

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 9 DECEMBER 1927

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FRIDAY, 9 DECEMBER, 1927.

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Bertram, *Maree*) took the chair at 10.30 a.m.

QUESTIONS.

EXPENDITURE ON RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION UNDER UPPER BURNETT AND CALLIDE LAND SETTLEMENT SCHEMES.

Mr. CLAYTON (*Wide Bay*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

“1. What is the mileage constructed and total cost to date of the following lines:—(a) Many Peaks towards Monto; (b) Mundubbera towards Monto; (c) Rannes towards Monto?”

“2. What is the total expenditure to date on railway construction included under the Upper Burnett and Callide land settlement scheme?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. T. Dunstan, *Gympie*), for the SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Larcombe, *Keppel*), replied—

“The information is in course of preparation.”

SUPPLY OF SHELL GRIT.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*) asked the Treasurer—

“1. What are the names of the five persons granted leases of shell-grit areas mentioned in his answer to my question of 25th November last?”

“2. Will he lay upon the table of the House all correspondence, reports, and other papers in connection with this matter?”

The TREASURER (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*) replied—

“1. Thomas Maloney and Sons, T. Rowe, J. Loynes, junior, E. Beattie, G. D. Fraser.

“2. If the hon. member will call at the Treasury, he may peruse the correspondence.”

PAPERS.

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

Report of the Manager of the Golden Casket Art Union.

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Regulations under the Racecourses Act of 1923.

Regulation under the Explosives Act of 1906.

Regulation under the Slaughtering Act of 1893.

FIREARMS LICENSE BILL.

THIRD READING.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Mr. M. J. Kirwan, *Brisbane*), for the PRIME SECRETARY (Hon. J. Stopford, *Mount Morgan*), said: I beg to move—

“That the Bill be now read a third time.”

Question put and passed.

CROWN FEES PAID TO BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS.

Mr. CLAYTON (*Wide Bay*): I beg to move—

“That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing the fees paid on behalf of the Crown to solicitors and barristers during last financial year.”

Question put and passed.

COMMONWEALTH AND STATES FINANCIAL AGREEMENT RATIFICATION BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

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

The PREMIER (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*): I beg to move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to authorise the execution by the State of Queensland of a draft agreement between the Commonwealth of Australia and the States of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania concerning the adjustment of the financial relations between the Commonwealth and the States of the Commonwealth; to approve and ratify the agreement as finally made and executed between such parties; and for other purposes.”

I do not intend at this stage to outline the agreement, as it would be repeating what I shall have to say on the second reading. If we get the Bill through this stage and have it printed and circulated, hon. members will have an opportunity during the week-end of looking over the Bill, and on Tuesday they will be in a much better position to discuss the agreement as a whole. This is merely a ratification measure, and we have either to accept or reject the agreement.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed.

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

Resolution agreed to.

FIRST READING.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*) presented the Bill, and moved—

“That the Bill be now read a first time.”

Question put and passed.

Second reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

SUPPLY.

SEVENTEENTH ALLOTTED DAY.

RECEPTION OF RESOLUTIONS.

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Pollock, *Gregory*) presented the resolutions reported from Committee of Supply on Wednesday, the 7th instant.

1927—5 H

The TREASURER (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*): I beg to move—

“That, the resolutions be now received.”

Question put and passed.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS.

The resolutions being taken as read,

The TREASURER (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*): I beg to move—

“That the resolutions be now agreed to.”

And hon. members indicating a desire to discuss resolutions 2, 3, 8, 9, 21, 32, 38, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, and 50.

Resolution 1—“*Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor*”—agreed to.

Resolution 2—“*Railways, General Establishment, Chief Office*”—

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Bremer*): I desire to bring under the attention of the Secretary for Railways certain matters in connection with the electric power used at the Ipswich workshops. When this vote was before the Committee I mentioned the matter, and the Minister sent me a reply by letter in reference to the repair of the generators at the workshops. I understand now that a movement is on foot to provide the power required from an outside source, and, on behalf of the men at the shops, and the electrical trades union in particular, I desire to enter a strong protest against that being done. I believe that, if a thorough investigation were made, it would be proved that the power could be generated at the workshops more cheaply than it can be provided from outside. I firmly believe that the outside supply such as is given to the citizens of Ipswich, which is subject to interruption, would be an extremely bad thing from the point of view of the workshops. Particularly I want to draw attention to the fact that I asked the Minister the cost of generating power at the Ipswich workshops, and he advised me in reply that it was 1½d. per unit. I believe that the actual generating cost is four-fifths of a penny, but, of course, overhead charges, interest, and redemption have to be added to the cost, bringing the price to 1½d. per unit. What I want to point out is that, in the event of power being purchased from an outside source, the cost of interest and redemption on the buildings used for this purpose at the shops will still have to be met. The workshops cannot avoid those charges, because the money has been borrowed to build them and they are depreciating, so that to any amount which may have to be paid to anybody outside must be added the amount representing interest and redemption charges on those buildings.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What is the price at which outside power can be obtained?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I do not know. I think that ordinarily it is 2½d. per unit. I understand that the matter has not been finalised. Had it been finalised, it would be no use discussing the matter. It is still under consideration, and I earnestly ask that every investigation be made and that fact be not overlooked, because I believe the fact is being overlooked that the interest and redemption charges will still have to be met, whether the current is obtained from an outside concern or not. Of course, the workshops cannot escape those charges. In

Mr. F. A. Cooper.]

addition, the power proposed to be supplied by an outside concern will be manufactured in Brisbane, and will have to be transmitted 25 miles to the Ipswich workshops.

Another matter with which I wish to deal is the payment to railway employees for Christmas Day. This year Christmas Day falls on a Sunday, and the Commissioner and his officers have arrived at the decision not to pay for Christmas Day. Ordinarily, according to the award, Christmas Day is a holiday for which pay is given; but, as it falls on Sunday, it has been decided not to pay for the day. Monday is to be observed as an ordinary day—Christmas Day not being kept up on Monday. On Tuesday, which is being observed as Boxing Day, the usual award rates will apply. I am reminded that this is a ruling of the Board of Trade and Arbitration; but I would remind the Railway Department that it is a ruling of the Arbitration Court in 1921. The old idea that the awards of the Board of Trade contain the maximum provision is an erroneous one. The awards provide for minimum payments, and the decent employer has the opportunity to give more than the award rates if he thinks fit.

The PREMIER: It is not an erroneous idea in a department which is losing £2,000,000 per annum.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: It may not be erroneous from that standpoint; but, having paid the amount in the past, the employees have always understood that Christmas Day and Good Friday were holidays for which they would be paid, and it is a loss to them when those holidays fall on a Sunday and they are not paid.

There is one other matter to which I wish to refer. Three years ago the department, in its wisdom, decided to give contracts to outside firms for the manufacture of wagons, and an inspector was appointed. It was his duty to inspect the work carried out by these firms, and he continued as inspector right up to the termination of the contracts. Some little time afterwards he was charged with neglect of duty in a matter of inspection, and was suspended. He denied the charge, the case duly coming before the Inquiry Board. The appellant was reduced from the position of inspector to that of wagon builder. He appealed to the Appeal Board, and when his case came before that body the department refused to go on with the matter, allowing the appellant to win his appeal and obtain costs against the department. Now comes the remarkable position: This man has been advised that the only position available for him is that of marker-in in the wagon shop, whereas previously he had been a leading hand marker-in. This position meant an absolute reduction in status. No charge was brought against the man, but he was advised by the department that he would have to accept the position or leave the service, because of the fact that there were now no outside contracts. The remarkable feature is this: that in all other cases where the employees of the workshops have been appointed outside inspectors they were given positions in the workshops at least equal to the positions they occupied when they took the job of outside inspectors. That occurred when the outside work ceased. There is something peculiar somewhere. This man was charged with neglect of duty, found guilty by the Inquiry Board and

[Mr. F. A. Cooper.

suspended; but, when it comes to the Appeal Board, he is allowed by the department to win his appeal with costs, and now he is reduced in status. He again appealed to the Appeal Board, which tribunal decided that it had no jurisdiction in this case. Mr. T. Fallon, employees' representative on the Appeal Board, said—

“In dealing with this case I very much regret that the Act does not allow the employee the right of appeal. In the case which was previously before the court, this board threw out the suggestion to the department, expressing the wish that the department would be able to see its way clear to preserve the status of the appellant. I regret the department has not seen its way clear to accept the suggestion offered by the board. I also consider that the appellant has been unfairly and unjustly treated.”

“His record shows that he has been employed in the railway service for about fifty-six years, and during that time has given efficient and faithful service. For sixteen years he has been employed as a wagon builder and promoted to leading hand marker-in. Some three years ago a vacancy occurred for the position of inspector of wagons built by private contract. The appellant being the senior employee, and the department being satisfied as to his qualifications, appointed him to the position. He held the position until the expiration of the contract. He was then informed that as the private contract had expired that there was no further work for him as inspector, and the department could ‘sack’ him, but did not do this, and offered him the position of wagon builder, thus putting him back to his position of twenty-six years ago.”

Hon. W. H. BARNES: What age is he?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I should say he would be about sixty-six or sixty-seven years of age. He is getting on, anyway—

“and thus depriving him of his status in the seniority, and allowing employees who had always been junior to him to become his seniors.

“As a matter of fact, other inspectors had been appointed for private contracts, and at the expiration of these contracts they had always been offered a position equal in status to the one held prior to receiving the position of inspector. Why the departure in the present case? asked Mr. Fallon.”

I ask that question also. If there is good reason for the departure, the man should be told of it. If he has done something which warrants this reduction, a specific charge should be made against him and he should be given an opportunity of defending himself as the law requires.

Mr. TAYLOR: Was the department represented before the Appeal Board?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Yes. Their legal adviser was actually sitting in court, but took no part in the proceedings. It may be that there is something deeper in the matter. It may be that there is something further wrong than the dereliction of duty alleged against this inspector and subsequently not proceeded with. If there is, it is the duty of the department to clear up the whole

thing. It is a very wrong thing for a man, after fifty-six years service, to be sentenced on a charge which he has no opportunity of disproving.

Mr. MOORE: Do you say he has had fifty-six years' service?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Yes. That may be a mistake, but I know he has been many, many years in the service. He is put back to a position he occupied twenty-six years ago, and men many years his junior in service are put over his head. I ask the Secretary for Railways to give this matter his earnest consideration and see if some injustice has not been done to this man.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): I understood the hon. member for Bremer to say that the Secretary for Railways has in contemplation the purchasing of electric current in bulk from some outside company to supply the Ipswich workshops, evidently with the view of discontinuing the generation of current in the workshop itself. If that is his intention, I can only say that I must commend the Minister for his contemplated action, especially if the experience in the Ipswich workshops is the same as the experience of the Darra cement works. We are in much the same position there. Some years ago, when the Darra cement works were established, we spent a large sum of money in establishing a modern power house with the object of generating current for our own consumption, but a year or two of experience showed that it was more economical to purchase our current in bulk from outside. Ever since that date, eight or nine years ago, we have continued that procedure, and have found it entirely satisfactory.

Dealing with the phase of the matter on which the hon. member for Bremer touched, that interest and redemption would still have to be paid on the present power plant and buildings at Ipswich, I have no doubt that the Railway Department can make good use of these buildings. We have done so at Darra, and I have no doubt that, being pushed for room at the Ipswich workshops, the buildings at present accommodating the power plant can be used for a good purpose. It is pleasing to note that economy and efficiency are being looked into very carefully at the Ipswich workshops. I am quite certain that this contemplated procedure will end in a saving to the workshops.

Mr. BRAND (*Burrum*): I would like to put in a plea to the Minister for consideration to the railway men who are employed at Maryborough. When the Estimates were going through, I touched on this matter, and suggested that departmental officers in Maryborough should be given more discretionary powers than they possess to-day. I pointed out that it was necessary, as Maryborough was a very important district situated some considerable distance from Brisbane where the officers in charge were not as sympathetic as they were in Maryborough. It appears now as though Maryborough is only to have a station-master in charge. The Economy

Board has gone north, and on the [11 a.m.] eve of Christmas we find men being discharged wholesale, and these men will have to go elsewhere for something to tide them over the Christmas holidays. The services of three men have already been dispensed with, and, according to the report in the press to-day, a large batch is to be dismissed to-day. In the

Wide Bay and Burnett districts there is sufficient railway work for the railwaymen, and there is no need to dispense with the services of railway employees in that district.

Mr. LEWELYN: How do you reconcile that with your general criticism of the Railway Estimates?

Mr. BRAND: Hon. members on this side have never suggested the dismissal of employees from the Railway Department; but they have said that they should be placed in useful employment. I should like the Minister to take into consideration the position as it exists at Maryborough, and recognise that that is an important centre in railway management. Instead of dispensing with the services of these men, he should see that the officials there are given more discretion so that these men can be kept in employment at least until after the Christmas holidays.

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*): I wish to raise a question in connection with the booking of sleeping berths, but in doing so I do not wish to be misunderstood by the great body of railway employees. After members of Parliament have gone to the Railway Department for the purpose of securing a sleeping berth, and have met with a refusal, the booking clerk behind the counter in some leading hotel is apparently able to secure sleeper reservations.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. POLLOCK: It is a most difficult position, and it is an evil that hon. members of this House will have the utmost difficulty to stand up to. I think a very thorough and searching inquiry should be made by the Secretary for Railways into this matter. I have brought it under his notice before, and he has been most sympathetic. I know, of course, that the hon. gentleman has some difficulty in dealing with this sort of thing. I do not say it is a general practice—I do not think it is—but it is sufficiently common to have brought this party in for quite a lot of criticism which it was not entitled to get. When in Sydney last year I went down to the railway booking office in Martin place to secure a berth on the express to Brisbane. I was told that a berth was not available. The berth was not for myself, but for another person. An hour afterwards I noticed that a gentleman was able to go to a leading hotel, and, by the payment of a sum of money to the man behind the counter, he was able to secure a berth for another person. That is not right, and something ought to be done to stop that sort of thing. If there is any sort of petty grafting going on—I do not say there is—whereby for the payment of a few shillings to the officials in charge of the booking office that sort of thing can be brought about, the quicker it is stopped the better for all concerned. (Hear, hear!) I do not want to say any more on it. I know that it is a real evil, and a proper and searching inquiry should be made into the matter. The fact of allowing these people in the booking office to know that members of Parliament are wise to the fact that this sort of thing is going on, perhaps, will do more to remedy it than anything else.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. T. Dunstan, *Gympie*): In the absence of the Secretary for Railways, I can only reply briefly to the matters brought forward by various hon. members. The matter raised

Hon. T. Dunstan.]

by the hon. member for Bremer in regard to the supply of electric current to the Ipswich workshops by an outside firm will receive complete investigation.

With regard to the payment of overtime to railway employees on Christmas Day, I am given to understand that overtime payments are made in accordance with the railway award. Christmas Day will fall on a Sunday this year, and there is no provision for that day being regarded as a pay day. The other matter brought forward by the hon. member for Bremer, and the matters brought forward by the hon. member for Oxley and the hon. member for Burrum, will receive attention. The matter of the reservation of sleeping-berths raised by the hon. member for Gregory, who asked that an inquiry should be made into certain allegations in that respect, will also receive attention.

Resolution 2—"Railways, General Establishment, Chief Office"—agreed to.

Resolutions 3 to 7, both inclusive, agreed to.

Resolution 8—"Legislative Assembly"—

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I desire to take advantage of this opportunity to draw attention to the position of Parliament itself. We all recognise that the prosperity of the community depends upon what Parliament does, on the laws it makes, and the general administration resulting therefrom. I would like the House to consider seriously whether under present conditions the community are getting the service from Parliament that they are entitled to. Take the present session, for instance. We must bear in mind that there is now no second House to review the legislation passed in this Chamber. We have sat just over forty days. During that time we have passed a number of laws, most of which are amending laws—all evidence of the difficulties in previous law-making under the system under which legislation is rushed through as it is.

Another important function of Parliament is the control of public funds. All those who have read history will realise that in the early days of the British Parliament the providing of finance was the chief function of Parliament. In view of what has just happened, I ask whether the public are getting the full service they are entitled to in that regard. I notice that these resolutions cover a total sum of £27,619,000, out of which over £16,000,000 is revenue, £5,000,000 trust, and something like £4,000,000 loan expenditure. The only departments which have been discussed are the Railways, Chief Secretary's Department, the Home Office, and the Department of Labour and Industry, which represent an expenditure of £8,383,000.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Mr. Bruce put £36,000,000 through in thirty-six hours.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SWAYNE: It seems to me that the time to deal with these matters is when you are in the chair, Mr. Speaker. The Estimates of the Department of Public Lands, the Department of Agriculture and Stock, the Department of Mines, and the Department of Public Instruction have not been discussed.

The SPEAKER: Order!

[Hon. T. Dunstan.

Mr. SWAYNE: We know, Mr. Speaker, that every now and then disclosures are made, and Parliament has a right to expect, when you are moved out of the chair, to have an opportunity of discussing them—for instance, in connection with the Mines Department. Then in regard to Trust Funds—

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will have an opportunity at a later stage of discussing that matter.

Mr. SWAYNE: We are now discussing the resolution embodying the vote for the Legislative Assembly, and it seems to me that this is the proper place to discuss it. Of course I bow to your ruling, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member will have the opportunity of discussing that matter on the Trust and Special Funds Estimates.

Mr. SWAYNE: There is another matter to which as an old member I would like to call attention. If affects members generally. I notice that a practice has arisen under which Ministers make long, discursive speeches in moving the second readings of Bills, thereby getting in a lot of electioneering matter. Then, possibly, Mr. Speaker, as the debate progresses, your deputy takes the chair, and, if a member on this side of the House endeavours to reply to the electioneering of the Minister, he is ruled out of order. Take the Chief Secretary. He repeatedly does this, but members on this side are not allowed to reply to the points he makes.

The SPEAKER: Order: That is a reflection on the Chairman of Committees, which I cannot allow.

Mr. SWAYNE: I do not suggest any reflection on the Chair. I am simply giving reasons for a suggestion which I am going to make, and which I think would tend to a more satisfactory condition of things—that those who occupy the chair should confer and decide what is in order and what is not in order. There should be one fixed rule in this regard. At any rate, I do not think it should be left to the individual judgment of the member who occupies the chair at the moment. There should be some fixed rule or system under which we all—Ministers as well as ordinary members—would know exactly how far we could go. I think that we are within our rights as members of Parliament in discussing these matters, and that in the interests of those whom we represent we are entitled to the fullest debate which should be allowed—and none of us wishes to exceed that.

Then, as to our opportunity to go into the details of some of these votes, I would like to point out that the Leader of the Opposition asked for three extra days on the Estimates. Possibly if his request had been granted we might have got to the Estimates of the Department of Mines, but those extra days have been refused.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No.

Mr. SWAYNE: I think I am justified in saying that, if those three extra days had been allowed and we had been permitted to get as far as the Department of Mines, the interests of the people of Queensland might have been very much better served than otherwise.

Then, personal interjections have reached a pitch beyond which they should not be allowed to go.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. SWAYNE: For instance, I understand that, when I was speaking the other day on a public question, one hon. member on the other side said that I had burned down a sawmill. He might have been just as truthful—or as untruthful—if he had said that I had robbed a church; but the suggestion was made—a pure concoction—and it got into the press. I want to take this opportunity of saying that no property or house—farm or otherwise—with which I have been connected has ever been burned down.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. SWAYNE: I want further to say that that sort of interjection, concocted on the spur of the moment to disconcert an hon. member who is making a speech, if it does not tend to lower the standard of Parliament, does not tend to raise it.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I want to draw attention to a serious statement made by a member of the Opposition which reflects upon Parliament and the conduct of Parliament as presided over by yourself, Mr. Speaker. Let me quote from the "Courier" of Monday, 28th November last—

"DECLINE OF PARLIAMENT.

"At a garden party for the Queensland Women's Electoral League, held at Mrs. Dan Wienholt's home, at Chelmer, on Saturday, Mr. J. G. Appel, M.L.A., addressed the gathering saying that it was to the womanhood of the State they must look if a change for the better was to be effected. The women must endeavour to spur on the manhood of the community, who had become apathetic. Such apathy had not existed in the earlier days of Queensland. Parliament had degenerated; in fact, it was not a Parliament, and as such it could have little effect. At one time a man was proud to become a member of Parliament, as in it there had only been men of the highest character and honour, and it had benefited progress in the State. A mighty effort must be made by the women of Queensland to regenerate the House and Legislature so that Parliament should once again become honoured and respected, and so make for the progress and advancement of the State."

I regret very much that the hon. member for Albert is not present this morning, because I wish to state as a member of Parliament when the hon. gentleman was a member of a Government, and as one who has watched closely the conduct of members of Parliament during the time that I have been in Parliament, that the debates of Parliament are on as high a level to-day as when I first came into this Chamber in 1909. I do not now see the scenes that I witnessed at that particular time—men rolling up their sleeves between here and the refreshment room and setting out to bash each other. Apart from that, Parliament to-day is dealing with different subjects from those dealt with in the past. Parliament was then dealing with political subjects such as the enfranchisement of the masses of the people and so on; but to-day we have passed that stage, and are dealing with far more important subjects—economic subjects—which require a great

deal more thought than political subjects. I do not think that any member of this House has the right to go and tell the womanhood of Queensland that they have to regenerate Parliament.

The PREMIER: Such members should start to regenerate themselves.

Mr. COLLINS: There is something in that. Their first duty is to see if they themselves are perfect. Every morning when they rise from bed they should look in a big looking glass, and, if they think they are perfect, then they can preach perfection to others. The remarks of the hon. member for Mirani this morning prompted me to draw the attention of the people of Queensland to the result of my experience, and my observation is that Parliament is on just as high a level to-day as it was when I first came into this House in the year 1909.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*): As this question has been raised and prominent members of the Opposition are setting themselves up as paragons of virtue on procedure and personal conduct, it might be well for me to say a word or two on the matter. The hon. member for Bowen has just quoted the hon. member for Albert. I wish to say here publicly that the hon. member for Albert had some effrontery—I used that word with a full appreciation of its meaning—to go outside this House and deliver a lecture upon the conduct of members within this House. I do not want to say any more than that; but the hon. gentleman would do well to follow the advice of the hon. member for Bowen, and he himself first do all the things that should be done by a respectable member of the community. Having accomplished that himself, he might be a little more humble in criticising his fellow men, who have all the weaknesses of human nature. The idea that Parliament has degenerated is one that the old identity is liable to accept, because he still lives in the past when only the representatives of the wealthy class sat in the halls of the legislature.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I am afraid that you are not fair.

The PREMIER: It is time it was said, because this idea that the working man who comes from the field or the factory is not as capable, not as cultured, and not as well mannered as men and women who, perhaps, have never performed any useful work, is a theory that has been entirely exploded.

If, in the changed circumstances and the changed political positions in which we now find ourselves, a little more heat is engendered, it is due to division of opinion. It is due to men facing issues from different points of view, and probably getting heated because they represent two different sections in the community. That is all to the good. It is not deterioration at all. As I have stated here before, this Parliament is a Sunday school compared with the House of Commons. Many people in England think that the House of Commons is deteriorating because, in the heat and passion of the economic fights that are taking place there to-day, members lose control of themselves and say things that they ought not to say, or create disorder in the heat of the moment. I myself was in the gallery of the House of Commons on one occasion—I think the hon. member for Kurilpa was there at the same time—and I witnessed a situation

Hon. W. McCormack.]

where the Speaker himself was helpless to secure order. Members on both sides were offenders, and nobody with any knowledge of the situation is going to tell me or anyone else that, because of those scenes, Parliament is deteriorating.

Mr. KELSO: What was the nature of the interjections that you refer to?

The PREMIER: I could not catch any of them because there were so many.

Mr. KING: Were they in relation to criminal offences? (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: Members were taken out by the sergeant-at-arms during the turmoil. There were probably nearly 600 members present on the occasion I refer to, and nearly every interjection from one side was answered by the other, and the Attorney-General, who was making a speech when the tumult arose, simply stood at the table and waited for about ten minutes until members on each side told members on the other side what they thought of them before he proceeded.

There is another theory held that the men in politics to-day are mental pigmies compared with men who preceded us. There was never a greater illusion. No doubt in the course of time, as every notable man passes away all his good deeds are predominant, and they alone are credited to him. Men in Queensland politics in the past, such as McLlwraith, Griffith, and Kidston, are regarded as men of outstanding capacity in the affairs of State; but they appear much bigger men now than they did to their contemporaries who were abusing them from the Opposition side. We want to view things in their proper relationship.

Mr. KELSO: I hope you are not talking personally.

The PREMIER: Not at all. I know, and I am sure every member of the Opposition knows too, that the task of governing to-day is much more difficult, and calls for much more attention than it did in those days. We have only to look at the records of Parliament in those days. The business of a session probably consisted of a Land Bill, and the balance of the time was devoted to the Estimates. Members then had not to deal with the same amount of legislation, the intricate Bills, or the regulation of society which have to be dealt with in the Parliaments in every part of the world to-day. Governments to-day are compelled to take on tremendous tasks in regard to legislation; yet we and the public are prone to believe that the people in politics to-day are mere pigmies compared with the people who were in politics twenty or thirty years ago. It is not quite fair to the present-day members to take up that attitude.

I appreciate the difficulty of the members of the Opposition who receive Bills that have been thoroughly studied by the Ministers and officers of the departments with all the departmental knowledge at their disposal. A Bill is now framed and brought down, and the Opposition have to take that Bill and in a few hours endeavour to get a grip of the whole of its contents. I know the task is difficult for the Leader of the Opposition, and it is difficult for other Opposition members; and it is wrong for the public to get an impression that the [11.30 a.m.] men of to-day are pigmies and compare unfavourably with men of the past. That wrong impression should be corrected by every member of Parliament.

[Hon. W. McCormack.

The duties are more onerous, the public more exacting, and the electors most exacting on all members of this House. Members have to attend to many things that were never thought of in the old days. Country members are actually agents and representatives of their constituencies in the city of Brisbane, and I make bold to say that every member representing a country constituency more than earns his salary by the work he does for his constituents for nothing, without taking into consideration his legislative work in this Parliament. Why should we decry ourselves? Why should Parliament admit that this carping criticism has anything in it? I rose to say publicly that members of Parliament should show to the public that they know what their duties are, and should correct this general idea that members of Parliament, as a whole, have deteriorated mentally. It is not true. That is my candid opinion. I have had the opportunity of being at the head of nearly every department of the State as well as of being Speaker since I have been in this House. Many of the great departments of the State have been under my control, and while many of my predecessors were very capable men, I say there was nothing that these men did that men in this Parliament, either on the Opposition side or on this side, are not capable of emulating to-day.

Mr. PETERSON (*Normanby*): I quite agree with what the Premier has said about hon. members upholding their own dignity, and, speaking generally, we can subscribe to the whole of his arguments. One of the chief reasons why Parliament has been brought into ridicule is the attempts on the part of a section of the press always to bring into contempt the people's representatives.

The PREMIER: They are always sneering at the politician.

Mr. PETERSON: After all, we are only a replica of the people outside. The people who sent us here are our creators for the time being, and the same people have the right to discharge us from our duties in Parliament; and it ill becomes a section of the press to attempt to belittle hon. members. The function of the press should be to conserve to the fullest degree the rights that we have under our Constitution. Nothing is more likely to bring about revolution than this contempt of the Constitution which has made the British nation supreme. Whilst we may disagree from time to time, we at least realise that we are the people's representatives, and we should at all times do our utmost to uphold the Constitution, and as far as possible maintain the dignity of Parliament. As the Premier said, we often hear it said that the politicians of to-day are not like the statesmen of days gone by. It is not possible for the politicians of to-day to be like the politicians of the past. To-day we are elected on an adult franchise. Every person over twenty-one years of age is entitled to say who shall represent him or her in the Parliaments of Australia. In the days gone by, when we had these so-called strong men, members of Parliament only represented property, and they were able to say things because they knew they had not to face infuriated electors. We may have to trim our sails to some of the breezes that blow, but we realise that we are liable to be called to account by the people, consequently we have to confine ourselves within certain limits.

At 11.34 a.m.,

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Pollock, *Gregory*) relieved the Speaker in the chair.

Mr. PETERSON: To-day we represent a democracy, and that democracy is an exacting one, and, as the Premier pointed out, demands from its Parliament more than Parliament can legitimately give it. Let us hear less talk about the want of dignity of Parliament, and let us show by our actions that we are worthy of the confidence reposed in us. There are times when we all get a bit heated and say things to one another that we would not say outside. These things are enlarged upon by the press. A man may make an intelligent speech and bring out good points, and he may see in the paper next morning a report of his speech in three lines; but if I call the hon. member for Bowen a liar I may get a column and a-half. That is not the way to educate the public in regard to the debates in Parliament or in any way assist the work of Parliament. If the press will take my advice, the less that is said of these things which go on in this Chamber the less frequently they will take place here. I think some hon. members like to get reported in the press in that way, and as a result the general public think we are all anxious to participate in these episodes. The majority of hon. members do not desire to get into this position. We desire to make the Chamber a worthy institution, and one which will conduct its business in the way in which it should be carried on. I trust that, as the result of this debate, we may be able to give such attention to our work that even the press, with all the sarcasm which it levels against us, will see that members are doing their duty.

The Premier spoke about country members. I am glad to have his opinion upon the duties of country members. I have never heard any complaint in my electorate about the salary which we receive, for the simple reason that the electors know we are their commercial representatives in Brisbane, and it is our job to get them as much business in the electorate as possible. The difference between the old job and the new is that we are commercial representatives for our electorates besides being members of Parliament. Two-thirds of our time is given up to looking after our electorates, and the other third to the work of this Chamber. I hope that, as members, we shall always be prepared to stand up for the dignity of Parliament and not allow the inference to be drawn that we are a set of inferior beings, because, if we assent to that, we shall lose the respect of the electors who send us here.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*): As one of the oldest members of the House, I would like to say a few words on this matter. When I read some days ago that the hon. member for Albert had stated that Parliament was not on the same level as in earlier days, I wondered what the hon. member meant. Whether he meant it from an intellectual, a moral, or a social point of view, I was at a loss to understand. I recognise that the seventy-two members of this House are all men of the world, more or less, and some of us have probably risen from humbler conditions of life than others, but we are all human. Whatever the sins of the politician may be, I make bold to say that, so far as character is concerned, the members of this Chamber can hold their own

with the average members of the community. All through my life, whether in politics or outside, I have always placed a very high value on character, because, after all, character still counts, and has some value. One does not wish to squeal or to make any personal reference, still I think that, when an hon. member, either inside or outside the House, makes statements like those made by the hon. member for Albert, he should certainly have the courage of his convictions and mention the individuals he is referring to. At the same time, I do not know that the hon. member for Albert will tally up higher in that respect than any other hon. member in this Chamber.

What I was particularly interested in with regard to what was said outside is this: If the behaviour of hon. members is to be discussed and their character is to be criticised, I would remind the House of an incident which happened on the opening day of this Parliament, on the right-hand side of the Speaker's chair. If any hon. member had been there, he would have witnessed an incident which I consider should not have occurred. So much noise was made by one hon. gentleman during the reading of the Governor's Speech that we could not hear what was being said, and the Speaker had to pass the word along to quieten him down. Hon. members can conclude who the hon. gentleman was. Then that hon. gentleman goes outside and states that Parliament is not on such a high level as it used to be, and is being degraded. I claim that whatever our politics are, taking hon. members as a whole, the ability, standing, and character of hon. members of this present Parliament—taking them generally, mentally, morally, and in every other way—are on as high a level as in any other Parliament that I know of or in this Parliament when I first entered it.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): I have followed what has been said by hon. members on both sides with a very great deal of interest, and I can agree with a very great deal of what has been said, although not with all of it. I quite agree that members are criticised by persons outside—and it does not apply only to this Parliament, because it has existed ever since I entered public life. There is no doubt that a great number of our supporters outside—I do not mean those who are directly associated with us individually in our electorates—are prone to express the feeling that members of Parliament do not count for very much. I remember once travelling in from Coorparoo by train and meeting a medical man who said, "You are all pretty well a bad lot." Then he used the oil can, and added, "But you are the exception." (Laughter.) I turned to him and said, "If we are such a bad lot, is it not your duty as a citizen of a great State to improve the condition of things so far as your representation is concerned?" After all, the representative of every constituency to a very great extent is a reflex of the people living in it. I have no desire to reflect on any hon. member. There are some who sit for constituencies who would have no more chance of getting in for certain other constituencies than of flying, because they would not represent the type of person in those constituencies. I think we are all agreed on that point. None of us need throw stones. I am reminded of One very much greater than any of us who on one occasion said, "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone";

Hon. W. H. Barnes.]

and they went out one by one. I am afraid that, if that suggestion were made to us, we would find ourselves in the same position.

But, having said that, I want to add that there is some criticism which is not quite fair. For instance, I do not think the criticisms of the press have been quite fair. The press is like ourselves, but it has the last say, and it is a wonderful say. It is a very great thing to be able to say, "We" and "We" have the last say. I think the press is fair, and no doubt the public demand what the press gives them. The hon. member for Normanby referred to the big headlines which would appear to-morrow morning if certain remarks were thrown across the Chamber to-day; and we must remember that the public outside do make demands in that direction.

Mr. LLEWELYN: This morning the "Courier" reported the speech of the hon. member for Barcoo on the Land Bill in five lines.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I have not even been reported in five lines after I have spoken for an hour, so I do not think that fact counts for much.

Mr. LLEWELYN: Don't you think it merited more than that?

HON. W. H. BARNES: It may be that what I said was not worth reporting—it is just as well to be candid—but I have been reported in this way:—"Mr. Barnes also spoke." (Laughter.) That is even worse than the treatment meted out to the hon. member for Barcoo, to which reference has just been made. I want to get back to the big point that has been raised. I hope that I shall not be misunderstood in anything that I say this morning, because I take it that this is a time when members of Parliament have a right to express themselves, so long as they do so within the Standing Orders.

The hon. member for Bundaberg made the statement that Parliament has not deteriorated. Perhaps, taking man for man, it may not have deteriorated to any great extent; but, in my opinion, the conduct of this Parliament has deteriorated. I should be man enough to say that, because I believe that is the position. I want to draw the attention of the House to another fact, so that it possibly may be remedied. There are some parts of this building which indicate that the character which has been directing the affairs of this Parliament has been utterly neglectful of the finer things—the things that go to build up character.

Mr. LLEWELYN: Why not be more explicit?

HON. W. H. BARNES: None of us can say that we are without sin. At least I know of one man who cannot, and I know it particularly well, and that is myself. But let us be perfectly frank, and get behind the scenes for a while if you like.

At 11.50 a.m.,

Mr. RIORDAN (*Burke*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved Mr. Pollock in the chair.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I make bold to say this morning—I am not referring to any individual—that somehow or other we have failed to live up to the very high ideals that we should have. I believe that the majority of hon. members are just as zealous on one side as the other not only

to serve the people, but to set up a high standard. Like the hon. member for Bundaberg, I am a senior member of the House—though I had a dismissal once—and I wish to impress upon members that we have a solemn duty cast upon us as representatives of the people to set a high standard. The hon. member for Bundaberg struck a strong note this morning when he said that character, whether it be here or anywhere else, is what stands the test. If we—take the hon. member for Wynnum, if you like—failed in the past to make the standard as high as it should be, it is our duty as representatives guiding the public—we do guide them—to attend to that matter. You cannot in your own business do something that is wrong without immediately leading your staff in the same direction. The same thing applies to Parliament. Many members, no doubt, will not agree with me, but the details of life work out in that way. It is our duty to set a high ideal, and see to it that some of these things which are thrown across the Chamber—it is not confined to this side—do not occur. I repeat with all earnestness that there have been things thrown from the Ministerial benches which have not been helpful either to the dignity or to the goodness of the State or Parliament of Queensland, and have justified some of the remarks which have been made in that direction.

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*): As one of those responsible for the conduct of the debates in this House, it would be only a fair thing for me to say a word or two to the public outside in response to this apparently general criticism that the tone of Parliament has deteriorated. I am not going to endeavour to cover the same ground as was covered by the Premier, but I want to point to one or two interesting facts. I have been Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of this Assembly for over four years, and I was Temporary Chairman of Committees for three years, and during the whole of that time I have found it necessary to name only two men, both of whom were named for very minor offences indeed. Quite possibly under different circumstances both these men might not have been named. It goes on show that, if you have only two such experiences in seven years, then no other Parliament in the world can claim that it is as well behaved as this Parliament. No other Parliament in the world can claim that record. It is fair, then, to quote that as a reply to those people who are always saying that Parliament is going to the bad. Parliament is not going to the bad. Parliament is an aggregation of seventy-two men drawn from all parts of the State. They are men of different tempers; some are not always able to govern their tempers. You find such men in every community of men. We are not all free from that sort of thing; and, when you get them sitting here for four days a week arguing interminably on different subjects, it is a wonder to me that they do not lose their tempers more frequently than they do.

Mr. FERRICKS: And sitting double days, too.

Mr. POLLOCK: That is what I am particularly referring to. I confess that, after sitting in the Chamber for ten hours a day listening to arguments, some good and some bad—and I say that without casting a reflection on anybody—one is likely to lose control of himself.

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

Hon. W. H. BARNES: While you are sitting in the chair you are able to listen to some very interesting things. (Laughter.)

Mr. POLLOCK: One is able to look at matters from a different angle. The point I want to make is that all members of this Assembly are well behaved. Outside of those two suspensions, which, as I said, might have been averted and were not for very serious offences at all, I have never found members of this Assembly other than very well behaved, always obeying the call to order, and conducting themselves as men should conduct themselves. I can say no more in that regard.

I want to point out that the press, which is responsible for much of this loose talk about the deterioration of Parliament, is mostly responsible for this idea, and with very little justification. As I said, a man sitting in the chair gets a different angle of the debate from probably any other man in the Chamber. That is probably because he has to dissociate himself, as far as possible, from party politics. I have heard some splendid speeches delivered by members on both sides during my term of occupancy of the chair. I have always found, without exception, that the member who makes a good, thoughtful, constructive, and well-prepared speech is given about a dozen lines in an obscure part of the paper, and the member who casts an epithet at some other hon. member receives prominent headlines across the chief page.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. POLLOCK: That in itself is an indication of just how much the press ought to alter its attitude. I do not believe it will alter its attitude. I believe that the press publishes this sort of stuff because the public taste, and not Parliament, is deteriorating. The public pays for that sort of stuff. It wants it. If it did not want it the press would not publish it. The public always likes a little bit of fight. It likes to hear of people abusing one another. People will go to vaudeville shows of questionable character and turn a real good clean show down. In my opinion, the allegation that Parliament is deteriorating is born of the fact that the public taste is deteriorating, and the press itself is catering to that depraved public taste. I know that what I am saying is true, and that this Parliament compares much more than favourably with any other Parliament that I have read about, and certainly much more than favourably with any other Parliament I have seen in action.

Mr. KING (*Logan*): I have listened with a good deal of interest to the views of the various speakers, and I, too, hold the view that the capabilities of public men of the present day show no deterioration compared with what they were in the good old days we often hear or read about.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: About a year ago they dug up something in Mesopotamia, which was supposed to be 2,000 years old, which referred to the good old days.

Mr. KING: Everyone talks about the good old days, just as hon. members opposite talk about the "bad old days." A good deal of the loose talk that has taken place lately about the deterioration of Parliament might perhaps be due to the fact that people compare the Parliament of to-day with the Parlia-

ment of olden days, when members gave their services in a voluntary capacity.

At 12 noon,

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Pollock, *Gregory*) resumed the chair.

Mr. KING: The job of the member of Parliament is now looked upon as a profession.

Mr. HYNES: Why should it not be?

Mr. KING: Exactly! I am not quarrelling with that at all. I have said before that it is just as good a profession as any other profession. I am not finding fault with that, but, because we are paid for our services, our services are looked upon as being of less value than they were years ago when they were given without remuneration. That is the reason why we are criticised now by the public and to a large extent by the press.

With regard to the dignity of Parliament and the control which should be exercised by members of Parliament when they meet in this Assembly, I have always been one of those who have tried to uphold the dignity of the House as far as possible, and to see that there should not be any of that unnecessary crossfiring which does take place at times. Interjections, when they deal with business before the House, are not objectionable; but I do object to innuendoes being flung across the floor by one member to another. I am not blaming any particular side at the present time, but I know the Opposition do feel aggrieved at certain innuendoes that come from the other side. Only the other day we had a scene which was not at all creditable. The hon. member for Wynnum was named for casting a personal reflection on the Premier. His statement was that the Premier had been the one to blame for the loss of the dignity of the House.

The PREMIER: That is putting it very mildly.

Mr. KING: That is what the hon. member was charged with—a personal reflection on the Premier.

The PREMIER: I did not care.

Mr. KING: Of course the hon. gentleman did not care. But at a later stage the hon. gentleman got up and talked about this man O'Brien, who, he said, was a scoundrel and a criminal, and yet he wanted to associate every member of the Opposition with that man.

The PREMIER: I did not want to do that.

Mr. KING: But you did it.

The PREMIER: He is circulating your literature.

Mr. KING: That is what we object to. The Premier knew perfectly well that he had no right to connect the Opposition with that man.

The PREMIER: There is a letter on the file from the hon. member for Kurilpa urging consideration for this man.

Mr. FRY: You read the letter. I will read it if you do not.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. KING: There is nothing in the letter at all. There was nothing in any of the letters from members of the Opposition.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I would ask the hon. member not to continue on those lines.

Mr. King.]

Mr. KING: What we object to is these innuendoes from the other side of the House. We had one the other day thrown at the hon. member for Mirani. The hon. member for Townsville accused the hon. member for Mirani of setting fire to a sawmill, and, when he was asked to withdraw and apologise, he said, "I admit that I am not certain whether he set fire to it for the purpose of getting the insurance or not." There is not a scintilla of truth in the statement.

The PREMIER: Be fair. What did the member for Mirani say?

Mr. KING: The hon. member for Mirani said nothing that he could be made to withdraw. In fact, I did not hear him say anything to which exception could be taken.

The PREMIER: He suggested that the member for Townsville was associated with the burning of cane when he was a union organiser.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: He did not.

Mr. KING: That is not so.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Order! I would ask the hon. member not to deal with particular cases.

Mr. KING: This debate will do no harm, and I hope it will be the means of bringing about a better understanding on both sides. The Opposition object to these innuendoes, and I hope they will be dropped.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): A most interesting subject has been raised in the debate this morning—that is, the dignity of Parliament as an institution, and the alleged deterioration of Parliament as an institution and of its members in general. Those who criticise Parliament do it from various points of view. There is the type of individual who has failed to get into Parliament, and consequently has not a very high opinion of those who obtained preferment over him. There are other types who, having got into Parliament, have not attained that preferment which they think their qualities demand.

Then there is the general type of pessimist who assumes that nothing to-day is as good as it was in the past. We find questions such as these being canvassed all over the place: "Are the young people of the present day as good as they were in previous generations?" "Is there a deterioration in the manhood or womanhood of the race at the present time?" These questions have been asked in every generation, and there are people who take a pessimistic view and say that things are going to the dogs. Personally I believe that progress is being made in every avenue of human activity. I believe that the people of the present generation are as good as, if not better than, the people of previous generations; and I certainly believe that the womanhood and youth of our nation compare favourably with similar types at any other stage in human history. Progress must be made if civilisation is going to be maintained. People living in the hurly-burly of life and coming in contact with the problems of life are liable not to be able to estimate accurately the progress that is being made. I believe that mankind is struggling ever upwards and attaining a higher level every year. If we believed otherwise, what

[*Mr. King.*

would be the use of advocating any reforms? Man must climb upwards if civilisation is to be maintained and human life to be worth while. Parliament is an institution that should jealously guard its reputation in the public mind. Any attempt to undermine the authority or standing of Parliament in the public mind should be resisted in every possible way. Parliament is the supreme authority in the nation. Every individual, male or female, who attains the age of 21 years is entitled to elect representatives to Parliament. That is a principle that has been obtained as the result of agitation in the past. Our forefathers fought strenuously to obtain those advantages for the people, and we should cherish and value them. We enjoy free conditions in Queensland and Australia under our Constitution. The manhood of other countries have dyed the soil with their blood in their endeavour to obtain those parliamentary rights, which are, in Australia, taken as a matter of course. Parliament is the expression of public opinion. We, through our parliamentary institutions, can obtain for our people anything we are brave enough and good enough to accomplish. Consequently any attempt to depreciate the value of Parliament to the people of the State is something that should be viewed seriously and resisted in all possible ways. I personally believe that the Parliament of Queensland compares favourably with those in other States of Australia or elsewhere. As other speakers have pointed out, Parliament is not a Sunday school or a picnic. It is not a place where people get up with the object of flattering one another. It is an arena where men endeavour to solve grave questions which affect the people as a whole. Parliament at the present day deals with every avenue of human activity. Who can deny that the conditions of Parliament are entirely different from what they were as recently as twenty years ago? At one time the function of Parliament was strictly limited—very little was expected of it—but to-day there is no question affecting the economic or social welfare of the people that has not got into the parliamentary arena; consequently, greater activity is required on the part of members. The problems we have to deal with require greater and more searching study than was the case in the past. The responsibilities and ramifications of government have extended to such an extent that things have become increasingly difficult. The point I wish to make is that there has always been a tendency for people to become pessimistic and assume that things are not as good as they were in their younger days.

If we were to get a true perspective of the progress which is taking place in Queensland and Australia, I believe that we would realise, despite our difficulties and trials and reverses, that we are gradually forging ahead. That is necessary, and it is the function of Parliament to cultivate that tendency. Much has been accomplished, but much yet remains to be done, and it is the duty of every member of Parliament to the full extent of his capacity to study all the problems of society and contribute his quota towards their solution.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): I am very pleased to see that hon. members have been looking in the looking-glass this morning and seeing themselves as they are, and that they have decided that they are living on a very high plane and are going to stay there. I hope

that is going to be the motto of the Parliament of Queensland in the future, whatever it has been in the past. I hope that the Standing Orders will be carried out according to the usual procedure, and not according to something I have here. The other day an hon. member said something when making a speech, and I made some reply. I have here the ruling of the Temporary Chairman. I want hon. members to hear this because it is in conflict with other rulings given from the Chair, and it proves to me that we need to have more uniformity.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The only occasion on which the hon. member can discuss a ruling from the Chair is at the time the incident occurs. I cannot allow him to discuss it now.

Mr. FRY: I did not do so then, for obvious reasons—the temper of the Committee was not good at the time. (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You are an authority.

Mr. FRY: The hon. gentleman is always interjecting, and, as he was Chairman of Committees for a time, he knows that interjections are disorderly; but I am prepared to sit for an examination on the procedure and rules of Parliament if he will do likewise. Let us see whether he has the power and mental ability to assimilate the rules. I hope that Parliament will set a high standard and maintain it, and that hon. members will not suggest that some ulterior motive is behind what other hon. members do. If we regarded every man as being worthy of his position in Parliament and he regulated his conduct to conform with that standard, there would not be any need for us to use the looking-glass. I hope that the Premier as Leader of the House—as such he is responsible for its conduct—will set an example for all of us to emulate. If he does that, we shall be all right; if he does not, he cannot complain about anybody else who follows him. It is true, as the Premier said, that I was sitting within a foot or two of the hon. gentleman during an incident which took place at the House of Commons, but that body is not controlled in exactly the same way as this House. Probably its constitution is different; but the fact remains that in the House of Commons members themselves take charge of the order of the House to a greater extent than we do. The Speaker of the House of Commons certainly has control, but, with six hundred odd members, interjections are frequent. In the incident I refer to some member made a statement, and other hon. members, instead of waiting for the Speaker to check him, at once began to cry "Order!" which immediately caused retaliation. We must control our own affairs in the best interests of the House and of the country. I, for one, am prepared to join the Premier in maintaining the highest standard. I claim the right to follow the hon. gentleman, for, although he is not my political leader, he is the leader of this House, and, after considering the whole conduct of this House and of the House of Commons, I am of the opinion that much depends on its leader. When the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. Baldwin, spoke, he got the respect of all parties. I heard also the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, and certainly neither of those men was interrupted in the way speakers are interrupted here; so that in more ways than one the conditions are quite different.

The other day some reference was made to a man named O'Brien, and the reference caused quite a controversy. During the discussion to-day the Premier interjected that there was a letter on the file from the hon. member for Kurilpa. I asked if he would read the letter, but the hon. gentleman said there was nothing in it. Of course, there was nothing in it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. FRY: I have a copy of the letter here, and would like the permission of the Chair to read it.

Mr. KERR: You are entitled to read it after what has been said.

Mr. FRY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, have I your permission to read the letter?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No; the matter is not connected with the resolution before the House.

Mr. FRY: That brings me to my point of complaint—the Premier can mention these things, but we cannot reply.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is a proper place for all matters to be dealt with in this House, and abundant opportunity is given to every hon. member. There is still a resolution to be considered on which the matter referred to by the hon. member can be discussed.

Mr. FRY: I do not wish to pursue the subject, but, like yourself, Mr. Pollock, I am anxious to see that Parliament is an example to the rest of the State. We should lead the State in public thought and public matters, dealing with essentials, and, as far as possible, dropping personalities which are the outcome of seeds sown in one quarter or another. Everybody knows that sometimes a few hon. members will make up their minds to irritate somebody, perhaps on this side—and that is the beginning. I have watched it. I have been the butt of the steerage party on the other side for quite a long time. (Government interruption.)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I would remind the hon. member for Kurilpa that there is no such thing as a steerage party.

Mr. FARRELL: This is the man who lectures us on the conduct of Parliament.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member for Kurilpa to withdraw the expression.

Mr. FRY: I withdraw the remark. I have for a long time been the butt of some hon. members opposite. That is where the trouble originates, and if it is dropped there will be no need to criticise Parliament, as has been done. We can then look in the looking-glass and be well satisfied to follow the advice of the hon. member for Bowen.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. member for Kurilpa that the dignity of this House could be much better maintained by the use of parliamentary language, and by referring to things in parliamentary terms.

Mr. BRUCE (*Kennedy*): The speech of the hon. member for Wynnum emphasised the very old-established fact that as we get up in years nothing modern is as good as the things in the early days. I do not say that

Mr. Bruce.]

with any special reference to the hon. member for Wynnum, because I, even at my age, find myself occasionally saying that things now are not as good as they were in my early days, and perhaps in twenty to thirty years' time, when delivering an address from this side of the House I shall be telling the then members of Parliament of the wonderful politicians there were in 1927. In the earlier Parliaments there were opportunities for more florid speeches and more oratory than there is to-day. The Parliament of to-day is largely an exchange house for the business of the State. If we had a Disraeli, a Pitt, a Fox, or a Burke in this House to-day, he would not get a hearing. He would not deal with the practical business with which we have to deal in the Parliament of Queensland. The few brawls and clashes that have occurred in this House are nothing compared with the clashes that occurred in the past history of this Parliament. I have been here for four or five years, and, although I have heard certain remarks thrown across the Chamber, I have not witnessed any physical clashes either inside or outside the building. The trouble did not come to anything. Probably the members, who at the time might have been a little hot-blooded, met later in the day and tried to decide which was in the wrong. During my four or five years the dignity and decorum of this Parliament has been remarkably good—the members being quite a peaceful body of citizens. I think we are a very peaceful lot of citizens. The hon. members for Bundaberg and Wynnum no doubt well remember some of the incidents that took place in the early days of this Parliament. I am prepared to say that the way in which legislation is handled by this Parliament is equal to, if not greater than, the capacity shown in handling legislation either in past Parliaments of Queensland or in the Parliaments of other States. The accusation that the decorum of Parliament is not what it should be, and that the dignity and ability of earlier days are not maintained, is entirely incorrect.

Mr. HYNES (*Townsville*): I am firmly of the opinion that the conduct of Queensland parliamentarians compares favourably with that of parliamentarians in any other part of the world. We compare favourably in the matter of decorum with any other Parliament. One has only to read the reports in the daily press regarding scenes which take place in the House of Commons and of how the Speaker, owing to the chaos that sometimes prevails during a heated debate, is obliged to leave the chair. The Speaker in this Parliament has never had to do that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Only on one occasion.

Mr. HYNES: As the hon. member for Gregory stated, during the four years he has occupied the position of Chairman of Committees two members only have been named by him for misbehaviour. He also made reference to the fact that the seventy-two members in this Chamber were drawn from all parts of the State, and that they represented different schools of thought, different interests, and are men of varying temperaments. Notwithstanding that, we find that the debates are carried on in a decorous manner. There are times when interjections are flung across the Chamber,

[Mr. Bruce.

and I know that I am as prone to that as any other hon. member.

Mr. KELSO: You are pretty good at it.

Mr. HYNES: Interjections I have made have in some cases been brought about by some scurrilous reference to myself by hon. members opposite.

Mr. EDWARDS: Don't excuse yourself.

Mr. HYNES: Some reference has been made during this debate to an incident that took place in this Chamber during the consideration of the Rural Fires Bill. The hon. member for Mirani on that occasion took exception to an interjection I made to the effect that he had burned down a sawmill for the insurance. Hon. members opposite have resurrected that during this debate. The trend of the discussion this morning was to show that I was in the wrong, and that I had no justification for making the remark. I am only human, the same as any other person, and I resented the nasty inference made about myself by the hon. member for Mirani, without any provocation prior to my making the interjection in question, that I, in my capacity as an industrial organiser of the Australian Workers' Union, connived at the malicious burning of sugar-cane in his electorate. It is very rarely that disorder has occurred in this House. I desire to deprecate the attitude of some members of Parliament outside who, in after-dinner speeches, tell some story of which the parliamentarian is the butt. The person who does that has generally reached that stage in life whom the immortal bard describes in these words—

“With fair round belly with good capon lined.”

Such members speak disparagingly of members of Parliament, and refer to the lack of dignity shown in this Chamber. That savours very much of the bird rousing its own nest. A member of Parliament should at all times use his best endeavours to protect the good name of hon. members. We find the matter developing to such an extent that second-class vaudeville shows make parliamentarians the butt of their coarse humour, and the thing is passed by without any objection by Parliament because it has no power to object.

Members of Parliament are as honourable and as dignified in the carrying out of their duties as any other members of society. The behaviour of members of this [12.30 p.m.] Chamber compares favourably with the behaviour of any other professional class in the community. Members of Parliament usually are men who can restrain themselves, and are men of temperate habits. One has only to take into consideration the very small receipts at the refreshment bar to understand that, generally speaking, the seventy-two members of this Parliament are men of very temperate habits. Could you find seventy-two professional men anywhere else who patronise the bar less frequently than members of Parliament patronise their own refreshment bar, as indicated by the receipts? I do not think Parliament is deteriorating. In the old days, when members of Parliament were not paid, there was nothing to dispute about. They were all of one mind, as the party system was not in existence, and Parliament at that time was looked upon as a social

club, and was used generally for that purpose. I resent any member of Parliament speaking disparagingly of other members, either outside or inside Parliament. They should defend the dignity of Parliament as far as possible in their public speeches. I rose to try to induce those people who have a tendency to disparage Parliament to cease doing so, and to point out to them that they themselves are bringing about the very state of things to which they object. It is they who bring Parliament into disrepute, and cause the people to think that the tone of Parliament is deteriorating.

Resolution (Legislative Assembly) agreed to.

Resolution 9—"Premier and Chief Secretary's Department—Chief Office"—

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I should like to bring before the notice of the Premier the case of a public officer who retired last year. It is a very hard case, and I should like briefly to recapitulate the facts. The officer concerned, Mr. W. T. Jack, had a long and splendid record in the service for thirty-seven years. For reasons of his own, in March, 1926, he resigned from the service, less than twelve months before the time he would have had to retire under the regulations of the service. Up to the year 1913 he had a gratuity of £131 for long service accruing to him. Mr. Jack made application for that money, to which he thinks he is entitled although it may be said legally, according to the regulations, he should have served the full time before being entitled to it. Since that time Mr. Jack has obtained a situation which will probably last for three years, as he is supervising the erection of the City Town Hall, and I want to impress on the Premier that, if a gentleman leaves the service for the sake of bettering himself within one year of the time of his retirement, it seems very hard that the regulation will not permit of some consideration being given to him. I do not propose to read the correspondence, but will just refer to it. In May he received a letter from the management of the Public Service Superannuation Board regretting that the amount of gratuity which had accrued up to 30th June, 1913, could not be paid to him, but that he would have been eligible to receive the amount had he remained in the service until he was retired. Mr. Jack replied that, notwithstanding the ruling given, he considered he was morally entitled to the gratuity, and he also said this—

"I understand that officers who are contributing to the Public Service Superannuation Fund have been allowed to pay premiums by having them set off against the amount of accrued gratuity—thus obtaining the benefit of the gratuity—before it became payable.

"In my case I have paid all my premiums to the superannuation fund in cash, although the amount of my gratuity had accrued up to 1913.

"If I had taken advantage of the practice to which I have referred, I should have obtained the benefit of the gratuity which I had earned, but to which it is now stated I am not entitled."

He asked for a review of the matter, and got a letter, dated 6th August, 1926, stating that the board regretted that the provisions of the Public Service Superannuation Act

of 1912 did not permit of the payment to him of a retiring gratuity or any proportion thereof. Mr. Jack replied on 16th August, 1926, acknowledging receipt of the letter of 6th August, and stating that he regretted the decision of the board. This is his letter—

"This decision of the board is to be much regretted, as perhaps in terms of legality I may not be entitled to the gratuity, which I claim morally I should be paid after a faithful service of thirty-seven years.

"The terms of the Public Act referred to, I am confident, were never intended to apply to an officer of such lengthy service who, within a few months of compulsory retirement, resigned to avail himself of a position which would give occupation for a longer period."

That is part of the correspondence. I would ask the Minister who is representing the Chief Secretary to give this matter consideration. I am not arguing that from a legal point of view Mr. Jack has a right to this. It may be, and probably is, that the regulations laid down in a hard-and-fast way what should be done, but it is only fair that the Cabinet should consider the question. This gentleman, after thirty-seven years' service, had a sum of £131, not accruing from year to year, but which had accrued as at the year 1913, and which, if he had liked, he could have allowed to be used to meet his superannuation payments. He did not do that—he paid his superannuation payments in cash. Mr. Jack has a very good case for the sympathetic consideration of the Government, and the Premier, after going into the matter, might see his way to meet him. If it cannot be done out of the Public Service Superannuation Fund, I would suggest that it might be done out of some contingent vote, recognising, not exactly the legality of the claim, but the fact that Mr. Jack had strong moral ground for consideration in view of his thirty-seven years' service.

At. 12.40 p.m.,

The SPEAKER resumed the chair.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): The case referred to by the hon. member for Nundah is one to which I have personally given some attention. Mr. Jack was a very capable officer of the Department of Public Works during the period I was in charge of the department. Personally, I regret that he thought fit to retire from the service and take up another appointment with the City Council. He gave good service to the Government, being thoroughly qualified in all branches of building construction and being a thoroughly capable and painstaking officer. It is to be remembered that the Public Service Superannuation Fund was established by a previous Government and has been continued up to the present time. Payments from the fund are made to public servants when they retire on reaching the age limit. It is a form of insurance against the time when a man reaches the age limit and is compulsorily retired. Mr. Jack retired before the age limit was reached. He realised that in a few years he would have reached the age limit. He was able to obtain another position outside in regard to which there was no age limit, and the conditions of which appeared favourable to him. Therefore, the question of a retiring allowance to enable a man to live after he

Hon. W. Forgan Smith.]

reaches the age limit does not enter into this case. However, as I said, Mr. Jack wrote to me personally, and I had the case completely reviewed, as the Premier also had done on a previous occasion. The Government have a very high regard for this officer.

The matter was investigated by the Premier and later on by me, at Mr. Jack's solicitation. He left the service as an officer of the Department of Public Works on 1st March, 1926, his resignation having been accepted by Executive Council on 25th February of that year. On 18th March of the same year, Mr. Jack made application to the Public Service Superannuation Board for a refund of his annuity payments, and a cheque therefor was sent to him on the 28th of the same month, so that his payments were refunded. He then made oral inquiries as to why he was not being paid his retiring gratuity, and on the 12th April he was advised by the manager of the Public Service Superannuation Fund that the Public Service Superannuation Act made provision for the payment of retiring gratuities in those cases only where the contributor was entitled to such gratuity under the Public Service Act and regulations. A gratuity was not payable under the Act and regulations to any officer who resigned from the service to accept other employment, and a reply was sent that it was much regretted that the retiring gratuity was not payable to him. On the 24th of the same month, Mr. Jack replied that he could find no provision in the Public Service Act and regulations stating that such a gratuity was not payable to an officer who resigned from the public service to accept other employment, and he therefore renewed his application for a retiring gratuity, as gratuities were presumably given for long and faithful service. On 10th May, 1926, the manager of the Public Service Superannuation Fund advised Mr. Jack that the Crown Solicitor had ruled that contributors to the Public Service Superannuation Fund who voluntarily resigned from the service could not claim against the fund for the amount of gratuity as at 30th June, 1913; and, in the circumstances, the board much regretted that they were unable to pay to him the gratuity for which he would have been eligible had he remained in the service until he was retired therefrom. That is the ruling given by the late Mr. Justice McCawley when Crown Solicitor, and there is no doubt at all that the opinion is sound in law. The Government do not control the Public Service Superannuation Fund, and, as a Government, we are not in a position to make ex gratia payments from it in the nature of rewards. It is a fund to which the members of the public service contribute, and the Government have no right whatever to give anything from that fund to anybody who is not entitled to it. The result of my investigation may be summed up in these words—

"From the foregoing it will be seen that Mr. Jack was not entitled to a gratuity in accordance with the terms of the public service regulations in force at 30th June, 1913, and in accordance with the Crown Solicitor's ruling the board had no legal power to make a payment to him."

The board have already repaid Mr. Jack the annuity payments which he had contributed to the fund.

[Hon. W. Forgan Smith.

Superannuation, as I say, is a form of insurance, voluntarily entered into as in the case of Mr. Jack. He realised that he was approaching the retiring age. He saw the opportunity to get a better appointment—one in which the salary was suitable and in which no retiring age was imposed. He voluntarily resigned from the public service, and automatically placed himself outside the ambit of the Act under which the claim is now made on his behalf by the hon. member for Nundah.

Mr. KELSO: That has nothing to do with it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It has all to do with it. He is asking for a gratuity, and I am pointing out that there is no means by which a gratuity may be given unless it be an ex gratia payment from the consolidated revenue.

Mr. KELSO: Well, do that.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Is the hon. member serious? Does he want me to do that?

Mr. KELSO: You have got my answer.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The hon. member asked for information, and I have outlined the position. If the Government were to give a gratuity to Mr. Jack out of consolidated revenue on account of his services, voluntarily terminated by himself, we would be setting a precedent which would have to be followed in other cases. Would the hon. member suggest that it should be done in all cases of men who retire voluntarily from the public service? One can easily see the difficulty into which the hon. member's suggestion would lead us. The hon. member knows as well as I do that, on the case I have cited, there are no means whereby Mr. Jack's request can be acceded to. The Premier investigated the matter himself—took a personal interest in the matter—and so did I on account of my association with the officer when I was Secretary for Public Works. I can only repeat what the manager of the board said—that it is regretted that his request cannot be acceded to.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): I wish to support the hon. member for Nundah in connection with this matter. Here we have an officer with thirty-seven years' service paying into the superannuation fund, and on retiring he is repaid the amount of his premium. He is then placed outside the benefits attached to contributions to the superannuation fund.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The main point is that he left to improve his own position.

Mr. KERR: Mr. Jack had thirty-seven years' service, and was entitled to extended leave. At one period of his service he had availed himself of extended leave. Had he not been entitled to benefits under the superannuation fund, and had he remained in the service for another twelve months, in addition to the extended leave he would have been entitled to a retiring allowance under the Public Service Act. Having severed his right to any benefits from the superannuation fund, he should be entitled to a retiring allowance from the consolidated revenue. An officer of the public service is entitled to two concessions—first of all, to extended leave. Mr. Jack availed himself of one portion of his extended leave. After serving

twenty-five years and reaching the retiring age, he is entitled to a retiring allowance. I understand that Mr. Jack has not received that. Mr. Jack is one of the straightest men possible; his qualifications cannot be attacked in any way; and he gave the very best years of his life to the service. Had he wished to be dishonest and submitted to the Public Service Commissioner a medical certificate to the effect that he could no longer continue in the service, the Commissioner would have granted him a retiring allowance equal to payment for six months' service. Then there would have been nothing to prevent his taking the new position.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you suggest that a man should be rewarded for being dishonest?

Mr. KERR: No; but there is the moral side to this matter. I am not suggesting that Mr. Jack would be dishonest.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He would not do it.

Mr. KERR: Of course he would not do it, but, had he done so, he would have received the allowance. Mr. Jack is a straightforward man. He resigned from the service within one year of retirement to take up a position that probably might last five years. In those circumstances would he not have been foolish to remain in the service for only twelve months when he had the prospect of five years' service in another avenue? The Government should reconsider the matter. I am not asking the Minister to ignore the ruling given by the manager of the Public Service Superannuation Board.

The Government could very well pay an allowance. I know from my own experience in the Railway Department that men have received the retiring allowance even when they have had a claim not nearly so strong as that of Mr. Jack. I would like the Minister to assure the House that he will go into the matter once again to see if something cannot be paid in connection with this just claim. Mr. Jack has no legal claim, as the public service regulations are quite clear on the matter; but his case is such a good one that the Governor in Council might give further consideration to the matter. I am quite satisfied that after Mr. Jack has given thirty-seven years of the best part of his life in the service of the Government, and in view of the extraordinary circumstances of his case, the Government would be doing only a fair and reasonable thing by reopening the case with a view to seeing if something cannot be done for him.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): I would like to endorse what has been said by the Minister as to the capabilities of Mr. Jack. I had the privilege, when Secretary for Public Works, of being associated with Mr. Jack, and the remarks of the Minister as to his capabilities can be fully sustained. The facts of his case show that he could have utilised the £151 gratuity, to which he would have been entitled on reaching the age of sixty-five years, in the reduction of his premiums to the superannuation fund; but he allowed his gratuity allowance to remain intact and continued to pay his premiums as they became due, unlike some other officers in similar cases. After hearing the Minister, no one would claim that Mr. Jack has a legal claim to a gratuity, but I do think that he has a moral claim. The Minister stated that it was impossible to do anything in the matter for fear of creating a precedent.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I said that, if payment were made in this case, similar cases, both past and future, would have to be treated in the same way.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I take it that the Minister will see what has been done, and he will then realise that that kind of thing has been done previously. The Minister is wrong in saying that a precedent would be established if payment were made. It is something which has already been done.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Not in cases where a man leaves the service to better his position.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I want to argue from that basis. Mr. Jack may have thought that he was serving the State by leaving its service a year before he was entitled to do so, after having given it thirty-seven years' service. I ask the Minister to look at this claim, not in the light of a legal claim, but in the light of service and from the point of view of equity, because it does seem to me that Mr. Jack is entitled to the sympathetic and practical consideration of the Minister. My experience as a Minister was that the Minister always does what he believes to be right. I ask the hon. gentleman to look at this case in that light, and to review the claim made by the hon. member for Nundah sympathetically.

Resolution (Premier and Chief Secretary's Department—Chief Office) agreed to.

[2 p.m.]

Resolutions 10 to 37, both inclusive, agreed to.

Resolution 38—“*Department of Public Works—Services, Public Buildings*”—

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*): I wish to draw the attention of the Minister to the lift accommodation in the State Insurance building. Those who have had occasion to use this building frequently realise that it is a very high building, in which a large number of Government employees are engaged, and also that it is largely used by the public. There are only two lifts in the building—one at the George street side and one at the Elizabeth street side—and, if inquiries were made by the Minister as to the traffic on these lifts, he would find that there is not sufficient accommodation at the present time for public use. I have frequently to go to that building on public business, and in many cases I have to wait a considerable time owing to the fact that there is only one lift on each side. I suggest to the Minister that he consider the question of putting in an extra lift, especially on the Elizabeth street side. There are some hundreds of employees in the building, and naturally no reasonable number of lifts could cope with the traffic in a few minutes; but I feel perfectly certain that, if the Minister makes inquiry, he will come to the conclusion that it is advisable to make further provision to avoid the congestion that takes place.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): The inadequacy of the lift accommodation in the State Insurance building is well known to the Government. That building was completed during my term of office as Secretary for Public Works, and we made investigation into the question of lift accommodation then, but it would require several structural alterations, costing a good deal of money,

Hon. W. Forgan Smith.]

to provide further lifts. The building was designed and the contract let in 1914 by the Denham Government. The building was started and well on its way before we took office, and during the period it was under erection building costs were at the peak, and the Government did not feel justified in making extensive structural alterations involving additional expense. However, when I was Secretary for Public Works we had a complete check made of the amount of traffic on these lifts, and, while at various periods of the day members of the public may have to wait for the lift sufficiently long to give time to walk up several flights of stairs, persons of an impetuous temperament become impatient and consider the time much longer than it is. I wish to say that it would involve a great deal of expenditure to put an additional lift in this building.

Resolution 38 (Department of Public Works—Services, Public Buildings) agreed to.

Resolutions 39 to 43, both inclusive, agreed to.

Resolution 44—“*Department of Justice*”—

Mr. KING (*Logan*): I would take the opportunity of congratulating the Government on the excellent appointment to the Supreme Court bench of Mr. Justice Woolcock. Personally I have had a long acquaintance with His Honour, who in his former position of parliamentary draftsman had a high reputation for ability and capacity for work.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He has performed very excellent service to the public of the State.

Mr. KING: Yes, and I am pleased to see him appointed to the Supreme Court bench. I trust that His Honour will have physical strength to carry out his onerous duties on the bench with just as much satisfaction as he carried out his previous public duties. (Hear, hear!)

I would like to refer to youthful criminals who are brought before the court. The Criminal Code prescribes that a child up to the age of seven years is not criminally responsible. A person under the age of fourteen years is also not criminally responsible unless he has the full capacity of knowing that he is doing wrong. I notice that it is provided under the State Childrer Act that the longest sentence a person under the age of sixteen years can get is confinement in a reformatory until he reaches the age of eighteen. Many children, especially in Australia, are capable of crime at the age of fourteen years; but, instead of being tried as ordinary adults, they are tried and sentenced to detention in a reformatory till the age of eighteen years, and no longer. I understand that this extraordinary state of affairs was brought under the notice of the Department of Justice five or six years ago by Mr. Justice Lukin in the case of a half-caste. In that particular case I believe the young fellow, who was sixteen or seventeen years of age, was found guilty of murder, and the only sentence he could get was detention in a reformatory until he reached the age of eighteen years. This state of affairs should be remedied, and I draw the attention of the Department of Justice to the matter in the hope that it will be remedied. I do not think it is wise that

[*Hon. W. Forgan Smith.*]

anybody from fourteen to eighteen years of age should be allowed to get off with a short sentence like that for such an offence. Detention in a reformatory until the age of eighteen years is not much of a deterrent.

I would also like to refer to the operation of the Jury Act. The Jury Act Amendment Act of 1923 removed the qualifications which had hitherto been required on the part of jurors, and also removed the special qualifications for special jurors. Under that Act every male elector between the ages of twenty-one and sixty-five years and every female elector between the ages of twenty-one and sixty years is eligible to serve on both civil and criminal juries. Female electors only become liable to serve upon application to the principal electoral officer. I do not know whether any applications to serve on juries have been made by females or not; but, if not, I would suggest that the Act should be amended so far as female electors are concerned. Since the qualifications of jurors have been removed, simply leaving the electoral qualification, there have been many complaints made in connection with this matter, and on one occasion the circuit court at Innisfail was abolished.

The police do not seem to have favoured the change to the present system, for I notice that, at a conference of the Police Union, reported in the “*Standard*” of Thursday, 23rd October last, a resolution was passed to this effect—

“That section 3 of the Jury Act be amended so as to provide that all criminal trials shall be heard with a jury of eleven qualified persons; that the decision arrived at by the majority of such jury shall be taken as the verdict; that such verdict shall be recorded by secret ballot; and, further, that the persons eligible include aldermen, bank officials, chemists, druggists, Customs officers, engine-drivers, inspectors of schools, ministers of religion, mining managers, public servants, school teachers, mayors, and town clerks.”

It will be seen that what might be called the common jury has not proved satisfactory, and, if that be so, how much more unsatisfactory must it be so far as special juries are concerned. It seems to me that it would be far better to revert to the old system, which gave much more satisfaction to the Department of Justice and those who have to do with administering the law.

I do not propose to discuss the electoral rolls from the point of view of the “*faking*” of the rolls; but I want to draw the attention of the House to the inequitable state of the rolls so far as voting strength is concerned. We have 80,259 electors returning eighteen representatives, and 97,845 electors returning only eleven representatives. Hon. members will see at once that there is a big disparity there which should be corrected. Such an inequality should not exist in a democratic country. According to the electoral rolls, there are three electorates each with more than 9,000 voters, and three with fewer than 3,000 voters each. There are nine electorates with more than 3,000 voters, and twelve with fewer than 5,000 voters. There is a very big disparity there, and, according to the quota provided for in the Electoral Districts Act, about forty-three of the State electorates are defective. Twenty-nine of those electorates are either above or below

the margin of the one-fifth divergence from the quota which is allowed. The votes in eighteen constituencies are worth nearly double the votes in eleven others. On the basis laid down in the Act as to the margin above or below the quota, there may be a difference of 2,548 between electorates. There is a discrepancy of 7,498 electors between Flinders with 2,395 electors and Bulimba with 9,893, and of 6,168 electors between Charters Towers with 3,814 and Logan with 9,982. The discrepancy is so wide that I want to draw the attention of the House to it, and suggest that it should be removed. I point to these figures, not to draw a comparison between the representation of the Attorney-General and myself, but between his electorate and the electorate of the hon. member for Bulimba. In the present Parliament twelve Opposition members represent 97,557 electors—an average of 8,130—whilst seventeen Labour members represent 80,550—an average of 4,737. Those figures indicate that there is a tremendous disparity between the average number of electors supporting Government members and those who are supporting Opposition members. It is my duty to point this out, and to urge that the public should be given an opportunity of saying what sort of Government they require. Under the existing state of affairs they have not that opportunity.

I take this opportunity of referring to the innovation in the Magistrates Court in the continuous sittings sanctioned by the Attorney-General. Under the old system a litigant might have a case for trial before a magistrate on a certain date, and, if the case did not conclude on that day, it stood adjourned for a week or a fortnight. Instead of perpetuating that system, the Attorney-General has permitted the inauguration of a system whereby a case not finished on one day is carried on the next day. That means a very great saving to litigants in the way of witnesses' expenses, etc. I understand from members of the legal profession that the innovation has been a decided success, and I hope the Minister will allow it to continue.

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumba*): The only matter to which I shall refer is the case of a lad convicted at North Pine for stealing a piece of wood. I brought the matter under the notice of the Attorney-General, who did all he possibly could in the matter. I believe the police were absolutely sympathetic with the boy; but I understand there is no provision in the law allowing relief to this boy, who was convicted and branded as a thief for taking a stick of wood, the highest commercial value of which, in the opinion of any witness, was one shilling. The parents of the boy and neighbours offered to pay this amount to the owner of the piece of wood. This lad required the piece of wood for a wireless pole, and went into a partly fenced paddock for it. It would be an advantage if all these poles were taken from this land, which is a piece of wilderness. The boy took only one, but this bad-tempered, quarrelsome owner summoned the boy, who was brought before the magistrate. I hold that the magistrate was very much to blame for convicting the boy. He was merely convicted, and no punishment inflicted. He was a good lad, well brought up, and he had no intention whatever of stealing. He could have cut a pole in another locality and no one would have made any complaint. On this partly fenced place nobody thought the boy was doing any harm whatever, but this quarrel-

some individual considered it his duty to have him convicted.

Mr. BEDFORD: The owner, and not the magistrate, was to blame.

Mr. WARREN: They were both to blame.

Mr. BEDFORD: No.

Mr. WARREN: The owner of the piece of wood should have been flogged. It is an absolute disgrace for a man of his calibre to have a conviction for stealing registered against this lad in these circumstances. It was an absolutely unjust and unfair stigma to place upon the boy. The law should be amended to permit of the quashing of convictions of this nature, and I hope the Department of Justice will even yet see if some means cannot be found for clearing the character of this boy.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I wish to refer to the question of electoral rolls. At the general elections on 8th May, 1926, there were 484,212 names on the State rolls. The annual rolls for 1927, which were compiled up to 31st December, 1926, show the net enrolment to be 458,779, or a decrease after the elections of 25,433. The State enrolment on 8th May, 1926, was 484,212, while the Commonwealth enrolment on 30th April, 1926, was 449,051, which shows an excess enrolment on the State rolls over the Commonwealth rolls of 35,151. According to the 1921 census, the proportion of adults to the total population was 54.42 per cent. The population of Queensland on 31st March, 1926, was 867,643, and, taking the above proportion, the total number of adults in Queensland on the 31st March, 1926, was 472,171. On this reckoning the State enrolment on 8th May, 1926, was over 10,000 in excess of the adult population.

I do not know whether sufficient care is taken in the compilation of the State rolls, but I do know that on the roll for my own electorate there is a large number of people who have left the district for years and years. In three cases people who have been dead for nine years are still on the roll. A large number of people to-day are able to stop on the rolls, notwithstanding the fact that they have no right to be there. It is rather difficult to trace where they have gone, and, unless you can prove that they have enrolled on some other roll, their names must stop on the roll indefinitely.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That is not right.

Mr. MOORE: Well, they do stay on the rolls for a very long period. As a matter of fact, a man whom I employed and who left my employ in 1916 is still on the roll.

Mr. W. COOPER: Why don't you get him off? (Laughter.)

Mr. MOORE: He voted against me, but he is still there.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Has he enrolled for some other electorate?

Mr. MOORE: I do not even know where he has gone. I do not care where he votes, but it shows that the rolls are inflated.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: If he did not vote at the last State election or the Federal referenda last year, then I guarantee that his name is not on the roll now.

Mr. MOORE: I have just quoted the fact that, after the last State election, 25,433 names were taken off the rolls. The time to

Mr. Moore.]

take these people off is not after, but before, an election. It is no use waiting till the damage is done.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Surely you understand that it is only after an election that we can ascertain whether electors are still residing in the electorate!

Mr. MOORE: Why do you wait ten years before cleaning the rolls?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: We have cleaned the rolls three times within the last three years.

Mr. MOORE: The individual I just referred to is still on the roll, notwithstanding the fact that he has not been with me since 1915.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That is only one case in half a million votes.

Mr. MOORE: Because I pick out one case only like that, it does not say that it is the only case in Queensland. I can pick out quite a number who have left the district for a long period and are still on the rolls. That is not as it should be.

As the hon. member for Logan said, the distribution of the electorates is most unfair. There are twenty-nine members of the Opposition, who represent 206,209 electors, while the forty-three members of the Government represent 252,570 electors. Each member of the Opposition, on the average, represents 7,110 electors, as against 5,906 represented by each member on the Government side.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: What is the total number of votes?

Mr. COBBER: On the number of seats secured, the Opposition have a majority.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That statement has been exploded.

[2.30 p.m.]

Mr. MOORE: The Electoral Districts Act of 1910 provides for a quota (1/72 of total enrolment), but permits a margin of one-fifth above and below. The annual rolls for 1927 disclose the following position:—

Quota, 6,372; maximum, 7,646; minimum, 5,093.

	Government.	Oppositio ⁿ .
Above the quota ..	17	18
Below the quota ..	26	11
	43	29
Above the maximum ..	1	10
Below the maximum ..	16	2
	17	12

On the 1927 rolls there are twenty-nine electorates outside the statutory limits. That goes to show that the position of the rolls and of the Elections Act as it is to-day is not as satisfactory as it might be. When you find 25,433 names taken off the rolls immediately after an election, there is something wrong; and when you find that on the Commonwealth rolls—which are pretty well looked after—there are 35,151 names less than on the State rolls, it indicates something wrong somewhere.

[Mr. Moore.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The difference in numbers on the two rolls is because the Commonwealth has not enrolled all the electors, while we have.

Mr. MOORE: When you find a discrepancy between 8th and 30th April of 35,151 names, it can hardly be accounted for by the fact that the Commonwealth has not enrolled all the electors. The Commonwealth rolls are kept wonderfully clean, because they are looked after by the permanent officials of the various districts. The postal officials have a good deal to do in this matter, and, when they find a man has left the district, it does not take them very long to write and find out where he has gone.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They do not write at all; they knock him off.

Mr. MOORE: Only the other day I got a letter in regard to a man who had been working for me. He left a month ago, and they wanted to know whether he had left the district for good, or whether he was coming back. It was not a question of knocking him off the roll. They wanted to know whether he should be kept on the roll or not. When there is a difference of 35,151 between the two rolls inside of a few weeks, the enrolment is faulty, and it has been proved to be faulty, because the Minister himself has admitted that 25,433 names were taken off the rolls immediately after the election. That shows that there were people on the rolls who had no right to be there, and the position is altogether unsatisfactory.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J. Mullan, *Flinders*): The hon. member for Logan referred to the appointment of Mr. Justice Woolcock to the Supreme Court bench. I am very glad that the hon. member appreciates the action of the Government in appointing Mr. Justice Woolcock to that position. That gentleman has had a long and honourable career, notably in connection with the business of this House as draftsman. He did that work exceptionally well, and I know of no duties that are calculated better to qualify him for the position he now holds, and I join with the hon. member in the hope that Mr. Justice Woolcock will have a long and useful career. (Hear, hear!)

The remarks of the hon. member in regard to youthful criminals have something in them. According to the decisions of the courts, they cannot be committed to prison. There is certainly an anomaly there that needs investigation, and all I can say is that I shall go into the matter with the responsible officers of my department and see if that anomaly cannot be removed.

The hon. member also referred to the jury system, and from his remarks he would lead one to believe that the present system is not working satisfactorily. I am in a position to know, perhaps, as well as anyone in Queensland how that system works, and I say that it is working remarkably well, considering that it was a new system involving fundamental changes in the whole jury system of the State. The fact that something happened at Innisfail is not in any way condemnatory of the jury system. Indeed, that incident could have happened had there been no change at all. As a matter of fact, a similar thing did happen under the old system. I would be very sorry to recommend to this House, at present, at all events—what

may happen in the future no one can tell—that we should follow the recommendation of the Police Union regarding majority verdicts, as reported by the hon. gentleman. That is no new thing in Queensland.

On two occasions a Bill has been introduced into this Parliament proposing to adopt the principle of majority verdicts. On both occasions it passed through the Upper House, but got no further than the initial stages in this House, because there was a general consensus of opinion that it would not be acceptable to the people of Queensland. The hon. member pointed out that the system was very difficult because of the wide franchise which has been exercised in connection with juries, particularly in connection with special juries. I do not find the difficulty which the hon. member speaks of, and, when the Bill was going through the House and I was advocating the abolition of this special jury system, I pointed out that I could never see why a man being tried for his liberty was not entitled to as intelligent a jury as a man whose property was involved.

Mr. MOORE: They are both entitled to it.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: They are both entitled, in my opinion, to an equally intelligent jury. Our jury system makes towards that end. Except for the little trouble we have had at Innisfail—and which was taken in hand promptly by suspending the jury system there on the recommendation of the judge—we have had no difficulty with the system. The system certainly is on its trial; but, so far as it has gone, it has worked exceedingly well, and I have no desire to recommend a change.

We come to the statement of the hon. member for Logan regarding registration of women as jurors. Certainly the registration has not been great. Any woman between the age of twenty-one and sixty who is on the electoral roll can apply to be placed upon the jury list. We do not put them on, because it would lead to a lot of trouble in their asking for exemption. Under the law they are entitled to be placed on the list, if they so apply. Not a great many have applied; still they have a right to do so. It is a recognition of their equality with men, if they like to exercise it; and, if they do not exercise it, the Government are not to blame.

Mr. TAYLOR: Would you like to be tried by a jury of women?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No woman has yet sat on a jury in Queensland. A number of women have applied and are on the jury lists. In one case where a woman was on the panel she was promptly challenged.

The hon. member for Murrumba mentioned the regrettable case in his electorate of a boy who was convicted of stealing. However we may sympathise with the parents of the boy, I am afraid we cannot offer much assistance. The owner of the property prosecuted the boy, and there was no alternative for the magistrate but to convict him; but he only convicted him, and discharged him. I am sorry for the boy; but there was no other course open to the magistrate but to do his duty.

We come to a very hardy annual, but none the less interesting—the subject of electoral registration. Hon. members oppo-

site seem to be worrying over the fact that the electoral system in Queensland is not working equitably. I think it is working splendidly. (Opposition laughter.)

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Of course it is.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That is evidenced by our winning five successive general elections, and sixteen out of seventeen by-elections. Surely that is a testimony to the very satisfactory condition of the electoral system.

Mr. TAYLOR: The wonder is that you have not got the lot. (Laughter.)

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Hon. members opposite seem to think that everything would be all right if it were not for the redistribution of seats in 1921. We won in 1915 under the system of distribution of hon. members opposite, and we won in 1913 and again in 1920 under that system.

Mr. MOORE: You got down to a majority of one, though.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: We had a majority of four. Then we got back to a majority of fourteen again, which we still hold. The hon. member is foolish if he thinks that it is the electoral redistribution which has made the difference. Nothing could be further from the real situation.

In view of past experience, nobody can say that a redistribution should be made now.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Not when it wiped out four members of the Opposition.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: When the last redistribution was made, we had the anomaly during the last session of a Parliament having members without seats and seats without members. That should not occur, and it can be averted by making any redistribution that is to be made in the last year of a Parliament, so that members will represent their own seats during the life of Parliament. I say frankly that personally I see no need for a redistribution of seats at present.

Mr. TAYLOR: Of course you don't.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Now I want to reply to the statements which have been made in this House and outside that hon. members opposite, although in a minority in this Chamber, represent a majority in the country. Anybody who has gone into the matter knows quite well that that is not the case. Immediately after the last election, when wild statements of that character were being made, I went to the trouble of making a thorough analysis of all the seats, and, instead of arriving at the conclusion that the Opposition represented a majority—I think, of 18,000 electors—I found that hon. members on this side represented an absolute majority of the voters. I not only published my figures in the papers at the time, but I showed the process by which I arrived at them, so that, if I were wrong, hon. members opposite had the opportunity of refuting my statements. Nobody on the opposite benches has done that so far. It would take a very long time to read this analysis to the House, but I make this offer to hon. members opposite for their benefit—that, if the House has no objection, the analysis should be inserted in "Hansard," just as I gave it to the press two years ago. If it is recorded in "Hansard," hon. members opposite will have

Hon. J. Mullan.]

six or eight months between now and the meeting of Parliament next year in which to prepare a reply. I ask leave to insert the analysis in "Hansard."

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the Attorney-General be allowed to insert the table in "Hansard"?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

"REPORT OF ELECTION RESULTS OF STATE GENERAL ELECTION HELD ON 8TH MAY, 1926.

"The following summary is the analysis of votes at the general election held on 8th May, 1926, being based on the complete figures as obtained from the reports of the returning officers.

"In this election there were six seats unopposed, viz.—Labour: Barcoo, Burke, Gregory, Mitchell, and Warrego. Anti-Labour: Cooroora.

"There were three electorates in which no Labour candidate stood for election, viz., Fassifern, Toombul, and Wide Bay. Hence there were straight-out contests in sixty-three electorates. In these electorates the voting was—

	Votes.
Labour	188,401
Country Progressive Nationalists	182,250
Independent Country Party ...	5,120
Independent Labour	1,287

"We now take the seats in which there were no contests. We base the probable result if there was a contest in the 1926 elections on the position obtaining during the last occasion in which there was a contest in these electorates. The last occasion in which there was a contest in Cooroora was in 1918; in the Barcoo, 1920. There were contests in Burke, Gregory, Mitchell, and Warrego in the election of 1923.

"We then estimate what would have been the present vote at this election, basing the result on the proportion of the number on the roll when the vote was held to the number on the roll at the present election. For instance, when, in 1920, the number on the roll for Barcoo was 5,270, Labour polled 2,628 votes. Then in 1926, when the number on the roll was 5,786, Labour would poll 2,885 votes. Hence on this basis of calculation we would obtain the following figures:—

	Votes.
Labour	12,460
Anti-Labour	9,239

Adding these figures to the previous totals we obtain—

	Votes.
Labour	200,861
Country Progressive Nationalists	191,489

"In regard to the seats which were contested, but where there were not Labour candidates—namely, Fassifern, Toombul, and Wide Bay, an estimate was arrived at in the following manner:—Firstly, the figures showing the number of persons who voted for the 1920 election were taken, that being the last election in which a Labour candidate contested such seats.

"It was ascertained that in the 1920 election 17,778 votes were polled. Of these, Labour secured 6,714 votes, and anti-Labour 11,064 votes. There were 19,070 votes polled in these electorates during the 1926 election.

[Hon. J. Mullan,

Hence, taking the figures proportionately, an estimate of 7,201 votes would be allowed for Labour, and 11,869 votes for anti-Labour.

"Of course, it must not be forgotten that there was an undoubted swing for Labour in 1926, compared with the 1920 election—when the Government majority was reduced to four. However, no account is taken of this factor which, if ascertainable, would represent a large number of votes in favour of Labour. Adding this last total to the previous totals we obtain—

	Votes.
Labour	208,062
Country and Progressive Nationalists	203,358

"Taking, then, into consideration the Independent vote, we obtain—

	Votes.
Labour	208,062
Independent Labour	1,287
	<hr/>
	209,349

Country Progressive Nationalists	203,358
Independent Country	5,120
	<hr/>
	208,478

Or a majority for Labour ... 871

"It must not be forgotten that in the sixty-three electorates where there were straight-out contests between Labour and Country Progressive Nationalists, the figures, as shown above, were—

	Votes.
Labour	188,401
Country Progressive Nationalists	182,249

Or a majority for Labour of 6,152

"If we take the Independent votes into consideration in these sixty-three contests we obtain—

	Votes.
Labour	189,688
Anti-Labour	187,369

A majority for Labour of ... 2,319

"This gives, of course, to the anti-Labour Party the whole of the vote of 2,347 obtained by Mr. Russell, who opposed the Country Progressive Nationalist candidate for Dalby, Mr. Vowles.

"It is certain that if a contest had taken place in the five seats in which Labour was returned unopposed, that a very much larger vote would have been recorded for the Government in those electorates than that for which credit is taken in the above figures, and therefore the majority for Labour for the State would have been correspondingly increased."

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: What was the majority?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: It was only a small majority; nevertheless, it was a majority, and not a minority of 18,000 as hon. members opposite suggested.

Now we come to the statement of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition with regard to the size of electorates. In view of what the hon. member has said, it will be interesting for hon. members to know that there are fewer electorates above or below the margin allowed under the Electoral Districts Act than there were in 1911 or 1921, when the

previous redistributions took place. Here are the figures—

1911.	
Number of seats above the margin ...	21
Number of seats below the margin ...	22
Total	43
1921.	
Number of seats above the margin ...	12
Number of seats below the margin ...	20
Total	32
1927.	
Number of seats above the margin ...	11
Number of seats below the margin ...	18
Total	29

So that that fallacy is exploded!

Now we come to the reference to the smallness of some electorates and the largeness of others. Hon. members know quite well that in a State like Queensland, subject to droughts and other disabilities and to ups and downs, particularly in mining, populous centres to-day may have a poor population to-morrow. This feature is not peculiar to Queensland, but is common to most States in Australia. We need only compare this State with Western Australia, for instance.

In the electorate of Canning there are 17,347 voters, and in the electorate of Menzies there are 265 voters—the one electorate sixty-five times as large as the other. I could give quite a number of those anomalies. That is due to a depression in mining. In my own electorate there is a great depression in mining. I had 7,000 electors a few years ago, and possibly in a couple of years' time I shall have 7,000 electors again. You cannot have a redistribution of seats every time there is a depression in mining. It would be necessary to have a commission subject to perpetual motion. What is wrong with the redistribution on the present rolls? I have gone into the figures, taken the quotas—maximum and minimum—and examined the number of electors in North Queensland, Central Queensland, and South Queensland, and I find that, if we were to redistribute the seats to-morrow, there would be sufficient electors in North Queensland on the present basis for North Queensland to retain its margin and quota and its sixteen seats, Central Queensland its nine seats, and, with slight boundary alterations taking the electorate by and large, there would not be very much change in South Queensland, beyond the slicing off of a few votes here and there. No doubt hon. members opposite are hogging for a redistribution of seats. What would be the position if we granted that redistribution—not on the present Electoral Districts Act, but on the basis of what we advocated when we were in opposition? When the Electoral Districts Bill was going through this House I was a member of the Opposition, and we advocated that one of the factors in considering the margin and size of the electorates should be remoteness from the seat of government, and that the margin should be as much as one-third above and below instead of one-fifth, which would be quite equitable. If we were to take the whole of North Queensland, the whole of Central Queensland, and the electorates of Warrego, Balonne, Murilla, and Maranoa, and redistributed the electorates

with a one-third margin, instead of there being twenty-nine seats as there are now in that area, there would be thirty-five seats, and in the area comprised within those thirty-five seats there are only three Opposition members. That would mean that from North Queensland, Central Queensland, and the four electorates mentioned in South-western Queensland, there would be thirty-two Government members, and it would be necessary to secure only five more members from the rest of Queensland, including the metropolitan area, to give us a majority. If we cared to "dish" the Opposition with a redistribution of seats—which they appear to be hungry for—we could do that. It redounds to the credit of the Government that, although we could institute a redistribution on that basis, we have refrained from doing so because we regard it as unnecessary.

Mr. MOORE: You could pass a law disfranchising the Opposition.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Let me refer to the State of Victoria. What would be the position of the Opposition if the Government were to grant them a redistribution on the Victorian basis, the last redistribution in Australia—passed by a Tory Government after mature consideration? They wrangled over it for two or three years. Would hon. members like to have a taste of their own medicine? That is, the redistribution given to the Labour Party in Victoria. There they provided for three quotas—not one quota. One quota is for what they call the metropolitan area, which could run up as high as 25,000 electors. Then they have what they call the urban quota, that goes as high as 17,000 electors; and then they have the country quota, which goes as low as 8,500 electors. How would hon. members like that?

The representation in Victoria to-day is practically a reversal of what it is in Queensland. I will give an example. We have in Queensland to-day twenty seats in the metropolitan area, representing 156,271 electors, and there are fifty-two seats outside the metropolitan area, possessing 302,508 electors. In other words, the twenty members in the metropolitan area represent 34 per cent. of the total enrolment; the fifty-two members outside of that area represent 65 per cent. That shows that our system is very equitable. In Victoria there are twenty-nine seats in the metropolitan and urban areas, representing 65 per cent. of the electors, while the thirty-six seats comprising the country electorates represent 35 per cent. of the electors. That will show how the redistribution works in Victoria.

At 2.55 p.m..

Mr. RIORDAN (*Burke*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved the Speaker in the chair.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Supposing we gave the Opposition an electoral redistribution on a similar basis, let us see where it would lead them. If we were to take the whole of the electorates in North and Central Queensland and the four electorates in South-West Queensland and put them into one area, working on the Victorian basis, the quotas would be as follows:—Country electorates, 4,073; urban electorates, 7,073; metropolitan electorates, 11,930. Therefore, North Queensland, Central Queensland, and the four South-western electorates would be

Hon. J. Mullan.]

entitled to thirty-eight members, the urban areas to twenty-one members, and the metropolitan to thirteen members. How would hon. members opposite like that distribution? They would not recover from such a distribution for half a century. I do not know what hon. members opposite are growling about, for they hardly represent an important town in Queensland. They do not represent Rockhampton, Townsville, Gladstone, Cairns, Mackay, Bowen, Bundaberg, Maryborough, Gympie, Toowoomba, or Ipswich. They only represent the small town of Warwick. They represent no electorates in North Queensland or Central Queensland excepting Mirani and Normanby. That shows that the people are not behind them, and the people will not be behind them so long as they continue to adopt their present foolish tactics.

The Leader of the Opposition complained of the fact that there were some people on the rolls who should not be there, and apparently some people are not on the roll who should be there. Our roll at the present time is the cleanest roll in Australia, the Commonwealth notwithstanding, while it is the best kept of any of the rolls. The hon. member complained about our taking 19,000 names off the roll after the election and not before.

Mr. CORSER: 25,433.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The official figures are 19,000. The obvious answer is that we did not have the data on which to work before the elections. It was not the first occasion on which the rolls had been cleansed. This is the third occasion on which they have been cleansed.

Mr. CORSER: After the previous election you took 41,000 names off the rolls.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The fact that there was a State general election and a Commonwealth referendum afforded us facilities for cleansing the rolls. We calculate that, if a man had not voted at the State elections and had not voted at the referendum, failed to reply to the letter calling on him to show cause [3 p.m.] why he did not vote, and failed to show cause why he should not be struck off the roll, that was a fair indication that he was not there. After adopting this procedure we struck 19,000 names off the roll. The hon. gentleman can hardly realise the difficulty in keeping the rolls clean. Taking a normal year, the number of alterations that take place in our roll amounts to 142,000—32 per cent. of the total enrolment. In a three-year period the old roll disappears, showing how difficult it is to keep a clean roll and showing how antiquated is the Commonwealth method of having a triennial instead of an annual roll. The hon. gentleman talked about keeping people on who should be taken off. With nearly 500,000 people on the roll it is impossible to avoid some mistakes where each individual name has to receive attention. Last year 69,370 people left Queensland. Some of those returned, but of those who failed to return some may have died in another State, and, because they died in another State, their names are not registered with our Registrar-General in the way they should be. The result is that that officer is not able to include them in his quarterly list to the electoral registrar, to have them struck off, and in that way names remain on the roll of those who may have been dead for

some considerable time. I have always followed this principle—that I would sooner have 100 extra names on the rolls than run the risk of disfranchising one man.

Now we come to the point of the inflation of the rolls. The hon. member quoted certain figures to show how the rolls were inflated. I am in a position to prove by official figures that our rolls are not inflated, but that, on the contrary, the Commonwealth rolls are not up to the total they ought to be. Here are the facts—in my opinion irrefutable facts. The adult population of Queensland on 30th June, 1927—that is, those who had reached the age of twenty-one years and over—was 500,653. Taking that number we, of course, have to make a calculation because there are aliens, certain people who are insane, and certain people who are in prison, and we must deduct those from the total. The Registrar-General has estimated the alien population not entitled to vote and insane and imprisoned persons at about 13,500. Deducting that number from the adult population leaves 487,153. The number on the rolls at that date was 467,695, showing that the effective electoral adult population on 30th June last was 487,153, as against 467,695 on the rolls, or an apparent deficiency of 19,000 people not on the State rolls. The hon. member will probably rush to the other extreme and say, "Why don't you enrol the other 19,000?" I will tell the hon. gentleman. These 19,000 who are not on the rolls include arrivals who have not completed the residential qualification, temporary residents, travelling agents, and tourists. Our estimate is that they would make up about 19,000 people, showing that the rolls of Queensland are particularly clean.

Now take the Commonwealth rolls at the same date, and compare them with the Queensland rolls. On the same date Commonwealth rolls had 29,457 people less than ours, which proves conclusively that there are 29,000 people less on the Commonwealth rolls than should be there, if their electoral machinery was as fair as ours. (Opposition laughter.) Hon. members opposite may laugh. We can well understand that the electoral system of the Commonwealth is not so generous as ours. If a man removes—not from one electorate to another, but from one portion of an electorate to another—

Mr. HANLON: From one side of a street to the other.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I will not put it in that way—from one subdivision to another subdivision in an electorate, his name is taken off; and, if his name is taken off, it is almost impossible, if he is a nomadic worker, to get it on again. He has to have a four weeks' qualification somewhere before he gets it on again. The result is that for months or years he may never be able to get on the roll. Mr. Turner, the Chief Electoral Officer of the Commonwealth in Queensland, in giving evidence before the Royal Commission on electoral matters which recently sat in Queensland, stated definitely that the position of the Federal rolls was anomalous in that regard, showing that nobody can complain about our system.

I think I have said sufficient for the present to justify the policy of the Government. If the Opposition are keen on electoral redistribution and want to have it on the pattern I have outlined as being in existence in Victoria, I hope they will let us know.

[Hon. J. Mullan.

Hon. members opposite complain that they have not got their fair representation in this House in that they have only twenty-nine members as against forty-three Labour members. I am not saying that theoretically on figures they would not get more than twenty-nine members; but so long as we have single electorates we shall always have anomalies of that kind. Unless we went in for proportional representation—which I think no one in this House is prepared to advocate in view of experience elsewhere—and without that, it is impossible to get mathematical precision—it is impossible to get the strict proportion of members on each side of the House on the basis of the votes recorded. Hon. members opposite are nearer the margin than usually occurs. I remember that, when we went to the country in 1912 as an Opposition, we came back with twenty-four seats, and the Government of hon. members opposite had forty-eight seats. Taking the votes recorded for both parties, we ought to have had thirty-four seats as against thirty-eight seats. The same anomaly occurred at the last Federal elections, when the whole eighteen Senate seats went to the Tories and none to the Labour party, although the votes were almost equally divided. You cannot get a fair mathematical proportion of members on the basis of the votes recorded.

Mr. FARRELL (*Rockhampton*): There are a few matters I would like to bring forward on this vote. The first is in reference to the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court. I agree with the Attorney-General that the last appointment was a very excellent one. My complaint is that the system which has been adopted in the past of appointing the new judge to the Northern circuit has not been carried out on the last two occasions. The present Chief Justice himself first served in Townsville. When another appointment was made, he was transferred to the Central district and became the Rockhampton judge; and later, when a third appointment was made, he was brought to Brisbane. That practice was followed until Mr. Justice Brennan was appointed and stationed at Rockhampton. The reason that Mr. Justice Brennan was not appointed to Townsville was because Mr. Justice Douglas preferred to remain in the North. Since then there have been two appointments, and both of them have been made to Brisbane. I am not going to believe for one minute that there is not some reason for the department coming to the decision to appoint both those judges to Brisbane—that there is not some influence working against the transfer of Mr. Justice Brennan to Brisbane and giving him the same rights as others.

Mr. PETERSON: He has been no time up there.

Mr. FARRELL: It is not a matter of the time he has been there, but a matter of carrying out the ordinary rule that has been followed in connection with these appointments. The next appointment should have been made to Rockhampton, and Mr. Justice Brennan should have been appointed to Brisbane when Mr. Justice Macrossan was appointed to the bench.

Mr. KING: I hope he never will be.

Mr. FARRELL: There is the same feeling, which hon. members can see over here. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition hopes

that he never will be. In Rockhampton he is looked upon with as great favour as any judge who has been there.

Mr. KING: I do not doubt that for a moment.

Mr. FARRELL: He is looked upon in that way, not only by the general public but also by the legal fraternity, and the same thing has prevailed when he has sat on the full bench in Brisbane. I do not know just where the influence is, but I certainly know it exists, and I would like the Attorney-General to deal with it.

About two months ago, in Rockhampton, a Mr. McKnight, an auctioneer and commission agent, was sentenced to imprisonment for five years for the misappropriation of funds, and the judge, in sentencing him, said that, in view of the circumstances—he had invested his own funds and the funds he had misappropriated—

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: And his wife's.

Mr. FARRELL: And his wife's, too, in trying to establish the cotton industry in the Dawson Valley, and for that purpose alone—the judge remarked that he would forward a recommendation to the Attorney-General that Mr. McKnight's sentence might be considered by the Executive Council. So far I have heard nothing further. I do not know whether the report of His Honour has reached the Department of Justice; but, if it has, I would like to hear what the Attorney-General has to say. I hope that he will give every consideration to the judge's recommendation.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL (*Toombul*): I rise for the purpose of challenging the figures of the Attorney-General, and for that purpose I refer him to his own speech of last year, quoted by me, in which he made the following statement:—

“I observed a line of criticism in the ‘Daily Mail’—namely, objecting to a majority for Labour of fourteen seats on a majority vote of 2,126 votes.”

The Attorney-General took the figures for sixty-three seats which were contested, and he worked out by proportion what he considered would be the polling in 1926 in the uncontested electorates, based on the voting at the 1923 election; but he omitted to take into consideration the fact that, in four Labour seats, there had been a decrease during that period in the number of electors of 3,625, comprising Gregory, 1,287; Burke, 1,000; Mitchell, 765; and Warrego, 575, whereas, on the other hand, there was an increase in Coorooa—which is represented by an Opposition member—of 615. If he had accepted the right figures in respect of electorates in which there were no elections, his calculation of a majority of 2,126 would have been shown to be incorrect, and it would probably be found that the Opposition had a small majority. As a matter of fact, the Sydney “Bulletin” of 9th September, 1926, working out the result and allowing for the probable figures had there been contests in the uncontested seats, arrived at the conclusion that the Opposition would have been 1,900 votes to the good. The fact remains that, whether the Government secured a majority of 2,000 odd or whether the Opposition had 1,900 votes more, the Opposition have twenty-nine out of seventy-two seats, and our voters are inadequately

Mr. H. M. Russell.]

represented. I do not intend to go into the matter of the redistribution of seats just now, but I want to put the Attorney-General right in regard to the actual figures.

Resolution 44 (Department of Justice) agreed to.

Resolution 45—“*Department of the Treasurer*”—

At 3.20 p.m.,

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

Mr. PETERSON (*Normanby*): I am interested, on behalf of a number of sufferers from miner's phthisis in my district and in the electorate represented by the Home Secretary, in the matter of a request for an increased allowance. I have a right to refer to the matter, seeing that I have a large number of phthisis patients in my electorate, but to show that I am not butting-in on the business of the Home Secretary, I have a copy of a letter sent by the private secretary to the Home Secretary authorising the committee at Mount Morgan to utilise whatever means it considered necessary to bring about a successful result of their efforts. Under section 14 (b) of the Workers' Compensation Act of 1916-26, a married man with no children under the age of fourteen is allowed £1 a week if suffering from miner's phthisis. We know that these unfortunate people, who have become afflicted with a disease the result of their calling, must maintain themselves out of this £1 a week. They must purchase brandy—a very necessary comfort in connection with this disease—and other medicinal comforts, and the Minister can well understand that very little is left out of the £1.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That does not come under this vote. It is dealt with under the Trust Funds.

Mr. PETERSON: I earnestly trust that the Government will see their way clear to do something further in the matter. It must be admitted that a great deal of assistance has already been granted; in fact, the House unanimously agreed to the necessary legislation some years ago.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I must rule that this matter can be discussed only on the vote for Trust Funds.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): I ask the Minister to persuade his department to include in the report of the Marine Department comparative tables showing the working of the department over a number of years. The report is interesting so far as it goes; but I like other hon. members, peruse these documents from year to year with the object of taking out certain tables. This work could well be done by the clerk who prepares the report. If that tabulated matter was submitted to Parliament, we could form some conclusions in connection with the fish business. On page 5 the report says—

“The supply of fish has again been irregular, in many cases not being equal to the demand.

“The sea-mullet season did not reach anticipations, but I am given to understand that a fair number over and above those marketed as food were otherwise disposed of.”

Can the Minister tell us if there was a shortage in the supply, and will he inform

[*Mr. H. M. Russell.*

us what is meant by the words “otherwise disposed of”? Were they disposed of because the Government were anxious to keep them off the market and maintain the price, or was it for some other reason? If the report were more explicit in those matters, it would be of more value. A statement like that conveys nothing. What has become of this fish? I hope the department will see that the report is made clearer next year. It further states—

“Large quantities of deep-sea fish of mixed varieties, but particularly giant mackerel, were taken by line by fishermen employed in large motor boats suitable for fishing on the outside grounds; the price, however, demanded for this class of fish is beyond the purse of the ordinary public.”

First of all, we are told there is a shortage in the supply of mullet—the fish usually purchased by the workers.

Then follows a statement that a portion of the catch was disposed of otherwise than by going into consumption. This is followed by a further statement that the better quality fish was sold at rates far beyond the purse of the ordinary working man. It seems to me that the report in that respect could have gone a little further into details, and thus have been made more interesting. I hope that the official who compiles the report next year will go more fully into details, especially the appendices on pages 7 to 9, so that hon. members will be able to see what was in his mind when compiling his report. When I took up the report I was not able to grasp the statements as fully as I desired until I had consulted the reports of previous years.

I desire to congratulate the pilot staff on having no accidents in the port during the year. They were very successful in bringing the ships into the harbour and up the river. The only accidents which took place in the port occurred in two cases where the ships were in charge of their own skippers.

A very big necessity prevails for the establishment of a dock sufficiently large to accommodate the shipping that comes to this port, in order to conserve for this port work which now goes to Sydney. We have here a dry dock for small vessels; but a large dock to accommodate the larger vessels could be constructed on a site lower down the river. It is quite possible that the dues would have to be reduced if such a dock were established, as I understand that the docking charges here are much higher than in other capital cities of Australia. That is a matter which should be gone into very carefully, if we desire to make this port the port it should be.

Mr. PEASE (*Herbert*): The Opposition claim that last year the amount of income tax collected was greater than the previous year. According to the report of the Commissioner of Taxes, the amount of taxation levied last year was £305,287 less than the previous year. The number of taxpayers for 1926-27 was 1,344 less than in 1925-26, and the amount of tax levied was £1,609,309, as compared with £1,914,596 in 1925-26.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL (*Toombul*): I would like to know if the Treasurer intends to take into consideration the recommendation contained in the report of the Land Settlement Advisory Board in regard to averaging the

incomes of pastoralists and graziers over a period of five years. If so, will he extend the same concession to the whole of the business community who are subject to the same fluctuations of business as pastoralists and graziers?

At 3.29 p.m.,

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 307 and of the Sessional Orders agreed to by the House on 25th August and 26th October, I shall now proceed to put the resolutions not already agreed to by the House.

Resolution 45 (Department of the Treasurer) agreed to.

Resolutions 46 to 54, both inclusive, agreed to.

At 3.29 p.m.,

The SPEAKER resumed the chair.

WAYS AND MEANS.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

(Mr. F. A. Cooper, Bremer, one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, in the chair.)

The TREASURER (Hon. W. McCormack, Cairns): I beg to move—

“(a) That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1927-28, a further sum not exceeding £5,152,461 be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland, exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.

“(b) That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1927-28, a further sum not exceeding £1,791,655 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

“(c) That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1927-28, a further sum not exceeding £2,491,161 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.

“(d) That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1926-27, a supplementary sum not exceeding £203,265 9s. 10d. be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland, exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.

“(e) That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1926-27, a supplementary sum not exceeding £211,776 16s. 5d. be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

“(f) That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1928-29, a sum not exceeding £2,000,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland, exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.

“(g) That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1928-29, a sum not exceeding £900,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

“(h) That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on

account, for the service of the year 1928-29, a sum not exceeding £600,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.”

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): I wish to refer to a rather unfortunate incident that took place in this House some days ago, when the Treasurer, by way of interjection, made it known to the people of Queensland that one of the members of this Chamber had had his parliamentary salary seized, apparently at the instigation of the Treasurer, to meet his income tax obligations.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! We are now in Committee of Ways and Means, and not in Committee of Supply. The hon. member cannot discuss Estimates at this stage.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I am not talking about Estimates. I am talking about a grievance, and I take it that the time to discuss grievances is when a vote for Supply is before the Chamber.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: Order! This is a Committee of Ways and Means.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I am quite serious in my desire that the Treasurer should deal with this subject. The point that requires to be determined is that an impression has got abroad that the Treasurer of the State is able to, and does, obtain an intimate knowledge of the income tax affairs of those who are assessed.

The TREASURER: It has nothing to do with income tax.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I shall be much obliged if the Treasurer can give an answer to what I think he understands I mean.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. McCormack, Cairns): It might be as well to reply to the hon. member at this stage. The matter has nothing to do with the income tax at all. An order was served on me as Treasurer under the Income Tax Act, and only in that way could I know about it—I do not know anything about the taxation. The order was served on me, and I had nothing more than an ordinary duty to perform in regard to it.

Mr. KING: It ought to have legal effect.

The TREASURER: It has legal effect under the Income Tax Act. It comes to me as the Treasurer just the same as it would go to any other employer. At this stage I express regret for having said anything about it, but the hon. member concerned made a very nasty reference to me in connection with Chillagoe, inferring that I was engaged in something dishonest, and I retaliated at the moment; but I can assure the Committee that I have no access to any income tax returns or anything to do with taxation, nor do I desire to have. The notice was served upon me, as it would be served on me in connection with any public servant, in the ordinary process of law. There was nothing secret in it, though, perhaps, it is regrettable that I referred to the matter in this Chamber.

Question (Ways and Means Resolutions) put and passed.

The House resumed.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to certain resolutions.

Resumption of Committee made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

Hon. W. McCormack.]

RECEPTION AND ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS.

On the motion of the TREASURER (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*), the resolutions were received, and agreed to.

APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 3.

FIRST READING.

A Bill founded on the resolutions reported from the Committee of Ways and Means was introduced, and read a first time.

SECOND READING.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*): I beg to move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): A good deal of money is being voted, and there are one or two things on which the Treasurer might give us a little information. In answer to a question asked on 25th November with regard to the balance of the Trust Funds, the Treasurer gave the following information:—

TRUST FUNDS (31-10-27).		£
Debit Balance at 30-6-27	...	2,364,647
Less Transfer from Loan	...	2,525,261
Credit	...	£160,614
Less—		
Apparent Excess of Expenditure over Receipts (four months)	...	747,853
Debit Balance at 31-10-27		£587,239

It seems extraordinary to have that excess of expenditure over receipts in connection with the Trust Funds during that period, considering that the workers' dwellings and workers' homes have been brought under the Loan Fund.

The financial position is recognised by every hon. member as being a serious one.

The unemployment problem is also a serious menace, and, when we are voting large sums of money, we might well give some attention to the manner in which the money is being spent, so that, if possible, the position may be improved. This year the expenditure from revenue is £16,490,953, as compared with a corresponding expenditure in 1914-15 of £7,199,399. The point I want to make is that, in the intervening twelve years, the number of Government employees, salaries, wages, and interest on the public debt have increased in this fashion—

How Spent.	1914-15.	1926-27.
Number of Government Employees	28,121	39,337
	£	£
Salaries and Wages	4,134,689	10,913,600
Interest on Public Debt	1,875,581	4,831,250
	6,110,270	15,744,850
Balance over	1,089,129	746,103

So that, out of £7,199,399 collected in revenue in 1914-15, the sum of over £1,000,000 was

[*Mr. Moore.*

available for the purchase of material and miscellaneous expenditure, whereas in 1926-27, out of £16,000,000 odd, only £746,000 approximately was available, and that between those two financial years the number of Government employees had increased by 40 per cent. as against an increase of only 30 per cent. in population. It seems to me that we are getting into a very difficult position, because we are not getting a sufficient production to keep up the standard which this country is entitled to expect.

I was very much struck by some remarks in the report of the industrial delegation to America, in which it was pointed out that in America, which is a creditor country, the hours are longer than in Australia, which is a debtor country. It is only possible to maintain the conditions which exist here by greater production. I think the Treasurer himself said that that is absolutely essential.

The TREASURER: I want the public to realise it.

Mr. MOORE: Production must go up to enable these conditions to be continued. The industrial delegation said in their report—

“The American Federation of Labour, in urging for a five-day week of forty hours, state that they do not urge for an immediate change as they realise that permanent progress must rest on increased productivity, and that it should be introduced quietly and as industries are made ready for it. . . . The employee recognises that industry cannot pay what it does not earn, and that on his own efforts as much as on those of the management depended its earnings.”

Many people in Queensland seem to imagine that there is some “widow's cruse” from which money can be drawn to pay what they do not earn, or to make up the difference between what they do earn and what they think they ought to be paid; and they must realise that the position cannot be continued on that basis very much longer. We have almost reached the end in our Trust and Loan Fund expenditure, and, unless something is done, there must be a diminution of the standards we are enjoying to-day. The financial position of the country is not sufficiently strong to enable these things to continue unless we have a greater production, or the policy of the Government is altered to enable us to produce a greater amount for export. That is really what the problem amounts to, because what is consumed here does not make very much difference—we have to send more of our products out of the country in order to make more wealth. Let me point out our sources of revenue per head of population—

	Taxation.	Other Sources.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1914-15	1 8 2	9 4 8
1926-27	5 2 1	13 4 0

In 1914-15 taxation represented 15 per cent. of the revenue.

In 1926-27 taxation represented 40 per cent. of the revenue.

A large amount of money which should go towards the expansion of industry is really going into the revenue of the country to be expended on non-productive work. When we find that the public service has been increased in the way it has, we must realise that something must be done to curb this tendency, for it is the perpetually increasing cost of government that counts. The position is becoming so serious that it is absolutely necessary that it should be brought home to the people that the money must be wisely spent, and there must be a change in policy in the direction of payment by results, co-operation, or some system by which we can get a greater return from money expended, and thereby encourage people to embark upon industry.

We must be in the position of paying for what we get, and not in the position of paying for what we do not get. Unfortunately, that is the position that is dragging us down, and we are finding it very difficult to get away from it. We say that, owing to the tightness of money and the difficult financial position of the country, it is absolutely essential that the people outside should recognise that, if we are to maintain a 44-hour week under the present standard of living, the only way in which it can be done is to see that there is sufficient production in the industries to enable them to be carried on. We have to see whether this can be brought about reasonably, otherwise it will mean a great deal of distress. I attribute a great deal of the unemployment to the very system under which we declare a certain rate of pay in many industries which cannot secure the necessary value to enable those engaged in them to meet those charges, and, instead of expanding, they are gradually closing up. We find that the quality of production—I do not mean the value of production—is not increasing in Queensland in the way that it should increase. We know perfectly well that the value of certain commodities has increased, particularly since the war, so that the position does not look so bad as it really is.

The TREASURER: The cost of production has increased correspondingly.

Mr. MOORE: Yes. The difficulty we are experiencing to-day is that the cost of production is so high in many of our primary industries that it is almost impossible for any expansion to take place; and the only possible way in which we can keep going is by endeavouring to evolve a system by legislation to prevent organisations holding up industry. The other day the meat industry was being considered by the Board of Trade, and it must have been obvious from the evidence that the cost of production in that industry is a very serious matter. Even a member of the Board of Trade, Mr. Gillies, realised that when he suggested that the men should accept piecework. He recognised that would be to the advantage of the industry, and that it was only by those means that the industry could keep going. He certainly had no desire to speed up the men, because he pointed out that they were amply protected by the award. He recognised the continually increasing cost of production that was gradually pressing on this industry until it was in a cul-de-sac from which it would be difficult to emerge. He was endeavouring to find some solution of the difficulty when he made that suggestion, but, of course, it was not accepted. On the contrary, it was

opposed most bitterly by the organisations—why, I do not know—Mr. Gillies was unable to understand their objection to it. It seems that their chief objection is that they are afraid of losing control of men who might get into a position of independence by being able to use their skill and industry to the best advantage. The employees do not seem to recognise that in an industry such as this it is to their advantage to see that the men use their skill and ability to the best advantage so that they are not kept back in the way that many are to-day. We know that, when tasks are given and an agreement is made that they shall do only a certain amount of work, many of them are able to knock off at 2 o'clock, proving that they are perfectly competent and willing to do the work; but they seem to be held back, not by the rules of the Board of Trade, but by the rules of their own organisation, which prevent them from giving of their best, in a mistaken idea that limitation of production is going to make employment for more people. I think it has been demonstrated the world over that restriction of output does not mean mere employment, but less employment. We are realising that to-day in the enormous number of unemployed as a result of the stagnation of many of our industries. We see those difficulties outside in the country, where essential work that should be going on cannot be accomplished because of the cost being so high that the value cannot be recovered. That was recognised in a Bill presented to Parliament yesterday, where certain concessions are proposed for the development of land requiring an extraordinary amount of money. We have reached the stage to-day when we must recognise that our position is an unstable and difficult one, and one which must be faced by every section of the community. The report of the Industrial Delegation further states—

“The high standard of living enjoyed by the American people is the result of steadily mounting per capita productivity. There is only one way to increase or further these standards, and that is by improved methods and processes, by the elimination of waste in materials, and motion in our production and distribution system.

“At the same time, the Federation of Labour recognised the position and has modernised its views to the newer ideas that employer and employee are interdependent, and that co-operation between both for the benefit of industry is essential: efficiency, strict application to work for the maximum output on both sides, is the only way that industry will be made to provide further remuneration for both.

“The employee recognised that industry cannot pay what it does not earn, and that on his own efforts as much as on those of the management depended its earnings.

“The American Federation of Labour, in urging for a five-day week of forty hours, states that they do not urge for an immediate change, as they realise that permanent progress must rest on increased productivity, and that it should

Mr. Moore.]

be introduced quietly and as industries are made ready for it.

* * * * *

“The average factory hours may be put down at slightly over forty-nine a week.

* * * * *

“The hours in industry were very closely investigated by the delegation, and a full report is submitted on this phase of our inquiries. Although America is a creditor country, it will be seen that it works longer hours than Australia, which is a debtor country.

“After reviewing all aspects, unionism in Australia must realise that workmen cannot expect higher wages and shorter hours unless production is maintained—if not increased—so that industry can be carried on profitably. This is acknowledged in America. Methods of production are changing from year to year, and it is essential that both employers and employees, through their unions, should adapt themselves to the changes.”

We know that there is a good deal of waste going on in many ways under the system by which the work is being carried out. The position is most serious. Although I recognise that the drought has been a contributing factor in regard to unemployment, it must be recognised that one of the main factors is the system under which Australia is endeavouring to develop. It is a system entirely her own. It is recognised in other parts of the world that the cost of production has something to do with prosperity; and one thing which must be done to enable the country to meet its obligations and attain a higher standard of living is to increase production, and for the employer to pay the employee according to his ability and the output of his labour. This cannot be refuted. Unless that point of view is taken up by the large sections of organised industry and the organised unions, then we are going to get into a position from which it will be most difficult for this country to emerge. We shall have to wake up and face the position, and, until we understand that it is necessary for the employer and the employee in industry to co-operate so as to find out where there is waste and eliminate that waste, and decide upon what is a reasonable thing to be done if a man is to be paid according to his working ability, we shall not find a way out of our difficulties. If that is not done, we shall have to retrace our steps with regard to the legislation which has been passed dealing with the economic position. We have gone ahead of the money power of the State and even Australia in enacting that legislation. It is all very well to think that the money will be available. It cannot be available unless it is earned. It is all very well to think that we can obtain that money by printing notes and by having a local population to absorb all that we can produce.

The position to-day of the adverse trade balances is a most distressing one. The Chamber of Manufactures has drawn special attention to this phase of the situation. The adverse trade balance for the coming year is going to be in the vicinity of £73,000,000. That money has to be found somewhere. It is not going out of the country in exports. We are importing more than we can afford, and are not producing enough to pay for those imports. That only means that this money will have to come out of loan money, and that means that the greater the imports

[*Mr. Moore.*

the more money will have to go out of the country, and the position will be considerably worse. If more money is to go out of the country, that must necessarily mean more unemployment. When we are discussing a Bill such as this, it is essential to examine the whole position and see whether the policy adopted heretofore will lead to prosperity, and, if not, whether it is possible to make alterations in that policy so that a greater amount of the money produced here is spent in the country. One of the most vital factors in improving the position is the careful expenditure of the money that is sought to be appropriated. The Treasurer recognises that for the first four months of this financial year he has spent almost £1,000,000 less of loan money on the average than he anticipated. I suppose he has practically received the whole of his loan money, for the receipts up to 31st October are shown as £4,784,236. That must be about the total amount to be received by him for the year from the Loan Council.

The TREASURER: We shall participate in the loan floated in London.

Mr. MOORE: The Loan Fund on the 30th June, 1927, was in credit to the extent of £5,235,513. Out of that amount was paid the temporary overdraft at the Bank of England, amounting to £1,370,192, and the expenditure for the four months of the present financial year—£1,375,350—while £2,525,261 was transferred to the Trust Funds debit. The balance of the Loan Fund Account on 31st October must, therefore, have been £4,748,946; so that the Treasurer is spending considerably less than the amount budgeted for.

[4 p.m.]

The TREASURER: At the last Loan Council we were asked to cut down expenditure.

Mr. MOORE: The Treasurer seems to be making an attempt to face the situation. The figures published at the beginning of this month certainly show that there has been a decrease in expenditure. There is one thing that I cannot quite understand—that is, the decrease in the interest paid. Possibly the interest had not become due, or else it was paid in another month.

The TREASURER: That is a matter over which we have no control.

Mr. MOORE: At any rate, the Treasurer is making an effort to reduce expenditure and to build up the financial position of the State in view of the serious position we are in. In my opinion we are only at the beginning of the really serious part of the position, because the effect of the drought is only now being felt, not only in connection with income tax, but in connection with many other matters, and it is going to be exceedingly difficult to get money to carry on. The amount of money we are voting in this Bill is about the same as last year, and will carry us on till about next August. The distressing part is the statement made by the Secretary for Labour and Industry that he considered the 4d. levy was not going to be nearly enough to pay unemployment sustenance. We have to recognise that the amount of unemployment is exceptional, due largely to our legislation; and it can be improved to a tremendous extent by amending our legislation, and also to a certain extent by reasonable consideration of the position by those outside, who are continually putting forward claims for a reduction of hours and an increase in wages when

their productive capacity is not increasing. If these people outside were only prepared to face these responsibilities and recognise that the Government have not an unlimited fund from which to pay the difference between what they earn and what they think they ought to get, and, if they recognise that industry outside is in an even worse position than the Government, because they have not the taxpayers to fall back upon, possibly we shall be able to get into a position which will enable the country to recover. But that will take some considerable time to do. The carelessness and extravagance displayed by every section of the public to-day will have to be curbed. I am afraid that the bitter experience of distress is the only way to teach the people that the extravagance which is being indulged in to-day is more than the country can afford, because the country is not producing enough to pay for it. We are asking for a good deal of money, and it should be recognised by the people outside that we have almost reached the limit. In my opinion we have really got past the limit in regard to taxation, because we are finding that our industries cannot carry the burden. Many of them are having tremendous trouble. People, instead of expanding their industries, are gradually curtailing them, and many of them are looking towards the other States to see where they can invest their money and get a better return. I was surprised the other day to learn that one of our larger industries in the country districts talked of shutting up altogether and going to Victoria to open up there, because they said they could make the article cheaper in Victoria and send it to Queensland at less than it costs to produce it here, because in Victoria they would not be hampered by continual restrictions or harassed over trivial mistakes and shortcomings that are being continually brought up against them here. A little while ago another industry intended to start here. If it had started, it would have given employment to 200 hands. But, after going fully into the question, it was discovered that they could save £2 per ton by starting in Victoria. These are the things that have to be looked at.

The TREASURER: That was due to some other cause.

At 4.4 p.m.,

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

Mr. MOORE: It was due to the hours and rate of pay.

The TREASURER: The Victorian hours are the same as ours.

Mr. MOORE: That may be.

The TREASURER: The cost of living is higher in Victoria than it is here.

Mr. MOORE: The cost of living is lower there. We have to endeavour to get people to see that the co-partnership system or payment by results is the one method by which we are going to improve our position. They are properly safeguarded by the Board of Trade and Arbitration, which will protect them from exploitation—I do not call it exploitation myself. In the sugar industry the workers appreciate that system, and recognise that it is the best. In the sheep-shearing industry men do not think about day work, and it is the same in other

industries. The employees want to be paid for their skill, and, if a man turns out double the amount that another does, he should be paid accordingly.

Mr. FERRICKS: The people you talk of in Victoria are having a bad time there. Victoria is just on the turn now. She has lost the advantage of her congested population.

Mr. MOORE: I do not think she has lost the advantage, because her industries are continually expanding. We find that factories are being established in the adjoining States for the manufacture of our raw material.

The TREASURER: What is the reason?

Mr. MOORE: The taxation is very much heavier here than in New South Wales. When people are going into an industry they take every factor into account. Just to show how people take notice of these things, I might mention that a man came to Toowoomba with a view to starting an industry. He seemed to be about to start, but he came down to Brisbane, and a week or two afterwards he returned and said that he was not going to start. When I asked him why, he said that the Government could compel him to employ men in his industry whom he might not want, and he was not going to take the risk. He said, "The power is there, and we do not know what might happen. If you interfere in a man's business and compel him to employ someone he does not want, he will not take the risk."

The TREASURER: Everyone told me that Lang was hunting them out of New South Wales—where are they galloping to?

Mr. MOORE: The idea is to blame the Federal Government and say they do not impose a big enough tariff.

The TREASURER: It is not a question of party.

Mr. MOORE: It is a question of economics—people will go where they get the best deal. The Treasurer himself recognises that there are restricting conditions on industry which are seriously hampering the starting of new industries in the State. Queensland manufacturers complain that we have more hampering restrictions here than in the other States. This State should be able to develop in the same way as the other States.

The TREASURER: The import figures show that Australia is buying everything broad, but Queensland less than the other States.

Mr. MOORE: We cannot get that information. A lot of our stuff is being transhipped.

The TREASURER: We are not using any more imported goods than any other State.

Mr. MOORE: I do not think we are; but every State is using too much. That is largely due to extravagance. I think the Treasurer is correct in curtailing his expenditure of loan money, because that is one of the avenues by which the position is going to be met; but it is not the only avenue. The people have to realise their general extravagance, because, unless this expenditure is made up by increased production, it cannot be continued. I want to get it into the heads of the people outside that the outlook is not as rosy as some of them seem to think. A lot of people seem to

Mr. Moore.]

think that the Government have only to pass any proposal and they can get the money to carry it out. The people must be brought to realise that it is only what is earned in industry that can be taken out of it.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): I want to take the opportunity of dealing with Savings Bank matters, and in that connection I want to go back to the Auditor-General's report for 1923. During this session the Treasurer has tried to make out that the transfer of the Savings Bank business was wholly in the interests of Queensland.

The TREASURER: You cannot deal with that now.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I took the precaution of seeing the Speaker, who said that I was perfectly in order, and he could not stop me.

The TREASURER: I am like you—I bow to his ruling. (Laughter.)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Treasurer referred to the fact that we are getting 70 per cent. of the Savings Bank deposits in Queensland, and he went on to say something to this effect: "Look at the tremendous sums in addition that we are getting in the shape of loans to local authorities." Those moneys were loaned out to local authorities before anything of this kind took place. It is a matter of business with the Commonwealth Bank, just as they take a good account if they are offered it.

The TREASURER: It is a matter of arrangement.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I have read through the later agreement and the original proposed agreement. Clause 10 of the agreement made in 1920 reads—

"That the Government shall have the right to draw from time to time from the Commonwealth Bank of Australia at current rates of interest seventy (70) per centum of such sum or sums as the Governor of the bank shall from time to time notify to be the increase in the amount of the Savings Bank depositors' balances in Queensland. Should the Government upon receiving any such notification not require the whole of such seventy (70) per centum of increased depositors' balance, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia shall be entitled to retain and invest in the business of the bank or any Commonwealth, State, or municipal securities such part of the seventy (70) per centum as shall not be availed of by the Government."

When the hon. gentleman was speaking the other day one of his Ministers interjected that all the other States had tried to get this arrangement and could not get it.

The TREASURER: Which Minister?

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Secretary for Public Works.

The TREASURER: That is not correct.

HON. W. H. BARNES: At page 743 of "Hansard" the Secretary for Public Works interjected when one hon. member asked why the other States had not done likewise—

"They cannot get the opportunity."

I knew that that was not correct, but, in

[*Mr. Moore.*

order to fortify myself, I took the opportunity of writing to the Treasury Department of New South Wales. I attended quite a number of conferences of Treasurers which dealt with this matter. First of all, let me say that the action of the Queensland Government in handing over the Savings Bank business was detrimental to the interests of the State.

The TREASURER: In your opinion.

HON. W. H. BARNES: In the opinion of others also. Let me quote from the report of the Auditor-General for 1923, page 107—

"For convenience it has been arranged to treat the State's proportions—shown in the above statement—to the nearest thousand.

"Under clause 12, schedule 1, the State has lost the use of the following amounts, representing 70 per cent. of the decrease in depositors and depositors' balances, which have been withdrawn from special deposit receipt, which carried interest at rate of $\frac{3}{2}$ per cent., together with an amount of £16,008, shown hereunder—

During 1922-23—

Proportion of decrease,	
quarter ended 31st	
March, 1923 ...	138,000 0 0

Amount withdrawn to	
30th June, 1922 ...	523,334 15 11

Total withdrawn	
from special de-	
posit ...	661,334 15 11

Proportion of increase	
for quarter ended	
31st December, 1920,	
set off against de-	
crease, quarter ended	
31st March, 1921 ...	16,008 0 0

Total ...	£667,342 15 11"
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I am glad that the Secretary for Public Works is here now. He said that the other States could not get the opportunity of carrying out the same arrangements as were carried out in Queensland in connection with the Savings Bank. I knew that I had attended conferences in Victoria, where we had done our very utmost to block the transfer of the Savings Bank, and in order that it could not be said that I was making a statement that could not be borne out by fact, I wrote to the Treasury Department in New South Wales, and I received a reply—which I am prepared to hand to the Treasurer—dated 24th November, 1927. I shall not read the whole of it, but merely this extract—

"When the Commonwealth Bank Bill was before the House of Representatives on 29th November, 1911, a memorial signed by the Premiers of New South Wales and Victoria was forwarded to the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, in which it was stated that they viewed with the deepest anxiety the contemplated establishment of a Commonwealth Savings Bank, and urged that final action be postponed until the matter could be discussed by the heads of all the Governments concerned and a course of action suitable to all determined upon."

The TREASURER: Both New South Wales and Victoria are opposed to it.

HON. W. H. BARNES: It is rather odd that you admit that now, but would not do so before.

The TREASURER: It was never raised.

HON. W. H. BARNES: If the hon. gentleman will look at "Hansard," he will see that it was raised.

The TREASURER: I am not responsible for remarks made by my colleagues.

HON. W. H. BARNES: You should keep them in order. (Laughter.)

The TREASURER: We have great difficulty in keeping you in order. (Laughter.)

At 4.22 p.m.,

The SPEAKER resumed the chair.

HON. W. H. BARNES: We must not get back to that, because it would not be congenial to the Treasurer. The letter continues—

"A proposal for the amalgamation of the Federal and State Government Savings Banks was laid before the Interstate Conference of Treasurers held at Melbourne in January, 1912, but such proposal was not acceptable to the States' representatives."

I want the Secretary for Public Works specially to listen to the concluding paragraph—

"The business of the Savings Bank of Queensland was transferred to the Commonwealth Bank in December, 1920, but, so far as can be ascertained, the Government of New South Wales was not approached by the Commonwealth at or about this time."

I want this paragraph to be noted very carefully—

"At the conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers, held in May, 1923, representations were made on behalf of certain States (including New South Wales) for the absorption by those States of the Savings Bank business of the Commonwealth Bank, but the Federal Government decided to take no action in the direction desired."

The letter is signed by the Under Secretary to the Treasury Department.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is a matter of policy for them.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman sits on the front bench and says, "They cannot get the opportunity." May I emphasise that?—"They cannot get the opportunity." The whole business to which I have made reference has been disastrous to the best interests of Queensland.

Before I sit down I want to draw attention to the eleventh annual report of the State Government Insurance Office and to point out that to-day a deliberate attack is being made on one section of insurance, which is helping to aggravate the unemployment position, because this attack is being made upon men who are engaged in business and who have to find money for the payment of the wages of their employees. That money cannot be found if the State is levying on them far beyond what is necessary. This report shows that this office has invested in Government debentures £1,974,771 13s. 6d. In these days when the stress is so great that

is one of the things which should be locked into.

The TREASURER: Do you say that all that money was obtained by confiscatory methods?

HON. W. H. BARNES: No.

The TREASURER: Why don't you state what you mean, and not be misleading in your statements?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am sorry that the Treasurer should be cross so near the end of the session. He was cross the other day. (Laughter.)

The SPEAKER: Order!

HON. W. H. BARNES: The fact remains that the position of this State to-day requires the greatest care. The hon. gentleman interjected about the industries in this State and the handicaps they were suffering under. I ask him to look up his own railway rates and fares which apply to the people inside and outside in order to show the tremendous burden that is imposed on those who are seeking to carry out the industries of the country. It simply means that the producer and manufacturer are shut out of some of the activities which would go a long way in helping Queensland at the present juncture.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): I predict that before Parliament reassembles next year the financial position will have become fairly acute. If that situation is faced in the right spirit, then the experiences we shall gain during this period of stress and tribulation will be of benefit. But to shut our eyes wilfully to the situation, as some hon. members opposite appear to be doing, if we judge from their speeches, only makes the position more acute, because those whom they lead are being led on the wrong track and are not advised as to the direction in which they should look for relief. That simply means that, unless we change our policy, we shall rush to a climax.

There is one phase of the financial situation which seems to call for great concern. Page 29 of the financial tables of the Treasurer shows that the actual charges on revenue for the interest on public debt, year in and year out since the year 1917 to the year just closed, has been no less a sum than £21,000,000. That money has been taken out of the public purse. In other words, money that has been invested in public utilities has failed by that sum in ten years to realise the interest necessary to be paid on it. If any person wants to look for the real reason for the stagnation in industry, surely therein lies the real root of the trouble. In ten years industry in Queensland has been called upon to bear more than its actual share for the upkeep of the State to the extent of £21,000,000. Year in and year out that goes on, and it is a serious drain on the resources of Queensland. Now that sheep have failed us, we are thrown back on our own resources, and we suddenly discover that we have no resources to fall back on, and a number of people are now trying to find out the reason for all this. What is the solution? One of the most pleasing signs of the times is to find the Treasurer boldly and fearlessly facing the position. He is really talking in exactly the same manner as we on the Opposition benches have spoken for some

Mr. Elphinstone.]

years past in regard to the financial and economic position. It is amusing to listen to the hon. members behind the [4.30 p.m.] hon. gentleman still giving voice to opinions which are the absolute antithesis of those which the Treasurer has been voicing recently. Therein lies one of our greatest problems—that the party in charge of the affairs of the State, and which should set the lead, are at sixes and sevens themselves in regard to that matter.

The TREASURER: So are you.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: We are, undoubtedly, but the reason I call attention to that is because the lead is expected from the Government and not from the Opposition. This is the first time that Queensland has had to face a set of circumstances like we have to-day, and it does seem regrettable that those from whom we expect a lead should be absolutely at sea in regard to a solution of the problem. The Treasurer, by interjection, asked for some of the reasons that are causing people to look askance at Queensland as a State where development might be engaged in. I will mention one. Take workers' compensation. Workers' compensation was instituted with a view to giving the worker who is injured in his ordinary vocation an opportunity of getting reasonable compensation when deprived of his means of livelihood, and it was naturally considered that the industry which employs that man should provide the premium from which the compensation should be secured. Since the business has been made a Government monopoly and everyone has been compelled to insure, the premiums that have been paid amount to £3,692,000. The actual claims in that period have amounted to £2,487,000. The expenses incurred in the department amount to £559,000. Those expenses may or may not have been all incurred in that particular department; however, they have been allocated to it. That shows a profit of £645,000 in that department since its inception. That is money which the employer has paid in excess of what has been required, so that in reality industry has been deprived of that money, which makes the task of the man who is conducting business all the more difficult.

The TREASURER: We must have some reserve.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I was expecting that reply. Where you take the result over a period of ten or eleven years, the question of reserve does not arise.

The TREASURER: Supposing a big disaster occurred?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: A big disaster can hardly occur here, because where are your accumulations of men who are likely to be killed in any large enterprise at any particular period?

The TREASURER: Take the Mount Mulligan disaster and the disaster at the Ipswich coalmines.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You have had both of those, and still you have your large profit.

The TREASURER: Suppose there had been 500 men killed there instead of fifty.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: You do not get that accumulation of men, and, if you did, it would be the duty of the Insurance Commissioner to reinsure the portion of his risk

[*Mr. Elphinstone.*]

that he is not able to bear. He does it with fire insurance, and it is the proper thing to do with workers' compensation where a calamity is likely to occur; and no doubt he would if there were risks such as the Treasurer refers to.

In another direction, too, the Treasurer is absorbing moneys that are taken out of industry and development and out of the pockets of the people. A question I asked in the House has an important bearing on this subject. Take the insurance on workers' dwellings. There are 12,420 workers' dwellings actually erected or in course of erection. The Government, by reason of the fact that they have advanced moneys on the erection of these dwellings, have received £79,306 in fire premiums through their Insurance Department. The actual losses that have occurred over the whole of the period since 1916 only amount to £7,051. The loss ratio is under 9 per cent. That money is coming out of the pockets of the owners of those dwellings, and, in my opinion, that is an unfair drain on their resources, which are slender enough in these days. The mere fact that they are workers' dwellings indicates that it is a means of providing a man with a dwelling which he cannot secure through ordinarily accepted channels. These are two directions in which there is a steady drain on the resources of the people—a drain which the people could afford to bear, probably, when there was something like £15,000,000 or £16,000,000 per annum being circulated among 800,000 people as the result of the income received from pastoral pursuits. But now that it is practically half what it used to be, we are feeling the effect and naturally must look round to see where we can get some relief; and it is the duty of the Opposition in times like these to call attention to these matters. In days gone by hon. members opposite took little notice of what we said. To-day, when trials and tribulations have to be faced, and when the man who is trying to keep his business and home going feels the pinch, they will listen. Therefore, I am of the opinion that we shall emerge the better from the adversity through which we are passing; although, in my opinion, it is going to be more accentuated next year than this. We do not refer to these matters for the purpose of finding fault, but to show where the weaknesses lie and to try to do something to retrieve the situation.

The TREASURER: (Hon. W. McCormack, Cairns): I would point out to hon. members that the Trust Fund balance fluctuates a great deal. The purchase of sugar is the chief cause of that fluctuation. At certain times of the year the funds are in credit and at other times in debit. Queensland is passing through a difficult period, but my opinion is that, so long as we are not stampeded, we shall be able to manage. It looks as though we are going to get a good season. The north-west monsoon seems to be coming over our drought-stricken areas, and, if we get good seasons, we should be able to get upon an even keel again in a few years.

The Leader of the Opposition took some pains to show how legislation was preventing industries from being established in Queensland. Although an effective higher rate of wage exists in Brisbane than in Sydney, taking the cost of living into consideration the actual money paid to the wage-earner

in Sydney is higher than in Queensland. Taking the cost-of-living basis, the wage in both Melbourne and Sydney—which are the two biggest manufacturing cities in the Commonwealth—is less effective than in any other part of the Commonwealth. Why do industries gravitate to those centres in spite of that? No one knows better than the hon. member for Oxley that, if he was starting an industry for the manufacture of any particular article, he would go to the spot where the bulk of that article was used, taking advantage of the bigger demand there, and then selling the surplus to distant parts. If he made the articles in Melbourne, he would sell them in Brisbane at a price which would prevent anyone from manufacturing those articles here with the small market available in this State. No one knows better than the hon. member that that is one of the essential factors in the case. The same thing applies to industry even in our own State. *Why do people take bullocks hundreds of miles by railway past meadows to the large centres of population? There is a tendency for industry to gravitate to big centres of population for these reasons.

This is what actually happens with the imported article: A big importer in New South Wales is able, by reason of his bigger market, to import in large quantities, and he pays a lower price than what the Brisbane importer can buy at. He gets not only the benefit of buying a larger quantity from the manufacturers, but he pays a lower ad valorem duty upon the goods.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: No; he pays duty on the domestic value.

The TREASURER: He pays duty on the price he pays for them.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: No—on the domestic value.

The TREASURER: I am giving the hon. member the statement of one of the leading importers in Brisbane. He says that, on account of those factors operating, the New South Wales importer is able to import a huge quantity of stuff and sell it in Brisbane at a lower price than it would cost the merchant in Brisbane to import it. The New South Wales merchant gets an advantage by buying in larger quantities. It actually happens that stuff sent from New South Wales can be sold in Brisbane at a less cost than the Brisbane importer can sell at. That stuff comes to Brisbane and injures our business firms. That illustration can be applied in regard to the manufacture of many articles.

I do not want to go into all the matters dealt with by various speakers. I sincerely trust that our seasons may improve and that things will rectify themselves, and that we shall be able to carry on without too much hardship. It is very easy for anybody without responsibility to say that we ought not to do this, that, or the other thing.

I find great difficulty in persisting in the attitude I have taken up since I have been Treasurer of reducing loan expenditure. Queensland is the only State which has made a real effort to carry out the decisions of the Loan Council. Last year we spent nearly £1,000,000 less from loan funds than during the previous year. The benefit is that we

have not got to find the interest, and if this year we can go along spending the bulk of our money on wages and not on materials, we shall at least be able to prevent any further unemployment; but at the same time we must endeavour to reduce our loan expenditure except on things which are entirely reproductive. I am firmly convinced, although it is not popular politics, that this is one of the things which must be faced in Australia, and the saving of a little bit of workers' compensation premiums will not get us very far. A little more attention to business by both employer and employee may help to solve the problem, but it will not stop the enormous drain that is taking place in Australia in the direction of loan expenditure. The danger is that, if this expenditure of loan money is cut off forthwith, the large numbers of men and women who are dependent upon it for a livelihood—not only those who are working on the job but those also who are supplying them with goods and the business people who live on the spending of their money—will be thrown idle, and we shall find ourselves facing a very serious crisis indeed. I do not want to face a crisis in that way. I would rather do what has to be done gradually, and get people so used to living within their means that the position will gradually right itself.

The Government intend to follow that course. Queensland is not bankrupt. So far as loan money is concerned, we are not in any immediate difficulty. We ought to be able to carry on our business for the whole year, or till very late in the year, without borrowing any more. Other States are not so fortunate, and the real reason is that they have not faced the situation as we have done. They are having to knock off men, and are endeavouring to save money here, there, and everywhere. It is useless for us to believe, or for the people of Queensland to say, that we are in any different position from those in other States of Australia. The whole of Australia has to face this problem. No individual State can face it. All the people have to learn to live on what they earn, and not on money borrowed from somebody else.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

(Mr. F. A. Cooper, Bremer, one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, in the Chair.)

Clauses 1 to 3, both inclusive, schedule, and preamble, agreed to.

The House resumed.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

THIRD READING.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. McCormack, Cairns): I get to move—

“That the Bill be now read a third time.”

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at 4.52 p.m.

Hon. W. McCormack.]