Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 1924

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WEDNESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER, 1924.

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

QUESTIONS.

INSTALLATION OF HEATING AND COOKING APPLIANCES, BRISBANE SICK CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*) asked the Home Secretary—

"In the face of the statements made by the hon. member for Port Curtis, with reference to certain conduct on the part of the Brisbane Sick Children's Hospital Committee in accepting a higher estimate for the installation of a cooking and heating system in the kitchen of that hospital, will he cause an inquiry to be made into the accuracy of the statement?"

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. Stopford, *Mount Morgan*) replied—

"I have asked the Hospital Committee for a report on this matter."

PLANT NURSERY ON BRIBIE ISLAND.

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

"1. What area has been cleared and fenced for use as a nursery at Bribie Island?

"2. Is it being successfully used?

"3. What is the cost to date?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*), for the Secretary for Agriculture (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*), replied—

"1. Eleven acres stumped and one acre cleared but not yet stumped. Fifty-two acres have been fenced.

"2. Yes. The land has been proved to be adapted for nursery purposes.

"3. Total payments to 31st August last—£3,245 13s. 4d."

TRAVELLING EXPENSES OF MINISTERS.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*), without notice, asked the Premier—

"Will he inform the House when the return showing Ministerial expenses for the last financial year will be placed on the table of the House?"

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

"I cannot inform the hon. member definitely, but it will not be unduly delayed."

PAPER.

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

Report by the Director to the Council of Agriculture under the Primary Producers' Organisation Act of 1922, embracing a review of the operations of the year ended 30th June, 1924.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—SIXTH ALLOTTED DAY.

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

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS.

COURT OF INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION.

Question stated—

"That £4,132 be granted for 'Department of Public Works—Court of Industrial Arbitration.'"

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): Some discussion took place yesterday when this vote was before the Committee as to the merits of the present system of arbitration as compared with the wages board system. To my mind the wages boards were more effective in the way of efficiently dealing with disputes and settling the conditions in the industry. That system also enables the men engaged in industry to appreciate the difficulties of the employers, and in many cases obviates an appeal to a court.

There is one thing to which I strongly object in connection with our arbitration system, and that is that it is going outside the scope assigned to it for fixing wages and conditions of employment, and is being used in such a way that some people are going to suffer in their employment unless they contribute to an organisation.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: If they get the benefit, why should they not pay?

Mr. MOORE: Why should they be forced to contribute to a political organisation? What I object to is what happened in the case of the Public Service General Officers' Association. After the members by an enormous majority decided that they would not link up with the Australian Labour party, the executive joined up, irrespective of the result of that poll. To point out how it affects some of them, this statement is made in the organ of the association, "The State Service"—

"If they are not in an association, they will suffer accordingly by a reduction in their wages."

That means that men have got to join the union in order to get the same remuneration as their mates, and if they do join, they are forced to contribute to the funds of a political organisation with whose objects many of them do not agree.

Mr. HARTLEY: They can easily annul the action of the executive.

Mr. MOORE: That is all very well, but the hon. member knows very well that, if any individual in the association took action in that direction, he would be a marked man.

Mr. COLLINS: You are speaking from experience of your own crowd.

Mr. MOORE: I am speaking from experience of what has happened here during the last eight or nine years, where a man who dared to give expression to his opinions was victimised, and that is exactly what would happen in a case like this.

Mr. ROBERTS: The Government themselves have done it.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: This is a change from 1912.

Mr. MOORE: We are not going back to 1912 at all.

Mr. COLLINS: What about the tramway men?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MOORE: I believe in the principle of arbitration because I think it is a fair and efficient way of settling disputes, even though there are some cases in which it is impossible to secure adherence to awards. Arbitration is an efficient system of settling disputes.

Mr. WRIGHT: What about your candidate for Buranda in the 1923 election?

Mr. MOORE: He was victimised. I do not object to preference to unionists where it is not going to affect the political opinion of the individual; but to compel a man to subscribe to a political organisation that he does not agree with is wrong. He should not be compelled to subscribe to a political organisation because of the fear of loss of proper emolument unless he belongs to a union. To force him into a position to which he strongly objects is absolutely improper, and people have no right to be forced into that position. It is all very well to talk about indignation meetings, and say that they can protest, but we know perfectly well what the result would be if they did protest.

Mr. HYNES: Should not all the members of the organisation be bound by the opinions of the majority?

Mr. MOORE: Not when it affects political freedom. No section of an organisation should be coerced into subscribing funds for a certain political party. This is not a question of industrial freedom, but a question of political freedom. That is what I object to. Why should a man be compelled to join an organisation that he does not want to join, and does not believe in, and to contribute to the funds of that organisation? To my mind it is absolutely wrong. Efficiency is what should count in the public service. It should not be a question of whether a man supports a certain political organisation or not. That is the point I take in connection with arbitration as it affects the system of preference to unionists. If a man in an industry is obliged to belong to a political organisation, then preference should not be continued in that industry. Preference should be granted for merit. I am quite prepared to admit that under certain circumstances, where a union makes an agreement with the employers, preference is a fair and square thing, but in the public service preference is not fair and square. The individual has to subscribe to a political organisation that he does not believe in and does not want to belong to. In this case the public servants took a ballot and rejected the proposal to affiliate, and then the executive went behind that ballot and forced the individuals to belong to a political organisation that they did not agree with.

Mr. HYNES: They decided to affiliate with the Queensland Central Political Executive.

Mr. MOORE: Yes. The executive did that in the face of the ballot that was taken.

Mr. HYNES: The convention decided it.

Mr. MOORE: The convention had nothing to do with it.

Mr. HYNES: It is representative of the whole of the organisations.

Mr. MOORE: The public servants took a ballot as to whether they would join up, and that ballot was decisively against any such action; but the executive took it into their own hands to join up, and the members of the association have no way of getting out of their unpleasant situation. We should have freedom of thought in the politics of this State, and men should not be liable to have their jobs taken away or have their wages reduced merely because they desire political freedom. The principle is wrong, and the Government have no right to exercise discrimination in affairs such as this.

Mr. CARTER: There is a lot of political freedom over there.

Mr. MOORE: There is political freedom here. We know exactly how hon. members opposite are tied. I do not object to a man tying himself, but I object to a man being compelled to contribute to a political organisation because of the fear of losing his job or not receiving his full emoluments. It is not right to place him in that position. It was stated yesterday that arbitration existed so that men engaged in industry could get proper conditions; and two hon. members opposite said that it was to ensure men getting the full fruits of their industry. We know that there are many industries from which a man would get very little if he obtained the full fruits of his industry. Take the men engaged in a mine that is not paying. The fruits in that case would be very small. Take the men working in the Railway Department. If they got the full fruits of their industry, they would not get very much. Arbitration is only for the purpose of endeavouring to settle disputes in an amicable fashion and so give the employees fair conditions of work. To my mind that is what arbitration is for, and if you go outside those limits and compel people to subscribe to a political organisation before they can get their proper emoluments fixed under arbitration, then you are forcing them into a position that they have no right to occupy.

The hon. member for Townsville pointed out yesterday that preference was only secured by the strength of the militant unions; if a union was strong enough, it was able to secure it. Some years ago the hon. member for Mount Morgan, the present Home Secretary, stated that arbitration was useful only in so far as the union was strong enough to enforce its demands in the court. If a union is strong enough, we know that it is able to enforce preference; but in the case of the public service such a principle is decidedly unfair if it is forced from the court without consideration of efficiency or merit, and merely because the organisation is powerful.

The question of arbitration in the public service is a pretty wide one. I suppose that many hon. members have read the annual report on the Commonwealth Public Service, which was placed before the Federal Parliament this year. In that report the Acting Public Service Commissioner, Mr. W. B. Edwards, states his opposition to arbitration in the public service because of the difficulties he experiences in carrying on an efficient and contented public service in face of the huge number of boards that he has to adjudicate upon or administer. He says—

"I am also satisfied that true work values can only be determined by an

> intimate knowledge of, and frequent association with, the class of work under consideration, and that the hearing of evidence, naturally biassed, and in many cases not typical of the general nature of the work, even though rebutting evidence may be adduced, and an occasional cursory examination of working conditions made, cannot give the best results in fixing terms of employment."

The greatest objection he seems to have is this—

> "The Commissioner further states that during his period of office the difficulties of administration were greatly increased by the accumulated effect of new conditions and inadequate provision to meet them."

That is just the trouble that most of our heads of departments are faced with where there are continuous variations in the award, where there are inadequate provisions to meet them, and the difficulties that crop up in the administration of their departments. Mr. Edwards further points out—

> "Further, while the object of arbitration is to secure a contented service, I am doubtful, to say the least, whether it achieves that end. This is evident by the frequent appearance before the Arbitrator of associations of officers whose claims have previously been decided. An organisation goes to arbitration in the knowledge that they have everything to gain and nothing to lose, and, if the judgment does not give them all that they seek, or is tantamount to a declaration that their claims are extravagant, the feeling of disappointment engendered must have a disturbing effect upon them as a body of officers."

We find that the same difficulties that crop up in the public service here crop up in the Federal public service also. Continued applications for variations of awards mean that a great deal of time is taken up by the officers of the departments in considering and interpreting them, that a great deal of time is taken up by the public servants themselves in the preparation of claims, and that a large amount of unnecessary expense is entailed. We all know that a great deal of this expense is brought about, not because of the existence of any dissatisfaction or dispute, but because there are certain paid officers whose duty it is to make application for fresh awards.

Those hon. members who are connected with local authorities know that they have experienced the same trouble.

Mr. HYNES: An increase in the cost of living is usually responsible for fresh applications to the court.

Mr. MAXWELL: Not always.

Mr. MOORE: There are many other causes. Speaking from experience as a member of a local authority, I know that in nine cases out of ten the men are unaware that a fresh application has been made. They were perfectly satisfied with the conditions obtaining prior to the application for a variation. We all know, though, that the paid official has to keep his job.

Mr. HANSON: You do not think he acts on his own initiative, do you? He never acts without instructions.

Mr. MOORE: He puts before a small meeting the need for a variation of the award, and urges that such an application can do no harm, and may mean something beneficial to the men. The men outside have no opportunity of putting forward their views. They are not asked, and frequently do not know that the application is coming on. The official naturally thinks that if he can gain something, so much the better; if he does not gain anything, the men lose nothing. The effect is that there is a continual disturbance in our local authorities, and people having to pay the award are continually faced with difficulties, because the award does not come in at the beginning of the year, but usually after the estimates have been made. I know that the common experience is a reduction of work so far as my council is concerned, because we have not been able to make adequate provision to meet the difference in conditions.

That sort of principle is continually creating unrest. I admit that the principle of arbitration, when applied to disputes, is a sound one; but, instead of the officials continually attempting to upset awards, the men concerned in the industries should be the ones to consider and advocate any variations. I much prefer the system where employees and employers engaged in an industry got together round a table and thrashed out the whole question. Those people knew the position of the industry concerned. The trouble now is the unreasonableness of the officials. I do not suppose they always expect to have their applications granted, because they ask about double what might reasonably be expected, but that system creates interminable disputes and unrest. It needs amending so that we may eliminate a large number of useless applications for variations in various awards.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): I think we have been going along the wrong road for a number of years so far as attending to the wants of the worker is concerned. With other hon. members on this side, I think the better principle would be the improvement of the old Wages Boards Act. I think that every hon. member on this and the opposite side of the Chamber wishes to see a better system in operation. I do not think we are going to arrive at a solution of the problem unless we adopt a system different from that at present in operation. Hon. members opposite must admit that we are getting nowhere under present conditions. The fact of the matter is that the present system has reached its limits. There are, of course, some dreamers who have beautiful visions of what will take place in the future, but no one has advanced a practical scheme.

I am convinced and I feel sure there is something in the idea that the worker realises that he is being wrongly led. That wrongful leading is not wilful—I do not wish to convey that idea—but there has been a huge mistake. To-day the worker wishes to do the work himself; he wishes to become a proprietor. I am convinced as to that. I am also convinced that the thin end of the wedge may be inserted to get this great boon through the system of profit-sharing. I am absolutely certain that it would have been achieved had the Government acted on some suggestions made a few years ago, from one hon. member in particular—who did not wish to swallow the ideas of the Government holus-bolus—and who moved resolutions on two occasions for an extension of the Industrial Arbitration Act which would have enabled the worker to acquire secondary industries.

Had that system been started in a small way, by this time we would have arrived at a solution of this problem which is a most oppressive weight on every thinking person in Queensland. We know that the conditions have materially altered of late. There never has been a time in the history of the world when alterations have been taking place so rapidly as during the last decade—the decade that was ushered in by the great war. I do not suppose that any thinking man will ever expect that we shall get back to the "jog trot" system of doing things. Members who have been elected to this Parliament of Queensland should trace this problem from a purely non party viewpoint, because I am quite convinced many hon. members are prepared to give a trial to something that is new so far as we are concerned—that is a kind of co-operation. The worker up to the present time has not been prepared to accept co-operation because he has been told that the golden age will be brought about by bleeding the boss and by taking as much as possible from that individual by the easy way provided by way of the Arbitration Court. Those views have been wrong. We must admit that the workers are in a very large majority. What is called the "boss" section of the community represents not more than 10 per cent. of the people with whom we are dealing. Although my constituency is a producing constituency, at the same time the men who are doing the producing are nearly all actual workers. Therefore it would be to my advantage and to the advantage of nearly every individual in my electorate if some better and more christianlike solution of this problem were arrived at. I may be considered old fashioned—I suppose I am—but I am of the opinion that the present method is engendering an unchristianlike feeling between employer and employee. I believe that the agitator served a useful function in the past. We have had them in our own party, and it is no use saying we have not.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You have them now.

Mr. WARREN: We have got them now, and I am not going to say that we have not. The agitator has served a useful purpose, and, while we should take the best that is given by these agitators, at the same time they are a very big danger to the commercial peace and the industrial peace of Queensland and of the other States. We are in no better position in Queensland than they are anywhere else, and it is no use hon. members saying that we are the slightest bit better off. I want to approach this subject as honestly as possible, and I give more credit probably than most hon. members on this side to the desires of hon. members on the other side. Yet the man who says we are better off in Queensland is deliberately misleading the people. There are two industries in regard to which we are better off. The shearers are better off, and the sugar workers are better off.

Mr. HYNES: So are the squatters and the farmers.

Mr. WARREN: The hon. member does not know what he is talking about.

Mr. HYNES: Are not those industries which are covered by awards in a more prosperous condition than those industries which are not?

Mr. WARREN: The hon. member's figures may suit him, but they do not suit me. We have two very prosperous industries in Queensland to-day. I do not want to say too much about one of those industries, because that industry depends to a great extent on the attitude adopted by Australians generally. Up to the present the people of the other States have treated us in a right way, and I believe they will continue to do so, but that does not get away from [10.30 a.m.] the fact that without that right treatment the industry referred to unfortunately will be put down below the other primary industries. What is the use of deceiving ourselves—we are getting no further forward? Can any hon. member opposite honestly say that we are getting any further forward? If we are not, why should we humbug ourselves and also the workers? I would be delighted to see some plan evolved in the interests of the worker—not State socialism, as that will never meet the case—but co-operation, under which the best men will manage concerns as they are required.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: A co-operative commonwealth.

Mr. WARREN: I agree absolutely, without any reservation, in a co-operative commonwealth.

Mr. MAXWELL: Yes, but you do not understand what they mean.

Mr. WARREN: I understand what I mean. I do not care a rap what they mean—I understand the English of it. When we adopt co-operation to the extent of becoming a co-operative commonwealth, we shall then be nearer to the teachings of Jesus Christ than the world has ever yet approached. I believe that the legislation of Queensland will have to come down to that bedrock before we can do any good for the State. Whatever has been done by any Government hitherto has not been permanent.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. WARREN: I accept your ruling, Mr. Pollock. I want to make myself quite clear that this vote, although very small, is absolutely useless, and if we are to go on like this year after year with no better prospect, it is no good to anybody. I maintain that the "fat man"—that is, the "very fat man"—the bloated man—is getting fatter, combinations are getting stronger, and the worker is getting into a worse condition. I do not stand for this state of things. I ask hon. members opposite, who profess to stand for the workers, what they are going to do to remedy the very serious difficulty we are in.

Mr. BRUCE (*Kennedy*): The leader of the Opposition seemed to be somewhat upset on the question of unions approaching the Arbitration Court, and took altogether a wrong attitude on the matter. It is necessary for unions to approach the court annually to overtake the increased cost of living.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: You are increasing it.

Mr. BRUCE: When the judge lays down an award at any particular time, he makes provision for the twelve months' period which the award has to cover. Immediately an award is made and a slight increase is given to the men, the middlemen, and very

often the retailers, increase the cost of living to a very much greater extent than the amount granted per medium of the court. It is necessary to approach the court at least once a year to keep things some way within reason. The Arbitration Court has made no provision whatever for fixing the cost of materials. The worker goes into the court and has the price of his labour fixed, but the man who sells material or a commodity does not have the price of that commodity fixed by the court at the same time. We have a Commissioner of Prices—one man who, in a haphazard way, fixes the prices of commodities throughout the State. One man cannot control the whole of the business activities in the State of Queensland. Especially is that evident when we remember that we have a number of Arbitration Court judges fixing the price of labour, and we find that number being increased. What should be done? The worker has only his work to sell, and a price is fixed for that work. With that price he has to turn round and purchase food and clothing, and, if the price of the only thing that he has to sell is fixed, then the price of every commodity that he has to buy with it should be fixed at the same time.

Then the leader of the Opposition took exception to the principle of preference to unionists. Unionists have found since the introduction of arbitration that the difficulty of raising the money necessary to approach the court is one of their greatest handicaps, but, although there are certain men who will willingly subscribe to get the improved conditions and rates of pay, on the other hand men outside come along and say, "Now you have spent the money to secure these improved conditions and rates of pay, I am going to enjoy them." The members of the union quite logically say, "If you are going to enjoy them, you must also take your part in the cost of securing them." That is a sound business proposition. There is not a member on the opposite side of the Chamber, there is not a business man in Australia, who would do something for nothing, or who would let anybody else come in and enjoy the fruits of his labour without any cost. I say that the principle of preference is absolutely sound, and I believe that in all organisations and awards that policy should be enforced.

The leader of the Opposition then went on to complain of unions joining up with the Queensland Central Executive of the Australian Labour Party, saying that small executives, or agitators as he called them—the organisers and secretaries—were responsible for this joining up. But any man who belongs to a union of any kind has the right from time to time to take part in the framing of its policy, and if a man wanted to frame a policy in that direction he would act on those lines and endeavour to get the organisation to follow them; but if another man with brains and intelligence objected, he could organise with a view to preventing it.

Mr. MOORE: The Public Service Association took a vote on it.

Mr. BRUCE: There is one explanation of the objection of the Opposition. They have nothing to offer to men who earn their living with their brains or their hands, and therefore these organisations would never join up with the political party opposite. On the other hand, the Labour party has something to offer them. Consisting of men who have worked at some of the hardest classes of labour, it has built up, first through direct action and then by instituting arbitration, an organisation, political and industrial, which offers some opportunity of improvement to every man who earns a living by his hands or brains. Not only so, but if hon. members opposite would look at the political position to-day they would realise also that the Labour movement has done something for the primary producers as well as the men who work for wages, and that that achievement has been recognised by the primary producers themselves. That being so, the organisations of workers of all classes will affiliate with this political party. Hon. members opposite have an opportunity to create a party. They have an opportunity to put forward a policy that will attract these people if they are able. It would then be entirely in the hands of the organisations or unions to join up with them, if they so desired; yet the leader of the Opposition objects to these organisations joining up with the Queensland Central Executive.

Mr. MOORE: Because they had previously objected to doing so.

Mr. BRUCE: The wages board system would be very fine if you could establish it on a fair and equitable basis. You have representatives of the employers and the representatives of the employees, but it is the third man—the apex of the triangle—who causes all the trouble, because he is usually a man who does not belong to the working class and is opposed, consciously or unconsciously, to the outlook of the worker.

Mr. HANSON: Usually a political appointee.

Mr. BRUCE: In any case his outlook in life generally is opposed to the worker. The Arbitration Court itself has some weaknesses. One weakness is that we have judges who, though perhaps possessing a first-class legal training, have no knowledge of what work really is, and have no knowledge of the industrial surroundings of the worker. My contention is that, when a man is qualifying for a judge of the Arbitration Court, he should serve some time at some form of industry as well as serving his time in learning the legal side of the question. When operating under the old Industrial Peace Act, where a worker in an industry had to represent the workers, and a manager or some other person had to represent the employers, I took a judge through a mine, and in going through that mine we warned him of a little pothole about 18 inches or 2 feet deep, but notwithstanding that warning, he slipped into it. We went along a little further and approached a rise. When he got a few feet up the ladder, he came back and made the statement that he was satisfied that mining work was dangerous. Yet he had not seen one-tenth of the danger, and he had not seen one-fiftieth of the difficulties of mining. I did not blame the man, because he had never been in a mine or laboured at that particular class of work.

Mr. CORSER: See how sympathetic he would be.

Mr. BRUCE: It was not a question of sympathy; he was trained entirely to possess a legal mind. If he had awarded the full value that he thought the men were worth for doing this work, I do not know what he

would have given, because he would not have worked there himself under any conditions at all. I have even seen men watching the workers engaged on the railways and remarking, "Government stroke!" Let anybody not accustomed to the work get out and try to keep pace with those men for eight hours, then we would see all about the Government stroke. You will see that men who are not used to manual labour and who have no knowledge whatever of what actual work is—this applies to the judges of the Arbitration Court—have the right to fix the rates of pay affecting a certain industry on the basis of the bare cost of living. Those wages are fixed as the minimum wage for those who know the actual conditions of labour. I think the Arbitration Court is too limited in some respects. I know that in Brisbane to-day—this has come before the Arbitration Court in one particular case—the card system is in vogue amongst the employees, and it is absolutely sweating the life blood out of the men who are employed, and it is also destroying the quality of the goods turned out.

To-day in the leather trade a card system exists, under which a man is given a set task to perform. The task is greater than he can perform, but the objective is to get the men competing with one another in an endeavour to reach that limit. That system speeds the worker up. It also finds out the slowest worker, who is dismissed if a better man can be secured to take his place. On the other hand, if production is increased to such a stage, work can be suspended until the accumulated stock is reduced. Those are the consequences of speeding up. Hon. members have knowledge of the attempt at speeding up that was introduced into the workshops of Sargeants, Ltd., last year, and the consequent dispute that took place. The judges of the Arbitration Court should appoint men to investigate conditions in industry and give the result of those investigations in evidence. To-day the unions have to provide the whole of the evidence necessary in the case; no matter what line of evidence is required, the union has to cover the whole of the ambit. The position briefly is that the unions are required to prove their case. The employers simply sit back on the prosperity of the industry and the basic wage as fixed by the court. The highest wage that the employees can secure from the court is merely a bare living wage. A living wage alone is not the compensation for workers that we should strive for in this State. The prosperity of an industry acts both ways. When an industry slumps, the employees engaged therein can fall below the basic wage. One hon. member opposite made that suggestion in connection with Mount Morgan. The same hon. member stated that it was better that the miners in that place should continue in the industry at a lower rate of wage than be unemployed; but I state that it would be better if those men had an opportunity of engaging in a more remunerative branch of industry. There is no hope for the worker under that system. The worker has only one viewpoint—that no matter what happens in this country, what work he does, or how effective that work may be, he can only get a living rate of wage. Under the system of arbitration there is no hope for the worker. The judges of the Arbitration Court have in many instances, by their statements, told the workers, not directly but indirectly, that the court has reached its limitations. The natural result of that statement will be that as time goes on the workers will initiate a movement for the abolition of the court. During the war period, when the cost of living was jumping up by leaps and bounds, the court served a very useful function in keeping the rates of pay somewhere in the vicinity of the increase in the cost of living. It also had a tendency to do away with industrial unrest and direct action, which in many instances tends to do a lot of damage to the workers as well as to employers. Nevertheless, so far as the unions are concerned, it has created a commercial spirit that is from day to day destroying the principle of solidarity and the general unselfishness that men brought to bear in their early battles for improvements in conditions.

Employers are sitting back to-day and are well satisfied with arbitration, particularly employers in secondary industries. Those men are sitting back in comfort, the rates they pay are not excessive, and they are able to sell their commodities on a high market. Those men do not worry about arbitration awards, because they can pass the increase on to the consumer. The trouble about the whole thing is that we do not get the producer in close touch with the consumer. If that were done, the employer could give rates of pay and conditions for the worker that would be satisfactory and worth while. Instead, there is a man in between the producer and the consumer who takes a proportion of the profit that should be passed on to the worker. The result is the producer and the consumer are exploited all the while; and, when I speak of the producer, I mean the worker as well as the farmer. That is the position. There is a quiet man in between of whom we see and hear little, and he is doing the damage. That is why farmers and workers cannot get a decent return, and that is why the consumer has to pay so much for the things that go on to his breakfast table. That quiet individual is the man who destroys everything. A system of arbitration is created, but as soon as that system is created this individual finds a method of getting round it and nullifying its benefits. That is the kind of thing that keeps going the agitation for better conditions, and it is the kind of thing that will create chaos and ultimately breed revolution. It is no use talking about agitators. They are not the individuals who bring about the trouble; they are merely trying to do something for bodies of men that is absolutely necessary. These men are exploited in every shape and form, and they will wake up sooner or later. If these exploiters continue their operations, and do not supply some hope of a better future for the masses, the time will come when Great Britain and Australia will be thrown into a revolution. I do not favour revolutions, because they react upon the workers; but, make no mistake, we shall get them. Hon. members have talked about the conditions affecting the workers, and have stated that secondary industries are necessary to relieve the position. Great Britain is one of the largest possessors of secondary industries in the world, and there are 2,000,000 unemployed in that country. They have their Arbitration Courts and systems of arbitration there, but they just come to the same thing. Those affected work round arbitration. But make no mistake, unless these people who are suffering from the system

receive some relief in the near future, it will result in a tremendous disaster to the nation.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*): I realise that this vote is one of the most important upon the Estimates.

Mr. HYNES: Why did you not speak upon it yesterday?

Mr. MAXWELL: To me the Arbitration Court is something that has been created for the purpose of bringing about a better understanding between employer and employee. It endeavours to give greater satisfaction. When one hears the speeches that fall from the lips of hon. members opposite—speeches tinged with a flavour of bitterness—I think it is a most pitiful state of affairs. We have been told by hon. members opposite that Tories are responsible for the distress of workers. I presume hon. members opposite refer to members of the Opposition; but let me tell those hon. members that in this respect they are Tories of the Tories, and if anything of a democratic nature is advanced to assist the workers, it will come from hon. members on this side. I wish to point out in the best interests of the community that, if there is to be a better understanding between employer and employee, the doctrine of hatred and class consciousness must cease to be disseminated. There should be that understanding between the one and the other which goes for the building up of a State such as this. One would imagine from the statements that have been made that when members on this side occupied the Treasury benches nothing had been done in any way to ameliorate or relieve the position of the workers. But we find that members on the other side are benefiting by the legislation that was passed by what they term "Tories." The system of wages boards was introduced by the previous Administration. The hon. member for Fitzroy pointed out the benefits that accrued from wages boards, and, in fact, he seemed rather to like wages boards in preference to the Arbitration Court. The Wages Boards Act became law in 1908, and this supposed Tory Administration went a step further in 1912 and passed the Industrial Peace Act. Then, when the Labour Government took control of the Treasury benches they repealed the Industrial Peace Act and passed the Industrial Arbitration Act.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: We had three all-night sittings on it.

Mr. MAXWELL: Notwithstanding the three all-night sittings it is not perfection, and I presume it was because of the three all-night sittings they had to rush through that legislation—like they have been doing in connection with other legislation—that it has been essential to introduce amendments to Act. There are various sections in the Act to-day that require amending. If the statement made by the hon. member for Kennedy is correct, that the unions have a right to appeal to the Arbitration Court once a year for the purpose of having their wages adjusted, nobody can find fault with that; the court is there for that purpose; but that is not the case. An amendment of the Industrial Arbitration Act is necessary because there is no fixity of tenure. Section 17 provides—

> "An award shall be binding on—
>
> (*a*) All parties to the industrial cause who appear or are represented before the court or the board; and
>
> (*b*) All parties who have been summoned to appear before the court or board as parties to the cause, whether they have appeared in answer to the summons or not, unless the court or board is of opinion that they were improperly summoned before it as parties; and
>
> (*c*) All industrial unions connected with the calling or callings to which the award applies; and
>
> (*d*) All members of industrial unions bound by the award; and
>
> (*e*) All employers and employees in the locality to which the award applies in the calling or callings to which it applies; and
>
> (*f*) All persons who, whether as employers or employees, are engaged in such calling or callings in that locality at any time while the award remains in force."

Section 18 provides—

> "(1) Subject to this Act, the court may rescind or vary any decision, recommendation, direction, appointment, reference, or other act made or done by it, and may reopen any reference or proceeding."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you agree with that?

Mr. MAXWELL: Certainly I do, and I will tell the hon. member why I agree with it. For a period of twelve months there ought to be fixity of an award. The Minister is in charge of a huge spending department, and he will know full well from the experience he has had in another sphere of activity how impossible it is for a man to estimate the cost of work under conditions such as that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Most contracts contain a rise and fall clause which meets your complaint.

Mr. MAXWELL: That is wrong, and no one knows it better than the hon. gentleman. He knows how impossible it is for a contractor to estimate the cost of his work under such conditions. Let me illustrate my meaning.

A few weeks ago the Consolidated Buildings Trades Award was given by the Arbitration Court. The contractors were naturally unable to make proper estimates of cost of work pending the hearing of the case, and after judgment was given they tendered for work which was available. We now find that there is a number of contractors who are carrying out certain work under the conditions of an Award which will come before the Court again in a week or two. The Consolidated Buildings Trades Award will be coming before the Arbitration Court again for review. All this shows that the argument which has been adduced by the hon. member for Kennedy, so far as it concerns the industry or activity that I am talking about, will not stand investigation. I am one of those who believe in trade unionism—in a union of crafts.

[11 a.m.]

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The Employers' Federation.

Mr. MAXWELL: It is no good the hon. gentleman talking like that. When men were asked to belong to a trade union, it was understood that it was to be a union of trades or crafts, but when, as the leader of the Opposition pointed out this morning,

they were forced into the position of becoming members of a political union instead of a union of craftsmen, it was an utterly wrong attitude to take up, and instead of being good for unionism, it is going to have a very detrimental effect. There was one aspect put forward by the hon. member for Fitzroy which it was rather refreshing to hear; that was, that he realised that there were from 10 to 15 per cent. of the whole number of the employers who might be unscrupulous. The same remark applies—I want to be perfectly frank—on both sides. Owing to that condition of affairs obtaining, it has been necessary to introduce measures such as the Industrial Arbitration Act so that men on both sides will get a decent deal.

Mr. GLEDSON: Why did you oppose the measure when it was going through, if it was necessary to get a decent deal?

Mr. MAXWELL: I was not here then. It is no use the hon. member making nonsensical interjections.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What did the Employers' Federation think of it?

Mr. MAXWELL: I do not know, but I would tell the hon. gentleman what it thought when I was associated with it. The Federation believed in arbitration and in the right of the employees to go to the Arbitration Court; but what some of the members did not believe in—and some hon. members opposite do not believe in it—is the overlapping of Federal and State awards.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Where has that happened in Queensland?

Mr. MAXWELL: It happened at a conference of the Council of Employers of Australia, reference to which will be found in my speech on the subject recorded in "Hansard" of last year. Under the conditions of the Industrial Arbitration Act to-day it is an absolute impossibility for an employer or a contractor, more particularly in association with building construction, to arrive at a definite idea of what the costs are going to be in connection with a contract. Hon. members opposite must know how impossible it is when employees can go to the Arbitration Court week in and week out for a revision of their awards.

Another detrimental and dangerous matter is retrospectivity. I want to be fair in regard to that. I say that, when a union makes a claim to the Arbitration Court, retrospectivity would be all right from that date, but to go back months and months, as has been done in certain industries, is unjust. I have given an instance in connection with an industry where contractors based their calculations on the condition of affairs which existed at a certain period. Later on the judge gave retrospectivity in certain cases. If the hon. members opposite are desirous of the socialisation of industry—and I believe they are—it is quite all right for them to advocate such things as that, but they have no right to be hypocritical about it. It is no good saying that they believe in an Arbitration Court for settling disputes between employers and employees, for fixing conditions, and seeing that men get a decent rate of pay, and then undermining the Court and preaching the gospel of discontent. That is the kind of thing which does no good to employers and employees. The following letter which the hon. member for Townsville wrote is not conducive to the welfare of either employers or employees or to the advancement of the State. This letter was sent out early in 1916—

"A.W.U. Office, Mackay.

"Dear Comrades,—

"Yours of even date to hand and in reply I wish to state piece-work may be done by field workers under the existing award, provided that the remuneration does not fall below the prescribed rates for day labour, inclusive of overtime.

"Consequently, as Easter Monday and Good Friday are gazetted holidays under the Industrial Peace Act, all time worked on those days (irrespective of whether the work is carried out on the daily wage or contract system), must be paid for at time and a-half. So, if the men work eight hours on Monday at piece-work rates, they are entitled to not less than 13s. 9d. irrespective of the amount of work performed. I would suggest that if the men take it on they go slow and thus give the employer a bellyful of this pernicious piece-work system.

Fraternally yours."

That is the kind of thing which, in my opinion, is most detrimental to any industry, and, if that is the kind of conduct that hon. members opposite stand for, the sooner we have it settled the better.

The position in regard to the over-lapping of State and Federal awards has created misunderstanding. In a report of three lectures delivered by Chief Justice McCawley, we find the following:—

"FEDERAL AND STATE JURISDICTION.

"If some form of arbitration is to continue, should the industrial spheres of action of the Commonwealth and States remain as they are? Federal jurisdiction is limited to disputes extending beyond the boundaries of any one State. Reference has already been made to the incidents leading up to the insertion of the enabling words in the Federal Constitution; it is safe to say that few, if any, of those who participated in the Convention debates anticipated that there would be Federal interference, save in those disputes which naturally extended to various States, such as disputes in the maritime and pastoral industries. But it did not take unions long to perceive that disputes could be artificially extended beyond a State, and thus be brought within the Federal purview."

We can easily imagine how unsettled the conditions are in certain industries when such a condition as that obtains. I am not advocating the absolute control by Federal authorities of industrial arbitration, but I am saying that there should be some better understanding in connection with the overlapping of awards. If this is the class of doctrine that is to be preached in connection with arbitration, it appears to me, as I have stated before, that it is absolute hypocrisy for hon. members opposite to make speeches as they have been doing and then deal with matters in this way. We have it on good authority that there is an element on the other side advocating One Big Union who believe in altogether eliminating Wages Boards and Arbitration Courts. They say:—

"As soon as the workers realise that Arbitration Courts, wages boards, and the various other methods of 'mutual' bargaining will never bring them any nearer to their emancipation from the

toils of capitalist exploitation, that on those lines nothing that really matters can possibly be attained—as soon as that position is realised then will another big advance be made on the onward march."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What are you reading from?

Mr. MAXWELL: "The One Big Union and Reconstruction," by Ernest H. Lane—a Parliamentary Library book. That aim is also backed by the objective of the abolition of the wages system and "production for use and not for profit." We know that the present system may not be perfect, but it has helped to build up our Commonwealth. We have heard it said also that the profits that are made should be distributed equally amongst those who create them. I would like to have, from hon. members on the other side, an explanation of what they mean when they say that a man shall receive the full reward of his labour. Does the employer receive the full reward of his labour? They are all workers. There is only this difference: that there are some who work harder than others—and some employers work very hard indeed. It is stated that in the wages system there is no incentive to great production. I will tell you why. There is a minimum wage, and all men are put on the same footing by the Arbitration Court. I realise that that does not prevent the employer from raising the standard of pay of a man who is doing excellent work—and he does so in many instances—but, so soon as the employer does that, individuals like some hon. members opposite say, "So and so is paying so much," and on that they base an application to the Arbitration Court accordingly. The Commonwealth Statistician has shown that, if the whole of the profits of industry were distributed amongst the employees, the result would be an increased wage of not more than 2s. to 3s. a week. Hon. members will see the fallacy of their argument there. Then they say it must not be forgotten that the primary function of industry is not the making of profit for the payment of wages but the fulfilment of public requirements; but they forget that profits and wages are the incentives without which industry would cease to be regarded as an attractive undertaking.

The Premier, in his policy speech at Cairns on 9th April of last year, said—

> "There has been a great deal of controversy amongst industrial workers since the basic wage was reduced from £4 5s. to £4 per week in Queensland last year. The feeling on the subject culminated in a strong agitation on the part of public servants and Government employees against the application of the reduction to them. I admit that it is the duty of a Labour Government to protect the wage standards of the workers of the State, and I acknowledge that consistently with the policy that workers should share in the general prosperity of the community the standard of life should be raised and not lowered as opportunity offers. Despite the criticism of the Government, it can be shown irrefutably that the operation of the arbitration system has, in fact, raised the standard of living in this State in a very material manner. Not only are nominal wages higher in Queensland than in any other State, but the effective wages are higher. . . . It is this increase in the effective wage that has made the Queensland workman the best paid worker in Australia and among the best paid in the world."

Let us analyse the position of the worker. For the quarter ended the 31st March last, the average nominal weekly wage paid in the various States was as follows:—

	s.	d.
New South Wales ...	94	1
Victoria	96	3
Queensland	94	4
South Australia	90	6
West Australia	93	9
Tasmania	92	7

Now let us take the percentage of unemployment as compared with the total number of unionists, which, I take it, must be considered in conjunction with those figures—

	Per cent.
New South Wales	10.6
Victoria	5.1
Queensland	10.0
South Australia	3.8
West Australia	4.8
Tasmania	2.1

Combining those figures and making allowance for the factor of unemployment, the average weekly wage actually paid in the various States was as follows:—

	s.	d.
New South Wales	84	1
Victoria	91	4
Queensland	84	10
South Australia	87	1
Western Australia ...	89	3
Tasmania	98	7

From these figures it will be seen that Queensland stands fifth on the list of the six States. Where is the foundation for the statement of the Premier as to the high rate of wages in Queensland?

There is one thing that the Arbitration Court has done. It has done a great deal of good, irrespective of what my friends on the other side may say. It has enabled a man who is making a claim before the court to continue his work and earn his livelihood, and, whilst it is not altogether perfect and I certainly hope there will be an amendment of the Act which will give the employer and employee fixity of tenure, nevertheless we must realise that it is impossible to achieve perfection in one Act. We have in the Arbitration Court an instance of how the Labour party have profited by the example of the men they traduce as Tories—I say they are not Tories—because we have worked up step by step from the old wages boards through the Industrial Peace Act to the Industrial Arbitration Act, and, although everything is not perfection or even as we would like it to be, I am certainly not going to advocate the elimination of the Arbitration Court and the introduction of something else. As I stated at the outset, it is absolutely essential that the Industrial Arbitration Act should be amended—I think hon. members on the other side realise the necessity for it—in order to create that fixity of tenure which is so essential in the building trade, for instance. I certainly hope that before very long the Government will recognise the desirability of altering the law in that respect and go thoroughly into the overlapping of State and Federal awards.

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

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Bremer*): After listening to the speeches of hon. members opposite for the last two years on our Arbitration Court system, one is inclined to the conclusion that it forms a very fine basis for the organisation of industry and the progress of industry in this State. It was very pleasing to hear the hon. member for Murrumba say that he looked forward to a co-operative commonwealth, and I think we can all agree with him so long as it is a co-operative commonwealth in fact, and so long as all the people in the commonwealth co-operate for the common good. If that is the explanation of the term, then the hon. member for Murrumba and we on this side may link hands. It is not very material how we reach the heavens so long as we do reach them. We on this side are broad-minded enough to throw no stones at the people who are making for the same goal as we, even if they do not happen to move along the same path.

Mr. MOORE: Parallel lines can never meet.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: We can reach a spot that is broad enough for all. The leader of the Opposition probably has never followed parallel paths to their termini.

Mr. KING: They are just as far apart as the starting points.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: They may reach a common end.

Mr. KING: They cannot.

Mr F. A. COOPER: Hon. members opposite have no common end; their end generally is rather uncommon. The hon. member for Kennedy stated very clearly and definitely something that is in the minds of hon. members on this side. He stated that alongside the Arbitration Court it is necessary, and must become more necessary in the future, to have a Price Fixing Court. Price-fixing goes hand in hand with the Arbitration Court. The debate this morning proves, if it proves anything, that the struggle for better conditions is a matter of going step by step. It is a tug-of-war, and we are pulling at one end of the rope, and the Opposition are pulling at the other end. For years we have been advancing, and the foothold that we relinquish to-day for a better foothold a little higher up is taken by the Opposition as their standard of opposition. Time was when they opposed the wages boards, and time was when they opposed anything in the nature of the control of industry and giving the employees any voice whatever. To-day they are saying they are in favour of arbitration, but five or six years ago they opposed it tooth and nail. To-morrow, when we get a step or two along the road, they will step into the footholds that we have abandoned. Reference has been made to the introduction of the wages board system, and as to who were responsible for its introduction. The hon. member for Toowong claimed that the Tories were responsible for the introduction of the wages boards system. I am going to quote some early history compiled from official records—there can be no questioning the authority—dealing with the matter. I propose to quote from "Queensland Politics during Sixty Years, 1859-1919."

Mr. KING: Whom is that by?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: It is written by "Charles Arrowsmith Bernays." It says—

> "The Wages Board Bill of 1907 . ."

I want hon. members to observe the word "Bill." It is not "Act." It continues—

> "was the work of O'Sullivan, as Secretary for Public Works. It constituted, as a matter of fact, part II. of the Factories and Shops Act Amendment Bill of the previous year. At this time, out of five States, three had Arbitration and Conciliation Acts in force, and two Wages Boards Acts. In Victoria wages boards were introduced primarily to stop the evils of sweating and for the purpose of raising the standard of living. Tailoresses' wages in Queensland in 1907 averaged 12s. 11d. per week, but in Victoria, with a Wages Board Act in force, they averaged 17s. 1d. Dressmakers in Queensland averaged 9s. 8d. per week and in Victoria 12s. 2d. Numerous other instances could be given to show how wages boards had improved the position of badly-paid employees. It will hardly be believed that there was a tailoring establishment in Brisbane in 1906-1907 which employed 84 hands, 53 of whom averaged only 3s. 7d. per week, 2 received nothing, 24 received 2s. 6d. per week, and the wages varied from 2s. 6d. per week upwards. Is it any wonder that such a state of affairs cried aloud to heaven for remedy?"

That paragraph gives us the condition of affairs in 1907, when Mr. O'Sullivan, Secretary for Public Works in the Kidston Ministry, was fighting for the introduction of the wages board system. It was opposed by the Opposition tooth and nail. The Bill eventually got to the Upper House, but what happened?

Mr. CORSER: Were the present Government responsible for all the good actions of the Kidston Government?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Not for all of them, but for a fair number of them. The good Acts of the Kidston Government were piloted through by the Labour party supporting Mr. Kidston at the time.

Mr. CORSER: The Government must take responsibility for the sins of that Government as well as for the good things.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: The paragraph I have quoted concludes—

> "There were differences of opinion between the Council and the Assembly in regard to the Bill, so that it did not become law in 1907."

A further paragraph states—

> "In 1908, however, it was again brought forward by Mr. Kerr, who was Secretary for Public Works. It had undergone no alteration in the meantime, and on this occasion the Council were persuaded to come to terms with the Lower House."

The Council were persuaded to come to terms with the Lower House! How? By a general election fought upon this very question of the institution of the wages board system. The elections of 1908 were fought upon that question, and the gentlemen occupying the Opposition benches to-day are the political descendants of the people who fought against the Kidston Government at the elections and who opposed the wages board system tooth and nail.

Mr. FERRICKS: Some of them are sitting there yet.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: If I remember rightly, the hon. member for South Brisbane was a candidate at those elections, and he knows that the main issue was the institution of the wages board system.

Mr. MOORE: What side was he on?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: He was fighting for the wages board system, as he subsequently fought for arbitration and is fighting for better conditions to-day. Surely the leader of the Opposition has no doubt where the hon. member for South Brisbane stands, or has ever stood?

Mr. MOORE: The Labour party was so mixed up at the time.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Is that so? The hon. gentleman's brain does not seem to have clarified anything since that time.

Mr. FERRICKS: That election was fought with the Labour party behind Mr. Kidston.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: In some minds there is a confusion about the Arbitration Court. It is simply because of the fact that we sometimes are inclined to regard it as having failed to achieve its purpose. If those people who believe that, particularly those outside who are supporters of this party, will treat it as a stepping-stone and just a foothold by means of which we might get something else, I believe the whole of the disgruntled attitude and dissatisfaction will disappear. I would remind them, as I was reminded before I spoke, of these words—

"I hold it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things."

This big movement of ours must rise on stepping-stones. There is nothing to take us along the track to the industrial heaven. We can only get there by hard work and hard toil, and arbitration is one of the things which has helped us considerably along those lines.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): The hon. member for Bremer does not speak for all the workers. We all know that in many organisations the Arbitration Court is one of the things that the workers are fighting against. They claim that it is a machine operating in the interests of the employers. Surely hon. members opposite are not going to claim that the Labour party stand for the Arbitration Court.

Mr. FARRELL: It has outlived its usefulness.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. member for Rockhampton by his interjection contradicts the hon. member for Bremer. If it has outlived its usefulness, then what are the Government going to advocate? Why do hon. members opposite not get up and disagree with this appropriation if they do not stand for arbitration? Why do they not say that the next stepping-stone is going to be so and so?

Mr. FARRELL: I agree that it is a stepping-stone.

Mr. CORSER: It may be a stepping-stone downwards.

Mr. FARRELL: No—upwards. This party never go downwards.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. gentleman is going up like any other balloon. Those things that have been a benefit to Labour in Australia were brought about by Governments other than Labour Governments. They may have improved them, but that is very questionable. We know that better industrial conditions were made possible by Acts of Parliament passed by the Government in 1907. That Government has been condemned right along the line by hon. members opposite.

Mr. W. COOPER: They were obtained under pressure.

Mr. CORSER: What is the use of a Labour Government in office if the workers can obtain these things with an antagonistic Government in power? To-day many things are obtained under pressure, notably increases in wages; but the people are now finding it difficult to obtain improved conditions under pressure even from their own Labour Government. That seems to indicate that there is no necessity for a Labour Government to occupy the Treasury benches to enable the workers to secure that which they claim is essential. In the past it was the practice to obtain concessions under pressure—that has been admitted by the hon. member for Rosewood. It is not fair for hon. gentlemen opposite to continue their stump oratory and have the essence of their speeches distributed broadcast in the domains and parks to the working people, keeping the truth from them. It is unfair for them to urge them to oppose what they term "Tories," and point out to them that they can get nothing from them. We have had an illustration of that to-day.

[11.30 a.m.] We know that arbitration conditions and industrial awards were made possible by building up a system that has been provided by the machinery of "Tory" Governments, more particularly the Government which has been referred to to-day which was headed by the late Mr. Kidston. We know further that whilst our arbitration awards and industrial conditions and the sentiments of hon. members opposite remain as they are to-day there will be no further hope for the rest of the world. We know that the advances that have been made industrially in Canada, the United States of America, and other countries of the world were made possible despite the fact that Labour Governments have never been in power there. The hon. member for Bremer quoted an Arbitration Act which he claimed first found its inception in the Victorian Parliament. Those ideals were brought forward in this Parliament in 1907 by the Hon. T. O'Sullivan, who was then Secretary for Public Works. Victoria up to very recently never had a Labour Government, and the Government of the day were never in the position that they were forced by Labour to legislate. That clearly shows that the workers have not had to be depend on so-called Labour Governments for the remedial measures that are necessary to improve their lot. Unfortunately the word "Labour" seems to be used to imply that all matters pertaining to those engaged at any kind of labour can only be secured by the party bearing that name. So long as the Labour party dub their opponents as Tories they hope to retain and instil that idea in the minds of that section of the community for whom they pretend to speak. It it also generally inferred that the employer is represented by hon. members on this side of the Chamber, and that he is anything but a desirable section of the community. We claim that we represent all sections of the community, and that all sections are necessary for its wellbeing. If we encourage the employer through our arbitration awards, and at the same time protect the employee under them, we are going to increase the possibility of providing further employment. If we cannot look upon an employer working under the awards and conditions as fixed by the Arbitration Court as necessary for the benefit of the community, and give him the protection which is essential, how are we

going to provide work in order to develop our country and industries? It is all very well for hon. members opposite, particularly the rank and file, to attempt to inflame the mind of the worker against the employer, when they know they have not to be responsible for the consequences of their actions. It might mean their seats to them. It might mean that the more bitter the feeling in the ranks of Labour becomes against the employer the wider the gap between those sections and the more votes they will consequently command. That, though, will not be to the advantage of the State. The hon. member for Bremer showed what was possible under our present system of arbitration for the working people of Queensland. What have hon. members done with regard to another section of the community, who work longer hours and receive a very much smaller remuneration? I refer to the primary producers, who are the hardest workers in the community. What conditions of arbitration have been extended to them?

Mr. GLEDSON: The Sugar Cane Prices Board.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. member for Kennedy contended that the middleman was responsible for the high price of sugar. I ask the hon. member for Ipswich what middleman is responsible for the high price of that commodity?

Mr. GLEDSON: The Colonial Sugar Refining Company.

Mr. CORSER: The Government said on coming into power that by their labour conditions they would take away the power of interference on the part of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. The Government are in power to-day, yet the hon. member for Ipswich infers that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company is responsible for the high price of sugar. The conditions attached to the awards of the Arbitration Court are responsible to a very great extent, and to a greater extent the increasing cost of wages is responsible. I am not for one moment contending that those increased wages should not have been granted, but I do say that, if those principles are extended to one section of the workers, they should also be extended to the other section that I have referred to to enable them to secure a fair remuneration for their work and industry. If that was done, we would find that things would not finalise just as easily as they do to-day. We would find that the primary producer would have the opportunity of passing on the increase in wages that he has to pay, together with the increase in the cost of implements and other articles which is now denied him. Hon. members opposite have claimed that the Arbitration Court has been established to enable both the employer and the employee to have a say. That is all that we ask for our primary industries. If those principles were extended to the primary producers and the dictator who fixes prices was wiped out, they would be extending fair treatment to that section. The position then arises: Can the community pay? Those are the questions we ask when the Labour party, in order to keep some agitator, some union secretary, or other official in a job, advocate increased wages and conditions. That seems to me to be the unfair part. It is quite popular for the party calling themselves the Labour party to be ever advocating increased wages to the great majority of the people—the wage earners—without considering all sections. By the advocacy of that policy Labour stays in power, and they use the word "Labour," and dub everyone else "Tory," as if all the improvements in wages and conditions had been achieved by them, whereas it has been admitted and proved that they found their birth in Governments that were other than Labour.

The hon. member for Kennedy made strong reference to the fact that the great trouble to-day is in not bringing to the consumer direct the product of the land instead of sending it through the middleman. In making reference to this matter he tried to make out that hon. members on this side are responsible for the protection of the middle section of the community who are living on the worker, the consumer, and the producer. Is that the case? Let us take our wheat pool, which is administered without any interference on the part of the middleman. We find in that case that for every 8s. that is received 3s. goes to keep the pool itself, which takes the place of the middleman. Whatever organisation you have there must be a distributing head, and someone must pay for it. If Parliament was elected for ten years, we would have a very much wiser legislation than the antagonistic conditions which exist at the present time in regard to the rural industry. Arbitration conditions would then be governed by the interests of the employers, of the workers engaged in our industries, and of the State generally. These platitudes that we hear from hon. members opposite would not then be indulged in. They are platitudes delivered by Ministers and private members from the platform and the kerosene case for the one purpose of securing votes and retaining power.

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

Mr. CORSER: I advocate my ideas in the interests of fair arbitration for all sections of the community, as against the arguments of hon. members opposite which are merely used for the purpose of securing votes.

At 11.45 a.m.,

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

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): I have listened very attentively to speeches by hon. members of the Opposition, and I find they are uniform in commending the principle of arbitration and the administration of the Arbitration Court. When hon. members opposite advocate anything, it is usually necessary for us to analyse what they say, because as a rule there is something behind their methods.

It has been stated by hon. members opposite that the principle of arbitration was originated by Tory Governments. The Industrial Arbitration Act, as administered by the Labour Government to-day, is totally different from the old Wages Boards Act as administered by Tory Governments in the past. We find that workers are now given every facility to approach the Arbitration Court, and in addition they are allowed to use whatever means may be at their disposal to place their case before the Court and to have matters dealt with in a proper way. That was not so with the Wages Boards Act. Under that Act the workers were restricted in their rights. Unless they were under the

direct control of an employer—who could crush them and prevent them getting a living—they were prevented from sitting on or appealing to a wages board. Men who were not dependent upon an employer for their bread and butter could neither sit on a wages board nor place their cases before a board. Employees were therefore at a disadvantage all the time.

In justice to some employers of the State I might say that they were totally opposed to that sort of action. I have been dealing with arbitration matters for a considerable time, dating back even prior to the introduction of the Wages Boards Act. I was connected with the coalmining industry, and I suppose that throughout the world no other industry has had bigger fights by direct action for the rights of its workers than has the coal industry. Prior to the introduction of the Wages Boards Act we had to resort to direct action. If we were strong enough, we were able to get an advantage. If we were not sufficiently strong to wage war on the community and the Government of the day, we were not able to get an advantage. That meant that we had to wait until we were strong enough and had saved sufficient funds to justify us taking direct action and so securing an advantage for our workers.

That condition of things was altered in 1906, and conferences were held in the Ipswich and West Moreton districts dealing with the coalmining industry. From those conferences a system of arbitration was evolved which brought about benefits to coal miners and saved them from resorting to strikes. Eventually the Wages Boards Act of 1908 was evolved from those conferences, but the Government of the day would not give the workers the advantages they should have secured from that Act. If a man was not under the control of an employer, he was prevented from taking his seat on the wages boards and so representing the employees. Consequently the wages boards were not a success in that regard. Another disadvantage of the wages boards was that in nearly every case they did not reach finality. The representatives of the employees went before the board, and the employers might say, "We can't give you anything," and then no advantage resulted to the employee. Under the present system of arbitration we can come to some determination, and matters may be brought to finality, although that finality at present and for some considerable time past has not been of great advantage to the workers of this State.

We are asked why we are opposing arbitration. We are forced to the conclusion that arbitration, while it has served a useful purpose in the past—and I suppose is serving a useful purpose at present by giving to those industries which have been weak certain advantages which they would otherwise not get—does not give full advantage to those concerned unless they have a strong organisation behind them.

Mr. KELSO: Do you want an increase every time?

Mr. GLEDSON: I do not know what the hon. member is talking about when he makes that remark. We want to place the workers of this State on a better footing than they were on in the past. We want to raise their standard of living and increase their hours of leisure. Unless we do that, we shall not be achieving our object. It is not merely a question of an increase of wages; it is a question of raising the standard of living of the workers, of increasing their hours of leisure so that they may have a more cheerful outlook on life and not merely exist to eat, drink, and sleep. Time was when employers of labour kept their employees going from daylight to dark. Not very long ago we found that girls were employed in our clothing factories without receiving any pay at all. They gave their first six months of labour free.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: And in some cases they gave twelve months free.

Mr. GLEDSON: Later they received 2s. 6d. a week, and still later they were apprenticed, if they were lucky, and received 7s. 6d. a week. Arbitration has remedied that and some measure of justice has been given to those girls, who now receive a weekly wage from the start. Further, they have the privilege of approaching the Court to better their conditions.

We should be failing in our duty to the workers if we stopped there and said that arbitration had been successful, that it had raised the standard of living, and that it prevented strikes and loss of work. We must not consider that we have reached the apex of our ideas so far as the improvement of the conditions of our workers is concerned. If we do, we are going to fail as a Government which represents the workers.

Mr. VOWLES: You have failed.

Mr. KELSO: What is the remedy?

Mr. GLEDSON: There will have to be a broader outlook in connection with arbitration matters. The judges of the Arbitration Court will have to take a broader outlook in the future than they have done in the past. There is one particular matter that I must deal with—the security of the employment of the worker.

Mr. MOORE: I have a report here which says that there were less men employed last year than during any previous year.

Mr. GLEDSON: If the leader of the Opposition is correct, then the report is not a very good one. If these things occur, we have to find some way out. One of the greatest needs of the workers to-day is security of employment. A man who has no security of employment, and who is in constant fear of being thrown out of work—who does not know whether his next pay will be his last one or not—is in a very unhappy position. These are matters that we have to take into consideration. The judge of the Arbitration Court should view these matters from a more humane point of view, and he should give to the workers a greater degree of security than they have at the present time. At present when any plaint is brought before the court and a case is made out for the employer, the court invariably says that the employer has the absolute right to dismiss any employee that he likes. We say that should not be so.

Mr. KELSO: Why should he not have that right?

Mr. GLEDSON: Because the men engaged in industry are just as much a part of the industry as the man who puts his capital into the industry, and the men who do the useful work in any industry should have some security of employment.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: All men are not equal.

Mr. GLEDSON: The hon. member for Warwick states an obvious fact. If we are to go back to the old Darwinian theory and say that the fittest only has a right to survive, and that only the strong man with broad shoulders and no brains is to be employed—if those are the ethics of the hon. member for Warwick—then we know where he stands.

Mr. KELSO: What are you going to do with the employer whose business is declining? Are you going to force him to employ men who are not required?

Mr. GLEDSON: If an employer's business declines, he cannot blame his employees for it. If the management is inefficient, that is a matter solely for the employer. The workmen are there to do the work and, if the employer does not conduct his business in an up-to-date manner and makes a failure of it, why put it on the poor workmen all the time? The workmen have to suffer for the inefficiency of the employers because the latter come along with their balance-sheets and say "Our industry is not one of average prosperity, and therefore we must have longer hours and shorter wages than are paid in some other industry that is managed in an efficient manner." We have examples of that right throughout Queensland to-day. Take the woollen mills. The Ipswich Woollen Mill Company and the West Moreton Woollen Company had an application before the court yesterday, and they said that their industry is not an industry of average prosperity.

Mr. VOWLES: Did you read their balance-sheets?

Mr. GLEDSON: I read the reports that appeared in the Press. I am not criticising their balance-sheets. They give as a reason against granting a reduction of hours that the industry is not one of average prosperity, and the judge said, "According to your balance-sheets your industry is not one of average prosperity at the present time," and refused to grant a 44-hour week, which is sufficiently long to work in any factory. I do not know anything about the running of a woollen mill, but I am told by those who do know something about it that, if these mills were efficiently managed, they would be able to work a 44-hour week and show a profit.

Mr. MOORE: The same thing applies to the State butcher shops.

Mr. GLEDSON: The same thing applies to any industry that is not efficiently managed. The worker suffers every time because he has to bear the brunt of all these things.

The Arbitration Court can do better work than it has done in the past if it takes a broader outlook. The Queensland Industrial Arbitration Act provides the best system of arbitration in the Commonwealth, but those who are responsible for the administration of the Act should take a broader view of the workers' conditions and their home life. Those who are in charge of the Arbitration Court should not be judges of the Supreme Court. The judges of the Supreme Court must be men trained to deal with legal matters, which is not necessary in the case of the Arbitration Court. The judges of the Arbitration Court should be taken from industrial life. They should be industrialists who have gone through the mill, and who have some of the milk of human kindness in their constitution, so that they would be able to take a broad view of matters that will benefit the workers.

Mr. VOWLES: That is going back to the wages board principle.

Mr. GLEDSON: The wages board principle was a different thing altogether.

Mr. KELSO: Would you cut out the bosses with their experience?

Mr. GLEDSON: I do not know what the hon. member for Nundah is talking about. I have always found in my experience, extending over many years, that the boss is always well able to take care of himself. He does not need any cutting out, as he always has the big end of the stick and is well able to take care of himself. I have found that it is only the man who is crushed by the iron heel of capitalism and by bosses that requires some protection and some assistance in these matters.

Mr. KELSO: You would only appoint workers as judges of the Arbitration Court?

Mr. GLEDSON: The worker is just as able to interpret what is necessary in the Arbitration Court as any legally trained man, and he has a right to be given an opportunity to show what he can do, which he has not had yet. We could very well adopt that principle and thereby place the Arbitration Court on an industrial basis.

Mr. KELSO: Exclusively for the benefit of the workers?

Mr. GLEDSON: The hon. member can have his say afterwards. If the wages boards had been constituted on the same principle as the Arbitration Court, and some one from the industry appointed as chairman, matters would have gone along very nicely. The hon. member for Burnett referred to the good system of wages boards adopted in Victoria. If the hon. member for Burnett knew anything about the Victorian system, he would be the last to get up here and commend it. It is nothing to be compared with the Arbitration Court of Queensland. In addition to that, the Government of Victoria have on every occasion opposed any attempt to bring arbitration within the reach of their State employees. I myself have had to fight them in the endeavour to get men whom they control in their State coal mines under an award.

[12 noon.]

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: As a matter of fact, the Victorian Government refused to put into operation the awards of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court.

Mr. GLEDSON: The Victorian Government refused to accept the awards of the Commonwealth Court; consequently the men had to strike for weeks upon weeks before they could get any justice at all from the Victorian Government. It was only by means of strikes that the men were able to get any measure of justice from that Government.

Mr. DEACON: The employees in the Queensland State coal mines also had strikes.

Mr. GLEDSON: There always will be strikes. I am not going to say that arbitration will stop strikes. Men should have the right to strike if they are suffering under injustice, and the Industrial Arbitration Act gives them that right. There is injustice in connection with State coal mines as well as anywhere else. The Arbitration Court gave the miners an 8-hour day, but they had to fight for that concession. They had to stop out week after week

before they were able to secure it; they got it at the point of the bayonet. We can understand some of the reasons for the workers being just a little dubious as to whether arbitration is getting them where they want to get.

I hope that favourable consideration will be given to one of the great needs in connection with workers—that is, security of labour. We know that the old saying of Burns still holds good, even in sunny Queensland—

> "Poverty and the fear of it make cowardly cravens of us all."

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): The hon. member who has just resumed his seat said that the workers are asking whether the Arbitration Court is getting them where they desire to get. I assume that the men who go to the Arbitration Court naturally are desirous of getting better conditions and wages, but as one who watches the conditions of industry and realises that profit must be made if an industry is going to be continued, it appears to me that possibly the men have got to the limit to which under present conditions in Queensland it is possible to attain. We have to admit that wages lately have not been increased to any extent by the Arbitration Court, and it has been stated from time to time by the judges of the Court that the hours of labour cannot be lessened. The hon. member for Ipswich referred to the case in the Arbitration Court which came before Mr. Justice Macnaughton. I had proposed myself to make one or two references to it, because I cannot quite understand what was in the mind of the judge. I do not agree with the ideas of the hon. member for Ipswich as to who should be on the Arbitration Court assessing in these matters. Occasionally there is room for a difference of opinion about the decisions of the court, and certainly this is one of those occasions. There is the unfortunate position that the men who are answerable for the industry in one particular have had to close down for four weeks. It appears to me that the important point to the employee is not what the rate of wages is to be, but as to how many individuals shall be employed. The important point to the man who works is not merely the rate of wages he will get but the number of days he can get work in the year. If he can only work eleven months in the year at a certain rate of wage, he is no better off than he was before when working twelve months in the year at a lower rate of pay. But it is altogether different so far as the industry is concerned. An application was made to the Arbitration Court yesterday by the textile section of the Australian Workers' Union for a variation of the textile and woollen workers' award for the South-Eastern district, and we find this in the "Courier" report—

> "Mr. Simpson stated that the balance-sheet of his company showed a loss of £1,935 on the year's operations. Mr. Walker said that his company suffered a slight loss for the year.
>
> "Mr. Lamont stated that the award was made in 1920, and had been varied several times since."

Notwithstanding that, the judge allowed an increase of 3s. 6d. per week to spinners and tuners, bringing their wages to £4 16s. per week. No alteration was made in the hours of work, which at present are 46. I take it that they were asking for 44-hours. The judge only increased the rates of pay in a small proportion of cases. Here is an industry which is not paying, yet the wages have been increased. If the wages of the lower paid men had been increased, perhaps I would not have had any fault to find. I do not know how many men are employed, but the judge has increased the wages of men now getting £4 12s. 6d. by 3s. 6d. per week, making them £4 16s. This is one of the things I have noticed in a lot of the awards which have been altered. I want to point out that woollen mills are subject to competition. If they have to work less hours and pay higher wages than the woollen mills in the other States of the Commonwealth, we shall lose the industry. Then there is the question of machinery. The report of the Chief Inspector of Factories shows that there are fewer men being employed. I know of my own knowledge that certain industries have closed up within the last few weeks in Queensland, and certain other industries under existing conditions must be closed within the next few months, as they are showing losses and cannot compete with the other States. The competition by the other States is brought about largely by the employment of machinery and the large quantity of work which is being turned out; but, unfortunately, we are not warranted in installing these machines in Queensland on account of our conditions.

Mr. FARRELL: You are always talking in favour of secondary industries.

Mr. ROBERTS: The Minister is always talking in favour of secondary industries. I am pointing out that we cannot keep secondary industries going which are already established. Take the shirt industry, which was referred to yesterday, and which employs a large number of hands. We can buy articles manufactured in the South and retail them in Queensland at a less cost than we can sell the articles manufactured here. We know that the same thing applies to the boot trade. There are large surplus stocks of boots in Queensland, which possibly in many cases are being sold below cost. We have to meet competition in that trade. We cannot continue to pay these increases and at the same time to reduce the hours of labour. We have to admit that there is a difference of opinion on both sides of the Chamber as to which system—Wages Boards or Arbitration Courts—is the better means by which these industrial questions can be settled. We have to recognise that there comes a time when we cannot pay increased wages. Unless the Government see their way to decrease taxation, many industries in Queensland will be unable to pay their way any further.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I was very interested to hear the remarks which have fallen from hon. members opposite with reference to arbitration. They are now attempting to make out that hon. members on this side are opposed to the principle of arbitration. That is not so, because it is a plank in the platforms of both the Country party and the Nationalist party. Where we differ from hon. members opposite is in this—that we think both sides should be made to conform to the provisions of the awards.

Mr. GLEDSON: The Court has power to compel them to do that.

Mr. VOWLES: The Court has power so far as one side is concerned. It is possible to compel or coerce the employers, but it is a matter of impossibility to compel the workers, in the case of strikes, to conform with the law.

Mr. GLEDSON: There is the power of starvation.

Mr. VOWLES: The hon. member takes up the attitude that the time has arrived when we should have a differently constituted Court, and when the judges should not be legal men but men engaged in the industry concerned and men, moreover, acting on behalf of one side of the industry, that is to say, on the side of the employees. I think that is gradually getting back to the old system of the wages boards to which hon. members opposite have taken such strong exception. The only point of difference between that old system and the present system is that under the previous system the chairman was a person who, according to the view of hon. members opposite, was biased in favour of the employers. They now want to constitute a board the chairman of which will be biased in favour of the workers. If that is not so, why did an hon. member on the other side interject that they should constitute a board which would give the employers some of their own medicine? We have to face facts, and, unfortunately, the report of the department which was tabled yesterday is rather alarming, because in a country where the population is expanding as it is in Queensland—we see by the papers to-day that the population of this State is now about 826,000 persons—there is a falling off in the number of factory employees. There may be a slight increase in the number of factories, but, unfortunately, whilst there is a decrease in the employees in factories, there is an increase in the employees in shops; and it is rather alarming to see that the shop assistants are not now handling the product of our factories but the product of the factories of the other States of the Commonwealth. I ask whether under those conditions it is desirable that there should be an agitation amongst members opposite for new conditions which would make the position for factories more difficult than it is. The hon. member for Ipswich told us that it was very easy to trace the history of the Ipswich woollen factories and ascertain where the trouble lay. He also told us that it was easy to trace the cause of the troubles in most industries and to explain why they are not in a state of prosperity. The hon. member says that it is a question of efficiency, but are not most of our companies run by business men, and why should there be any less efficiency in the case of this industry than in the case of any business run by private enterprise? Unfortunately the factories of New South Wales and Victoria do a very heavy trade. They are better equipped and they work longer hours than factories in Queensland, with the result that our factories are not able to compete with them. Under those conditions I say that it is regrettable to find on the part of hon. members opposite an agitation for something that will not help Queensland along. We should make the conditions such that capital will be retained in Queensland and will not be transferred to other States, as has been happening.

I suppose that it would be out of place to refer to the case of the cotton industry, as the matter is still *sub judice*, but we know that one hon. member of this Assembly was up in Dalby the other day looking after one side only and asking questions of one side only—that of the worker—while the poor producer or grower has to shift for himself. Of course, the Australian Workers' Union, as in all other instances, is out in the interests of the worker. Organisers are no doubt paid to fight for the best conditions and the highest rates of pay, irrespective of whether the industry concerned is capable of giving them. I am not now referring to this particular case. I have in mind the remark of one hon. member on the other side that our Arbitration Court judges are not sympathetic and that we should have men constituting the Court who would give to the employers a little of their own medicine. That is a most regrettable utterance to come from any hon. member of this Assembly, and, if that is the principle actuating hon. members opposite in regard to any alteration of our legislation, then it is a matter to be deprecated.

At 12.19 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I would like some explanation from the Minister as to the rates of pay of hospital workers and railway construction workers. I do not know whether they are affected by the embargo or not, but it appears that whilst the lower rates have gone up, the higher rates have gone down. I find from the report of the Director of Labour that, whilst the Railway Commissioner's employees in 1919 received from £175 to £365, in 1924 they are receiving from £220 to £300.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is easily explained. That is due to the operation of the £300 embargo.

Mr. DEACON: That may be. Then the report shows that the wages of hospital nurses go up to £370 and those of reception house attendants range from £200 to £335. Both are over £300, although the railway workers' maximum has come down to £300.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Where do you get that?

Mr. DEACON: From the report of the Director of Labour, pages 33 and 36.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Nurses, other than those in Government employ, are not subject to the embargo. No employees are subject to it except those under the Public Service Act and the Railway Act.

Mr. DEACON: They have an award which allows them to get over £300 per annum, whilst there are others who cannot get over £300 per annum.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Those salaries over £300 are not fixed under awards. In the case of the railway men the hon. gentleman has referred to receiving over £300 per annum. I would point out that they are not subject to the awards of the Court, although they get considerably over £300 per annum.

Mr. DEACON: Why do they get over £300 per annum? Why do the nurses and the attendants at the reception house get the amounts stated? Is it for overtime or by award?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They may have awards and not be subject to the Public Service Act.

Mr. DEACON: I notice that during the last three years practically all the awards have arrived at a dead-end. There has been no increase in wages over that period.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The cost of living has fallen during that period.

Mr. DEACON: There has not been much of a reduction in the cost of living during the last three years.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): There can be no two opinions about arbitration. It is the best method that we have established up to the present time for settling industrial disputes and promoting industrial peace. It may have its defects, but everything human has defects more or less.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: All men have defects, consequently all human institutions are faulty.

Mr. TAYLOR: I quite agree with the hon. gentleman. I think we can congratulate ourselves on the work which the Arbitration Court has carried out since its establishment in Queensland. Some hon. members sitting behind the Government and some of the Government supporters claim that the Government should not approach the Arbitration Court to put up a defence and state its case when the Government employees seek an increase in salaries from that Court. If there is anything that would tend more than anything else to break up the Arbitration Court and make it what it simply would be—an absolute farce—it would be action of that kind. It would do more to destroy its usefulness than anything else.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The Court must never become partisan. It ceases to be a court then, and the judge would cease to be a judge if he became a partisan.

Mr. TAYLOR: I quite agree with the hon. gentleman.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The success of the Arbitration Court is the result of being entirely free from political interference and being entirely impartial.

Mr. TAYLOR: Those are my sentiments exactly, but I was simply drawing attention to the fact that there are men who take up a hostile attitude when a representative of the Government goes to the Court to state a case. If I understand the methods of arbitration adopted in Queensland, they are to arrive at an equitable statement of the case so far as is humanly possible, and then the judge gives his award. The judge is absolutely impartial, as the Minister says.

Mr. COLLINS: Do you believe that?

Mr. TAYLOR: I am very sorry to hear the hon. member for Bowen asking me if I believe that. I do believe it. I sincerely and honestly believe that our judges are impartial, and when the day comes—I hope it will never come—when we shall think or feel that our judges are not acting impartially it is going to be a bad day for Queensland.

Mr. COLLINS: They generally lean to the side of the fat man.

Mr. TAYLOR: That may be the hon. gentleman's opinion, but I am sorry to hear him express it.

Mr. COLLINS: That is my honest opinion.

Mr. TAYLOR: The evidence is placed before the judge by the two parties. What interest has a judge in leaning to one party more than to another?

Mr. COLLINS: What does he know about life with his £2,000 a year?

Mr. TAYLOR: I reckon he knows more than the hon. gentleman.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He did not always receive £2,000 a year.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am sorry to hear the remarks expressed by the hon. member for Bowen. He could not express a sentiment or opinion more detrimental to the usefulness of the Arbitration Court that what he has expressed this morning. I hope that his remarks will not be allowed to interfere with the usefulness of arbitration as we know it in Queensland. As I said before, the parties place their case before the judge or judges, as the case may be. Those two parties, one representing the employees, and the other representing the employers, endeavour to get the judge to view the position from their respective points of view. The judge does not view the matter from either point of view until he has the whole of the evidence before him, and he then weighs it carefully and sifts it, and gives an award in the direction which he thinks is right and proper. I have the very highest opinion of the men constituting that Court. I am not going to say that the employers and the employees are satisfied with all the awards. We know that sometimes they do not agree with them; but that does not apply to the Arbitration Court only, but it applies also to our criminal and civil courts.

Mr. W. COOPER: They are all courts of arbitration.

Mr. TAYLOR: They are. Very often parties feel aggrieved when they think justice is not done.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The trouble is that a great number of people want to be litigants and judges too.

Mr. TAYLOR: That is so. As an Australian and a Queenslander I am satisfied with what arbitration stands for in Queensland.

I would like to deal with the overlapping of awards issued out of the Federal and State Courts, and the question of whether it would be in the best interests of Queensland to have one court dealing with the whole matter. I believe that the State can carry out its business in a far more efficient way than if all matters are submitted to one central court.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Take the railway claim at present before the Federal Court. It is proposed to submit 2,000 witnesses for examination from one side. That will involve many months of work.

Mr. TAYLOR: I think that we could do better by dealing with our own State matters through our own Arbitration Court. There are certain activities which are Australian-wide, and we could go to the Federal Court to obtain an award to apply to the whole of that industry, but I would stress that what suits one part of Australia does not suit another. At Newcastle, for instance, during the last few years enormous corrugated iron works, wire-netting works, and other works have been established. Newcastle is favoured in having a good natural port and an abundant supply of coal. You may not be able to apply the same hours of labour in South Australia, or to a lesser degree in Queensland, that can be applied at New-

castle. You may not be able to fix the same rate of wages and be able to compete in these industries with such a favoured locality as Newcastle. If we were to submit all matters to the Federal Arbitration Court I think that probably very grave errors of judgment —I will not say injustices—would be committed.

However, I wish to say that I believe we have nothing to be ashamed of in our Arbitration Court, and that the judges carry out their duties in a fearless and impartial manner, endeavouring to do the right thing by all parties concerned.

[12.30 p.m.]

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): The most satisfactory deduction to be drawn from the debate is the simple assertion made a few moments ago by the Secretary for Public Works that our Arbitration Court is an impartial tribunal and free from political influences. I hope that it will remain so No man who is in any degree seized with the gravity of his position will for a moment fail in his duty to the community. I say that emphatically, because the utterances of the Minister are in total disagreement with those of many hon. members who sit behind him. Only half an hour ago the hon. member for Ipswich dilated on the constitution of the court, and advocated that because it was so constituted industrialists should not approach it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The hon. member for Ipswich did not convey that impression to me. His proposal was that, instead of the court being composed of legal men as at present, is should be composed of men with a practical knowledge of the industries of Queensland. That is quite a different idea.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: When the court was constituted the idea was to have on its bench legal men having a knowledge of and in sympathy with the industrial conditions.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The faculties of judgment and common sense are not a monopoly of any section of the community.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Certainly not. The argument of the hon. member for Ipswich was that the industrialists were not finding in the Arbitration Court, as it is constituted to-day, that sympathy they wanted. The only inference from those remarks is that the court must be constituted by persons in sympathy with the aims and objects of the workers.

Mr. GLEDSON: By a man who has a knowledge of industrial conditions.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I have ceaselessly advocated in this Chamber that representatives of the various industries should have a seat on the Arbitration Court bench when decisions are being given, and that the employer in connection with the particular industry under review should be represented there too. Under such circumstances the court would arrive at a conclusion which would be fair to both parties.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: As a matter of fact, there are sections of the Act which provide for the constitution of industrial boards, which give just what you advocate. It is a pity that those provisions have not been more used.

Mr. KING: That is quite true.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: If that course were adopted, I believe that the Court would reach a truer solution of the difficulties of industry. The position then would be something in the nature of a round table conference. Possibly as we are doing things and going forward step by step we may arrive at that point a little earlier than we expect, and perhaps as a result of those deliberations much greater results will be obtained.

The idea of the hon. member for Ipswich is extreme in another direction. He seemed to imagine that employers, whether they liked it or not, should be forced to employ individuals irrespective of whether efficiency of service would result. As the hon. member who followed him pointed out, that would simply bring about the end of things, because once an establishment or industry failed to be efficient it would cease to exist, consequently unemployment would result. A condition of things such as that could never obtain. Surely the man who is responsible for the enterprise should be respected for having created it and should be entitled to the control of his own business. The failure of our secondary industries is not solely due to labour conditions. Hon. members on this side of the Chamber have again and again made reference to the fact that our industries are seriously handicapped as a result of taxation and conditions of that kind. I admit that it has been said that our markets are not large enough; but if we were living on an equality with other places, industries could be established here and markets for that produce could be found in the other States, just as produce from the other States finds a market in our State. There is a great deal to be said in connection with the matter of arbitration. Let us only hope that as time goes on we shall evolve a system which will achieve all that is hoped from the standpoint of the employer and employee.

Question put and passed.

INSPECTION OF MACHINERY, SCAFFOLDING, AND WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): I beg to move—

> "That £25,934 be granted for 'Inspection of Machinery, Scaffolding, and Weights and Measures.'"

The expenditure last year under this heading was £23,153. The vote for this year shows a slight increase, due largely to the extension of the inspection of weights and measures in certain portions of the State. The vote is an increase of £4,039 on the amount voted last year. The increase is due largely to classification increases and the increased cost of administering the Weights and Measures Act.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I want to call attention to one paragraph in the annual report of the Chief Inspector of Machinery, Scaffolding, and Weights and Measures for the year ended 30th June last. When the Weights and Measures Bill was before Parliament last year I raised the question of fees. The Minister then stated that there was not likely to be any increase in fees. On the first page of this report, under the heading of "Fees" appear the following remarks:—

> "Receipts are again in advance of previous years' operations, but not sufficient to cover all departmental expenses. In this respect, I would remark that in the outside country districts, consisting

> principally of pastoral properties, the fees charged for inspections do not cover the salaries of the officers doing this work; therefore the other and more populated centres are carrying the expenses which directly belong to those who are benefiting by the visit of the department's officers. Travelling expenses on a mileage basis would be a legitimate charge for services rendered."

I take it that is in connection with the inspection of boilers.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is right.

Mr. MOORE: That will probably be the same principle which will be adopted in regard to weights and measures.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No. The inspector informs me that the fees provided under the Act which I put through this Chamber about a year ago provide a sufficient revenue to meet all the requirements of that Act. You can understand that the Machinery Act is different. Long distances have often to be travelled for an inspection that may only take two hours. Time often elapses then before the inspector is able to get away from the district. Delays like that often take place.

Mr. MOORE: The same thing will happen in the inspection of weights and measures in country districts.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Are you advocating an increase in the fees?

Mr. MOORE: I am not. I am calling attention to these facts, and I wish to point out the injustice to the man in the country. The people in the country are receiving no benefit.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They do. The Inspection of Machinery Act of 1915 provides for the public safety.

Mr. MOORE: The Government are providing for the public safety, but it does not follow that, because a man keeps his boiler in an efficient manner and the Government want to satisfy themselves that that is so, the man should be mulcted in mileage fees. I do not see that that is fair at all. Boilers close together in the metropolitan area do not suffer from this imposition, the owners merely paying a nominal fee. I therefore think that the man in the remote parts of the State should not pay on the mileage basis, and there should not be an increase in fees.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Am I advocating an increase?

Mr. MOORE: No, but the report suggests an increase, and the hon. gentleman may be influenced by the report of his officer.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I believe there is something in his view of the case.

Mr. MOORE: I admit there is from the Government's point of view, but I am looking at the matter from the point of view of the man owning the boiler.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That shows how capable the officer is.

Mr. MOORE: I am not quarrelling about the officer or saying that he is inefficient.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You believe in a flat rate?

Mr. MOORE: Yes, because those country people are in exactly the same position as the city people as regards the public safety; and they should be entitled to have their boilers inspected at the same rate as the city man.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): This is a sub-department of the Department of Public Works which has to be commended for the efficient and good work performed during the last financial year. I want to voice my opinion and congratulate the department on having experienced such a successful year. Dealing with "Boilers" the report states—

> "The report in connection with the work of this very important engineering branch of the Service again places on record the fact that there have been no fatalities with boilers under working conditions."

I think that is a very fine report, and I am glad to know that the Chief Inspector is able to render such a report.

Regarding what the leader of the Opposition said as to inspectors doing this work solely for the public safety, I consider that it means more than that. This work is a protection to the employer who is using the boiler, and often the inspection saves him pounds upon pounds. The inspector may go along and inspect the boiler, and say, "Here is a weak place in your boiler. If you get a patch put on, it will last another two or three years." By that means he saves the owner many pounds. And not in regard to boilers only. Take the matter of machinery generally. Inspectors have been able to point out defects in machinery, where the expenditure of a few pounds will remedy the defect and make the machinery last quite a number of years longer. There is no doubt that the work of the inspectors has been more than merely in the interests of public safety. It has been a protection to the employer, and has enabled him to carry on work in cases where the lack of inspection would have caused a stoppage of work for weeks, owing to defects in the machinery.

I am not going into the question of fees. There might be quite a lot in what the leader of the Opposition says when he declares that the men in the cities are more favourably placed than those outside. I am not going to say that there should be any discrimination so far as fees are concerned. I merely wish to point out that the work of the inspector does more than merely provide for the public safety.

There has been quite a lot of work done in this sub-department. I notice that 11,634 certificates of inspection were issued during the financial year, and I take it that covers boilers, machinery, scaffolding, and other work of that nature throughout the State. That shows that the department got through a large amount of work. The report on scaffolding is also fairly good. On reference to the tables showing the number of accidents resulting through the use of scaffolding it is pleasing to note that only one accident occurred—a slight mishap owing to a plank slipping off the supports. The report says—

> "This is a record I am proud of, and it reflects the greatest credit on all concerned. Quite a lot of credit is due to the spirit of co-operation existing between this department's officers and the employers and employees in the building trade."

That is a very fine report, because we know there have been serious accidents in other

States in connection with scaffolding. I am glad to know that the department has gone through the year with only one slight mishap, due to the plank slipping. This is especially pleasing in view of the fact that we have had a record year of building in Brisbane, and of high buildings, too. It reflects great credit on all concerned.

I cannot say the same thing with regard to machinery accidents. Machinery accidents have been numerous and most of them have occurred, so far as I can gather from the report, because there have not been proper guards in use. I do not know whether the sub-department has sufficient power to insist upon all machines being properly protected, or whether it requires an extension of authority to bring about that result; but I hope the Secretary for Public Works will make a special note of this matter so that the number of accidents will be lessened during the current year.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: All the protection that is possible should be given.

Mr. GLEDSON: Yes. I do not know whether the inspector has complete power to order the installation of the necessary guards.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Inspectors have that power, as also have inspectors under the Factories and Shops Acts Amendment Act.

Mr. GLEDSON: I know they have certain powers. Whether they have complete powers or not should be looked into in order that the number of these accidents may be reduced. We find that accidents have even occurred where young children have been drawn into the belting. Again, accidents have resulted in sawmills, not through contact with the saw, but through the wood which is being cut springing.

Apart from the machinery section I want to commend the Secretary for Public Works upon the very fine record of this sub-department, and I hope that during the current year further endeavours will be made to protect machinery.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): We have heard laudatory comments from both sides on the way this department has been conducted. From what I know about the subject I certainly confirm all that has been said. Personally I believe that the labourer is worthy of his hire, and in that regard I notice that the present leader of the Opposition asked when these Estimates were before the Committee last year what was being done to compensate the Chief Inspector of Machinery and Scaffolding for the additional work allotted to him in regard to the Weights and Measures Act. The Secretary for Public Works then said that the matter would receive consideration.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He has an increase of £25 in this vote.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The hon. gentleman surely does not consider that sufficient compensation for a man with the Chief Inspector's ability and for the important duties devolving upon him. I certainly do not. I think the time has arrived when we should give consideration to the question of whether we are paying these men with high attainments emoluments adequate to their duties. If these men were with private concerns outside they would receive very much more remuneration for the services rendered than they receive from the Government, who boast that they are model employers. They should keep up to their reputation and acknowledge the services rendered by these men in a more fitting manner. This sub-department is a most important one. Members on both sides agree that it is being efficiently conducted, and I certainly think that the officer in charge should receive a larger fee than he is at present enjoying. If you consider some of the salaries we have been paying to imported managers of State enterprises, running into thousands a year, and see here an old servant of the State, who has faithfully attended to his duties to the entire satisfaction of the House as long as I have been in it, it seems to me that, if you are going to impose further responsibilities on him, which is evidence that you have complete confidence in his judgment and ability, he should be rewarded in a proper manner. I do hope that the Minister will give us some indication as to what are his views in that regard. Is it another instance of taking up the position that "This officer has been in the service so many years and is apparently satisfied, so we will let him stay as he is"?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He is a good man, but he does not lack the virtue of pushing his own case.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: If that is the case, it does not look as if the Minister is carrying out his responsibilities. It is a case either of the officer in charge of this sub-department not being a good "pusher" or else the hon. gentleman cannot be "pushed." All we can do in this regard is to put our case before the Minister and say that in our opinion a greater reward should be given to this officer for the additional responsibilities that now rest upon him.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): One matter in connection with the testing of scales was referred to this morning, and I realise the difficulty we have of getting definite information. I understand that occasionally inspectors go round in connection with the examination of scales and where possible, if a scale requires attention, they are in the habit of recommending a certain firm of scale-makers. I do not know whether the Minister can say if that is so or not. I only got this information yesterday, otherwise I might have had a chat with the officer in charge of this sub-department in regard to it. I take this opportunity of saying that I can hardly imagine such a thing occurring.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They are not supposed to do that, but when agents representing various firms of scale-makers know that an inspector is in the district they follow him round.

Mr. ROBERTS: I should like to know if that is so.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is so.

Mr. ROBERTS: The department should not interfere with the activities of certain scale-makers.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They do not interfere with them.

Question put and passed.

LABOUR, FACTORIES, AND WORKERS' ACCOMMODATION.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): I beg to move—

"That £29,408 be granted for 'Labour, Factories, and Workers' Accommodation.'"

The amount spent in connection with this vote last year was £28,576, and there is a small increase required this year. Salaries have been increased by £1,288, which amount represents the classification increases.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): There are one or two rather interesting points in regard to this vote about which I would like to say a few words. The report of the Director of Labour on page 4 says—

"The number of employees in factories is slightly less than in the previous year, while the employees in shops have increased by 914."

It does not look very serious when it is put down like that, but it means a great deal to Queensland. It means that we are importing more and more from the other States and manufacturing less and less ourselves. It means that Queensland is gradually getting into a worse and worse condition rather than improving her condition. When we were dealing with the question of raising further loans, I pointed out that we were not in any way encouraging secondary industries and were relying more and more on importations. This report bears out exactly what I said on that occasion. There is also this very interesting table on page 8 of the report—

TABLE G.

Comparative Statements, Labour Transactions, Whole State, Years ended 30th June, 1917-1918 to 1923-1924.

Period.	Supply Registered.			Demand.	Persons sent to Employment.			Percentage Supply found Employment.	Percentage of Demand Supplied.
	With Dependents.	Without Dependents.	Total.		Government.	Private.	Total.		
1917-1918	13,223	16,740	29,963	17,158	7,592	7,049	14,641	48·8	85·0
1918-1919	17,077	20,853	37,930	15,451	8,008	5,760	13,768	36·2	89·0
1919-1920	19,387	25,829	45,216	15,024	7,489	6,193	13,682	30·2	91·0
1920-1921	19,097	25,329	44,426	13,494	4,683	7,924	12,607	28·3	93·0
1921-1922	21,854	32,236	54,090	13,897	4,819	8,283	13,102	24·2	94·0
1922-1923	16,871	29,137	46,008	14,951	7,000	7,298	14,298	31·0	95·6
1923-1924	35,132	48,674	83,806	14,703	6,580	7,481	14,061	17·2	99·0

It will be noted that the percentage found employment in 1917-18 was 48.8 per cent., while in 1923-24 it was only 17.2 per cent., which bears out our contention that less and less work is being provided in Queensland and more and more goods are being imported. We seem to be getting into a position when a larger number of people are relying increasingly on Government employment—employment that ends nowhere. That is rather a serious position of affairs, and it is illustrated to a considerable extent in this report. There is a continual increase in the number of men seeking employment and a decrease in the number found employment from 48.8 per cent. to 17.2 per cent. That is rather a remarkable reduction, and, instead of there being, as one would expect, a sort of arithmetical progression, there has been an arithmetical retrogression each year from 1918 to 1924.

I am sorry that we have not got the report of the inspector of workers' accommodation, as I would like some information with regard to a regulation which was

[2 p.m.] tabled at the beginning of this Parliament. I am rather unfortunate in not having discovered this matter in time, and there has not been time to give notice of objection to the regulation within the period allowed for doing so. The regulation I refer to is 13A—provision of verandas—

"Every building for the accommodation of workers shall be provided with a veranda or verandas, which shall be at least seven (7) feet in width and five (5) feet in length for each worker such building is capable of housing, and none of which verandas shall be less than ten (10) feet in length. All such verandas shall be erected to the satisfaction of the inspector."

That is one of the class of regulations I objected to before. In the Workers' Accommodation Act of 1915 the various classes of accommodation which would be required are specifically stated—

"Not less than four hundred and eighty cubic feet of air space shall be allowed to each person sleeping in any compartment of such building."

It goes on in six subparagraphs of section 6 to give full and specific details of the accommodation required. Section 16 states—

"The Governor in Council may from time to time make regulations for all the purposes which in his opinion are necessary to give effect to the purposes and intentions of this Act."

I do not think it was contemplated when the Act went through that practically a new provision was to be put into it by way of regulation. The provision of verandas did not come within the Act. If it had been specified at the time, the regulation might have been all right, but it is practically a new provision in the Act which was never contemplated at the time the measure went through. I was rather exercised in my mind as to the reason for putting it in. I got a little illumination from the July number of the "Industrial Gazette," which says—

"The building trade, owing partially to regulation regarding verandas, is brisk."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you think the workers have no right to have verandas?

Mr. MOORE: No, but I say that the system of putting into a regulation after an Act is passed something which has nothing to do with the intention of the Act is quite wrong. We have the "Industrial Gazette" telling us that the building trade is slack. The Minister racks his brains to see what he can do to find employment, and brings

forward a regulation which will provide employment for a number of men, seeing that the building trade is slack. The regulation regarding verandas is made for that purpose, and that is the way one department dovetails in with the other in order to find employment, quite irrespective of whether it is required or not. Then in the July number of the "Industrial Gazette" we get a little further. It states—

> "Employers generally have taken the requirements of regulation 13A in anything but a good spirit insofar as it applies to shearers' quarters. On the other hand, very few employers object to the provision of verandas on station hands' quarters."

In regard to station hands' quarters I do not expect that employers would make any fuss at all, because, as a rule, most of the station hands' quarters already have verandas. It does seem to be a farce that employers should be compelled to erect verandas on the buildings for the accommodation of shearers when they are occupied for only a short period of each year. It means the incurring of considerable expense which was never contemplated when the Act was put through, merely because of the framing of a regulation. I do not think that the principle of legislation by regulation is a good one at all.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you say that the regulation is ultra vires?

Mr. MOORE: I am asking whether the Minister is justified in bringing in a regulation providing for something which was never contemplated when the Act was going through. It is generally recognised that regulations must be in accordance with the provisions of the Act, and they were set out so clearly and specifically that no regulation of this kind was needed.

This regulation is of general application, and it applies to temporary accommodation which is only used for a very short portion of each year, and puts a large number of persons to very considerable expense. I think that the Minister will remember that some two years ago or so, before there was any editing of the reports of the inspectors, we had the opportunity of reading their remarks as to the difficulties which some persons had in complying with the provisions of the Act. I remember that it was pointed out in one report how employers in the sugar industry practically went to live in hollow logs and gave up their own houses for the accommodation of their employees so as to comply with the Act. Now the report of the chief inspector and the other reports are carefully edited. For the first year or two under this Government, before they "dropped" to the fact that departmental reports might lead to criticism, we got the reports of the inspectors just as they wrote them. Now, apparently, it is somebody's duty carefully to edit these reports and see that there is nothing in them that will leave any loop-hole for criticism. Before this system of editing was adopted, if inspectors had any recommendations to make for the administration of the Act, they used to put them in their reports. Possibly the inspectors may have made statements that did not meet with the approval of the Government or which were contrary to their policy. What we want is the reports of the individuals administering the Act, and when we get in the "Industrial Gazette" just one little tip to show us why this regulation was introduced, I think we are justified in asking whether the Minister was justified in making an alteration of the Act in a back-door method merely by regulation. I do not think it is a fair method at all that legislation should be made in this way. It certainly cannot lead to good administration in the case of people who have to abide by the Act. We know that in many cases people do not know that legislation has been passed until some time afterwards, and the position must be worse in the case of a regulation which is brought into force without any discussion and has been operating for months before Parliament can discuss it. I think that the making of such regulations is contrary to the spirit and the intention of the Act, and we are justified in asking whether the Minister did the right thing, especially when we find this paragraph in the "Industrial Gazette," and when we know that such things would probably be amplified in the reports if we were allowed to get them in the form in which they were written.

I have perused a good many reports on different occasions. I remember that some years ago the reports used to contain very useful information and suggestions, but now unfortunately those suggestions are cut out; possibly they go to the Minister to be dealt with. That is hardly fair to this Chamber. We should be in a position to get the reports of the various inspectors under the Act in a concise and unedited form, so that we may know the position exactly. We desire to have those reports so that we may know in what spirit the Act is being received by the people who have to carry out those conditions, and so that we may know whether the inspectors consider the provisions fair and reasonable, and so that we may know whether the conditions imposed are harsh or otherwise. Unfortunately we have not those reports just now, but all we have got by searching through the "Industrial Gazette" is a little paragraph here and there, comfortably hidden away in small print, which discloses hardships to the individuals. Particularly is that so with regard to the paragraph stating that the employers objected to putting certain additions on to the shearers' sheds. I do not think they are to be blamed for objecting to do that, because in many cases tradesmen would have to go long distances to erect the verandas required, and they would only be used during that portion of the year when the weather is not trying. The Government are not justified in compelling the employers to incur such needless expenditure. I could quite understand the position if the Act specified that verandas must be erected on permanent quarters—the people try to make the quarters as comfortable as possible—but to compel employers to incur a good deal of expense in putting up verandas on temporary quarters when they are really not required is going outside the scope of the Act and is to my mind unjust.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I do not think this vote should go through without hon. members specially emphasising that the Government have done something by regulation which is very questionable. It is all very well for the Minister to challenge hon. members on this side with regard to that regulation. Some day the Government may be challenged on that regulation. From the ordinary reading of the Act one would come to the conclusion that the Government were not justified in framing such a regulation.

We know perfectly well that land settlement in Queensland is not progressing at the rate that one would naturally expect it to progress. The trouble is that the Government are now imposing such hardships upon those who settle on the land that it is almost impossible for a poor man to take up a selection. The Government are doing an injury to the very class of men they profess they are out to help by passing regulations along the lines of the regulation requiring the erection of veranda accommodation on shearers' huts. The only way those who follow an occupation on stations can advance a step in life is by eventually becoming the possessor of a piece of country. They are in exactly the same position as a boy who enters a trade and learns that trade, and then step by step becomes head of his department. The only way that a man working on a station can become anything else than an employee all his life is eventually to select a piece of country. If he is fortunate enough to draw that land at a ballot, it will enable him to carry on the industry that he has been engaged in since youth, and that is the industry of a grazier. The Government by continually framing these detrimental regulations are interfering with the progress of those individuals. The more regulations the Government frame, the more hardships they impose, and the more expenditure by the individual that they are responsible for, the more difficult are they making it for those settled on the land to become their own masters. It should be the aim and object in life of every individual eventually to become his own master. He might eventually employ labour. I do not know whether that is one of the aims and objects of the Labour party. I often think they do not wish to see the worker eventually become an employer of labour. They look upon him in a different manner. These regulations, which are framed by the Minister from time to time, are making it very difficult for workers eventually to become masters. For those reasons I object to the regulation that has been framed for the purpose of compelling a very large veranda space to be provided for the shearers. Hon. members know that the shearer travels about from place to place. He is only working on a property for two or three weeks in the year, and his longest stay on the larger properties would not exceed six or eight weeks. Yet the owner of a property is now compelled to spend a large amount of money to give him veranda space. These verandas will be at the mercy of the elements for ten or eleven months of the year, and will become less in value year by year as the weather plays havoc with them. The only benefit they would provide is to enable the shearers for a few weeks in the year to sit under a veranda. I know from experience that they have no opportunity of sitting under the veranda during the week, as they are engaged at their work, while on Saturday afternoons and Sundays they do not usually sit under the verandas but engage in something else. It is these little pin-pricks that are causing great dissatisfaction throughout the length and breadth of the hinterland in Queensland. It is such regulations that prevent settlement, prevent the worker from becoming his own boss, and interfere with the land settlement policy of the State. Departmental officers may not look at the question from that point of view, but experienced men do. I do not believe that even those shearers who wish to go on the land would be in favour of regulations which subject the people who are engaged on the land in primary production to hardship without their being first placed before Parliament. I am very pleased to know that the leader of the Opposition has taken a very keen interest in the regulations. It is the duty of hon. members on this side to watch the issue of regulations more stringently than they have done in the past.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MORGAN: Hon. members on this side may have been a little neglectful in regard to regulations that have been issued heretofore, but I can tell the Minister that it is the intention of the Opposition to watch the issue of regulations very carefully for the future and take full advantage of the Standing Orders in respect of them. Hon. members on this side have continually complained on the floor of this Chamber of government by regulation. Unfortunately that is the policy of the present Government. In many instances it has been found that an altogether different construction has been placed by regulation on measures passed by this Chamber to what was intended by the Legislature. I disagree with the regulation in respect to the veranda accommodation. I do not say that the ordinary station hand is not entitled to veranda accommodation or to every comfort that it is possible to give him, but that accommodation is provided for him when his quarters are originally built. The regulation does not cater for that class of worker, but for the casual worker. As the representative of a farming constituency I object to regulations which are not in conformity with the spirit of the Act being laid on the table of the House without Parliament having first been consulted.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): Since we received the report of the Director of Labour this morning I have been going through it to get some idea as to the general unemployment in the State. Unfortunately, although there are some interesting tables in the report, they do not convey information in a form which would be of service to this Committee. One table shows the number of passes issued to unemployed who were about to go to some work. We seem to be setting aside a large sum of money for this purpose, and it gives us some idea of the number of unemployed. These figures are about the best index to the situation that we have. In 1921, 6,658 passes were issued; in 1924, 5,978 were issued.

That is a large number to issue. In 1921-1922 they had not lessened in any way, the number issued being 7,783. Large sums of money are outstanding, and we can only hope that a considerable amount will be recovered. The report contains this—

	£	s.	d.
"In 1923-24, the value of passes issued was ...	5,392	5	9
The amount refunded as at 30th June, 1924 ...	2,986	18	2
Amount dishonoured ...	926	2	8"

I suppose that "amount dishonoured" represents sums which those concerned have absolutely refused to pay—

	£	s.	d.
"Amount outstanding at 30th June, 1924 ...	1,479	6	11
Percentage of recoveries	55 per cent."		

What occurs to me in connection with this column of figures is the amount that is

actually owing. This is only one year's work, and I presume that a large part of this amount has accumulated from other years. It must represent a very big debt. Whilst this report is interesting in some places, it is difficult to find out the number of unemployed in the State. I think I am quite safe in saying that there are between 5,000 and 6,000 in the State, taking the year all round.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No.

Mr. ROBERTS: I think my figures are not far wrong.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Where are you getting your figures from?

Mr. ROBERTS: Unfortunately I have no place to refer to, and have to estimate them.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I will give you the actual figures.

Mr. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman says that he will give me the figures. It would be far better if those who compiled this list gave the figures so that everybody could have them. This is a matter which appeals to me. There is certainly a lot of information which does not help us at all, and which is often misleading. Take Table D on page 6. That table gives interesting columns of figures which need a lot of explanation. I shall give an extract—

CLASSIFIED OCCUPATIONS—SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR TWELVE MONTHS ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1924.

SUPPLY.		Demand.	No. Sent to Employment.
With Dependants.	Without Dependants.		
35,132	48,674	14,703	14,061

If one reads the figures as shown there and accepts the statement made, one would be making a great mistake. But, when you make inquiries and find that that number represents those registered five or six times in a year, it alters the whole position. I realised that it could not be as stated in the report, and I inquired from the officer in charge, and the explanation I received was that a number of these people are called upon to register once a month or once a fortnight, and they are counted as separate people and appear in that column as representing over 80,000 individuals, while the table shows that the department has only been able to place 14,600 of these people. However, it bears out my statement that between 5,000 and 6,000 people are continuously out of work.

I notice that we keep on increasing the expenditure in connection with industry, and I notice, according to the Estimates, that the chairman of the Apprenticeship Committee is to receive £425 a year, the secretary to that committee is to receive £405, and members of the Apprenticeship Committees are to receive £650 among them. These are three items of expenditure which industry is to be called upon to bear. All this expense retards employment. I would also like to bring under the notice of the Minister the difficulty there is at the present time in ascertaining the address of the union secretaries in outside districts. The position may be all right in Brisbane, where you have a Trades Hall and permanent secretaries, and where you have a registered office to which those who are looking for employment are able to go and register so that they may get employment. On several occasions in Toowoomba I have been asked by persons where they could find the secretary of the Australian Workers' Union. When a person comes to me and asks for that information, if I can give it I am only too pleased to do so, because it shows that they are trying to get employment. The other day I was asked if I could tell where the secretary of the Australian Workers' Union was, as this person understood there was certain work to be done in connection with the sewerage works in Toowoomba, and until he could get a ticket from the union secretary he understood he could not be employed. I made several inquiries as to the address of the secretary of the union, and I went to a certain man interested in the industrial movement in Toowoomba, but he said he could not tell me where the secretary could be found. I suggested to the person seeking employment that he should go down to the Trades Hall to see if the secretary happened to be there, or go along to the labour agent and see if he knew where this person could be found. Both these channels were investigated without result. When a demand is made that a person shall have a union ticket before getting employment, some provision should be made for the granting of that ticket, and the address of the labour agent should be made public where there is not a permanent office.

Evidently some people are watching the Unemployment Insurance Fund, as several people have asked me just what it means. We have a table in the annual report on the operations under the Unemployed Workers Insurance Act, showing the sale of stamps at various labour agencies, from which it will be noted that the total amount received at Toowoomba was £8,461 4s. 7d., while the amount received at Ipswich was £4,903 18s. 10d. In the face of that, we find that the sustenance payments at Toowoomba amounted to £6,023 15s., and the sustenance payments at Ipswich amounted to £5,062 10s. 4d. I quite understand that stamps are purchasable in any part of the State and that they are not simply for use in a particular district, and as a result we are not able to get at the exact position. I hope that, when these tables are next prepared, these details will be made clear.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): I would enter a word of protest against the regulations in regard to workers' accommodation, which provide not only the accommodation which has been proved to be sufficient, but also verandas. I am not going to say that in the great wool industry verandas [2.30 p.m.] are not provided to-day, but hon. members opposite are very keen about bringing the rural industries under the workers' accommodation conditions. If wheat growers, maize growers, and farmers generally are going to be included —and it looks as if they are, because hon. members opposite have gone round recently representing the case from their point of view—it is going to be hard for the farmers to provide all the accommodation which is essential, as well as verandas in addition, before they can comply with the requirements of the department. The settlers in our

rural districts have not got much more than a veranda to live in themselves, and it is generally hessian-lined, and, if they have to provide accommodation in the shape of verandas for those who work for them which they have not got for themselves it will only inflict hardship. If our rural industries are brought under these conditions, the hardship imposed upon them will be very great if they are compelled to provide more and more accommodation. Where these conditions are essential in the rural industries they are being provided. The accommodation provided in wool-sheds under the Act is much better than what we have in our agricultural settlements. Our agricultural and dairying industries will find it very hard to comply with all these pin-pricking regulations, and to satisfy the inspection which will take place by the invasion of industrial magnates who may go from trade unions into the farming district to stir up strife so that peace may reign in connection with their jobs. I hope the Minister will consider the matter from the point of view of our agricultural industries very probably being drawn into these conditions in the near future.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): I desire to reply to the questions which have been asked. The hon. member for East Toowoomba and the leader of the Opposition referred to Table A in the report of the Director of Labour relating to employment, and showing the number of registrations and the number who have been sent to employment. Those figures, as will be apparent, cannot be regarded as a reliable indication of the number of unemployed persons in the State. It gives clearly a record of the number of registrations at the various labour exchanges throughout the State, and the number of men who have been sent to employment through Government bureaux. Sometimes men are registered for employment at the Central Exchange and also in other towns, and if they get employment through one of them, it does not always follow that the other exchanges are acquainted with that fact, consequently the number of registrations is larger than it really ought to be.

It is becoming the fashion for the figures of the Commonwealth Statistician regarding unemployment in the various States to be taken as authoritative. I have pointed out on several occasions that the figures of the Commonwealth Statistician cannot be regarded as a correct indication of the amount of unemployment, because in Queensland—and I suppose the same is true in other States—he gets as the basis of his figures the monthly returns from the secretaries' of the unions, showing how many members are unemployed. I would point out, for example, that in the case of the Meat Industry Employees' Union a very large number might be returned as unemployed by the secretary, but it might happen that the return was made during the slack season of the year and that a very considerable number of those men were really engaged in railway construction work without the secretary of the Meat Industry Employees' Union knowing anything about it. I mention that to show that the figures of the Commonwealth Statistician cannot be regarded always as reliable. Then take the case of the Waterside Workers' Union. The secretary of the union may return a large number of the members of the union as unemployed, but it might so happen that that was only so on the day on which he made the return, whereas on the following day quite a large number of them might be employed through ships having entered the port in the interval. It is only possible to compile correct statistics in reference to such industries from the returns under the Unemployed Workers Insurance Act. No reliable figures can be given as to unemployment in Queensland except those compiled under the Unemployed Workers Insurance Act, and from the figures supplied by the officer in charge I find that the number of persons registered as unemployed on the 31st of last month for the purpose of getting sustenance under that Act, totalled 4,675. Of that number 1,150 arrived from other States during the previous four months, leaving a balance of 3,525.

We know that during the sugar season and the shearing season and during the operations of one or two other seasonal industries, men travel from State to State in search of employment, as they have every right to do; but it is interesting to know that of 4,675 unemployed registered in Queensland, 1,150 have come from the other States during the past four months. I have here a table prepared by my department, showing that the percentage of unemployed—excess of supply over demand—to the population in August, 1923, was 0.3 per cent. The percentage of unemployed to male population in August, 1924, was 1.03 per cent., and the percentage of unemployed—excess of supply over demand—to male population in August, 1923, was 0.57 per cent. There is a very interesting footnote to the report, which says—

> "It should be noted that the figures for the corresponding month for last year (1923) cannot be taken as representing the number of unemployed at that time. Sustenance payments under the Unemployed Workers Insurance Act did not really commence until October, 1923; hence it was not incumbent on unemployed persons to register at the various labour bureaux. Having regard to this, it cannot be said that unemployment in the State has appreciably increased during the past twelve months."

Those are interesting figures, and can be regarded as the most accurate account that can be given of the number of people unemployed. It is a regrettable thing that there is anyone unemployed and willing to work. However, that is the condition of things that exists at present, and will continue so long as men have to depend on seasonal industries and so long as the existing economic system of society continues.

The point raised by the leader of the Opposition regarding the Workers' Accommodation Act is one that I wish to refer to. You are no doubt aware, Mr. Pollock, that men engaged in the shearing or pastoral pursuits generally are entitled to decent accommodation, and it has been found necessary from time to time to introduce legislation to provide a certain minimum standard of accommodation for workers in certain industries. That is done because a few people will not supply decent accommodation unless they are forced to do so. In many cases good accommodation, and accommodation in excess of the requirements of the Act, may be provided; but, having regard to the reports that

I received from the inspectors under the Workers' Accommodation Act, there can be no doubt that in the pastoral industry there are a number of people who will not supply the minimum requirements of the Act with respect to accommodation unless they are forced so to do. It has been argued that the introduction of the regulation providing for 5-feet veranda space for each worker is something that we should not have done. As Minister responsible for that regulation, and as the Minister who recommended its adoption to the Governor in Council, I say that is the least that can be done. The men engaged in those pursuits are entitled to decent accommodation whether they be there six weeks or six months. No one can argue, at least seriously, that the minimum accommodation demanded under the Act and the regulations provide palatial accommodation for the workers concerned. The objects of the Act are being carried out by the regulations. The Act provides that the workers engaged in certain industries shall have a certain minimum standard of accommodation. The Act gives the Minister power to prescribe by regulation the form of accommodation that is necessary. It is fair and just that veranda accommodation should be provided. The majority of these huts are built of corrugated iron. They are very hot indeed in the summer time, and I cannot understand how the shade provided by the veranda can be regarded as extravagant. I would not like to be subject to any such conditions.

Mr. MAXWELL: Do you apply those conditions to Government works?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Yes, they apply to State stations.

Mr. MAXWELL: You do not apply them to those shacks in which the railway workers live.

Mr. HYNES: Your Government compelled the railway workers to provide their own tents and picks and shovels.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The regulations apply with equal force to the State stations as they do to the private individual. I have not heard any serious complaint from the pastoral industry regarding them. As a matter of fact, I have met some pastoralists who are affected by the regulations, and they did not make the complaint which has been voiced by the leader of the Opposition. In any case the regulation is in accordance with the purposes of the Act, and is one that is justified from every point of view.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I am not complaining about the erection of the verandas, but what I am complaining about is bringing into being something by regulation which was not provided for or intended when the Act went through Parliament. It is not a question of whether the verandas are required or not. The Act states distinctly what accommodation is to be provided. Then it is set out specifically in two and a-half pages what is considered to be proper and sufficient accommodation. Verandas are not suggested at all.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The power to make the regulation is given under the Act.

Mr. MOORE: Then the Act says—

> "The Governor in Council may from time to time make regulations for all purposes which, in his opinion, are necessary to give effect to the purposes and intention of this Act."

The purposes and intention of the Act are specifically set out. The regulations are intended for the proper carrying out of the Act. What I object to is the action of the Minister in bringing in by regulation something which was not specified in the Act. That is the reason of my objection to-day. Hon. members ought to enter their protest at Acts being altered by regulation. It is perfectly easy to stipulate what is required when the Act is going through, so that Parliament may know what is going on, rather than subsequently issue a regulation which has the force of law until objected to in Parliament. I do not suppose for one instant that any objection of the Opposition will have any weight with regard to annulling the regulation even if it was unfair, but I enter this protest because I consider that the principle of altering Acts of Parliament when the conditions in it are set out specifically is wrong.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: We are not altering an Act by regulation. We are carrying out the purposes of the Act, which are to provide decent accommodation for the workers.

Mr. MOORE: That is a matter of opinion.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Does the hon. member for Logan think that the regulation is ultra vires?

Mr. KING: I think it is, but I am not inclined to say definitely without going into it fully.

Mr. MOORE: It is not a question of whether the regulation is ultra vires or not. It is a question of protesting against regulations of this character being given the force of law. We had to protest the other day with respect to another matter, and we subsequently saw the necessity for that protest when the Secretary for Public Lands announced that it was intended to bring in a validating Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There is no question of a validating Bill here.

Mr. MOORE: Possibly there is not, but it is one of the class of regulations to which I object. The power to issue regulations for the proper administration of the Act does not convey the power to impose greater conditions than are already specified in the Act. It is not a question of whether a veranda is required or not, or whether a veranda gives more comfort. It is not as if shearing is done in summer time; it is done in the cool part of the year.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you not think that the shearer is entitled to decent accommodation?

Mr. MOORE: I am not talking about decent accommodation. I doubt very much if the shearer will use the veranda at all when he gets it. I am talking about verandas in temporary buildings which are only used for a few weeks of the year. I say they are not necessary.

Mr. HYNES: They shear during the summer months as well as during the winter, and the sugar worker needs a veranda in the hot weather.

Mr. MOORE: I am not talking of permanent residences at all. In the suggestions made by the local inspector at Roma

he said he was meeting with no objection with regard to permanent buildings; the objection applied only to temporary constructions. But, when a regulation like this is brought in, it applies to all buildings It is not a question of hardship; it is a question of altering an Act by regulation beyond what was specified and intended when the measure was instituted. It is unfair.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I accept your explanation.

Question put and passed.

THE GAS ACT OF 1916.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): I beg to move—

"That £1,990 be granted for 'the Gas Act of 1916.'"

This provides for an increase of £372 due to the large amount of refereeing during the year.

Question put and passed.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

CHIEF OFFICE.

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

"That £19,816 be granted for 'Chief Office.'"

Mr. KING (*Logan*): We know there have been considerable alterations in the law of late brought about by the repeal of the District Courts Act and by the institution of the Magistrates Courts Act of 1921. I wish to ask the Attorney-General if he will be able to give us any information by and by as to how the alterations are working—whether they are satisfactory generally, and whether they are satisfactory so far as expenditure is concerned.

So far as I am personally aware, although I had considerable doubts as to the wisdom of the alteration at the time, I am rather inclined to think that they are working satisfactorily. I believe in being fair, and from what I can gather the alterations are not entailing hardships, and I understand the constitution of the Magistrates Court is giving satisfaction. I would like to make reference to the Magistrates Court in this vote. It is generally found that the trouble with the Magistrates Court is the tremendous congestion of work and the long delay that occurs before securing a hearing. In the last issue of the "J.P." a case for over £200 was mentioned. It was brought to the Supreme Court, and the reason given for bringing it to that Court was the delay in prosecuting it in the Magistrates Court. That delay is of very common occurrence, and I do not know how the Minister is going to get over it. I know that litigants are continually complaining about the delay in getting their cases before the courts. The magistrates are good men, and they do their work well, but their time is fully occupied, and we know that time after time Magistrates Court cases are adjourned because the magistrates have not the time to take them. Their time is occupied with matters that have priority on the list.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Very often adjournments are allowed at the request of the litigants.

Mr. KING: I know that perfectly well. They ask for an adjournment in order to get a day set apart without waiting two or three hours till their turn comes round. There are only two days a week set apart for the work of the Magistrates Courts, and, when you have dozens of cases on the list, you can readily understand that these cases cannot be disposed of in two days. There is a continual send-over from one day to another. Some cases may last two or three days, and there is continual congestion, as the magistrates cannot keep up with the work. To get over this difficulty I suggest that the Minister should appoint a qualified barrister to deal with nothing else but the Magistrates Court work. You must understand that by the abolition of the District Courts many of the cases that previously went to the District Courts are now within the jurisdiction of the Magistrates Courts and have to be dealt with by them. The present method is unsatisfactory in that it results in congestion of the work. I trust the Minister will take this matter into consideration, and, if he can give relief in that direction, he will benefit the business community very much indeed.

I also want to deal with the question of the salaries paid to the legal assistants on the Solicitor-General's staff. The Government pose as model employers, and it is just as well that they should maintain that reputation. I do say that the legal assistants on the Solicitor-General's staff are not getting that remuneration to which they are entitled. It will be found from the Estimates that the audit inspectors, health inspectors, and machinery and scaffolding inspectors are all being paid a higher rate of salary than is paid to the legal assistants. I recognise that these inspectors must have certain qualifications, but I also recognise that the legal assistants in the Solicitor-General's office require very high qualifications indeed, and surely they should receive that remuneration to which the responsibilities of the office entitle them. I trust the Minister will see that they do get proper remuneration. They are highly qualified men. They have to pass very stiff examinations to become qualified, and they undertake very onerous and responsible duties.

We have later on in the Estimates, a professional man, Mr Woolcock, who only gets £650 a year as Parliamentary Draftsman. The Assistant Crown Prosecutors get from £400 to £450 a year, less 5 per cent., which means £380 to £427 10s. Will anybody say that that is sufficient remuneration for men who are undertaking these duties? I do not think so. We find that [3 p.m.] in Melbourne the Crown Prosecutor gets £1,400 per annum, and the County Court Crown Prosecutors get £800 per annum. These legal assistants in Queensland are doing exactly the same work as the Crown Prosecutor and the County Court Crown Prosecutors are doing in Victoria, yet they only get a pitiful £380 to £427 10s. per annum. I trust the Minister will take particular notice of these figures. I always think that a man is worthy of his hire. These men have served their time and qualified and passed examinations, and I think they are entitled to something more than what perhaps is a little better than

a glorified typist's salary. I will give the figures in connection with New South Wales, for instance:—

"STATEMENT SHOWING POSITIONS CLASSIFIED IN THE PROFESSIONAL DIVISION, AND SALARIES PAID IN CROWN SOLICITOR'S OFFICE IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

Position.	Salary Paid. £	s.	d.
Crown Solicitor	2,007	16	6
Assistant to Crown Solicitor ...	992	8	8
Chief Clerk	792	8	8
Civil Law Branch—			
Clerk	957	16	6
Clerk	767	8	8
Clerk-in-charge, Equity ...	692	8	8
Senior Clerk, Common Law Branch	600	0	0
Three Clerks (each)	562	8	8
One Clerk	582	16	6
One Clerk	607	16	6
One Clerk	550	0	0
Two Clerks (each)	492	8	8
One Clerk	523	8	8
One Clerk	398	0	0
(And Special allowance,	51	16	6)
One Clerk	398	0	0
(And Special allowance,	25	16	6)
One Clerk	383	8	8
One Clerk	353	16	6
Five Clerks (each)	336	8	8
Two Clerks (each)	262	8	8
One Conveyancing Clerk ...	582	16	6
One Conveyancing Clerk ...	440	8	8
One Conveyancing Clerk ...	388	8	8
Criminal Law Branch—			
Prosecuting Officer (Inferior Courts)	792	8	8
Office of Clerk of the Peace—			
Clerk of the Peace	822	8	8
Deputy Clerk of the Peace ...	592	8	8
One Clerk	522	16	6
Temporary Staff—			
One Legal Clerk (per week) ...	8	3	0
One Conveyancing Clerk (per week)	11	3	0

Our Crown Solicitor gets £675, our Solicitor-General £1,250, and our Chief Legal Assistant £500 per annum. All these salaried men in New South Wales are doing exactly the same work as our Crown Solicitor and Solicitor-General and our legal assistants are doing here, but they are on a very much higher level in regard to salary than our men. We know that these legal assistants are doing the work which the Crown Prosecutors of the Supreme Court and District Court did, but their remuneration is immeasurably smaller than that which is paid in either New South Wales or Victoria. If we want good men to carry out these important duties, then we ought to pay them salaries commensurate with the responsibilities they carry; otherwise we are going to have continual changes in our Crown Law Department. These young men—because they are mostly young—qualify and carry out their duties with the utmost satisfaction, and they give to their work an attention which is quite noticeable; but there is no inducement to them to stay on in the department unless we recognise the value of their services adequately. I ask the Minister to take into consideration the work they do, and I hope that, if he wants to keep an efficient staff in the Crown Solicitor's Office, he will make it worth the while of these men to stay there.

I should also like to say something with regard to permits for art unions. I do not make any secret of the fact that I have approached the Attorney-General with requests for permits for art unions, but I have never gone to him with a case which I did not think was genuine and one which came within the category indicated in the Act. I have never asked for a permit for an art union of a purely gambling nature—we must admit that in all these art unions there is a certain amount of gambling—I always had it in my mind when I went to the Attorney-General for a permit that it had at the back of it some deserving, charitable object. We know that permits have been granted for things of quite another character. We know what went on in the Woolloongabba Park night after night at the Liberty Fair. What happened at South Brisbane was also simply a disgrace. Gambling was carried on there night after night to an extent that was never contemplated by the Act. I am not going to talk against gambling generally, but I do say that there are limitations to this sort of thing, and that the spirit of gambling ought to be confined within certain limits. I hope that these requests for permits in connection with gambling will be closely scrutinised. I hope the Minister will try to the best of his ability to keep the issue of permits within reasonable limits.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): In 1915, it was thought advisable by this Chamber that a Bill should be introduced with a view to controlling and regulating horse-racing in Queensland. Although a motion to that effect was carried unanimously by this Chamber, nothing has been done by the Government to give effect to it. I do not think that things have altered to such an extent since then that a Bill dealing with such matters is not necessary. I really think the time has arrived for such a Bill to be introduced. From what we read in the Press and from what we see when we visit the racecourses, we must come to the conclusion that there is some necessity for the Government exercising greater control over horse-racing in this State than has hitherto been the case.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: The trouble with some of the punters is that some of the jockeys have too much control.

Mr. MORGAN: I am not speaking about the troubles of the punter or the jockey; I am not speaking on behalf of one section as against another. I believe that in every other State of Australia the Government have some control over racing. Racing has reached huge dimensions in Queensland. We know that many thousands of people are obtaining their living from horse-racing in some form or another. One has only to visit Ascot of a morning to see the large number of people who are engaged in training horses and the large number of people who are interested in the feeding of those horses. Racing has reached such dimensions in Queensland that it is time something was done by the Government in the way of exercising more control. There is a governing body known as the Queensland Turf Club, which is a more or less conservative body, as everybody knows. You have to be fairly wealthy before you can became a member of that club.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: You cannot become a member at all now.

Mr. MORGAN: I did not know that they had actually closed their list.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: I understand they have.

Mr. MORGAN: I did not know that. I know it costs a large amount of money to become a member, and the contribution each year is very considerable. That body may almost be termed a close corporation, but it is controlling the racing in this State and can do just as it likes, and every other racing club has to abide by any rule or decision that it comes to. While I have no objection to the Queensland Turf Club controlling racing in Queensland, I do think they should be called upon to govern racing under power given to them by an Act of Parliament. I believe that certain regulations should be laid down so that the Queensland Turf Club cannot infringe upon the rights of others. Many reforms are necessary in order to make racing a clean sport. Horse-racing is generally spoken of as the "sport of kings," but there are a great many others who are not kings who attend the race meetings.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: It is not to be compared with the sport the bookmakers call "shearing the punters."

Mr. MORGAN: There are a great many people who desire to see the horses competing one with the other. If that is a form of amusement and recreation that some people desire, then I do not wish to prevent it. We all have our different forms of recreation. Some of us prefer to play golf, some to play bowls, and others to engage in other sports; but if a man desires to spend an hour or two at a race meeting there is nothing in law to prevent him.

We, as the representatives of the people of Queensland, should endeavour to make the sport as clean as it is possible to make it. We do not want to abolish horse racing; we want to control it. In my opinion it should be controlled by an Act of Parliament. I can mention one or two reforms which are necessary. Take, for instance, the appointment of stipendary stewards. They are men who are appointed to be present at race meetings for the purpose of endeavouring to do away with "crook" practices that occur in horse racing. Those officials are appointed by the Queensland Turf Club. A great number of the men controlling the Club—I think all of them —are horse-owners, and are interested in the racing. The bread and butter of the stipendary stewards is dependent upon certain individuals, and they might be dismissed if they offend any one or any number of those who have the right to make the appointments. It is only human, therefore, to suppose that those officials are not going to allow their bread and butter to suffer through the carrying out of their duties. If those men were to haul over the coals certain of the men who govern the sport, they might find themselves at loggerheads with those individuals. The result, it is generally conceded, is that a small horse-trainer or owner is often hauled over the coals and quite justifiably, for some wrong-doing, while on very many occasions the horses owned by those in a much higher position—men of social and financial standing—are allowed to escape punishment. They are evidently immune from supervision and can run their horses as they choose. It may be that theirs would be a glaring case of misconduct, but they escape punishment simply because they have the appointing of the officials whose duty it is to detect those engaged in improper practices.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: Who do you suggest should make the appointments?

Mr. MORGAN: I would not suggest the Government, because they might make appointments of a political character. (Laughter.)

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: Would you take a plebiscite of the punters?

Mr. MORGAN: I would not. I suggest that every racing club in Queensland be registered, and that these clubs, according to the amount of prize money paid and number of meetings held in the year, be vested with power to appoint these stipendary stewards. In Victoria racing is governed by little associations composed of representatives of racing clubs, and these bodies appoint the stipendary stewards. The South Western Racing Association of Queensland, which has its headquarters at Toowoomba, has appointed a stipendary steward. A number of clubs are affiliated with that association, and they have the right of appointing representatives to it. That is a good system to institute in connection with the appointment of stipendary stewards in the metropolitan district and in connection with racing in Queensland generally. Those appointments should not be entirely in the hands of the Queensland Turf Club. Every club registered with the Queensland Turf Club should have one vote, with additional votes, according to the number of times they race in the year and their membership. It may be possible to allow them one vote for every 100 members.

Mr. FARRELL: In that case how many votes will a body like the Queensland Turf Club get with a membership of about 5,000?

Mr. MORGAN: I do not intend to go into that question at all. I merely say that outside racing bodies should have some say in the appointment of stipendiary stewards, and that it should not rest solely with the Queensland Turf Club.

It has been stated frequently that the reason why we indulge in horse racing is for the purpose of improving the breed of thorough-bred horses and, during the recent war, to assist in supplying a suitable animal for war purposes. In my opinion that theory has been exploded. All sorts of business people are engaged in horse racing for the purpose of making money—and sometimes for losing money. We have not got now, as we had in the olden days, men racing entirely for the love of the sport. It has been made a business, even with rich men. People look upon it as a method by which they may make money and accumulate wealth. The stability and general conformation of the horse has gone by the board. A horse may be deformed and a squib, and of no use from a breeding point of view—useless altogether in perpetuating the species. At the same time that horse may be one of the fastest and most profitable horses in a stable.

We should insist by Act of Parliament upon longer races being provided, and the shorter races should be wiped out. We should regulate the length of the racecourse and safeguard the jockeys who have to ride the horses.

Mr. FARRELL: That is very necessary.

Mr. MORGAN: We should make the minimum weight to be carried, say, 7 stone 7 lb. At present many young boys are allowed to take part in races—even boys of the age of fourteen. When those boys are about twenty-one years of age they become heavier, and the result is that their occupation vanishes, because at present horses are handicapped as low as 6 stone 7 lb.—a mere flyweight. Those boys are compelled to sweat if they are to continue racing, consequently many die from consumption. They seldom live a lengthy life. It seems to me that the winning of a race is considered of greater importance than the life of a boy. We know of jockeys who, after they reach manhood, and owing to the necessity for continually reducing weight, die at a very young age. If horses are not capable of carrying a decent weight and of racing a decent distance, they should cease to exist, and should not be assisted in any shape or form on the racecourse.

On most of our courses now they are going in for divisions, where horses are classed 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, or 5th division, as the case may be.

Mr. CONROY: That is only at Albion Park.

Mr. MORGAN: The practice exists throughout Queensland. If it is a good system at Albion Park, it should be adopted throughout Queensland with a view to preventing horses carrying excessive weight. It is wrong to attempt to match horses evenly by causing one to carry, say, 7 stone 7 lb. and the other a maximum of 10 stone 7 lb. The matter could be better brought about by placing them in definite divisions. I do not think it is right to attempt to match the worst horse in Queensland beside the best horse in the State by imposing an excessive weight on the latter. The matter could best be tackled by the universal use of divisions.

My principal argument in support of this is that, if one horse can give another horse four stone or five stone, then the horse that has to carry the lower weight should not be on a racecourse at all—it should be in a baker's cart or a butcher's cart. I advocate that each horse should carry at least seven stone for the sake of the boy riding the horse, and because we want to breed a class of horse that will carry weight and also one that will run a long distance. I do not know why the Government have not done something in this direction. Some time ago we debated the question of the abolition of proprietary racing. Since then an Amateur Turf Club has been formed in Brisbane to take over the principal proprietary racecourse in this State.

Mr. FARRELL: And the wealthiest.

Mr. MORGAN: According to the balance-sheets over £50,000 yearly, representing the profits from that proprietary racecourse, has been going out of the State, and a profit of £54,000 was made during the first year that the new club took control.

Mr. FARRELL: After paying interest.

Mr. MORGAN: That was clear profit after paying all expenses. That goes to show that those who condemned the Government for allowing one man to take that amount of money yearly out of Queensland had something to go on. It has been said that this club has only been formed for the purpose of throwing dust in the eyes of the legislators and in the eyes of those who desire to see propretary racing abolished. I do not believe in proprietary racing, and I am sorry it was ever allowed in Queensland. I would like to see it abolished altogether. This club may be genuine, but it is open to suspicion owing to the fact that it is almost impossible for anyone to become a member and take part in the management. If anyone desires to become a member he, first of all, has to run the risk of being black-balled, and he has to be approved of by those who at present control the club. It has been stated in the Press, and it has not been refuted, that Mr. Wren, by transferring the management of this racecourse to what is known as an amateur club, escaped taxation to the amount of £10,000. The figures show that he evaded taxation to the State to the amount of £3,000 or £4,000 and that he also escaped Federal taxation amounting to £6,000 or £7,000, so that it was an extraordinarily clever move on the part of Mr. Wren. He must be a very clever financier himself or he must be advised by very clever men. These matters deserve investigation on the part of the Government, as they are here for the purpose of knowing just what is happening in regard to these matters.

I feel sure that, if some other individual were to do something which would mean the State losing between £3,000 and £4,000 in taxation, the Government immediately would institute inquiries as to whether it had been done in ignorance or not. That is a matter which should be inquired into by the Government. That would certainly show that the Government were taking a keen interest in this matter. I think the time is over-ripe for the Government to introduce a Bill to deal with the matter. We have racing in Queensland commented on by Southern people, who say that racing in this State is much more "crook" than racing in the Southern States. There may not be any truth in that—I am not going to say that racing in Queensland is any worse than it is down South; but we have had visits from public men in the South who have expressed that opinion with regard to racing in Queensland. I do not in any way uphold that opinion, but I know from what I have seen myself and from newspaper comment for many months, that many things have happened on our racecourses in
[3.30 p.m.] Queensland that should have been inquired into, and in connection with which the stipendiary stewards should have taken action. I feel sure that those who visited Ascot during Exhibition week must have arrived at the conclusion, if they were men who know anything about the capabilities of horses and racing, that everything was not fair and above-board, more especially in connection with the running of horses which came from the South. It is stated by racing men that Southerners can come up here and do just as they like, and then go away with a rich harvest made at the expense of those who take part in racing in Queensland. It is a wonder that the public take these things lying down, as they do, and that more demonstrations similar to that which was made last Saturday are not made by those who attend races. The Queensland people are very lenient in that respect. I am doubtful whether Southern people would stand what the racegoers of Queensland stand when such deliberate attempts are made to take down those who support the racing game in this State. I do not wish to say anything

to condemn the Government, or to say that they are responsible for what is happening; but the time has come when the Government should introduce a Bill, which should be dealt with solely as a non-party measure. The Minister has on several occasions stated that it was his intention to bring in such a Bill, and he must have recognised the importance of the matter when he made those statements. What the public outside want to know is why the hon. gentleman has changed his views. Why has he not introduced the Bill that people are crying out for, and which is so imperatively necessary? He must have thought so when on several occasions he told us a Bill was being prepared and was almost ready for presentation, but suddenly he has discovered that nothing must be done in the matter. It almost looks as if influence has been brought to bear, perhaps on the Minister controlling this particular department or perhaps on the Cabinet generally—I am not going to say which, but it looks as though something has happened. At one time the hon. gentleman was loud in his condemnation of the way in which racing was carried on, and later on we find that he has nothing much to say at all. At any rate, I hope he will see his way to bring in a Bill this session.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): This is the department which in some small measure is connected with racing, and I wish to say a few words on the lines taken by the hon. member for Murilla. I think it is time that the Government took some action to protect people who go to races and to see that racing is conducted in a proper manner. The Government cannot stand clear of responsibility in this matter, because I notice by the returns to the 30th June last that they got a very nice little dividend from racing in Queensland. I notice that for the year 1922-23, the amount paid in totalisator tax and betting tax was £53 523, and that in 1923-24 it was £84,377, so that there was a pretty good increase of £31,000. When you take into consideration that nice little "divvy" and the prospect of an increase as the game goes on—because I do not think that racing is going to go back—it is evident that the Government have a certain responsibility. There is no doubt that we in Queensland and Australia generally are a sporting community, and particularly a horse-loving community. There may be a certain amount of sentiment wrapped up in it, and there may be the consideration of money-making by betting; but, whether people bet or not, there is an intense love of sport and an intense love of horses in the make-up of the Australian. That is one of the big factors we have to consider, and for that reason I do not think that racing will go back. That being so, the department can look forward to a continuance of that nice little "divvy," but they also have a responsibility which they otherwise would not have. They have a responsibility to see that racing is as straight and as clean as it can be made. There is not the slightest doubt that, as a general thing, racing is fairly straight, but I am also quite certain that at times the public are taken down, and taken down badly. As horse racing now bears the imprint of the Government approval, if the Government are desirous of seeing that the public are not taken down, they should, as the hon. member for Murilla has pointed out, bring in a Bill to control racing. The hon. member says he cannot understand why the Government have not done so before. I think the first vote I gave in this House was a vote against my own party, and that was in favour of a Bill for the abolition of proprietary racing. I must confess that I have gone back on that opinion, too, for the simple reason that I am not too sure how I would control racing. There is, however, one thing of which I am absolutely certain, and that is that I do not want the Government to control it. (Opposition laughter.)

I have got quite enough to do now without somebody coming up and saying, "Did you see where the judge placed such and such a horse first on Saturday? I was on the second horse, and I bet he won by a neck," and wanting me to persuade the Government to put No. 2 horse first. (Laughter.) That is what would happen. I am quite satisfied to leave the management of racing in the hands of the men who are best acquainted with it. We ought to have the power whereby the Government can direct and control those men, but at the present time the real dictators of racing in Queensland are the Queensland Turf Club, composed of a number of very estimable gentlemen, but they could be improved upon considerably, and some of their actions could be improved considerably. The trouble with racing at the present time, particularly in the metropolitan area, is that a number of the Queensland Turf Club Committee are also horse-owners, and very often unpleasant incidents occur in races in which their horses run. In passing I just want to touch upon the three protests lodged in connection with certain races whereby the prize was taken from the first horse and awarded to the second. Those incidents were practically responsible for the retirement of at least two stipendiary stewards, and it would not have mattered very much if the other stipendiary steward had retired also. The first incident was in connection with Kinnoul and Prince David. I do not know if Prince David ran even third. It seemed to me that the horse Birnam beat Prince David for third place, but that was the way that the judge placed them, and I would not dispute his decision. The other incidents were in connection with Lodi and Gay Song, and in connection with Jessie Marsh and Pleystowe. In every one of those instances there was very grave room for doubt as to whether there should have been any interference with the judge's decision. The public were left to think that there was some other motive in disqualifying certain of those horses. Take the case where a horse is dealt with. One of the most unjust actions of the Queensland Turf Club was that which led to the disqualification of the racehorse Admetus. The horse had only been purchased that day. I know the owner particularly well. We grew up in the same town together, were young fellows together, and we were pretty well acquainted, and my fullest sympathy went out to him that day in his trouble. In my opinion he was undeserving of that trouble, which was due to some extent to the lack of ability on the part of stewards to appreciate the value of evidence. It does not matter whether the action was right or wrong, but that was an instance of where a man had paid £1,000 to purchase a horse which he considered was a good horse and one that would win him

some money. The very day he made that deal the horse was put out of action for some time. He did not remain disqualified for the whole period of his disqualification, but I think for only about eight or nine months.

Anyone who attends the races will notice the inconsistent running of some of the horses owned by big owners.

I do not believe in criticising a person and indulging in innuendoes, but in mentioning the names of those I criticise. One Saturday the horse Dispenser—a 10 to 1 chance—failed, but on the following Wednesday carrying the same weight, or very little different, he came out and won. The horse Civetta ran nowhere in a three-year-old race, and on the following Saturday came out and won a mile race. No action was taken in those cases. The people at the time asked why no action was taken. The conclusion that I came to was that no action was taken because the horses were owned by the Hon. A. H. Whittingham, the President of the Queensland Turf Club, and the stewards were in the unfortunate position of not liking to hint that there was anything irregular or inconsistent about horses owned by him. Those are instances of actual occurrences, but other instances, perhaps not so glaring, could be brought forward. It is time that some Bill was brought forward to regulate racing, and safeguard the general sporting public against such occurrences. There is no reason why the Queensland Turf Club, no matter how wealthy a body it is or who the persons are who control it, should be controlling horse racing in Queensland. The Bill, if brought forward, should allow racehorse owners and others interested in racing to elect boards in four or five divisions of the State, and Government representatives should be appointed to those boards to watch their conduct in the interests of the Government. A small percentage of the representatives of the board would be elected by the racehorse owners and others interested in racing. It would be the duty of those boards to control the stipendiary stewards, and to watch the racing in the general interests of the public. I hold no brief for John Wren or the Albion Park Race Club. I am not contending whether those bodies are right or wrong. Quite recently the Queensland Turf Club issued an ultimatum to the Brisbane Amateur Turf Club, which has purchased the Albion Park Racecourse, to increase their prize money to £1,500 per meeting. That is a dictatorial attitude for one body to take up in respect of another. I do not approve of any body such as the Queensland Turf Club dictating what amount another body should race for. The boards which I suggest would decide the amount by which the prize money should be increased. The amount of prize money should certainly be enlarged, but I fail to see on what grounds the Queensland Turf Club should have the power to fix the amount. If the transfer of the Albion Park Race Club, owned by John Wren, to the Brisbane Amateur Turf Club was genuine, how is that body going to meet its liabilities? I am only assuming that that transfer was a genuine one, and it stands to reason that if it is the managers of that club should want to make some profit to provide for the repayment of the purchase money and for future improvements. The Queensland Turf Club have assumed a big power in dictating what prize money that club should race for.

Another matter—and this is of interest outside of Brisbane—is the control of the allotment of dates and the control of outside racing. In Rockhampton we have a central racing association that practically dominates the fixtures of the Rockhampton Jockey Club and yet, to a great extent, is merely a nominative body. I am satisfied that the Central and Northern districts would welcome that type of board of control. It would give a more equitable control of racing, and would give the clubs greater liberty in conducting their own affairs.

Then there is the matter of the licensing and the control of bookmakers. Seeing that the Government are taking money from the bookmakers to the extent of £84,000 a year—they are really taking it from the racegoers—they have a duty to perform towards those bookmakers. The bookmaker is at the mercy of every club with which he operates. Those clubs can fix what fees they like and can issue a license or otherwise, as they choose. I think the Government should take that matter into consideration.

Perhaps I may be a target for bricks on this question of racing. One often hears it said what rough fellows those who go to racecourses are, and I read the statement by an hon. member of this Committee describing the trains that carry racegoers to the course as "trainloads of iniquity." Have you ever thought, Mr. Pollock, just how far the iniquity of the racing public goes? I am game to bet that there is not a business man in this Chamber who is prepared to take the risk some of these bookmakers are prepared to take when they make a bet of 100 to 10, or even 1,000 to 100. The backer says, "I will take 1,000 to 100," and the bookmaker simply nods. The horse wins; settling day comes round; the backer says, "I want £1,000 from you," and the bookmaker pays the money. There is not an hon. member opposite who would make a deal involving £1,000 without having a lawyer at his side to look after his interests. That is all I have to say about the so-called iniquity of the racegoer.

Mr. FARRELL: No other body gives to charity to the same extent as the racing people.

Mr. PETERSON (*Normanby*): I desire to draw the attention of the Attorney-General to the conduct of art unions. Time after time art unions are conducted in various centres. I am not going into the question of whether they are right or not, but I consider that some protection should be given to the public subscribing to those art unions. They are subscribed to by people all over Queensland and Australia. Week after week we have different art unions in Brisbane for which permits have been given. People in various parts of Australia buy the tickets and they never hear any more about the art union, even if they win a prize. Instructions should be issued by the Department of Justice that, when a permit is given to people to conduct an art union, they should be compelled to supply a list of the winning numbers to all people buying tickets.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That is provided for under the new regulations.

Mr. PETERSON: I am very pleased to hear that from the Attorney-General. Unfortunately in the past the public have been fleeced in this direction, but, in view of the Attorney-General's statement, I shall say nothing more about this subject.

The next point is that one sees in the streets here and in the streets of Rockhampton and elsewhere motor-cars that are being put up for art union purposes. These motor-cars are run all over the place for months and months before the art union takes place, and by the time the winner gets the car it is not even second-hand but third-hand. I think it is up to the Attorney-General to see that, when prizes are issued, particularly in the form of motor-cars, some restriction should be placed on the use of those cars prior to the drawing of the art union.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: They are bound to supply a prize equal in value to that indicated on the ticket. If they use a car for twelve months and it is nearly worn out, that cannot be the prize.

Mr. PETERSON: The sentiment is all right, and it shows that the Attorney-General agrees with my argument. The point is—on whom is placed the onus to see that the winner gets a prize of the value indicated? The committee will say, "This is the car for which we sold the ticket." They then hand over the car, which in some instances is in a very dilapidated condition. The onus should be on those who issue the permit to put some obstacles in the way of using these cars.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: They must give a prize equal to the value shown on the ticket.

Mr. PETERSON: That should be made public. Go down Queen street to-day, and you will see cars that have been exhibited in Queen street for months past, and the same thing occurs in other parts of Queensland. I have seen these art union cars being used by officials. They may be using them in order to sell the tickets, but that decreases the value of the car, and the members of the public who are asked to subscribe to these things should get full value. It is up to the Attorney-General to see that the law in this respect is carried out.

We have had a rather interesting debate concerning the conduct of racecourses. Personally I am not one who frequents racecourses. I do not understand much about horse racing, but I do not object to those who like horse racing taking part in the sport. I do not think that the workers of Queensland are going to be made any better off by this Parliament wasting time discussing horse racing. We have greater ideals in front of us, and, if the workers of Queensland were to pay a little more attention to the welfare of the State and the politics of the State, and if they only knew half as much about the politics of this State as they know about stern-chasers that run on the racecourse, it would be better for themselves and better for the State. Whatever may be done in regard to proprietary racing, it is the duty of the Government at all times not to encourage that particular kind of sport in the way it has been encouraged in the past. I think we have had a little bit too much of horse racing. That is why I am in favour of the suggestions of the hon. member for Fitzroy. The workers may have a good day's sport at a race meeting and they may enjoy it, and it is not my function to criticise them; they can do as they like; but we as members of Parliament should endeavour to set a better standard and legislate in such a way as to provide some source of amusement for the workers other than race meetings. If these iniquities occur in connection with horse racing, it should be the function of Parliament to intervene.

Mr. HARTLEY: Particularly if they get £84,000 a year out of it.

Mr. PETERSON: Yes. I have heard a lot about what the workers have to contend with, and I know they have to contend with a good deal. If I am any judge of the crowds that go by trains and trams to the racecourses, the bulk of that money comes from the workers. I would be in favour of seeing that a considerably less amount was extracted from the workers' pockets in that direction. If the Committee is going to be of any use in purifying sport generally. I shall certainly support the proposals mentioned by the hon. member for Fitzroy. I trust that the few remarks I have made, particularly regarding art union prizes, will be given effect to. The Minister has already stated that instructions have been given to that effect. The onus should be on those who sell the tickets to send to each purchaser of a ticket, a list of the winners, and the prizes should be of the value indicated on the tickets. If he will do that, he will earn the good wishes of all those who would like to subscribe to art unions, which in the main are generally in the interests of charity and other good objects.

[4 p.m.]

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): I would like to make some comments in connection, first of all, with some of the details of the vote. The Minister, no doubt, will be able to furnish the particulars I am seeking. I notice that the amount set down for "Postage, telegrams, and incidentals" is £2,500, while last year it was £2,260. I would like the Minister to tell us what amount was spent last year. No doubt he will have had the figures supplied to him, and will be able to tell us whether he thinks £2,500 will be sufficient for the present year. It would be very interesting also to know how the "Incidentals" are made up. It is a very convenient term, and covers a great deal—so many things can be slipped in under the heading of "Incidentals." I followed the hon. member for Murilla very closely this afternoon when he dealt with the question of racing.

Mr. MAXWELL: Did you hear the hon. member for Fitzroy?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I had not the pleasure of hearing the hon. member for Fitzroy. I confess straightaway that I am not in a position to criticise racing, because I know nothing about it. It is said sometimes that a person who knows the least about a thing talks the most about it. I happen to be an honorary member of the Queensland Turf Club; at any rate the courtesy was shown to me of sending me a ticket which would entitle me to go to the racecourse if I desired. (Laughter.) I felt that it was my duty to express my satisfaction and to tell the sender that I would take it as a memento of the consideration of the club in wanting to get one member of Parliament among others to the races.

Mr. MORGAN: Did you go?

HON. W. H. BARNES: No, I have not gone yet. (Laughter.)

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: If you went once, it would be the end of you. (Laughter.)

HON. W. H. BARNES: If the hon. member for Murilla has rightly diagnosed the incident which happened on the racecourse he referred to, I am rather a fortunate man in not having attended. I do not know whether the hon. member painted it too black, but he certainly threw out a number of suggestions which help us draw our own conclusions.

I want to say a word or two to the Minister in connection with what I consider was a most unwarranted granting of a permit for Market Square during Centenary Week. I am prepared to admit that after it had run its course for a very considerable time the thing was closed up; but, as a public man, I consider it was a great blot upon the community that a gambling hell of that description should have been flourishing under the patronage of those who were running the Centenary celebrations.

Mr. MORGAN: It was shifted to the Domain.

Hon. M. J. KIRWAN: It was not. That is wrong.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am speaking of what I know—I do not know anything about the other thing—and I have no right to make a charge. Why the Attorney-General should grant a permit of this kind to celebrate the Centenary of Brisbane I do not know. If that is the progress we have made in one hundred years, it seems to me that we have been going backwards. I said a while ago that I knew very little of racing, but I thought I should not say anything about what went on in the Market Square without seeing for myself. I did, and I am bound to say that there was any number of blanks and not many prizes, and that the people who were apparently expecting to get something great out of it were being impoverished, and all in the name and under the cover of a permit granted by a department of the State. I hope that what happened will be a lesson, and that the Minister will do what he can to wipe out such a scandal. No public man can speak too strongly of what happened there. Again I say that it is a pity that the people connected with the Centenary of Brisbane celebrations had anything to do with it.

There is another matter I want to raise on this vote. Some time ago I asked a question with reference to the cases of McAvoy versus Nelson and Tarrant versus McAvoy, in which I was trying to find out whether it was not a fact that after the cases had been decided and the verdicts had been given fresh evidence came to light. I have not seen any of the papers, but I am prepared to admit that in this case as in every other case there are two sides. Is it not a fact that a letter was sent to the Justice Department from the Registrar of the Supreme Court covering a letter from McAvoy, stating that, if the facts were in accordance with his letter, it was a case for immediate prosecution? In other words, was not evidence available that, when the hire-purchase agreement involved in the case was supposed to have been signed at Maryborough, the parties concerned were not within 80 miles of that place? Is it a coincidence that so soon as ex-Subinspector Donnelly was put on to the case and was preparing to prosecute, he got his marching orders to Longreach? I take it that we are right in saying that there is evidence that something is wrong, and I hope that the Minister will be prepared to give the facts. I am advised—and I consider that as a parliamentary representative a duty is cast on me in view of the information which I have to mention the fact—that so soon as McAvoy starts a little business the unsatisfied judgment in this case is brought up against him and everything he has is taken. I say that, if the Department of Justice is satisfied that a miscarriage of justice has taken place—and the sworn evidence supports it—I say that it is the duty of the department to intervene.

There is another matter that I would like to refer to, and I recognise that to some extent I am up against it, because the question arises as to whether I have the right to make any reference to the "Golden Casket" on this vote. I am in this position through no seeking of my own, but I have received a letter from New South Wales addressed to the Minister for Justice, and dealing with the "Golden Casket." As it is addressed to the Minister for Justice, I take it that I am allowed to refer to it. It refers to the non-receipt of money that was sent, and makes inquiries about it. I also would like to know in connection with the charges which I made previously, whether the matter has been referred to the Department of Justice, and, if they have, what has been the attitude of the department thereto? I am compelled to make these references incidentally because publicity has been given to the matter, and because a letter has arrived from Charleville and is of a very grave nature. I further want to ask the Minister what action has been taken, and whether he has been approached with regard to getting at the men who apparently have done an improper thing, and what was the action of the department?

Mr. FARRELL: The hon. gentleman seems to be out to persecute these men.

HON. W. H. BARNES: No, I want to get to the bottom of the matter.

Mr. CONROY (*Maranoa*): I would like to deal with the remarks made by the hon. member for Murilla and the hon. member for Fitzroy on the question of horse-racing. The hon. member for Murilla referred to the control of horse-racing, and dealt pretty fully with the matter. While I quite agree with him that we could control horse-racing in the way of having less horse-racing in Queensland, at the same time I do not agree with him that the Government should control horse-racing.

Mr. MORGAN: I did not advocate that.

Mr. CONROY: I tried to follow the hon. gentleman's argument closely, but I could not altogether reason it out, because, if the Government do not control horse-racing, then horse-racing must be controlled by the proper authorities, and, to my mind, the proper authorities at present are the Queensland Turf Club.

Mr. MORGAN: At the present time there are local authorities working under the Local Authorities Act, and they are not being controlled by the Government. That is what I want in connection with horse-racing.

Mr. CONROY: I am not talking about local authorities. The hon. gentleman complained about the stipendiary stewards. It

is a very easy thing for any hon. member to rise in his place and say that stipendiary stewards are not carrying out their duties conscientiously at race meetings. Those stewards are put in their position by the committee of the Queensland Turf Club, and that committee is elected by members of the Queensland Turf Club. Surely to goodness the men who are appointed to that position are fully qualified to carry out their occupation

I was rather interested when the hon. member suggested that the minimum weight in all races should be 7 st. 7 lb. The hon. gentleman has had a good deal to do with horse-racing, but I think he will agree with me that that is practically an impossibility. Just take, for instance, the Melbourne Cup, which is the greatest race in Australia and probably in the world. The minimum weight in that race is 6 st. 7 lb., and, if you added an extra stone to the minimum, you would not have such a large number of nominations, and consequently you would not have such a large number of starters.

Mr. MORGAN: The 6 st. 7 lb. horse should not be taken into consideration at all. He ought to be in a butcher's cart.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. CONROY: That is no argument. If a man who owns a horse is prepared to pay for the training and upkeep of that horse, I contend that he is quite justified in allowing that horse to race as he wishes to race it, and it is the duty of the handicapper to handicap that horse accordingly. There are horses nominated for the Melbourne Cup at 6 st. 7lb. which, if they came to Brisbane, would be handicapped at 7 st. 7 lb. or 8 st. 8 lb. The quality of the horses is different.

Mr. MORGAN: The unregistered clubs have adopted the 7 st. 7 lb. minimum, and it works successfully.

Mr. CONROY: It does not matter what the unregistered clubs do. Personally, I have no time for unregistered racing. The hon. member for Murilla has complained that there is too much racing, and now we find him interjecting about what the unregistered clubs do.

Mr. MORGAN: It is a pity that the Government do not stop them. If the Government introduced a Bill to regulate racing, it could stop them.

Mr. CONROY: The hon. member for Fitzroy complained about the action of the Queensland Turf Club in compelling the Brisbane Amateur Turf Club to increase the amount of its prize money. Quite recently the Queensland Turf Club decided that the programme to be raced for by the Brisbane Amateur Turf Club should not be less than £1,500 per meeting, and I contend that any race club that showed a profit of £56,000, as this club did last year, should increase the amount of its prize money. (Hear, hear!) The amount of prize money offered by that club up to the present time has been very small in comparison with the revenue received. They race practically every week. I cannot understand the attitude of the hon. member for Fitzroy in connection with that matter, because the people who own the horses have to pay for their upkeep, nomination, training, and riding fees. The Queensland Turf Club are to be complimented on the action they took in compelling the Brisbane Amateur Turf Club to increase their prize programme.

The hon. member for Normanby referred to art unions, and I was very pleased to hear the reply of the Attorney-General. I agree that some steps should be taken to control art unions more closely. I realise that this is necessary, not in regard to the country centres but as regards the city, where a large number of art unions are continually being held. Unfortunately, to my mind, a certain number of them are not genuine, and people who purchase tickets never hear further of them or of the results. Art unions conducted in the country centres in connection with hospitals or local benefits are known to everybody. No one can walk down the streets of Brisbane but what he is confronted with a request to take a ticket in an art union, and in many cases he does not know whether they are bonâ fide or not. I am pleased to hear that the Department of Justice is taking this matter in hand, and that the secretaries of all art unions have now to file and keep on record all tickets sold, together with the butts used in connection with them. So far as that is concerned, I think everything will now be in order and the public interest protected.

I quite agree with the hon. member for Murilla in his advocacy of longer distance races. In nearly every racing programme that you pick up outside of Brisbane you will find that there are no handicaps over a mile and a-quarter. Unfortunately that state of affairs must exist for some time, but I hope that an effort will be made—of course this is a matter for the committees of the race clubs—to have at all race meetings at least one race of not less than a mile and a-quarter. In Brisbane we have the Queensland Cup and the Brisbane Cup, each two miles, and during Exhibition time we have a mile and a-half handicap; but at no other time of the year have we a race longer than a mile and a-quarter. I certainly believe that, if we are to improve the breed of our horses, we should have longer distance races. That is a matter with which we have nothing to do, but the discussion might be the means of getting the racing committees to consider the question.

At 4.23 p.m.,

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

Mr. BRUCE (*Kennedy*): There are one or two questions I wish to touch upon. One is the method of issuing tickets to bookmakers. When the tax was instituted last year the bookmakers went to find out what arrangements had been made regarding tickets. The procedure was that they had first to go to the Government Printer, and there they received the tickets with the stamp on. They then had to take those tickets from the Government Printing Office to a job printer and get their names put on them. If the Government levy a tax on the bookmakers, I think it would be an efficient and decent thing for them not only to put the stamp on the ticket but to print the name of the bookmaker on the ticket at the Government Printing Office.

Mr. MAXWELL: And get the bookmaker to pay for it?

Mr. BRUCE: Of course—there is no argument about that. At present the bookmakers have to get the stamp put on at the Government Printing Office, and then they have to go to a job printer for the rest of the printing. This makes them pay an enormous price for the work.

Mr. MAXWELL: Why should they not go to private enterprise to get it done?

Mr. BRUCE: Why should not the Government Printing Office do the job and get a bit of profit out of it? I object to private printers—who may be sanctimonious people who object to racing—making quite a big thing out of the printing of tickets. I think the Government Printing Office should have any advantage that may be available.

Another matter is that of the incidence of taxation in country districts. In Brisbane, where we have a weekly race meeting, the taxation is not felt by bookmakers, but out in small country districts where they have an occasional picnic meeting or a race meeting once every month or two months with a scattered attendance, the incidence of the taxation is entirely unfair to the people.

Mr. TAYLOR: Why is it unfair in those districts?

Mr. BRUCE: The tax is out of all proportion to the return they get. Hon. members can understand that where a Brisbane bookmaker may write a bet for £100 the country bookmaker would only write a bet for 5s. or 10s. That is quite plain to hon. members who understand the position. Some hon. members do not believe in racing and others do; but so long as there are Australians and a few horses left in Australia, so long will there be horse racing; and, so long as horse racing takes place for monetary benefit, so long will there be "crook" business. It does not matter what committees you appoint or how you appoint them, certain men will use the means that they have at their disposal to get an advantage over the other man. I have seen endeavours made to remedy the evils that take place, but it does not matter how you conduct a racing club these evils will continue. It is the big fight for the cash, and while they are out for it, you will have this "crook" business. As to remedying the system, it is as good as you will ever get it.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J. Mullan, *Flinders*): I wish to reply to several matters raised by hon. members. In the first place the hon. member for Logan referred to the question of the Magistrates Courts as constituted under the Magistrates Courts Act. He also referred to the Supreme Court as constituted under the amending Act, and he asked how they were operating. I was pleased to note that eventually he signified his entire approval of the Magistrates Courts, notwithstanding the fact that many of the legal fraternity were hostile to the Bill when it was being passed.

Mr. KING: We have learned from experience.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I am pleased to inform the hon. member that we have not had one complaint in regard to the Magistrates Courts. I think that is a pretty good record for a new measure which at the time it was passed was said to be impracticable by men who ought to have known different. However, there it stands! After two years' operations there have been no complaints. On the contrary I can show the hon. member scores of letters of congratulation on the way in which the establishment of the Magistrates Court has facilitated litigation. A man who goes into the Magistrates Court can have his case cheaply, and, in my opinion, expeditiously settled as against the old system of going to the Supreme Court and having to go through the circumlocution essential there. I note the remarks which the hon. member has made regarding the delays in connection with the administration of the Magistrates Court in Brisbane. I am not questioning the accuracy of the hon. member's statement, but I am surprised to hear that such delays exist, because some considerable time ago I instructed the Under Secretary to have a conference with the magistrates with a view to facilitating the work of the Magistrates Courts in order to avoid congestion. He had that conference, and as a result it was decided that all undefended cases shall be taken before 11 a.m. each day. We thought that would relieve the congestion. At the same time I gave the Under Secretary distinctly to understand that, if any question of congestion arose in the future, I was immediately to be notified, because I tell the hon. member frankly that I will not tolerate delay. I regard the work of the Magistrates Courts as most important, and it is not the proper thing to have delays in regard to that work, and, if delays are occurring as the hon. member states, I want to know why, in view of the instructions I have given, I have not been informed of it.

Mr. KING: Delays are unavoidable under existing conditions.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I am prepared to alter the conditions and appoint more magistrates, if necessary, because delay is an intolerable thing which we would not be justified in countenancing. I only regret that it has not been brought under my notice by my responsible officers, and I will take immediate steps first to inquire if there is delay, and, if I find that delay occurs, I will undertake to see that the position is promptly rectified. (Hear, hear!)

The hon. member for Logan referred to the remuneration which the legal assistants received. In the first place, I agree with everything the hon. member said with regard to the legal assistants. They are a very fine body of young men, and well trained. Of course, in comparing them with [4.30 p.m.] the legal assistants of other places, it must be remembered that they are mostly young men who have been trained by and at the expense of our department. Still, having trained and equipped them properly for their task, I have no desire to sweat them, and I am quite prepared to treat them as reasonably as possible. I think the legal assistants themselves would tell the hon. member, if he was discussing the matter with them personally, that on several occasions we have given substantial increases in salary and improved their status, and I am quite prepared to continue that policy, because I recognise

that, having gone through the ordeal of the various examinations which are requisite for their job, they are entitled to decent remuneration. As far as the financial exigencies will permit, I will endeavour to have their position improved.

Mr. KING: I want the department to hold them—not lose them.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No matter what salary we pay them we shall not hold them, because when they see a good chance outside these young men naturally are going to leave the department because they will get into a wider sphere. I do not blame them. Several of them have left with my good wishes that they may do better, and they have done better. In the natural course of events all these men, as we fully equip them, will go out and take their place in private practice.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Is that in accordance with Labour principles?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Of course it is. The hon. gentleman would not stand in the way of a man bettering himself.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Decidedly not.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: In a young country like this where men are elevated to the bench, vacancies occur at the bar, and several of the men in the past have seized the opportunity and gone into civil practice.

Mr. KERR: It is quite apparent that you do not believe in socialism. (Laughter.)

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The hon. member quite misunderstands the position. He must remember that we are not living in a socialistic State. (Opposition laughter.) We are living in a capitalistic State where we are endeavouring to secure socialism. (Opposition laughter.) These young men must adapt themselves to the circumstances which exist, and endeavour to better themselves.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: That may be one of the reasons for their wanting to get out quickly.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The hon. member for Murilla and the hon. member for Fitzroy dealt with the control of racing. Although racing is not controlled by the Government in this State to the same extent as it is controlled in other States, I believe that it is better conducted in Queensland than in any of the other States. I am not going to say, nevertheless, that because that is true there is not something in the argument for a better control of racing—not directly by the Government, but by a board as suggested by the hon. member for Fitzroy. I shall take that matter and the whole of the suggestions made in connection with racing into consideration at a later stage when the question is under review.

The hon. member for Normanby referred to the question of art unions and the fact that in some cases prize winners went away after they got their tickets and forgot all about it. That is certainly not a fair thing, and in the regulations passed in the early part of this year we made it obligatory on those conducting art unions to notify each prize winner by letter, and to advertise the result in at least one newspaper circulating in the district in which the art union was conducted.

The hon. member for Normanby also raised the question of the value of prizes in these art unions. I contend that, if a prize consisting of a motor-car worth £500 is announced, the winner of the first prize has a right to get a car worth that sum, and not a motor-car which has been run about the streets for a long period so that perhaps something has been broken or it has become dilapidated before it is handed over. If the promoters announce that the first prize is a car worth a particular sum, they are legally bound, in my opinion, to give you a prize of that value; they have no right to depreciate it in value.

Mr. FRY: Suppose they announce that the prize will be a particular car, giving the name of the car, or put up on it, "First prize, this car," would it make any difference?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: They always give the value of the car.

Mr. FRY: Must the value be stated on the ticket?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: It is always stated on the ticket. If, as the hon. member for Normanby said, prizes are being handed over which are not of the value advertised, I will make inquiries and see that the practice is stopped in the future.

The hon. member for Wynnum referred to the amount of £2,500 set down for "Postage, Telegrams, and Incidentals." The amount voted last year was £2,260, but last year we spent £2,316.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: What are the items?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I will give the whole of them, if the hon. member wishes. They are—

	£	s.	d.
Postage and telegrams ...	323	0	0
Petty cash	110	0	0
Clerical assistance	157	3	0
Totalisator fees	181	0	4
Overtime	37	11	4
Towel money	19	1	10
Travelling expenses (official visits)	473	0	10
Motor hire	232	3	6
Premium, workers' compensation policy	90	0	3
Telephone rentals and calls ...	212	8	1
Miscellaneous	58	6	3
Living allowance	1	13	4
Ice	2	4	0
Allowance to officers—			
Chief Inspector Totalisators	58	6	8
Registrar, Auctioneers, etc. ...	50	0	0
Private Secretary to Minister	50	0	0
Unemployed Workers Insurance	10	5	10
Extra remuneration for officers acting in higher positions ...	187	10	0
Tea money	1	0	0
Honoraria (Miss Story) ...	12	0	0
Honoraria (Mr. Broadbent) ...	50	0	0
	£2,316	15	3

The hon. gentleman referred to the permit granted in connection with the "Liberty Fair" in Market Square, and in replying I will bracket the reference to permits by the hon. member for Logan and other hon. members. A representative committee—I will not mention names—representing opinions from both sides of this Chamber—waited upon me and asked if a permit could be granted allowing them to conduct raffles, art unions, and guessing competitions in Market Square, the total proceeds of which were to be devoted to establishing what they called "Centenary bursaries" at the University. I hesitated for some considerable time before I acceded to the request, but eventually I thought, "Well, if there is a considerable amount of money likely to be raised by this purpose and they run bonâ fide raffles, art unions, and guessing competitions, it would be a good thing to get an extra bursary or two at the University in this way"; and the committee being very pressing in its request I granted it. I am not going to justify or defend certain things that took place, because, when I found out the things that were taking place, I notified the committee, and they shut down earlier than perhaps they otherwise would have done. I notified them that unless something was done the thing would have to be promptly closed

The hon. member for Wynnum raised the case in which a man named Tarrant and a man named McAvoy were concerned. The facts of that case are: Mrs. Nelson bought a motor car from Tarrant. Mr. Nelson was indebted to Mr. McAvoy, who sued for and obtained a judgment. When McAvoy obtained a judgment he seized the car belonging to Mrs. Nelson, and when the matter was taken to court the court ordered the car to be returned to Tarrant. That was as far as the civil proceedings went. Subsequently the police charged Tarrant with perjury, and he was brought before the court and committed for trial. In the ordinary course the depositions went to Mr. Dickson, the Crown Prosecutor, and he filed no true bill. Those are the whole facts in connection with the case. In the face of no true bill having been filed by Mr. Dickson, notwithstanding that the police magistrate had considered that a prima facie case had been made out and had committed the man for trial, no further action was open. That is the whole position.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: It seems an extraordinary case. I have something further to say on it.

Mr. HARTLEY: The same thing happened under your Government.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I am not making any charge against the Government.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: This is the first occasion since I have been Minister upon which any reference has been made to the filing of a no true bill. I have never in any case interfered in the slightest degree from the moment that the depositions have been sent to the Crown Prosecutor, and in every case he has used his own discretion as to whether he should file a true bill or not. I have had hundreds of letters written to me by people, who naturally did not know that they were doing anything wrong, entreating me to deal with their cases, but I have in all cases scrupulously observed what I regarded as the proper course, and have not interfered with the Crown Prosecutor in the discharge of what he conceived to be his duty.

The hon. member for Wynnum mentioned certain matters in regard to the "Golden Casket." The "Golden Casket" does not come under my administration, but the references he made justify me in making a reply. If the hon. gentleman will hand me the letter of complaint which he received from New South Wales regarding the non-forwarding of prize money, I shall be only too pleased to inquire into it.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I shall be very pleased to do so. I have another inquiry in which it is said that the "Buckley's Chance" people won a prize and never got it.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: If the hon. gentleman hands that letter to me, I will undertake to make due inquiry.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I shall do so.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The hon. member for Kennedy made some reference with regard to certain charges made upon bookmakers. I have discussed the question with the Government Printer from time to time, but I have been unable to come to a more satisfactory arrangement than that which exists at present.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): It is only fair for me to say that I was exceedingly careful in introducing this last matter, and I did not for one moment imply that the Minister was not honest in his action. I have a letter which I have received from Mr. McAvoy dealing with the matter and in justice to him, who is a constituent of mine, I wish to read his view of the case. The letter is written from Lindum, and states—

> "On Thursday last I was speaking to ex-subinspector Donnelly, at his place of business, at Landsborough. He remembered the details of the case perfectly and stated that there seemed to him to be considerable opposition to any action being taken in the matter. After getting all the evidence he required, in accordance with departmental practice, he submitted it to the Crown Law Office. After considerable delay, the papers were returned to him, pointing out—no case. He returned the papers again to the Crown Law Office, stressing the salient points, as the case was so glaring, and the evidence so plain, that it was inexplicable to him. A second time, I was told, they were returned to him with a similar remark as to the case. The next event that happened, Donnelly was transferred to Longreach, and whilst a petition was signed by many of the prominent business people to retain him here, the Government was adamant, and would give no logical explanation as to his transfer. I might mention that Mr. Donnelly is practically a stranger to me, having only spoken to him in all three times."

The Attorney-General in his reply, if I followed him correctly, was of the opinion that there had been a miscarriage of justice inasmuch as the Crown Prosecutor would not file a true bill in the case. I can only say that, in the light of the evidence of the parties concerned, who were supposed to have signed a transfer at a certain

period, those parties were not even present when the transfer was supposed to have been signed. That was proved subsequently. I quite agree with the Attorney-General's attitude that, when the documents were sent to the Crown Prosecutor, the hon. gentleman should not take personal action. That seems to be a very safe course to follow. I am bound to say that, if I were Attorney-General and the papers were returned, I would not have touched them, as was the case with the Attorney-General. It appears to me that the judgment was not the judgment of the Crown Prosecutor.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I cannot admit that because of the fact of the State proceeding against the man to the extent of bringing him to the police court, when the Police Magistrate determined that there was a prima facie case. Later, of course, Mr. Dickson found that there was no true bill.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I have no wish to put into the mouth of the hon. gentleman words that he did not say. I can only admit that in a legal matter I would be guided by the legal experience and advice of Mr. Dickson; otherwise one would be courting some form of disaster. At the same time I am convinced that a manifest miscarriage of justice has occurred in the case of McAvoy, and I certainly think he is entitled to some form of protection. Here is a man who is trying to make a living, and who at every turn is compelled to meet this judgment until it is satisfied, even to the extent of having the few sticks he possesses sold over his head.

Question put and passed.

COURTS OF PETTY SESSIONS.

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

"That £64,100 be granted for 'Courts of Petty Sessions.'"

Question put and passed.

ELECTORAL REGISTRATION.

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

"That £12,866 be granted for 'Electoral Registration.'"

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): I would like to ask a question or two, more particularly in connection with the electoral rolls. I think it has been the policy of the Government to see that every roll is kept up to date from time to time, and the police are asked to take this work in hand. We all recognise the amount of work entailed in connection with electoral enrolment, and I take it the work is an increasing rather than a decreasing quantity. The question I wish particularly to put before the Attorney-General is, whether the police are at this time taking any action in regard to the enrolment of persons who are entitled to get on the electoral roll?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Yes.

At 4.56 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Another question which is of considerable interest to the community is whether any progress has been made with regard to having joint rolls prepared both of the Commonwealth and of the State electors. I do not say that I would advocate that unless there were some adjustments, but there has been some suggestion that there should be a uniform roll for the State and Commonwealth in order to save expense. My reason for not advocating that is that unless there were adjustments, I cannot see how it would work. Take the electorate of Wynnum, for instance. If you had, in connection with that electorate the same conditions as apply to the Commonwealth, you would have the Dunwich vote swamping the whole constituency. At present, as is probably well known, the people who are accommodated by the State in Dunwich vote for the electorates from which they came.

Mr. COLLINS: Is that a good system?

HON. W. H. BARNES: It would be a manifestly unfair system if the parties who are accommodated at Dunwich and who are receiving Government aid, were able to control that electorate.

Mr. COLLINS: If it is good for the Commonwealth, it should be good for the State.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The same conditions do not apply.

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Bremer*): I would like the Minister to tell the Committee the reason for making the electoral claims more difficult than they ordinarily are. The last claims coming into my district have on them the question, "What jury district do you reside in?" That information is absolutely unnecessary for electoral enrolment, and I do not think the electors should be called upon to answer any such question. I trust the Minister will have the matter immediately rectified, as I do not think the electors should be worried with such questions. The electoral claims are difficult enough now to fill in. In many instances the electors have no idea of the electorate they reside in, and I do not think they should also be called upon to know the jury district in which they reside.

Mr. PETERSON (*Normanby*): I would like to ask the Minister whether the names of those electors on the Normanby roll who failed to vote at the last election, and who have given reasonable answers as to why they have not voted—being in the main that they were not in the Normanby electorate but were in other electorates—have been excised from the Normanby roll. With those names remaining on the roll, when the percentage vote is worked out, instead of showing a 92 per cent. vote, the percentage vote is considerably reduced. It is not a fair thing that such names should be allowed to remain on that roll. It must be well known to the electoral office whether the claims of those people were properly filled in, and, if they were not properly filled in, their names are not entitled to be on that roll. It is clear from the answer given to me last session that a large number of these people had stated that they were already enrolled for other electorates, and that was the reason they had not voted for the Normanby electorate.

I would also like to ask the Minister whether any increases have been granted to returning officers in country electorates. In the past it has been the custom to pay the returning officers for country electorates the same fees as were paid in the town electorates. At the last election my own electorate had over 100 polling booths, and the returning officer was called upon to perform a gigantic amount of work in looking after and seeing that those 100 polling-places were properly attended to, and all he received was the same salary as the returning officer in the city, who has, perhaps, four polling-booths to look after. The Minister already has stated that he has no intention to sweat the legal assistants in the Crown Law Office, and I believe he has no desire to sweat the returning officers. I think that the returning officers in country districts have a strong claim for better financial consideration, and at least should be placed on the same footing as those in town electorates. I hope that the hon. gentleman will see his way to make some provision in that direction. The work is very onerous in country districts, especially in regard to postal votes. In 1915, during the big flood in the Central District, the returning officer in the Normanby electorate was put to an enormous amount of trouble, and, if he had not been a man of extraordinary ability, I question whether the election could have been carried out. In view of the splendid services rendered by these men—not only by the returning officer in the Normanby electorate, but in other country electorates—they should receive more remuneration than is given to returning officers in town. I am sure the Minister will recognise that there is no analogy between the work performed in the two cases, and, if we agree on that point, we should agree also that the country returning officers should receive a commensurate remuneration for the services they render to the State in this direction.

[5 p.m.]

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J. Mullan, *Flinders*): The hon. member for Wynnum raised the question of the collection of electoral claims by the police. The police collection of electoral claims is to be continued. That is one of the duties of the police.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I have people on my roll who have been away twelve years.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The Queensland rolls are cleaner than ever they were. The question of the amalgamation of the Commonwealth and State rolls was mentioned by the hon. member for Wynnum, but nothing has been done in that regard.

The hon. member for Bremer referred to the question regarding jury district being included on the electoral claim cards. One of the duties imposed on the Principal Electoral Officer to-day is to furnish the sheriff with a list of jurymen in the respective districts, and we recognise that by putting on the electoral claim cards the name of the jury district in which a man resides it will enormously reduce the cost of maintaining the jury lists and expedite the work. I do not think it is a great hardship for applicants for enrolment to state the jury district in which they reside if they know it. If they do not know it, there is no harm done; it does not invalidate the card; but, if it is put in, it will very materially assist the Principal Electoral Officer in providing the sheriff with the jury lists each year.

Mr. KING: You would get imperfect information.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: It would later on have to be verified by the policeman who would have to go round the particular district within the prescribed radius.

The hon. member for Normanby raised the question of the prosecution of certain individuals in the Normanby electorate.

Mr. PETERSON: I asked if their names had been erased from the roll.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: There has been a cleaning up of the rolls this year. We have had an opportunity of doing that owing to the polls taken in connection with the liquor referendum and the general election, which gave us a chance that rarely occurs to cleanse the rolls. The rolls are in a very good condition now, and they were very satisfactory in 1923.

The hon. member for Normanby raised the question of the remuneration of returning officers, and pointed out that in country electorates they received no greater remuneration than those in small city electorates. I have looked into the matter, and I frankly admit that a man who is controlling an electorate like my own and other big ones, has a tremendous responsibility in sending out the ballot-boxes and ballot-papers, and seeing that everything comes back. Undoubtedly a returning officer in the country has a greater responsibility than a returning officer in a smaller area.

Mr. COLLINS: Does he get any increased pay?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: He does not at present. Some time ago the question was raised, and I promised to give it consideration. Of course a returning officer receives no remuneration except during an election, and I assure the Committee that I am going into the question, and feel favourable, personally, to the idea of giving more remuneration in electorates where there are scores of polling-places than in an electorate where there are only a few. I am prepared to recommend a readjustment of the whole remuneration of returning officers.

Mr. KING (*Logan*): I want to refer to the question which has been raised by the hon. member for Bremer. I would ask the Minister to take into consideration the advisableness of absolutely eliminating the question mentioned by the hon. member from electoral claims. It only introduces extraneous matter which is quite irrelevant to the object of the claim. It is only calculated to confuse, and we do not want anything which is in any way going to impair the usefulness of the system. At the very best the Minister is only going to get very uncertain information, and we ought to make the procedure as easy as we possibly can.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): I would like to know what the Minister has to urge against the suggestion that we should have one card for enrolment for both Federal and State rolls. A great deal of suspicion is caused by having

these double-card claims. It may be well founded, and it may not be well founded. I am not going to complain about the enrolment with respect to the Kurilpa electorate, because I believe that the State and Federal rolls are identical; but it must be borne in mind that there is a suspicion amongst the people. I understand that Victoria and the Commonwealth have the same rolls, and why not place Queensland in the same position? The enrolment is not altogether satisfactory—not that it affects my electorate—because there is a position created which gives ground for suspicion. A number of old people are a bit embarrassed when they fill in one form and then get a notice saying that they have not enrolled for the other roll. They come to me and say, "I filled in a form and made application for a vote. I cannot understand it." I am in the same position as they are. Is it not possible to have one enrolment card for both the State and Federal rolls?

Mr. PETERSON: The qualifications are not the same.

Mr. FRY: Perhaps some arrangement could be arrived at. I do not see why the qualifications should be different. Why should the roll of the National Parliament be any different from the State roll?

Mr. FARRELL: The Commonwealth disfranchised a number of electors.

Mr. FRY: Let me tell the hon. gentleman in plain language that his Government are not trusted. The people do not trust them at the time of elections, and that is why the rolls should be controlled by the Commonwealth. We represent a majority of the people, but hon. members opposite represent a majority of the seats. That is what I am trying to point out. The hon. member for Rockhampton asked for this, and I am giving it to him. There is a suspicion that the State rolls are being "cooked."

Mr. FARRELL: That only exists in suspicious minds like your own.

Mr. FRY: That suspicion exists throughout the country. If the Government are a democratic Government, then how can they continue to hold a majority of seats while representing a minority of the electors? I ask the Minister again why there is any necessity for two enrolment cards?

Mr. FARRELL: That has always been the case.

Mr. FRY: I have already pointed out that Victoria has adopted the same means of enrolment as the Commonwealth, and I want to know why the system cannot be extended to Queensland. The Opposition would be better pleased if the present position were altered.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You were here for over fifteen years and did not alter the position.

Mr. FRY: The Commonwealth Government did not come into existence till 1900, and a Commonwealth roll was not required before federation. Further, three-fourths of the members sitting in opposition never sat in this Chamber before 1918, and, that being the case, we represent modern opinion, and are not bound by any hard-and-fast rule or machine like hon. members on the Government side. We express free opinion. I would like to know the necessity for two enrolment cards.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): Prior to the last election hon. members on this side of the Chamber pointed out to the Minister in charge of this department and the members of the Cabinet generally that the rolls contained the names of quite a number of people who did not live in the electorates, and that people who were dead were still on the rolls. We did not know whether the others I refer to were within or without the State, but they were on the roll, and any organisation could use their names. The Electoral Act of 1915, which was passed by the present Administration, permitted a lot of irregularities. That Act was protested against by the Opposition all day and night, nevertheless the Government were able to put it on the statute book. The Bill became law, and we have been fighting against it ever since. Since the Government were returned to power at the last elections the Attorney-General has made the announcement that 39,000 odd names have been taken off the rolls.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You know the special circumstances for that.

Mr. CORSER: The unfortunate part about it was that the elections were decided on the unclean rolls. The Attorney-General has stated that those names were taken off the rolls as a result of a roll-cleansing. Why were not the rolls cleansed before the elections, and why did the cleaning up come immediately after the election.

Mr. COLLINS: It would not have made any difference.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I can tell you the reason.

Mr. CORSER: The reason was that it was more suitable to do it afterwards. The hon. member for Bowen interjected that it would not have made any difference. I do not know whether it would or not, but the hon. member for Bowen might have some information on the point. The result was that hon. members on this side of the Chamber received a majority of the votes of the people on the rolls upon which the Government determined the election should be held. Notwithstanding the fact that we received a majority of the votes, the Government secured a majority on the floor of the House. Is there any reason why the State Government should not fall into line with Victoria, Tasmania, and Western Australia in adopting a common roll for both Commonwealth and State purposes? Our boundaries can be adjusted to advantage if the Federal boundaries are taken into consideration in arranging the State electorates.

The redistribution of seats is a sadder story. That story is known to many former members who are not here to-day. Four of them had their electorates obliterated, while the electorates of others were so adjusted as to enable their opponents to be returned. The administration of this subdepartment should be removed from the influences of any political head. It should be out of the control of the Government or members of Parliament. A franchise on which the existence of hon. members depends, and on which the success or defeat of the Government depends, should not be controlled by the Government.

Mr. COLLINS: Do you remember the days of Bulcock?

Mr. CORSER: "Bulcocking" is still practised here under the redistribution created by the present Government. Hon. members opposite speak of what has been done in the past, when Tory Governments handled these things. We know that it stands to the credit, or possibly to the discredit, of past Governments that whatever were their actions they allowed a Labour Government to get in on a two to one majority as against a two to one minority of recent times.

Mr. WRIGHT: That was due to the wisdom of the people.

Mr. CORSER: It may have been, but it certainly showed the cleanness of the rolls. Have hon. members opposite any such action to their credit? Let hon. members opposite earn the honour of being able to show that, when the electors have a fair opportunity, they will place the Labour party on the Opposition benches, where they should be. We find that as soon as the elections were over last year the Attorney-General cleaned up the rolls.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: How could it be done before?

Mr. CORSER: The hon. gentleman wanted to do it at the time that suited him best. I submit for the consideration of the hon. gentleman the necessity for attempting some compromise with the Federal Government which will bring about a uniform roll. We know there are certain disabilities with regard to time of residence in the State, and other things; but there are no disabilities too great to be overcome in view of the desirableness of a single roll, single administration, and single control.

The Government obliterated those 40,000 names, yet we still find 20,000 names on the rolls that should not be there. When the Federal roll was checked with the State roll, we found in some electorates there were as many as 300 people on the State rolls who did not appear on the Federal rolls.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Do you know that the Federal Government had to prosecute 900 people in order to get them on the rolls?

Mr. CORSER: They see that people who are apathetic about their votes get on the roll. Hon. members opposite deal with the union man who is not on the roll. Apparently with them it is a bigger crime not to be on the roll than to be on eight rolls.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: In the old days under Tory rule a man could be on every roll in the State.

Mr. CORSER: At present there may be 60,000 too many on the rolls, and, after they are wiped off, the Government can say, "Well done, good and faithful servants! We shall have a cleaning of the rolls and get going again." I do not wish to talk this matter out, but I hope the Attorney-General will be able to give a good and solid reason why action was not taken before the elections.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): I want to know if there is any intention on the part of the Government to bring about an equitable redistribution of the electorates, as nobody is satisfied with the present conditions. I notice that the Attorney-General is the only country member with a decent-sized electorate, as far as numbers 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.