth of all the wealth produced.

Then we are told that by increasing taxation upon these wealthy people we are going to retard development. Where are we going to get the money to carry on the government of the country if we are not going to take it from the people who are taking so much of the wealth which is produced by the masses of the people? How are we going to carry

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on the Department of Public Instruction—which is not a revenue-producing department—with its ever increasing demands? How are we going to carry on the Home Secretary's Department—which is an increasingly spending department and not a revenue-producing department—if we are not going to take it from those people who are taking so much of the wealth of the State? The fact that you take it from these very wealthy people and distribute it amongst the masses does not retard production. I do not mean that we should distribute it unless they earn it, because they earn the whole of it. What I mean is that you do not lessen production when you increase the standard of living of the masses of the people. In other words, such an increase leads to an increase in production. That is the reply to the false economics of the hon. member for Toowong and others who call themselves smart business men, but who, in my opinion, do not understand the ABC of business. The more you increase the standard of the masses the more you increase their earning capacity, which also means their spending capacity. It means general prosperity all round. All you have to do is to look round at the people since the advent of this Government to power. I remember coming to Brisbane as member for Burke in 1909, and noticing the shabby appearance of the people of Brisbane in their dress. I remember men and women working at very low rates of pay when I came to Brisbane under the good old Tory Government. Compare that position with the position to-day! My proposition is sound—that the more you increase the earning capacity the more you increase production; because the working class—who are the nation—will have better homes and more comforts. Go into the towns of Queensland where buildings are going up, and you will find that a better class of home is being built than was erected ten years ago. Go into the homes of the masses, and you will find more comforts than you used to see. Look at the people walking up and down your streets and attending your Exhibition. Mix amongst the crowd. Do you not find them better dressed and better in appearance—better in every way than they were in those good old starvation days of a Tory Government?

It is true that we have done something, but we cannot stand still. We have to forge ahead. But there is no need to be disheartened. All time is in front of us. We have only to get on with our reforms. The hon. member for Albert may remember the publication of the "Centennial Magazine"—an Australian production, published in 1889. In it appeared a remarkable article, of which I suggest that the hon. member for Enoggera might make a special study with a view to getting some sound economics at the back of his head. It says—

[3 p.m.]

"The first step, then, in any practical reform is to establish a real and living belief in, and acceptance of, the truth that the products of a man's labour, after defraying the cost of his maintenance during his labour, belong to himself. If only this step were gained, if we all really believed this truth, as we are getting to believe the laws of health, and as we all profess to believe in humanity and liberty, it would, I am convinced, have almost as much effect as was produced

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by the legislative abolition of slavery in the British Dominions. But a more important step is to reduce the rule into practice. Many schemes have, from time to time, been suggested in the nature of co-operation, having for their object the advancement of the condition of the labouring population. But, as they have generally not been founded on any definite and clearly apprehended law of natural justice, they have not brought about any practical result. I propose now, with some diffidence, to submit a mode by which the rule of right may be reduced into practice."

Further on the writer says—

"I admit, of course, that there are practical difficulties in putting this rule into operation. But this is not surprising, seeing that an extremely complex system of production has grown up for ages without any regard being paid to it. And I fear it may take a long time to work out the best practical application. But the sooner statesmen and political economists set themselves to the task, the sooner it is likely to be accomplished. And I am firmly convinced that in the adoption of this rule lies the only hope of averting a terrible social upheaval and revolution."

That was written by no revolutionary. That was written in the year 1889 by the late Sir Samuel Walker Griffith. Later on, we find that gentleman, after occupying the position of Chief Justice in the Commonwealth—

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. gentleman calls him a Tory now.

Mr. COLLINS: An idea is an idea, no matter where it emanates from. If it is a good one, seize on it; if it is a bad one, leave it alone. The hon. member for Toowong is surely not going to disown a man whom in years gone by he used to praise. The late Sir Samuel Walker Griffith, after he retired from the position of Chief Justice, wrote a very remarkable article which appeared in the "Daily Mail" of 1st November, 1919, and has some connection with the article which he wrote in 1889, and which I have just quoted. The latter article was written before some hon. members were born.

Mr. BRAND: I thought the hon. gentleman did not take any notice of the "Daily Mail."

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. COLLINS: I said that I did not take any notice of its leading articles, and so forth.

Mr. BRAND: The hon. gentleman did not.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member for Burrum to be careful to obey my call to order in future.

Mr. COLLINS: This is not the paper's idea. This is an idea expressed by a man who gave a good deal of thought to social problems—a great deal more thought than the hon. member for Burrum ever gave to it. This is a quotation from the article—

"THE SOCIAL PROBLEM.

"A FUNDAMENTAL ERROR.

"The solution.

"The first step to be taken in any scheme for ameliorating social conditions must be to inquire what is the basis on which the actions of the community are founded, and how far that basis tends to

what is desired. If it is radically and fundamentally wrong, there is no alternative but to abandon it, and choose and follow a right one.

"There is no room for doubt that, notwithstanding some palliatives, our system is founded on the basis of 'Master Rule.' If the foundation be unsound, we cannot be surprised if the structure raised upon it, whatever support it may have from antiquity, is unsound also.

"I am of opinion that the basis of mastery is absolutely wrong.

"This, then, is the task before us—to abandon the false basis of mastery and substitute that of fraternity. It is doubtless an arduous task to uproot the fundamental rules of mutual relation—so fundamental as to be always instinctive—and replace them by others radically different. Yet the difficulty must be faced.

"The question of mastery is essentially different from that of obedience to law or to lawful orders. The children of one family may be equal in one sense—that of having equal initial rights, but their capacities are various. So in a community.

"It must be assumed that in every community there is a certain amount of continuity, that in it established rules are followed, and certain rules of action are tacitly agreed to and treated as if they were part of the order of nature. This is indeed established by history and experience, although it is nowadays sometimes denied.

"In one sense this assumption may be said to be inconsistent with social equality, for the man who is required to obey is in one sense inferior to the man whom he obeys; but unless we accept the law of the jungle this is an essential condition of the fact of association. A bee or ant, born into the domain of bees or ants, would find rules existing. It would not occur to any one to dispute the absolute necessity of such rules or their consistency with perfect equality. There is indeed no alternative but anarchy or jungle law.

#### FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES.

"Some thirty years ago it occurred to me to try to express in the form of legislation certain propositions which appeared to me to be almost self-evident, and which would, if adopted, afford rules for guidance in the conduct of the industrial affairs of the State. My idea was that if these doctrines were so assimilated by the people that they acknowledged their truth and unconsciously believed them, they would form an unconscious basis of legislation, just as rules of right and wrong, rules of honour, rules of family relationship, are unconsciously accepted as part of the order of nature by many, though unfortunately not all, of the existing so-called civilised community. But I anticipated too much from the effect of the mere formulation of the rules; moreover, I had no opportunity in political life of giving effect to them, or even publicly advocating them.

"Yet it is manifest that some doctrines must be fundamental, and must be the foundation of any theory of government. These doctrines, however, touched only

a small fringe of the subject. I shall endeavour now to supplement them by other doctrines equally self-apparent and equally necessary for acceptance. To procure such acceptance is a work beyond my individual power; I can only offer a contribution.

"Among such propositions which I put on the same basis, are the following, of which those relating to the management and control of property follow as a necessary corollary upon the nature of the association of persons in the civilised community."

Then follow practically twenty-two commandments.

Mr. FRY: Put them all in.

Mr. COLLINS: If they could be put into "Hansard" they would form illuminating reading. No. 14 commandment reads—

"The net products of labour belong to the persons who are concerned in the production. If one person only is concerned in the production, the whole net products belong to him. If more persons than one are concerned in the production, the net profits belong to them, and are divisible amongst them, in proportion to the value of their respective contributions to the production."

No one can cavil at that, but unfortunately this gentleman did not live long enough to give us other articles. This is the last sentence—

"This is a mere outline. I have not touched on theological, or legislative, or international aspects. The analogy between these propositions and the doctrines of some of the oldest religions supposed to rest on different bases is apparent, e.g., 'Love thy neighbour as thyself.' 'Ye must be born again.'"

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. HARTLEY: You know he was not Karl Marx.

Mr. COLLINS: There is no doubt about it, that the hon. members opposite will have to be born again.

Mr. BRAND: First pick the mote out of your own eye.

Mr. COLLINS: I am quoting the opinions of a man who was Premier of this State, afterwards Chief Justice, and then Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia. After years of thought he came to the conclusion that, if we were to have a better state of society, we would have to get down to fundamentals such as he outlined in that article. That is what we will have to do.

Mr. FRY: Hear, hear! We agree with you. Unfortunately we do not take a narrow view, but a broad view of the situation.

Mr. COLLINS: We have not, as hon. members opposite have suggested, reached a dead-end. There will never be a dead-end so far as society is concerned. Society will keep on progressing from point to point.

Mr. FRY: Your party is stagnating.

Mr. COLLINS: It is ridiculous to think that we have reached a dead-end in such a State as Queensland, which is quite capable of carrying a great deal more of the cost of government than is the case at present. This can be done without injuring the State. It is quite right that the wealth of the

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country that is being produced should be better distributed amongst the producers—that is, the masses of the people.

I have in my hands the same quotation that was used by the hon. member for Burke. When I read that article dealing with one of the squatters of this State, it put me in mind of my reading of Roman history in the time of Nero. I know some of the places where these people live. They live in mansions equal to anything in the world. Their wealth has been accumulated by the masses of the people, and these people are squandering that wealth. They are not putting it into reproductive enterprises, as mentioned by the hon. member for Toowong. The hon. member may be doing that with his money, but these people are squandering the wealth that is being produced, and I do not believe that they cannot bear more taxation. I believe we have not reached the limit of taxation. There was no limit during the war when the friends of hon. members opposite were floating loans—not of a few millions, but of hundreds of millions—for destructive purposes. Here in Australia hundreds of millions of pounds were spent for destructive purposes and we have nothing to show for it. Yet the State Government are accused of being an extravagant Government! We have assets to show for our money, but what have hon. members opposite got to show—they belong to the capitalistic party—for all their wars? We have many men begging at the street corners from time to time because of that expenditure. (Opposition interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. COLLINS: We see where their wealthy classes, according to a debate that took place in the Federal Parliament, are trying to dodge taxation. They prated about their patriotism and kindness to the soldiers when those soldiers returned from the front, and now they are trying to evade just taxation, to deprive the Federal Government of money with which to pay their debt to the ex-soldiers.

Mr. KING: How do you know that it was just taxation? It has not been decided yet.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. COLLINS: It has not been decided as yet, but we have a good idea that the wealthy classes of all ages have tried to evade taxation.

Mr. KING: You have a good idea! (Opposition interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to address his remarks to the Chair, and hon. members on my left to cease interjecting.

Mr. COLLINS: Very well, Mr. Pollock. I want to point out that the wealthy classes have been trying to evade taxation throughout the ages. The man who first devised taxation through the Customs was a very clever man—far cleverer than those existing to-day. Governments, in my opinion, could raise by indirect taxation 19s. 6d. in the pound if they wished without much complaint, but if they put on direct taxation of 1s. in the pound there is immediately an outcry against it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. COLLINS: Our Government had increased the direct taxation, and rightly so, because the money had been taken from the

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wealthy classes to carry on the public services of this State. In doing that we are doing the right thing. Compare our Government with the Federal Government. We were told during this debate that the Federal Government were remitting taxation. They ought to be ashamed of themselves for remitting taxation on the higher incomes, inasmuch as they are responsible for the development of this Commonwealth. What Australia lacks to-day is big Australians. We have small-minded men controlling the destinies of the Commonwealth—men who are doing nothing for the development of the Northern Territory, nothing towards assisting Queensland to develop the northern portion of this State, and who are doing next to nothing towards assisting Western Australia to develop the north-west portion of that great State. Instead of remitting taxation, the Commonwealth Government should have done something towards assisting the States mentioned, and should have done something towards developing the Northern Territory by a system of railways, by a system of main roads, and by irrigation works where they are required.

I hope I have made it quite clear that the Labour movement has got to move on. It cannot afford to stand still. In fact, it cannot stand still, because the driving force outside of Parliament will compel it to move on. The people realise that they have not yet reached the goal of their ambition. They have a long way to go. I realise that, and I realise that since Sir Samuel Griffith wrote that article in 1839 we have made wonderful strides; but I realise that the great mass of the people still have to get a greater share of the wealth produced than they are getting at the present time.

During this discussion we have been told that what we want in this State is more secondary industries; and one argument used by the hon. member for Windsor was that one of the reasons why capitalists did not come and establish secondary industries in Queensland was because of the excessive taxation. Does anyone really believe that? Does anyone believe that who knows the history of this Commonwealth, who knows that Victoria, in the nineties—before federation—was building up her industries under a protective tariff. We all know that, and we also know that one of the reasons why secondary industries have been established in New South Wales and Victoria is because of the large populations of those States. But when we did set out with the best of intentions in the world to establish a secondary industry in Queensland—namely, the iron and steel works—what kind of a reception did it receive from the Opposition? Then, why all this cant and hypocrisy about the establishment of secondary industries? When we set out to establish iron and steel works in this State, did not members on the other side—of whom the hon. member for Toowong was the most guilty offender—send a delegation to London to stop us from getting the £9,000,000 which would have enabled us to build the iron and steel works at Bowen? That would have been a large secondary industry. Anyone who has studied the history of Germany, of Great Britain, and of the United States, must know that those three great countries have been built up by the development of their coal and iron and steel industries, and hon. gentlemen opposite have to take upon their shoulders

the responsibility for having blocked us from getting the £9,000,000 loan in London in 1920 which would have enabled us to establish the iron and steel industry in this State.

I am not one of those who believe that we should depend solely upon the Broken Hill Company's steelworks at Newcastle. I am one of those who are looking forward to that big development in our State which is mentioned from time to time by the hon. member for Toowong. The only way that big development can take place is by the establishment of this big secondary industry. Of course important developments have taken place since the proposal to establish iron and steel works at Bowen, inasmuch as our geologists have discovered 85 miles from the Bowen coalfields, at a place called Mount Cooloom, a big iron ore deposit, so that in the event of iron and steel works being established there will be no need for us to go right away to Cloncurry or to Yampi Sound to get our iron ore. It is practically at our back door. If we have not sufficient there, we have sufficient out from Woodstock on the Townsville-Charters Towers railway. We have discovered abundance of iron ore at our back door. I hope that the Government will give consideration to this matter. No law has been passed to stop private enterprise from establishing iron and steel works if they wish, but up to the present they have not done anything in that direction. I claim that, if ever we are to become great, that is the first step, or else the history of the three countries mentioned by me belies itself.

Mention has been made about our State enterprises. The hon. member for Toowong seems to be the champion of private enterprise in regard to coal. According to the figures supplied to me by the Railway Department the other day, the saving on the Northern railway system by the use of Bowen coal since the railway reached the field, has been no less than £76,000. Does anyone imagine for one moment that we can start a State enterprise to-day and expect a dividend, as it were, to-morrow? State enterprises take time before they become paying propositions. I have known privately-owned coalmines, and friends of mine have known them, which did not pay dividends for years. It took years to develop them. We are already getting beneficial results from the Bowen State coalmine in connection with our railway system. At any rate, there is no need to be disheartened in connection with State enterprises. We want to keep straight on and never mind about the criticism from the Opposition. They stand for private enterprise as opposed to State enterprise. They do not believe in State enterprises. We have had the hon. member for Cunningham saying this afternoon that he would get rid of the State enterprises that were not profitable, or something to that effect. I suppose that one of the first enterprises they would get rid of would be the railways. No sane person would propose to hand over our State railways to private enterprise.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member for Bowen in order in misrepresenting what the hon. member for Cunningham said about public utilities?

The CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order.

Mr. COLLINS: I have no wish to misquote the hon. member for Cunningham or

any other hon. member. I think hon. members on this side can bear me out that what I said is correct—that the hon. member for Cunningham said that he would get rid of State enterprises.

Mr. VOWLES: Not of public utilities.

Mr. COLLINS: It is getting down to a very fine point when you begin to talk about public utilities. What are public utilities? The sanitary business is a public utility. (Laughter.) It is one of the best public utilities we have got, but it is not a paying proposition. No dividends come from that source; and it is so with other public utilities. It is getting to a fine point when persons want to twist round what is a public utility and what is not. In conclusion, I want to emphasise once more that this Labour movement has reached no dead end.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: One of your members admitted it.

Mr. COLLINS: I do not admit it, and I will not admit it. (Opposition interjection.)

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask hon. members on my left to cease interjecting.

Mr. COLLINS: The Labour movement is going straight on with its programme, and I want to say right here to the people outside that there is no need to be disheartened. When men belonging to the same generation as I started out, they little thought that they would live to achieve what we have achieved. In my youth we had in operation the principle of one man many votes; to-day we have the principle established of one adult one vote. When we advocated old-age and invalid pensions we were looked upon as dreamers and visionaries; but we lived to see them realised. Just so, if the men of this generation put their shoulders to the wheel, they will live to see many of the reforms outlined by me this afternoon in actual operation. But I want to say to them that they are not going to reach them unless they are willing to suffer. No reform has ever been accomplished without some sacrifice for others; and, if they wish to reach the goal, they must put their shoulders to the wheel, not become disheartened, but keep straight on, and realise that the future is theirs.

Mr. BULCOCK (*Barcoo*): If any one were looking for the two best indications of the condition of the State, one would think that the delivery of the Treasurer's Statement every session is one and that the other is the Exhibition which takes place in Brisbane every year. Hon. members have been saying during the whole course of this debate that the State has been plunged into a cataclysm of pessimism, that there is no redemption, that we have reached the end of all things, that the State has nothing to hope for in the years that are yet to come. One side of the picture is the pessimistic scene which has been painted by members of the Opposition, and the other side is the Exhibition that we had here quite recently. Whilst hon. members in this Chamber were talking about the inability of the State to conduct its own affairs and its failure to prosper, we find leading articles in the newspapers issued during the Show period pointing out that we had a wonderful Show, and that, in fact, all records were shattered. If a Show or any such function is successful, it does to a very great extent reflect the condition of the State; and more especially and more vitally is that so when we come to deal

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with an Exhibition which comprises exhibits from all parts of the State and represents all the industries of the State. There was nothing pessimistic about that Show, which is the shop window, the very eyes, of the State. Whilst leader-writers of the "Daily Mail" and other newspapers were setting forth the lamentable condition of the State they were doing the Dr. Jekyll-Mr. Hyde stunt in talking at the same time about the wonderful resources of Queensland and the unbounded prosperity that she is enjoying—the one a definite, honest statement, and the other a specious statement of affairs for political purposes. I think that the leader of the Opposition remarked that the Financial Statement was a very depressing document, but this Chamber has worn a more depressed atmosphere whilst hon. members opposite have been speaking than the document itself exercised on hon. members or ever warranted. There is no doubt that we have to consider things in relation to other things, and the objection I have to the specious form of argument of the Opposition is their total refusal or inability to realise that one fact cannot be isolated from the surrounding facts and displayed in this Committee and be passed as current coin of the realm. It is quite unfair to take one isolated instance out of its setting and say that it represents a certain set of industrial, or social, or financial conditions or considerations. That is the form of argument that the Opposition have adopted during the debate on the Address in Reply and during the debate on the Financial Statement. They

used the good old tactics of the [3.30 p.m.] emu, which buries his head in the sand so as to be unable to see his pursuers. Hon. members opposite can only see one fact in relation to the surrounding facts, and that isolated fact conveys something to them that would not be conveyed through them to the country if they were courageous enough or truthful enough to bring the whole of the circumstances forward. That leads me up to this point: During this debate the Government have been subjected to criticism concerning the financial condition of Queensland. Briefly, it has been said that our taxation is excessive, that our industries are declining, that our population is unemployed, and our workers are restless. Those are the four charges that the Opposition have levelled against the Government. If they were speaking in the Parliament of any other State in the Commonwealth, or possibly in any other Parliament in the British Empire, the argument that they used here would have equal application in those other countries.

Mr. MOORE: It would not.

Mr. BULCOCK: Since the hon. gentleman is disposed to raise the question, I will take the charges seriatim. First let me take the expenditure per head of the population in New South Wales and Queensland. The leader of the Opposition in season and out of season has consistently stated that the expenditure per head in Queensland is inordinately high, and that the other States—presumably the Southern States—have managed to balance their ledgers more equitably than we have.

Mr. MOORE: So they have.

Mr. BULCOCK: The hon. gentleman sticks to his guns. In the last bulletin issued by the Commonwealth Statistician, I find that for the twelve months prior to 30th June last the expenditure per head of the population in

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New South Wales was in the vicinity of £20, whilst in Queensland it was in the vicinity of £16, and the expenditure per head of the population in Queensland is just a little over the average of all the States of the Commonwealth. The Tory-governed State of New South Wales is as high as £20 per head, and there are other States considerably in excess of Queensland, but we do not hear their Governments or institutions being held up to ridicule.

Mr. MOORE: What brings down the average if they are above it?

Mr. BULCOCK: Obviously, some are below. The leader of the Opposition and his colleagues would lead anybody not knowing the circumstances to believe that we were infinitely higher than any other State, and perhaps higher than all the States combined. There is the pessimism shown by hon. members opposite on this question. It has been said by hon. members on the other side—I think the leader of the Opposition had this to say—that the high taxation—I admit that high taxation is the natural corollary of the conditions obtaining at the present time—has led to unemployment. That is an axiom that has been trotted out by hon. members opposite, and was trotted out by Tory Oppositions many years ago, and has been a Conservative statement so long as the science of Conservative economics has been known. What are the facts of the case? Let me take a concrete example. To-day England is the highest-taxed country in the world. She has not remitted taxation to any extent for two years. In 1922, when she reached the very bottom of her industrial depression, there was such a vast volume of unemployment in England that it exercised the minds of all classes of the community. It became more than a menace, it became a scourge in the industrial life of England. Although taxation has not been remitted in England between 1922 and 1924, there has been a definite absorption of labour owing to the fact that the industrial and financial institutions have to some extent managed to balance the ledger, not by the remission of taxation, but by other social economic forces that hon. members opposite refuse to recognise.

Mr. MOORE: What about the £200,000,000 remitted in income tax?

Mr. BULCOCK: I do not admit that, but assuming that £200,000,000 were remitted, how does the hon. member account for the fact that in 1925 prior to that remission there was a big decrease in the volume of unemployment?

I want to put the position as I see it to-day. When we meet here each year we find that the problems confronting the State are more grave, and appear to be more complex than they appeared to be in the previous year. We find that they are not definitely associated with our own progress, but that they are a social phase associated with the progress of the world. Human nature is becoming more and more complex, and the conditions arising therefrom are also becoming more complex. Consequently the Government are faced with a grave and acute position—a position arising out of economic sources over which the Government have little or no control. Hon. members opposite have referred to a reversion to the 1914 standard. It is impossible to revert to the 1914 standard because society is just the same as any other corporate body. It is an



organic body which is continually evolving, decaying within itself, and rehabilitating itself out of its own decay. Consequently we cannot go back to the standard of 1914, although hon. members opposite have said, "Give us the 1914 conditions and everything will be O.K., and everything in the garden will be lovely." We have heard a good deal of discussion about the economic phases of our life in Queensland, and hon. members opposite have been disposed to suggest that a crisis has arisen on this side of the Chamber. It is quite obvious that we do not always see eye to eye with each other on particular questions, and this is a fact. I honestly believe that, if certain institutions—the big employers of labour and the big financial institutions—were prepared to take the workers more into their confidence, nothing but good could come from it. For instance, we have no definite statistics in Queensland or Australia to-day to show what is the national income or the national dividend. If we knew what was the national dividend, how much each industry was earning, and how the dividends were distributed, then it would be quite an easy matter to arrive at some adequate adjustment of our affairs. If we knew in detail how the finances of the various institutions and organisations were used, we would overcome a good deal of the unrest in evidence at the present time. It has been asserted by the Opposition that the workers should trust these institutions. The workers cannot trust them, and they never will be prepared to trust them unless they can be coerced into putting all their cards on the table so as to disclose their earnings, to show where that money goes to, and how it is absorbed in the progress of industry. Such a return would show the amount of watered capital there is in the shipping and other big companies. Further, it would involve a consideration of wages from an entirely new angle and in an entirely new light. I venture to say that the light we would gain from that knowledge would disclose to the arbitration tribunals that they have before them an unexploited field. At the present time the financial magnates are clever enough, through their accountants and trained practitioners, to cover up the details that are necessary in arriving at what is a fair and adequate wage for the workers of the State.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: You say you don't know this, yet you are assuming you do know it.

Mr. BULCOCK: I say we do not know this and that the country does not know. If the country knew it, it could judge for itself; but, so long as it is the policy of hon. members opposite to clothe these things in obscurity, so long the workers and people outside have a just right and cause to look with suspicion at any proposal brought forward by them. That brings me to a consideration of another question that has been raised frequently during the progress of this and previous debates in this Chamber—the question of unemployment. I regard this question as being in need of very grave consideration. I believe that in the future unemployment will be the problem in politics. I believe that such current questions as free trade and protection, socialism and capitalism, will all centre around the question of unemployment. It is a question not confined to this or to any other State, and it cannot be eliminated until such time as we are prepared to prosecute the line of argument that I have indicated in relation

to the distribution of profits and dividends and a final allocation of the earnings of industries.

I think that everybody realises to-day that the State has a debt to the unemployed citizen in our midst. A few years ago that was not realised. The Labour party have held it in the foreground of their platform that the State is under a distinct obligation to the unemployed. It is all very well for hon. members opposite to come here and shed specious tears over the fate of the unemployed. They do not offer any remedy. If we talk about increasing taxation to assist the unemployed, we are told that we are ruining the State. If we talk about borrowing money to absorb the unemployed, they tell us that our indebtedness is already too great, and that we should not borrow any more money. The only way that the unemployed can be put into employment, so far as the State is concerned, is by paying them out of revenue or loan funds, and, according to the Opposition, those channels of expenditure are closed. Under those circumstances there is no opportunity for the unemployed to obtain work. We all admit that the Unemployed Workers Insurance Act was a valuable contribution to the question of unemployment, but it did not solve the problem. Nobody expected that it would. It offered a palliative that was a little better than previous palliatives. It was a step in the right direction, and we must necessarily take another step. I believe that we cannot take a third step in this direction of dealing with the question of unemployment until we discover the profits that are being made by the various institutions of our State, and so formulate a new basis of adjustment as between employer and employee.

Mr. COSTELLO: Yes—the poor employer!

Mr. BULCOCK: Unemployment is a ghastly spectacle, and I believe the fear of unemployment is almost as bad. It has always been an axiom of hon. members opposite and their prototypes, when they held the Treasury benches, to have a reserve army of unemployed.

Mr. MORGAN: That is not true. (Opposition interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BULCOCK: That has always been the policy of hon. members opposite.

Mr. MORGAN: You know that is not true.

Mr. BULCOCK: I know that there have always been big periods of unemployment, and that unemployment has been most distressful in those States where the Liberals or anti-Labour parties have been in power. There are 12,000 unemployed in New South Wales—12,000 in "Fuller's Earth" unable to find work.

Some time ago there was some discussion about the establishment of abattoirs in Brisbane, and a certain proposition was put before the Premier by the Meat Council. The matter was discussed by the Meat Council, and they asked that some facilities be provided for the establishment of abattoirs in Brisbane, and, I take it, in various other centres of the State. I would like to address a few remarks to this question, because it seems to me to be a very vital one, and one that should be ventilated. I believe that the present system of the killing of meat for human consumption in Brisbane is totally inadequate and wasteful. I know that,

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owing to the distribution of the slaughter-houses in various centres over wide areas, two very fatal things occur. The first is an inadequate supervision of the meat before it goes into human consumption, because it is impossible for the meat inspectors to go about from place to place as rapidly as might be desired. That could be overcome by the establishment of central abattoirs. The second point is—and though it is not of equal importance it is an important point—that at the present time there is a very grave waste owing to the fact that the by-products are not properly utilised, and in many cases not utilised at all, owing to the fact that small slaughter-yards exist where it is impossible to put up the waste and the offal in a remunerative form. There could be a considerable reduction in the cost of meat inspection, and, so far as the health of the community is concerned, a far keener and better and more adequate supervision by the establishment of central abattoirs in Brisbane. But there is some danger in the proposition that has been put forward. As I understand the proposition, it is proposed that the cattlemen form a pool. Incidentally on this question of pools I understand that it is to be a compulsory pool or compulsory co-operation, if such a thing is possible.

Mr. MORGAN: It is not a pool at all; it is compulsory co-operation.

At 3.48 p.m.,

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

Mr. BULCOCK: It seems to me that compulsory co-operation is rather a contradiction in terms; nevertheless, I let that go. It is obvious that the hon. member for Murilla is not in the same camp as the hon. member for Albert, who fulminated in this House for about half an hour on compulsory co-operation, or whatever hon. members opposite call it, and the fact that we have conscripted the funds of certain of the primary producers. However, it is proposed by the cattlemen to establish these abattoirs. I think something better could be offered than the proposition that has been put forward by the pastoralists. It cannot be claimed that we have been antagonistic to the welfare of the cattle industry. We have remitted rents; we have reduced rents; and we have passed legislation giving the cattlemen an opportunity of forming a board or trust for the purpose of controlling the whole of their output.

Mr. MORGAN: On condition that similar legislation was passed by the other States of Australia.

Mr. BULCOCK: That is just the point I am coming to. At least we passed the legislation while the Government of New South Wales and the various other Governments refused to pass that legislation.

Mr. MORGAN: They did not agree to it.

Mr. BULCOCK: Why did they say at the initial conference that they would pass that legislation?

Mr. MORGAN: The Governments did not agree to it at all.

Mr. BULCOCK: The delegates who attended that conference agreed to it, and the Queensland Government kept faith with the cattlemen and desired to do the right thing in that direction. I am merely pointing out that we did the right thing in

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accordance with the expressed desires of the cattle people while the Governments of the Southern States, who are supposed to be sympathetic towards the cattle industry, could do nothing.

Mr. MORGAN: They want our cheap products.

Mr. BULCOCK: We export about 87 per cent. of the meat that is exported from Australia, and it is obvious that we should have some control and say in the whole question. Quoting from the hon. member's official paper, I find that, in an editorial last month dealing with this big question, it is set forth that—

“The importers purchased big consignments of Australian meat at 3½d. per lb. delivered in London.”

That seems to me to be an alarming statement, but I take it that it is an official statement made by the meat companies of Queensland. Further—

“The retail price of this meat ranged from 9d. to 1s. 3d. per lb.”

It is obvious, therefore, that, while the cattlemen could have done something for themselves along the lines suggested by a Mr. Jones the other day—that the Queensland and other meat interests should establish retail shops in London and various other provincial towns for the distribution of Australian beef—the whole trouble has been that the cattle growers will not co-operate. Voluntary co-operation has failed.

Mr. MORGAN: They have not got the money.

Mr. BULCOCK: Now we have this proposed compulsory co-operation for the establishment of abattoirs. This is the attitude I take up on the matter. I believe that we should not allow a public utility, such as the preparation and conversion of cattle to beef from the station to the retailer, to be handed over to private enterprise. We all know that, if the cattlemen succeed in establishing their abattoirs, whether they get State abattoirs or a State loan to construct them, they will run the abattoirs, not for the benefit of the cattle industry but for the benefit of the shareholders, and the price of beef in Queensland will go up out of all recognition. The true proposition which I believe should be followed is this: Instead of handing over the killing of our beef to those who are interested parties—to those who produce it—we should establish municipal abattoirs, probably extending over the Greater Brisbane area, and by killing our own beef, subject to the control of the City Council and the Commissioner of Public Health, we would get better results and cheaper meat than the people are likely to get from the scheme which is being put forward by the squatters, which is a proposition of, “Heads I win, tails you lose.” They do not seem to be keen on putting their own money into it, but they ask the State to put the people's money into it, for the purpose of creating abattoirs so that they can further exploit the public and take wealth from their pockets.

Mr. MORGAN: That is wrong. You do not know what you are talking about. We are not asking for a penny of State money.

Mr. BULCOCK: It would appear that hon. members opposite, while claiming to be democratic, shudder about the heresy of making any attack on banking institutions

if we suggest that the system of currency is all wrong. But there is always this to be remembered—that the merest observer in the smallest village in any part of the so-called civilised world, if he has any powers of observation at all, must be bound to see and admit that there is a vast and a peculiar change coming, whether anyone likes it or not. You might say that currency and conservation are one and the same thing. They shiver if we make any reference to amending the banking laws, but possibly that is the direction in which things are tending. We can all see the failure of the economic system which has been applauded by hon. members opposite, which has been upheld by professors of economics. Doctrines which have been taught in universities, doctrines on which our civilisation was alleged to rest, all went to the wall and were shattered either during the war or in the troublous period embraced by the years succeeding the war. Therefore, it is obvious that some big change is coming, and the sooner it comes the better. It will come, and hon. members opposite, whether they oppose it or not, will finally have to acquiesce in it, because it is one phase of the organic evolution which we call civilisation.

Before I conclude I would like to have a word or two to say about the London agreement. Representing a pastoral constituency as I do, I was unfortunate in not having an opportunity to speak on the Address in Reply, but there are some remarks I would like to make at this, the earliest, opportunity I have had of indicating my views in this direction. We had a period of distress and unemployment when we were unable in 1920 to obtain loan funds. This remark was passed by Mr. Lloyd George in the House of Commons the other day to the Prime Minister by way of interjection—

“Does the Prime Minister realise that some of the big banks could upset the whole fabric of government by refraining from renewing treasury bills?”

That discloses the position as clearly as it can be disclosed. That observation might have been made in this Chamber, and we realise from our own bitter experience that there is more than a vestige of truth in it. We realise that the banking institutions can upset the State's business by refusing to accept treasury bills. It is evident that our loan has been converted, and, as I see the position, the Premier was confronted with three alternatives. He had either to make a bad deal in New York, a good deal in London—in view of all the circumstances—or he could have made no deal at all, and come back and wrecked the fabric of government of the State. It is no use quibbling about these questions. I say that he did the only possible thing, and whilst I am sorry that it was necessary to make any compromise—and I believe that some compromise was made—yet, if he had not accepted it, he would have been wanting in his duty to the Labour movement and to the State.

Mr. MORGAN: Why does the Premier not admit that?

Mr. BULCOCK: I am not going to put words into the Premier's mouth. It is unfortunate that in an ill-considered, ill-digested article, and in a moment of passion, the “*Courier*” set out to refute the statements that the Premier had made in Perth. The “*Courier*’s” intervention was mischievous, misleading, untrue, and founded on false

premises. It set out that, if certain things were so, and if certain things had happened, certain concessions would be worth a certain amount. Everything was supposititious. There was not one definite, concrete, positive assertion of fact in the case the “*Courier*” made out. It set itself up to be a Land Court, and it took stations not covered by the London pact. Then it made itself a judge and then a prophet by assuming that the seasons, the market conditions, the dingoes, and the flies would do this or that, or would fail to do this or that. Nobody can arrive at any true estimation of the value of the compromise, concession, gesture, or whatever it may be termed, at the present time. It is only after a number of years have elapsed, when we are able to turn round and view the situation and see what the seasons have been, what the wool market has done, and whether particular things have happened, that we shall be able to form some more or less correct opinion as to the monetary value of the concession. I do not think that any great financial consideration was involved; but I am sorry that it was necessary to make such a big political question out of this issue. Nevertheless, I believe that the Premier did the only possible thing, and, as this is the first opportunity I have had of discussing the question, I want to make my position as the representative of a pastoral constituency abundantly clear by saying that, had the Premier adopted either of the other alternatives—had he gone to New York or returned empty handed—the State possibly could not have survived. I believe that he did the best thing for the welfare of the State, and is to be congratulated on having taken a broad view of the whole question.

[4 p.m.]

There is just one other question that I want to raise before I conclude, and that is a very vital one to Western members, and one that is not associated with politics to any extent, and that is in connection with the ravages that are going on and causing a steady diminution in the flocks and herds of Queensland. So far as cattle are concerned, I do not think there is any occasion for alarm, because I know that the bulls are being taken out of the herds and breeding has not been allowed to go on unrestricted; but the problem presented by sheep is altogether a different problem. It is obvious that the sheep man has been the backbone of the State for the last two or three years; but, were it not for the high values that are being obtained for wool on the other side of the world to-day, it is obvious that we would be in a much more critical and stringent financial position than we are in at the present time. We are deriving revenue from that source, and we must not lose sight of the fact that the source from which we are deriving that revenue is diminishing. That is to say, there is a diminution in our flocks which is rather alarming to me. On 1st January, 1923, there were 17,641,071 sheep in Queensland, whereas on 1st January, 1924, there were 16,225,909, or a decrease of 1,415,162. That, associated with the 5,000,000 decrease on our maximum figure, presents a very serious problem to the people of the State, whether they live in the West or in the cities. Our figures show that we carried very nearly 23,000,000 sheep in the State at one time. The pastures are still good, and there must be some other reason for the diminution in our flocks. The reason is not far to seek. The first reason

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is the blowfly, and the second reason is the dingo.

Mr. MORGAN: What about droughts?

Mr. BULCOCK: Yes, I will be fair. In 1922 we had a drought, and I took 1923-24 as being the fairest representation because that was not a drought year.

Mr. MORGAN: It takes a long time to get over a drought.

Mr. BULCOCK: I am quite prepared to admit that. I took the figures for the year 1923 because those sheep were the survivors from the drought, and I took the figures for 1924 because they dealt with a period not affected by drought conditions, and I found that there was a diminution of nearly 1,500,000 in our flocks. That is a very serious condition, and it is brought about partly by the droughts; but for the latter year, at least, more particularly was it brought about by the blowfly and the dingo. I want to make some appeal for more research into the ravages of the blowfly to see if some way cannot be devised to combat that pest. It is all very well to say that you can resort to crutching and that sort of thing, but still losses will occur through the fly. The ravages of the blowfly and the dingo are closely allied. A dingo rounds up a mob of sheep on a plain and bites a few of them—perhaps twenty or thirty as they run past if he is a bad dingo—then the flies blow the exposed torn wounds and the sheep crawl away into a corner of the scrub and perish. That is why our flocks are going back in Queensland, and that is too vital a question to be treated in any jocular spirit. The utmost endeavour should be made during the present financial year to give the small selector, who is unable to buy netting at the present price, the advantages of the distribution of netting by the Department of Public Lands in the same way as they benefited in the past. If the netting is to be available, then it should be available as soon as possible.

Mr. MORGAN: The Government are not making any netting available.

Mr. BULCOCK: I am making a plea to the Government to make the netting available.

Mr. COSTELLO: The Commonwealth Government are making netting available.

Mr. BULCOCK: Five miles! What is the use of 5 miles of netting in the West where the sheep are? That is a ridiculous proposition, and was a hare-brained thought of a Federal National politician.

There is another question which appeals to me as being worthy of some consideration. We are continually deploring the drift to the cities. We are saying that it is very, very sad that our lads will not remain in the western area; but what encouragement or opportunity do we give them to remain in those areas to follow the pursuits in the West, to marry, and rear their children in decent civilised and equitable conditions?

Mr. MORGAN: You give them no opportunities at all.

Mr. BULCOCK: I will put my case in my own way. The West does not offer any vocational facilities for training because there are very few mechanics, carpenters, or other tradesmen there. The West is abandoned to grazing pursuits. It becomes obvious that the only training likely to

induce a boy to remain in the West is training in relation to sheep work. We have vocational classes in our schools. We teach the children domestic science, carpentry, metal working, etc., and the boys thereby learn to make a soap box and a cabinet. It is merely an adjunct to their education, and has no practical utility or definite purpose. It merely allows a boy to know what a hammer, chisel, and other tools are. If we could devise a system of training whereby the boys in the West could learn something about industrial pursuits which are going on about them, then we could give them an education of far greater value than what is given in our schools to-day.

Mr. MORGAN: The best training for a boy is to get a job on a station.

Mr. BULCOCK: It is not the best training for a boy of fourteen years to go out and work on a station.

Mr. MORGAN: Of course it is.

Mr. BULCOCK: The hon. member must know how many boys of that age who go out to work on a station fall by the wayside.

Mr. MORGAN: Very few do so—certainly not as many as fall by the wayside in the cities.

Mr. BULCOCK: If the hon. member had a son of fourteen years of age, he would not send him to work on a station.

Mr. MORGAN: Yes, I would; they have worked on a station from the time they were eight years old.

Mr. BULCOCK: Then the hon. member has been sweating them. If it were possible to introduce some system under which lessons in which wool classing could be imparted to the boys in our Western schools, a very valuable purpose would be served. A scheme of this nature could easily be devised. I believe that the Central Technical College here overburdens the State, and that it pulls the legs of people, to put it vulgarly, so far as wool is concerned. There is not the extensive study necessary in Queensland in regard to wool classing that there is in other States where they have English, and crossbred, and merino wools to deal with. In the Central West the wool only ranges from "sixty-fours" to "seventies." They do not comprise many classes, consequently it would not be very difficult to give a boy an insight into the handling of that wool during the time he is passing through the senior classes in the State schools. Any other boys who desired could also come along. There are men in the West who are prepared to train the boys in the same way as the other teachers who come into the schools and give lectures. The obstacle to such a scheme is that there is a dearth of men with a thoroughly efficient knowledge of wool. The big selectors are able to bring wool classers from Brisbane or the other States; these wool classers go through their flocks and at shearing time class the wool. That is why those wool-growers top the market. It is obvious that a selector does not top the market because he cannot present his wool so attractively, and the quality is not there. That is because the majority of selectors have not the opportunity of acquiring the knowledge, and cannot employ a wool classer because that makes the proposition too expensive. If we are prepared to train some of our boys in this phase of wool classing, it would only

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if we suggest, period to give them this knowledge wrong. Wool classers are only in the West remembrance short period. A number of boys small and avail themselves of such an opportunity, and perhaps there would be a number of future selectors among them. The knowledge they would gain would enhance the value of their flocks, and by enhancing the value of their wool they would be enhancing the value of the industry to Queensland. I noticed in the paper the other day that a deputation waited on the Assistant Home Secretary and asked that some supervision should be exercised over the milk supply of the City of Brisbane. I do not quite recollect whether they asked for a milk pool or for supervision.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: They asked for supervision—in fact, medical examination.

Mr. BULLOCK: I noticed that the hon. gentleman promised to give the matter favourable consideration. We all know that milk is the medium in which diseased germs propagate with the greatest ease. It is like blotting paper, and absorbs all germs with which it comes into contact. Frequently cholera, tuberculosis, and typhoid germs have been isolated from milk. While we have done very well with our maternity homes, baby clinics, and so forth, we have another duty to perform so far as our little babies are concerned, and that is the proper and adequate supervision of our city milk supply. I believe that the milk supply of Brisbane is as good as that of any other city, but I believe that the milk supply of most cities is very unsatisfactory. I hope the Assistant Minister will give the matter consideration, because many valuable little lives have been lost through drinking milk impregnated with disease. There is another phase of the question. If a dairyman with twenty or thirty head of cows asks the Stock Department to test his cows for tuberculosis a veterinary surgeon is sent out, but if a man who has an individual cow makes a similar application, he cannot get a veterinary surgeon. The reason is that the department has laid it down that a veterinary surgeon may test a herd only, and that it is not economically sound for one to be detailed to test any individual animal owing to the length of time taken by the test. The man who has one cow is entitled to as much consideration as the man who has a dairy, and I wish to make a plea on behalf of the man with the individual cow. Proportionately, there is just as much tuberculosis amongst individual family cows as amongst dairy cows, and the time has arrived when a tubercular test should be taken of those individual cows.

If most people knew the advantage to be gained by having a tubercular test, I think they would be only too happy to have their cows tested. I suggest that a central depot should be established and that families within a radius of two or three miles should bring their cows in. A herd would then be accumulated and the cows could be tested under the same conditions as are dairy cows. Then we would find some tuberculosis. At present, as there is no available test for the individual cow—the householder with a cow is always in danger of tuberculosis. I hope some consideration will be given to my suggestion, as it would assist to safeguard the infant life of our State. Not only are infants subject to tuberculosis, but adults are also subject to the disease through consuming milk from a tubercular cow.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I am very sorry that the hon. member who has just resumed his seat did not go more fully into the scheme for the construction of abattoirs in Brisbane. Had he done so, he would not have made the mistake he did. In the first instance, I want to point out that the stock-owners of this State have not at any time asked the Government for financial assistance; but we did ask the Government to pass a Bill for the purpose of making a compulsory levy upon the stockowners of Queensland in order to finance the establishment of abattoirs in Brisbane and in two other important centres in Central and Northern Queensland. Not only would the establishment of abattoirs place the cattle industry on a sound and solid foundation, but it would assist the Government to get out of the blunder they made when they purchased State stations and became the largest cattle-owners in the State. They are in a financial tangle now, and do not know what to do to get out of the position in which they find themselves; and if our scheme were carried into effect, it would enable the Government to dispose of the cattle that they possess without making any very great loss. The hon. member for Ipswich dealt with this matter, but not being a practical man and not thoroughly understanding the market value of cattle, he stated that if the State cattle were sold at £3 12s. 2d. per head, the State stations would show a profit to the State. It is ridiculous to argue that at the present time the cattle on any run could be disposed of at £3 12s. 2d. per head. If any cattle-owner were to place his cattle in the hands of auctioneers and commission agents for disposal at the present time, it would be almost impossible for them to obtain £2 10s. per head all round. I state without fear of contradiction that if the State cattle were offered for sale to-morrow, they would not realise more than £2 10s. per head all round, so that the figure quoted by the hon. member for Ipswich is at the very least £1 2s. per head more than the present market value of cattle. If anything, I am placing a high value on the cattle when I say that it may be possible to dispose of them at £2 10s. per head.

I wish now to deal with the matters mentioned in the Budget Speech delivered by the Treasurer, but I wish first of all to congratulate the hon. member for Bowen on the delivery of his first Budget Speech in this House, and I also wish to congratulate him on the very fine support he received from the members of the corner party. (Laughter.) They rallied round him, and he had a very large audience, but as soon as he completed his speech the House melted away.

I now wish to give my ideas as to why Queensland at the present time is in such a deplorable financial position. That has been admitted not only by members opposite who are not holding responsible positions, but also by the Treasurer and the Secretary for Public Lands. They both admitted that at the present time Queensland financially is in a deplorable position, and there is no doubt that position has been brought about by the administration of the Government.

There is no reason why one should arrive at a different conclusion than that the condition we find ourselves in has been brought about by the blundering tactics and administration of the present Government. They have been warned repeatedly, not only by members on this side, but by the people who

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are in possession of information—men who are the leaders of finance not only in Queensland but also throughout the rest of Australia—that eventually we would reach the state we have reached at the present time. Unfortunately they did not take the advice which was tendered to them in all sincerity by those who were in a position to know. Now when the financial crisis has been brought about we find that there is going to be a great deal of suffering and distress in the next twelve months. One hon. member referred to the unemployment which exists, but forgot to mention the fact that one of the reasons for unemployment is the system of construction of public works which has been in vogue under the present Government. He did not mention how the Government build railways and employ many thousands of workers in different parts of the State usually three months before a general election. They bring men from all parts of Australia to carry out the work. Men in the other States know that the Government are constructing public works in Queensland, and the result is that they come here and are engaged on that work. After the elections are over the work in many instances stops and the men are discharged, and they are left stranded in consequence. They have been given a job for a few weeks or months, but the moment they have served the purpose of the electoral representative in the district the work ceases and they are left unemployed. As a result of that system we have a greater number of unemployed in this State than we otherwise would have. The Government have no right to enter into the construction of a large number of railways at the one time. If the Government want to build a railway 50 miles or 60 miles in length, it would be better to put as many men as possible on the work and construct the line in six months, so that it could be opened and be made revenue producing, instead of taking a longer time and having to employ a large number of men to superintend the work. In my district in connection with the construction of the Tara-Surat line, eighteen months have gone by, but the plate-laying has only been completed for 6 miles. If 500 or 1,000 men had been plate-laying on that railway, they could have completed the whole of the line in six months, and it could have been opened for traffic and become revenue producing. There would then have been a certain number of men permanently employed in the working of the railway. Some of the men who were brought up to work on the railway, after having served the purpose of voting at the election, were shortly afterwards dismissed. The same thing applies throughout the whole of Queensland. The Government are responsible for the large number of unemployed who are seeking assistance from them. They cannot deny that fact.

Another thing I want to point out is that in times of prosperity, when work was plentiful and the men engaged in the sugar and other industries were busy, so that all our workers could obtain work, the Government, nevertheless, embarked upon works themselves in competition with private people. Why did the Government not hold their hand? Whilst we have certain years of progress, we have also certain years of stagnation, and it is during the former periods that the Government should hold their hand and keep in reserve funds for giving work, instead of entering into competition with

private individuals who are prepared during a time of prosperity to spend money and thus find work for the workers.

It has been stated many times in this Chamber that in 1914 the taxation per head of population in Queensland was £1 8s. 2d.—the lowest taxation in any State in the Commonwealth—whilst to-day we are the highest taxed people in Australia. I remember a question being asked of a speaker from New South Wales, who was addressing a political meeting. When asked to give a reason why the people of Queensland were taxed more highly than those of any other State, he said that it was because Queensland had such a vast territory and only a small population. But it was pointed out to him that in 1914, although we had the same territory and a limited population, the taxation was lower than in any other State of Australia. He could not say then why it should be so. I just want to quote a few figures to show what has really happened in regard to taxation since 1914-15. In that financial year our taxation per head was £1 8s. 2d.—the lowest in the Commonwealth. To-day it is £4 9s. 4d. per head—the highest in the Commonwealth, the taxation per head in the other States being—

	£	s.	d.
New South Wales ...	3	11	9
South Australia ...	3	10	9
Western Australia ...	2	17	5
Victoria ...	2	11	3

It is extraordinary that in Victoria, where they have never had a Labour Government in power until just recently—a Government which will no doubt remain in existence for a few weeks longer—taxation is lower than in any other State in Australia. It is extraordinary that Victoria contributed its quota of taxation towards the war expenses just as the rest of Australia, and that the same conditions applied there as in the other States. Nevertheless, it came through that period without increasing the taxation on its people. The present Treasurer once said that high taxation meant that the producer paid and the worker suffered. If that be so, are this Labour Government not making the producer pay and the worker suffer? They are making the people they were elected to represent suffer, because they are increasing taxation. If the Government, by their high taxation, or by any Act of Parliament or administration, compel one employer to close down, what is the result?

At 4.30 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. MORGAN: It not only affects one employer, but it affects fifty employees. The Government, by their methods, have so taxed that business as to make it unprofitable, but in doing so they are not only taking the bread and butter away from the wife and family of one employer, but they are taking the bread and butter from the wives and families of fifty employees. That is the unfortunate part about the methods adopted by the Government. In their endeavour and in their jealousy they have tried to do harm to what they call the capitalistic class; they have done a certain amount of wrong to that class; and they have done one hundred times more harm to the people whom they misrepresent in this Chamber. They are beginning to see the light now.

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Both the Treasurer and the Secretary for Public Lands now recognise that under the existing conditions they can only harm the class they represent by pursuing their present methods unless the capitalistic system is removed altogether. Russia tried to do away with the capitalistic system and succeeded to a certain extent, but to-day they have to go to other countries to borrow money. The Russian Government have got to adopt the very system that the capitalistic Governments adopted in this country, which goes to prove that even in Russia they cannot carry on without the assistance of the capitalists. The unfortunate position is that we cannot carry on without money, and because of the lack of finance Queensland is in an unfortunate stagnating position and the country is not progressing. We are in that position because no encouragement has been given to the man with capital to come to this State. If a man with capital wishes to come into the State, he first inquires into the amount of taxation. He looks for statistics and he discovers that the taxation per head of the population in Queensland is £4 9s. 4d., or nearly double that of Victoria. Is that any encouragement for him to bring his money into this State for the purpose of developing it? No matter what industry he might be engaged in, he finds that because the taxation is so great he prefers to invest his money in some of the other States. I know of certain professional men to-day who are making money in Queensland and who are sending their profits down to Victoria to be invested because the returns from that money in those investments in Victoria are taxed to a lesser degree than would be the case in Queensland. Is that not injurious to this State? These men are only following a course that most human beings would adopt, and that is to get as much as possible from their money by way of investment.

I wish now to deal with the high freight charges upon our railways. This is a most important matter affecting the future progress of Queensland. I want to compare the railway freights charged in Queensland with the freights that are charged in the different States of Australia. It has been truthfully said that the freights can be so high that eventually the railways cease to be of benefit to the users, and that is the very position that the railways of Queensland have got into, and they have become a burden upon the people of the State.

Mr. DUNSTAN: You are not serious, are you?

Mr. MORGAN: I am serious. The railways have become a burden upon the people of the State; and in many parts of Queensland where they are not connected with the railway and where a few years ago they were desirous of having railway communication and met the Secretary for Railways in deputation with that object in view, they are now considering whether it would not be better to have a good road to their town and not have a railway at all, because, if they had a good road constructed to the nearest point of the railway, they could cart their produce and general requirements along the road at a cheaper rate than they could by rail.

I can, if necessary, prove to the Commissioner, or to the Secretary for Railways, that owing to the excessively high freights our

railways to-day are losing a great deal of revenue. All the cattle from the South and South-western portions of Queensland that are not within the tick area are travelling by road to Bengalla and Mungindi to be trucked there for the South. The railways in Queensland are not being used because of the exorbitant freight rates. At one time if you went to a country station you could see ten or twelve motor cars being loaded and passing through into the Western districts. The railways are not used for this purpose to-day unless the car happens to have been damaged or broken down. That is because of the excessively high freights. More motor cars are being sold to-day than at any time in the previous history of Queensland, and they are being taken to their destination by road. In America the principle of carrying a large tonnage on the railways at a low freight is adopted, but the Commissioner and the Secretary for Railways here have adopted the principle, because they have a monopoly, of charging high freights and carrying only a minimum tonnage. It would be much better for Queensland and the people of the State were freights to be considerably reduced instead of being increased, and if economy were practised to make the railways as near as possible self-supporting. I wish to give the following figures in order that the freights of the various States may be compared with those ruling in Queensland in what are known as "high class freights" for a distance of 100 miles:—

	Per ton.	
	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Queensland ...	89	4
New South Wales ...	76	8
Victoria ...	63	3
South Australia ...	77	3
Western Australia ...	77	1

It will be seen that Queensland has a higher freight rate for this class over 100 miles than any other State. The rates over 200 miles are—

	Per ton.	
	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Queensland ...	220	6
New South Wales ...	160	0
Victoria ...	163	0
South Australia ...	199	5
Western Australia ...	177	9

The rates for 500 miles are—

	Per ton.	
	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Queensland ...	268	4
New South Wales ...	197	6
Victoria ...	238	3
South Australia ...	287	9
Western Australia ...	246	8

That shows that right throughout the States the freights in Queensland over this distance are higher than any other State in Australia. We have what is generally termed the narrow gauge system in Queensland, and it is the cheapest system constructed. There is no reason why our railways should not be worked more economically and cheaper than any other railways in Australia. Let us examine the freights in the various States

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for what is known as low-class freights over 100 miles—

	Per ton.
	<i>s. d.</i>
Queensland ... ..	10 2
New South Wales ...	6 9
Victoria ... ..	5 4
South Australia ...	8 0
Western Australia ...	4 1

The rates over a distance of 200 miles for this class of freight are—

	Per ton.
	<i>s. d.</i>
Queensland ... ..	21 2
New South Wales ...	10 0
Victoria ... ..	10 6
South Australia ...	16 7
Western Australia ...	8 3

The rates for over a distance of 500 miles are—

	Per ton.
	<i>s. d.</i>
Queensland ... ..	30 5
New South Wales ...	12 4
Victoria ... ..	12 8
South Australia ...	21 1
Western Australia ...	12 5

It will be noticed that most of the States are between 12s. and 13s. for the 500-mile rate, while Queensland is over £1 10s. Yet our railways are supposed to be run for the benefit of the people.

Let me read a telegram from the "Daily Telegraph" of last night—

"During the term of the present State Government railway fares and freights have been reduced to the extent of £1,400,000. At the close of the present financial year this amount will be increased by another £900,000, making a grand total of £2,300,000."

That deals with the railways of New South Wales. In Queensland we are adding another burden to the unfortunate people in the country districts who are using our railways. The following table will show the increase in the rates during the time Labour has been in power on the carriage of agricultural produce:—

Year.	Tonnage.	Revenue.	Average Freight Rate, per ton.
1914-15 ..	Tons. 876,621	£ 264,036	<i>s. d.</i> 6 0
1922-23 ..	1,191,871	545,103	9 2

That shows an increase of 3s. 2d. per ton in the rate of carriage, which is equal to 52.8 per cent. That burden has had to be carried by the producers of Queensland. Those figures do not incorporate the recent increases. The recent increase of 7 per cent. would make the burden considerably heavier.

I have another list, showing tonnage of livestock carried on Queensland railways—

Year.	Tonnage.	Revenue.	Average Freight Rate, per ton.
1914-15 ..	Tons. 4,970,873	£ 2,516,380	<i>s. d.</i> 10 1
1921-22 ..	3,732,413	3,105,485	16 8

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That represents an average increase per ton of 6s. 7d., or over 60 per cent. That does not include the late increase. The Treasurer knows as well as I do that that increase has to be borne pretty nearly entirely by the people in the country who use our railways.

The following table shows the concession that are made to the people who live in the city as against those who live in the country:—

FREIGHTS CHARGED BY RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

	200 Miles.	500 Miles.	800 Miles.
	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>
<i>Agricultural Produce.</i>			
To ports .. ..	17 5	30 3	43 7
Up country .. ..	26 0	44 0	67 2
<i>Flour.</i>			
To ports (truck load) ..	17 3	30 3	43 7
To Brisbane .. ..	12 0	15 6	..
Up country (ton lots) ..	39 11	75 1	99 11
<i>Butter.</i>			
To ports .. ..	34 9	61 3	89 6
Up country .. ..	76 1	139 4	165 7

It will be noted that it costs 12s. per ton to bring foodstuffs 200 miles to Brisbane as against 39s. 11d. per ton—over three times as much—to take foodstuffs to country districts 200 miles distant. Also that it costs 15s. 6d. per ton to bring flour to Brisbane from a distance of 500 miles, and to take it the same distance to the worker in the country, who is carrying the whole burden of this State on his shoulders, it costs 75s. 1d. That is how the people in the country are taxed, and that is why the people are leaving the country and coming to the city. They have a right to get their foodstuffs at the same rate as is charged to the people of Brisbane. The Arbitration Court gives a Western allowance to a number of men who work in the West, which enables them to get the necessities of life at the same price as men working in a similar occupation in Brisbane. That is just, and every worker in the country should get a similar concession. Why should it only apply to one section of the community? The Treasurer and the Secretary for Public Lands already have stated that the public servants are a privileged class, and while that may be right, I say that the people in the West who are not employed by the Government should get a similar concession. I am not one of those who think that the railways should be made to pay by charging excessive rates. The cost of working the railways has now become so great that, if you put a sufficient freight on the goods carried by the railways to make them self-supporting, you would drive every man, woman, and child out of the country districts into the cities, and you would only have Brisbane and suburbs, and perhaps one or two other seaport towns left. You would have no one living in the country.

The Government, owing to the Treasurer's stupidity, were compelled to pay a high rate of interest for the renewal of the loan. In my opinion, the Treasurer was penalised to the extent of ½ per cent. for passing the Land Act Amendment Act of 1920. In order to get that ½ per cent. out of the people he has increased the railway freights and fares, and he is making the country people bear the burden of his stupidity in passing the "Repudiation Act" at that period. Hon. members opposite admit that a big concession has been given to the pastoralists, and



the Treasurer is the only man who has not come out into the open. He should have asked Parliament to pass a Bill, so as to place on record the fact that a certain agreement was entered into by himself and those who lent the money in England. The Treasurer had no right to go to England in the way he has done. He went over there as a delegate of the Government, and he had no right to make an agreement with any section of people there without asking Parliament to agree to it. He should have told the people in England that he had made the agreement subject to the ratification of the Queensland Parliament of what he had done in the old country. He may do it by Executive minute, but he has no right to expect the people of Queensland to agree to anything he may do in that way. The hon. gentleman made a certain agreement with the money-lenders in the old country, and, if he was doing a just thing, he would state exactly to Parliament what he has done and ask us to sanction it. If he did so, we should know what we were doing. The taxpayers have a right to know. An agreement entered into by the Treasurer which is not sanctioned by Parliament is not binding on any future Parliament. No Treasurer in a future Parliament would be bound by an agreement made by the present Treasurer which was authorised only by Executive minute. He would be justified in saying that the present Treasurer did not do his duty in not placing the particulars before Parliament and asking it to agree to what he had done. I am not blaming the Treasurer for making a concession, but I am sorry that it was necessary for him to do so. It was his own blunder, and he got out of it creditably; but it was at the cost of the taxpayers of Queensland. We have had to pay through the nose for the American loan, and we have had to pay  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. more for the loan which has been refloated in London than we would have had to pay if the Land Act had not been passed in 1920.

I wish now to refer to land settlement in Queensland. We find that land settlement, which is one of the most important things in this State, has been greatly curtailed. When Labour members were on this side continually in season and out of season they complained that land was not being opened for settlement, and they accused the then Government of working in the interests of the pastoralists and those connected with large holdings. But to-day we find that the figures in the Department of Public Lands show that there are unfortunately 32,000,000 acres of land less occupied in Queensland than there were in 1915. In 1915 there were 360,000,000 acres in use in this State, while in 1922 there were 328,000,000 acres in use, showing a decrease of 32,000,000 acres of land under a Labour Government.

That shows that since the Labour Government have been in power, the people have been abandoning the land and are using less than they used under the old so-called Tory regime. I think that some explanation is necessary. We should know just the reasons why this land is not being used. It may interest the hon. member for Bowen, who is very fond of figures, to know that an area equal to nearly the whole of England has gone out of use in Queensland—that 32,000,000 acres have gone out of use in this State since the Labour Government have been in power. It is a startling thing to say, but,

unfortunately, it is a fact. I think it is deplorable that we have to record the fact that land settlement has declined year after year. We are told by the hon. member for Bowen that very great profits have been made by certain pastoralists and companies, and he quoted a lot of their income tax figures. If it were not for the wool industry, I do not know what would become of Queensland to-day. It is practically the only industry in Queensland which is bringing us revenue from other parts of the world, that is, it is the only industry that is paying its way. The hon. member for Bowen may say, "What about sugar?" I admit that it is a profitable crop, but it does not bring us any revenue from abroad or help us to pay off the national debt, because it is all consumed locally. We are sending away butter and cheese, but, unfortunately, they are not showing a profit on the cost of production—we are actually losing by their production. One must almost come to the conclusion that, so far as the production of foodstuffs is concerned, Queensland is over-producing, and the result is that the people engaged in that production are losing money. If that is so, it is not right to encourage people to go on the land for the purpose of producing unprofitable crops. We should encourage them to go in for a paying industry, and so far as we can see the sheep-raising industry is likely to pay for some time to come. Why should we not encourage people to go in for it? Why should not the Government supply as much wire-netting as possible? In the Warrego district, there are many hundreds of thousands of acres of land suitable for sheep, and where only wire-netting and water are necessary to enable it to carry a large and prosperous population. But the Government are not endeavouring to bring about that result. They are opening land in small areas or compelling people to use the plough notwithstanding the fact that by the use of the plough they are becoming poorer and poorer each day. If the Government put the same energy and an equal amount of money into opening up land for sheep farming, providing wire-netting, and giving assistance to find water, they would be fostering an industry which would give a decent living to a large population and find work for many unemployed.

If what the hon. member for Ipswich says is true—that the State cattle are worth £3 12s. 2d. per head—then I would like to see the Government sell the whole of the State cattle and open up the State stations for settlement. Dillalah is one of

[5 p.m.] the finest sheep properties in the whole of Queensland, and it is only carrying a few head of cattle, and is not returning sufficient to pay for their agistment. That property could be opened up and put under sheep. It would pay the Government to sell every beast they possess and use the money to purchase wire netting, and supply that wire netting to the people at a cheap rate of interest, spreading the payment of the money involved over a long period. It would be better to do that than to continue the present proposition and lose many thousands of pounds annually.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Did the hon. gentleman say that he would like to take a lease of Dillalah?

Mr. MORGAN: I would like a lease of a portion of it. It could be cut up into 10,000-acre blocks, capable of carrying a number

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of small sheep farmers, and carrying them successfully. Unfortunately, the land is going to waste inasmuch as it is becoming more overgrown year by year. It is an exceptionally good cattle proposition, but as the dingoes and the undergrowth are not being destroyed it will be necessary to attend to that matter before sheep can be carried, and it will be necessary to securely net the property. That is not a very big proposition. If that land were cut up into 10,000-acre blocks, or at the most into 50,000-acre blocks, it would give a decent living to many people.

I would now like to make reference to one important matter that the people are talking about all over the State. I went into my district last week, and at Tara and in other localities that I visited the people wanted to know if there was any truth in the suggestion that the Treasurer had paid a representative of "Smith's Weekly" a certain amount of money to boost him in that paper? We have figures to show that a considerable amount of money has been paid to that paper by the Treasurer, and we often wondered why this large amount of money was expended. It was not expended by way of advertising in "Smith's Weekly," but the matter appeared as ordinary reading matter, and certainly the paper has continually laid itself out to boost the Treasurer. Recently some light has been thrown on the subject. I have here a pamphlet which has been circulated, and which was printed by the "Swift Printing Works, Brunswick street." The document seems to be quite legal and in order. If the statements contained therein are not true, then the quicker the Treasurer makes a public announcement, or prosecutes the persons who have made those statements, the better it will be for himself and the community. If the statements are true, and the Treasurer has been paying from Consolidated Revenue the money passed by this Chamber for advertising Queensland, and has been using that money for the purpose of boosting himself in different papers in Australia, and in "Smith's Weekly" in particular, he has been doing a dishonest thing.

It does not reflect credit on the hon. gentleman to do those things with State money. If he can show that he has paid this money out of his own pocket to have himself advertised or called a "super-man" I do not mind, but as a public representative of this State I do protest, and protest vigorously, against the Treasurer or any other Minister using the funds of the State for the purpose of his own personal advertisement. Nobody could take any exception to the payment if it was made to advertise Crown lands or the facilities for settlement. When we have a statement made publicly—and lawfully so far as I can see—that the Treasurer has been paying money to "Smith's Weekly" for the purpose of boosting himself, then the quicker the hon. gentleman makes a public utterance, or institutes a prosecution for libel the better it will be for his own reputation.

Mr. FARRELL: Your friend Thomas signed that.

Mr. MORGAN: The circular reads—

"Theodore Attempts to Drag the Labour Movement through a Political Sewer and Fails,"

and goes on to say—

[Mr. Morgan.

"While unemployed starve Premier Theodore and Sir Joynton Smith ('Smith's Weekly') plan a campaign of political graft!

"The rank and file of the Queensland Labour movement demand an answer to the following questions:—

Why did Theodore, during December, 1923, arrange with Claude McKay (editor "Smith's Weekly") to pay £6 a week towards the salary of a journalist whose work was to reside in Brisbane and boost Theodore in a capitalist Press?

Why did Claude McKay make the following statement to Cris. O'Sullivan (the Labour journalist to whom the position was offered, and who, later exposed the business in a number of sworn statements, at present held in Sydney pending some inquiry), "If you take this up, and if you like it, there will be a safe Labour seat in the Queensland Parliament for you at the end of it, and I assure you Theodore will do anything you want."

"McKay made a further statement—Confidentially . . . we are backing Theodore. Next year he will leave the State and go into Federal politics and he will be the next Labour Prime Minister.

"Can the Premier explain the following conversation which he had with Mr. O'Sullivan—

By the way—the matter of money. There is only one way I can fix this. I will arrange to pay you out of the special contingency fund of my office which will not be subject to scrutiny by the Auditor-General. . . .?"

I hope that in the future we shall be able to get from the Minister who has charge of the fund to be used for unspecified purposes, a statement showing exactly how that money has been expended. It is his duty to show how that money has been expended and in what direction. The circular goes on to say—

"Theodore refused to see an unemployed deputation. Is he prepared to assist them out of this fund?

"Is Theodore prepared to do the W. M. Hughes' act? The following excerpts taken from an editorial in the current issue of 'Smith's Weekly' suggests the move. Only in Sydney this week the chairman of one of the great banks said to a staff member of this paper: 'Theodore will be Prime Minister, but on our side!' 'Maybe if Labour won't let Theodore lead Australia another party will.'

"Traitors can sell some of the workers all the time—all of the workers some of the time—but they can't sell all the workers all the time.

"Workers! Demand an explanation at a special convention! Save the Labour Movement from disaster by a political cleansing!"

This circular has been put into all the homes for the purification of politics and those engaged in political life. I do not say that there is any truth in the statements, but some statement is due from the Treasurer. It is for him to refute what

has been stated, and, if necessary, to protect his honour through the law courts. I remember that the hon. gentleman on another occasion instituted legal proceedings when a statement was made in regard to his private honour.

The TREASURER: I have never issued a writ for a libel against me, although I have been libelled many times.

Mr. MORGAN: A certain man told me that the hon. gentleman issued a writ in one case.

The TREASURER: Not for libel—for slander.

Mr. MORGAN: I do not wish to pursue the subject, but I understand that the Treasurer issued a writ for slander in the case I have in mind. He may have been justified in so doing. In this present case he may be justified in issuing a writ for slander.

The TREASURER: If I were to issue writs for every article written against me and for every circular, I would be doing nothing else but issuing writs.

Mr. MORGAN: Of course, we know newspapers have certain comprehensive powers. It depends upon what the alleged libel is and what criticism the Treasurer may class as libel. A man's political life is really public life and public property.

The TREASURER: Does the hon. member really believe that there is any fund under the control of the Administration that is not open to the supervision of the Auditor-General? Every item of expenditure is subject to the scrutiny of the Auditor-General.

Mr. FRY: Would the hon. gentleman allow any member of the Country party or of the Nationalist party to peruse any voucher for expenditure from the advertising vote?

The TREASURER: Certainly not. The Auditor-General does that.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Do you believe what is in that circular?

Mr. MORGAN: How can I believe it or disbelieve it if I do not know the particulars?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Then who else would?

Mr. MORGAN: All I know is that the statement has been made publicly. It was published in the journal of the Scamen's Union. We do know, from questions that have been asked in this Chamber, that "Smith's Weekly" has had more than its fair share of the money expended by the Government upon advertising. For what purpose? Not to put Queensland in a better position. "Smith's Weekly" is not a paper that one would look to to do a great amount of good to the State. From the answers to questions in "Hansard" from time to time it would seem that "Smith's Weekly" has received enormous amounts of money from the Government.

The TREASURER: The hon. member knows that that is not true.

Mr. MORGAN: The figures speak for themselves. "Smith's Weekly" may have had a lot of other money that we know nothing about. It has certainly had a great deal more consideration from the Government than any other paper of similar importance. Week after week there is always a little paragraph about the Premier, stating what a great man he is, or giving some similar information. There may not be any truth in those statements. As with this document, I am not prepared to say that there is.

The TREASURER: They tell me you are a newspaper agent yourself?

Mr. MORGAN: "Smith's Weekly" says that the Treasurer will be the next Prime Minister of the Commonwealth. How do I know whether that is going to be true or not? Even the Treasurer does not know it. We have to take a lot of these statements for what they are worth. To be serious, I think it is the duty of the Treasurer to give some explanation in connection with the matter.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): It was not my intention to refer to the matter mentioned by the hon. member for Murilla just now, but, as the Treasurer has not confirmed or denied the statements made in the circular, and as he says all vouchers are subject to the scrutiny of the Auditor-General, I ask him if he will permit a representative of the Country party, a representative of the Nationalist party, and a representative of his own party to scrutinise all expenditure in connection with the special publicity fund in his office?

Mr. ROBERTS: Appoint a Commission.

Mr. FRY: The hon. member for East Toowoomba suggests that a Commission be appointed, and I think that would be better.

The Government have received £126,747,389 since they have been in office. That is a lot of money, but they have received that amount from loan and revenue. Had any other Government received the same amount of money and disposed of it in the same manner, they would have been kicked out of office by their own supporters, but we find the professional army opposite are not game to do it. If any other Government had received the same amount of money, hon. members opposite would have criticised that Government, and would have wanted to see some return for the money taken from the people of the State.

There are many things in regard to which we can criticise the Government, and I want in passing to refer to the question of mining. We were told by the Secretary for Mines, when the Mount Isa field was discovered, that he was going to retain that field for the working miners. Who are the working miners who have control of this field to-day?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: The hon. member for Warrego.

Mr. FRY: The working miners who are controlling this field to-day are the speculators of Sydney and Melbourne and Labour members in this Chamber. If the Secretary for Mines was in earnest when he said that he would retain this field for the welfare of the working miners, he should have done so. The policy of the Government is to nationalise mining and to prevent gambling in mining. When it was a question of Chilla-goe—a non-paying concern—they put Government money into it, and it has been a dead loss ever since. When it was a question of Mungana, they purchased a concern that was not paying. They purchased mines that were being run at a loss, and they have been run at a loss ever since; but, when they had an opportunity of opening up and nationalising a virgin field not in the hands of any speculators, they refused to do so. A field which promises to be one of the wealthiest fields in the whole world has been allowed to get into the hands of speculators, and the Government, if they want to nationalise it must now buy it back at an enormous price. These things deserve ventilating, and

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we want to know why, if the Government believe in the nationalisation of mining, they should pass by a field which would give an opportunity of making probably £2,000,000 or £3,000,000? It might be possible to make a hundred millions of money out of Mount Isa, which would have been sufficient to pay the national debt. But that money is not going into the State Treasury; it is going into the pockets of private individuals, and in that respect the Government are deserving of the most crushing criticism. That alone should merit a vote of no-confidence against the Government. How can the Government sustain their position when they allow a virgin field—which promises to be one of the wealthiest mining fields in the whole world—to drift into the hands of mining speculators and enable them to make a million or two out of it, and then afterwards, perhaps, the Government may buy it back at a great loss? The position was quite easy for the Government. One of the Government geologists made a report on the field. He left his position and acted as superintendent for one of the companies. He made another report, and afterwards returned to his position as a Government geologist. The Government had the field in their own hands, but they allowed it to pass into the hands of speculators. They put in charge this Government geologist, looking after the interests, not of the State, but the interests of the shareholders, and some of those shareholders are Labour members sitting in this Chamber, some of them mining speculators on the stock exchanges in Sydney and Melbourne. Those are the people whose affairs the Government put their paid servant, this Government geologist, to look after. They let the field drift out of their hands and threw it away. Then they say that their policy is nationalisation. You cannot believe them when you see them blowing hot and cold. It is all right if it is a loss—the State can have it then—but when it is likely to produce millions of money somebody else can have it. This is a grievance sufficient to warrant a no-confidence motion, and also sufficient to induce the members sitting behind the Government to turn the Government out of office.

The next question I want to deal with is the matter of unemployment. We were told by the Secretary for Mines at the Paddington by-election that within two months from that time there would not be a single unemployed man in Queensland who was willing to work. To-day there are thousands and thousands of unemployed in Queensland who are willing to work, and are only waiting for an opportunity to do so. They are going about with haggard faces, hungry stomachs, and ill-clad bodies. There is more unemployment now than it was ever anticipated there would be. How are the Government trying to employ these men? When they had contracts to give for railway bridges over the Johnstone and Kolan Rivers, did they say that the unemployed must have work found for them in connection with those contracts? No; they said the contracts must be given to the lowest tenderers. They let the contracts to English engineering firms, who pay less wages than we do here. They had better have let the contract to Messrs. G. and J. Dowrie, in South Brisbane, as by the time the cost of bringing the material from England is paid there will be very little difference in the English price and the price for which the work could have been done

here—perhaps a couple of thousand pounds. The result is that men have to be kept because there is no work for them to do. If this is the Government's way of providing work, the whole thing is a farce and a sham.

The Arbitration Court is an institution which we all uphold, but where do the Government stand in connection with it? Whilst they stood behind the shearers in going to the Arbitration Court—some of whom earn £500, £600, £700, or £800 a year—they tell the public servants, who do not earn more than £300 a year, that they cannot go to the Arbitration Court. In the same city you have private employers compelled to go to the Arbitration Court in regard to all employees receiving up to £600. The Government insist that the shearers must go, for instance, but refuse to allow their own employees to go.

At 5.25 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN left the chair, reported progress, and asked leave to sit again.

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

The House adjourned at 5.30 p.m.

[*Mr. Fry.*