

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 24 OCTOBER, 1928**

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WEDNESDAY, 24 OCTOBER, 1928.

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

QUESTIONS.

REVENUE FROM GATTON AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE.

Mr. LOGAN (*Lockyer*) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

“1. What amount was paid into consolidated revenue from the Agricultural High School and College at Gatton for the year ended 30th June, 1928?”

“2. What were the respective amounts from the following sections:—(a) Poultry; (b) pigs; (c) cattle; (d) honey and bees; (e) butter and other dairy produce; (f) all other sales?”

“3. What amount of students' fees were received for the year ended 30th June, 1928?”

“4. Into what fund was the students' fees paid?”

“5. What was the total amount received?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. T. Wilson, *Fortitude Valley*) replied—

- " 1. £1,358 15s. 7d.
- |                              | £     | s. | d. |
|------------------------------|-------|----|----|
| " 2. Poultry, eggs, and bees | 514   | 17 | 4  |
| Pigs                         | 1,211 | 7  | 6  |
| Cattle, wool, hides          | 706   | 17 | 1  |
| Butter, milk, cheese         | 5,992 | 0  | 0  |
| Other sales                  | 1,186 | 13 | 4  |
- " 3. £1,358 15s. 7d.
- " 4. Consolidated revenue.
- " 5. £11,070 10s. 10d. (Total of (1) and (2).) The balance of the amount received was paid into the special standing account of the college."

DAIRY CATTLE PURCHASED BY COMMISSIONER OF IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY FOR SETTLERS OF DAWSON VALLEY AREA.

Mr. CLAYTON (*Wile Bay*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

- " 1. Has the Commission of Irrigation and Water Supply purchased dairy cattle for the settlers of the Dawson Valley area?
- " 2. If so, how many head, and at what average price for dairy cows?
- " 3. Has the Commission issued a regulation forbidding the purchase by the settlers of dairy cattle from outside sources; if so, on what authority?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. T. Dunstan, *Gympie*) replied—

- " 1. Yes.
- " 2. 355 head to date, at average of £8 12s.
- " 3. The Commission has full power under his Acts to regulate the admission of stock into areas under his control."

COST OF INVESTIGATION BY PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION OF INGLEWOOD-TEXAS RAILWAY PROPOSAL.

Mr. COSTELLO (*Carnarvon*), for Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*), asked the Premier—

- " What was the total cost of investigation by the Public Works Commission of the Inglewood-Texas railway line proposal?"

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

" £344 4s. 8d."

NEW RAILWAY Moulding SHOP,  
ROCKHAMPTON.

Mr. GRIMSTONE (*Stanley*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

- " 1. What was the cost of the new moulding shop at Rockhampton?
- " 2. When completed?
- " 3. How long in operation?
- " 4. At what capacity are they now operating; and if no work being done or less than full capacity, what is the reason?"

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

- " 1 to 4. The information is being obtained."

LONGREACH-WINTON RAILWAY.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowoong*), without notice, asked the Secretary for Railways—

- " 1. How many miles of railway have been recently laid between Longreach and Winton.
- " 2. What is the cost of same to date?
- " 3. What is the anticipated cost to complete?"

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

- " 1. 40½ miles between Chorregon and Winton.
- " 2. The cost of this section to date is £194,000, including depreciation.

" 3. (a) Approximately £45,000; (b) rails have been linked between Longreach and Winton, and a bi-weekly service is now in operation. It will take some time to fully complete the line, as ballasting, lifting, fencing, and other work have yet to be carried out."

#### PAPERS.

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

Seventh annual report of the Commissioner of Main Roads for the year ended 30th June, 1928.

Second annual report on the operations of the Hamilton Cold Stores for the year ended 30th June, 1928.

#### PERMITS GRANTED UNDER PETROLEUM ACTS.

##### RETURN TO ORDER.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

" Return to an Order made by the House on 10th October last, on the motion of Mr. Clayton (for Mr. Walker), showing—

" (1) All permits (a) applied for, and (b) granted under the Petroleum Acts, 1923 to 1927, showing the following particulars:—(i.) Date of application; (ii.) date granted; (iii.) name of applicant or permittee; (iv.) area; (v.) locality; (vi.) total net rent to date.

" (2) With respect to permits granted which have subsequently been transferred, the date of transfer and the name of the present holder."

#### SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—SIXTEENTH ALLOTTED DAY.

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

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS.

FORESTRY OFFICE.

Question stated—

" That £41,435 be granted for 'Forestry Office.'"

Mr. WALKER (*Cooroora*): At the outset of my remarks, I want to protest against the absence of the report of the Provisional Forestry Board when we are considering

this vote. It is really too bad that a report, which has always been considered a very excellent one, should not be in the hands of hon. members when we are discussing the Estimates for this branch of the service. I think that the time has arrived when the officers responsible for this and many other reports being presented to Parliament too late, whoever they are—responsible heads or Under Secretaries—should be “hauled over the coals.” I do not think it is a fair thing, and I do not think those responsible can give reasonable excuses.

I have hunted up some figures from the reports of the Auditor-General and the Department of Public Lands, and they show a surprising growth in forestry returns during the last few years. It is surprising to know how much money the Government have made out of forestry, and I am sure it will be news to many hon. members to know that all of that money has been paid into the consolidated revenue, whereas all the expenses of reforestation have been taken out of loan funds. I shall just give the figures, the first table showing the surpluses which have been paid into revenue—

Year.	Amount.
	£
1922 ... ..	140,339
1923 ... ..	143,303
1924 ... ..	234,747
1925 (30th June) ... ..	117,123
1925-26 ... ..	195,140
1926-27 ... ..	218,997
1927-28 ... ..	203,637
Total ... ..	£1,253,336

That enormous amount of money was received in six and a-half years, the reason for the odd half-year being found in the alteration of the date of the annual balance. Those figures prove conclusively that the present Government have been doing exactly what hon. members on this side were criticised by them for doing in years gone by—putting into general revenue items such as royalty on timber. But when we were in office we did not spend any loan money on reforestation.

Mr. HARTLEY: That was when you sold Crown lands.

Mr. WALKER: I am satisfied that, if Government members were on this side of the Chamber, their arguments would be exactly the same as ours; but they have altered their attitude in regard to various matters since they sat on this side to such a degree that we hardly know where they are. At that time they were against crediting these sums to revenue, and said that we made surpluses by selling our assets. They are doing the same thing but to a greater extent. No man can argue that we should not apply a little of our revenue from forestry to the purposes of reforestation. Why should we pass on to posterity this enormous financial burden which is being created in an effort to supply the needs for many years to come? It may be a sound argument. Our asset in the shape of timber has taken many years to mature, and we should adopt a wise policy that will enable us, by means of reforestation, to provide for our timber needs in the future.

The following amounts have been expended on reforestation from loan moneys:—

	£
1922 ... ..	31,193
1923 ... ..	40,112
1924 ... ..	28,563
1925 (30th June) ... ..	16,795
1926 ... ..	42,006
1927 ... ..	37,378
1928 ... ..	41,661
Total ... ..	£237,708

The excess of receipts over expenditure, including loan expenditure, has been £1,115,000 over a period of six and a-half years, but that amount has been transferred to defray the cost of experiments in other directions. If the money had been wisely spent, there would not be so much to complain about; but the Government have wasted so much money on State industrial undertakings and added to the public debt to such an extent that it is doubtful whether posterity will be able to adjust the position satisfactorily. Many years ago a Forestry Bill, introduced by the then Secretary for Public Lands—I think the late Mr. Coyne—was viewed with considerable favour. We looked forward with great eagerness to the Bill, because we recognised the need for a sound reforestation scheme. It is a pity that the Bill was not passed so that such a scheme might have been adopted in a whole-hearted manner. I am not arguing that the Government are not already doing good business in this direction, but I shall refer to that aspect later. If we had a scheme of a definite character, we would then know exactly the manner in which the funds were being allocated. At the present time the policy of the Government is to expend in other directions the general revenue derived from reforestation, and to liquidate their liabilities at an enormous cost by resorting to loan money. Certain quotations from the reports, in my possession are well worth repeating to-day. We recognise the extreme value of reforestation, and, if some definite scheme can be carried out in the near future, there is no doubt that we shall progress by leaps and bounds; but, unfortunately, it is very difficult to discuss this problem from a modern viewpoint in the absence of the report for this year. Whoever is responsible, I hope that the Minister will shake him up, and give him the time of his life.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The report has been tabled.

Mr. WALKER: It was tabled yesterday, but, unfortunately, it has not been printed. The hon. gentleman has seen it, and approved of it. I saw it accidentally this morning, but, generally speaking, hon. members know nothing about it, and are completely out of date. Take the case of big companies which publish yearly or half-yearly reports or balance-sheets involving an enormous amount of intricate work. In those cases the documents are printed and are available about a month after the due date for issue. Here we find highly-paid officials who cannot do the work in the way in which I contend it should be done. I do not know who is responsible, but I hope that he will be brought to book. The report for 1924 states—

“The interstate forest authorities have agreed upon the provision for Queensland of a minimum forest reservation area of 6,000,000 acres.”

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No one can say that that is too much. I understand that there is an agreement in connection with the matter. Although an area of a little over 1,000,000 acres has been allocated for forestry purposes, the department overlooks the timber reserves. We have an enormous amount of timber reserves which are really forests, except that in one case they can be selected, and in the other case they cannot. It is surprising the amount of hardwood timber that we have on our State timber reserves, more particularly on areas that have not been calculated at all. This Chamber and the public of Queensland must be thrown entirely out of calculation until we can secure some clear and definite information relating to the quantity and varieties of timber on these areas. The report for 1924 further states—

"To assure to the succeeding generation of Queenslanders the supplies of wood which they will so obviously require, this minimum forest reservation of 6,000,000 acres must be brought as soon as possible into a state of maximum productivity of timber. This, then, is the task to be faced by the new Administration.

"For the report year the gross revenues of the department, inclusive of receipts on account of the forest service saw-mills, have reached the peak of £655,404. The expenditures in log and sawn timber marketing amounted to £364,002.

"Over a period of twenty-one years the surpluses transferred to the consolidated revenue from forestry operations, other than sawmilling, have reached the grand total of £1,167,972. To this huge sum the pine forests of Queensland have made the greatest contribution.

"There was originally in Queensland an estimated natural resource of pine amounting to 4,000,000,000 superficial feet, and of this original asset 3,000,000,000 superficial feet have been converted to the use of the community. In ten to fifteen years the exhaustion of the pine forests will have been completed. For this reason and because of the imminent cutting out of the high value stands closest to market, a decline in forest revenue must now ensue over the next decade, during which the period of exploitation will merge into the period of active replacement, and a reinvestment of revenue with some possible resort to loan money will become necessary in order to assuage the shortage of wood which the cutting out of the old forests will bring upon us.

"For the requirements of her immediate future, Queensland must now engage in a reforestation programme, beginning with 5,000 acres of softwood plantation and 15,000 acres of natural regeneration annually."

That is a very big task to undertake; still I do not see why we should not proceed with it. We have to bear in mind that this agreement has been made by the other States of the Commonwealth, and we must see, therefore, that they are carrying out their part of the agreement. Naturally, in considering this matter, we have to recognise that we import an enormous quantity of timber, and that we are big exporters of timbers, more particularly to the Southern States. We must see to it that the other States are kept fully

up to their agreement. From what I can see, it will be a very unprofitable venture if we in this State proceed on the present lines. We must remember that up to the present time we have had the advantage of the naturally grown timber. The report for 1926 states—

"Were we to fulfil our softwood needs wholly from our own holdings, our entire coniferous resource of mature saw logs other than casing qualities would be absorbed by the year 1938, twelve years hence.

"There is now operating in Queensland a local timber industry, the wealth of whose annual production is estimated to be close on £3,000,000. Within that not-unimportant industry are 257 saw-mills, of which the larger number depend upon the natural pineries of the State for their continuance. The Provisional Forestry Board cannot escape a sense of some responsibility for the welfare of this timber industry and has given considerable thought to the industrial and economic problems confronting it in consequence of the indigenous softwood deficiency. Obviously there are only two policies from which to choose, the first to cut out the hoop and bunya stands within these twelve years from 1926 to 1938, when the pine-milling industry would suddenly disappear, or to ration the cut over a more extended period, and by dilution and import to ease the decline in our small resources down to the point at which the incline of the new plantations of forest service creation can assume the responsibility for providing increasing supplies of log material."

I need not read any more of this report, although there is quite a lot of it. It is on the same lines, showing that there is a good deal of information in it. Owing to the absence of the report of the Forestry Department for this year, I am not able to bring my information up to date. I would like to refer to the system that has been carried out at various times in the various State timber reserves. I have often looked at them in a casual way, although I have never had the benefit of having an expert with me. I am of opinion, particularly with regard to the Imbil district in my electorate, that wonderful work is being done on these reserves, especially in connection with the Taungya scheme for growing bananas in conjunction with commercial trees. I had the pleasure of looking at a photograph showing the results of this scheme. That photograph would be an eye-opener to every hon. member, every one of whom would become a strong supporter of it. It is the only economical method of planting pine trees when we take into consideration the high cost of planting pines in Queensland as compared with the cost in New Zealand and other countries. It is the only feasible way.

Although we may take advantage of a natural grown State forest by thinning it out and getting rid of the useless timber, from an economic standpoint there is no way of replanting the whole area better than under the Taungya scheme. In the photograph I have mentioned the pines can be seen just about beating the bananas after growing for four or five years. When you have a field of young trees growing right up with no foreign matter, each tree protecting the other, then you are going to get

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hundreds of trees to the acre, and you are going to get the best trunk possible on the tree. Unfortunately, the department has not made the best use of that scheme, only fifty-six blocks having been taken up, most of them very small. I venture to say that each acre of land so planted would be worth a few pounds, yet the Government are charging the settler £2 10s. per acre per year for the right to live there: and when it is considered that in six or seven years the pine trees will be about 10 feet high, it will be seen that the Government will eventually acquire a beautiful forest of pine trees.

One danger in connection with this—and it is not realised by those who do not live on the land—is the rapid growth of lantana, which is surrounding many of these areas to-day. One need only peruse the morning papers to find lantana has been responsible for many fires in the North Coast district. So serious is the problem that lantana will beat the scheme unless the Minister issues instructions to his officers to see that the areas are kept clean.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Some of your exhausted banana lands propagate lantana.

MR. HARTLEY: Don't be silly. That is as silly as your forestry policy.

MR. WALKER: The lantana surrounds the banana farms; it is growing on the edges of these farms. Remember also that lantana germinates quickly and spreads rapidly. We have had big fires even in our grass lands: and hon. members can imagine what the growth of lantana is likely to be in a clean area that is shaded to a great extent.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Are not many banana areas allowed to go under lantana after being exhausted?

MR. WALKER: I want to see the scheme prosecuted vigorously. It has been said that the Government have areas of land suitable for bananas that are not yet leased. I cannot believe that that is so; but, if it is, I strongly urge the Minister to advertise any vacant blocks in the Gympie papers, because many people are eager to acquire such land. The Government should not make it hard for these men, because the time is coming when they will bless the man who introduced the scheme for the planting of pine trees for commercial purposes.

I notice that last year 2,000,000 young pine trees were planted. That is very creditable, and shows that steps are being taken in the right direction to encourage the growth of softwoods. That is all good work, but it is going to be expensive unless the areas are cleared, because, if these trees are planted in the scrub they are not likely to grow. You might just as well rub your head with a brick.

Any man who knows anything about scrub life can go into a scrub and see small stunted trees for the simple reason that they cannot get the air, sun, light, or food necessary to make them grow, as the big trees are stealing their food all the time. If the department is going to clear the scrub and plant trees the way it has led us to believe it has done it, it is going to be expensive; still it has to be done if we are to make good the shortage of timber in Queensland. Last year the department sold 41,000,000 superficial feet of pine, 7,000,000 superficial feet of hardwood, and 8,000,000 superficial feet of other

timbers. That is an enormous quantity, and it proves conclusively that the department must be sending large quantities of timber out of the State; and it supports the argument I have already put forward that the department should see that the other States do their duty in the matter of reforestation, because naturally—I want to emphasise that point—it is not going to be a money-making concern for this State owing to the high cost of planting to-day. While the department sold such an enormous amount of timber last year, the State sawmills cut nearly 10,000,000 feet of that quantity, which shows that the department cut one-fifth, to be on the generous side, of the total timber sawn in Queensland as against four-fifths cut by all the privately-owned mills.

We also hear from time to time of the controversy which exists amongst the State-owned mills in regard to the shortage of pine. I hope the department is not starving the privately-owned mills in order to get a little advantage, because, when all is said and done, there is not much in the State sawmilling business. The profit from the State mills last year was only £821, although the sales amounted to £174,689. According to the balance-sheet, stocks on hand are valued at £79,709—roughly speaking, half the amount of the total sales last year. That requires investigation. It is no use shutting our eyes to the fact that there is bound to be deterioration with such large stocks on hand. When the Government first took over a sawmill in Brisbane, they were £5,000 or £6,000 out in the stocks. I do not know whether that was a joke or whether it was due to deterioration. When the mills have £79,709 worth of stock on hand, it is natural to conclude that there is going to be great deterioration. There was an enormous loss from white ants last year. That was due to the want of supervision. We do not want that to occur, because it means a big loss to the State.

We have also imported an enormous quantity of timber to supplement the shortage which it is said exists here. I understand that about £155,000 worth of timber came into Queensland last year. Of course, on account of the interstate business, the records cannot accurately be taken, and the quantity may have exceeded the amount stated. However, it was something like £20,000 greater than in the previous year. Against that we are exporting an enormous amount of timber to the Southern States, and we are sending a lot of our northern timbers to America. Only last week a boat left Cairns taking something like 1,000 logs, as well as a lot of fancy timber for ornamental purposes. I think it is called walnut. That proves that there is a big sale for that class of timber.

MR. O'KEEFE: It is only an experiment.

MR. WALKER: Even if it is only an experiment, it shows that there is a market for it in America. Let us get their money in return.

The amount of stealing that takes place is to be regretted. I understand that the department had 150 cases of illegal operations last year, and I was sorry indeed to see that prosecutions were only instituted in twenty-five cases. There is something wrong with the administration when so many are let off. It cannot be because the cases are weak. It is necessary that prosecutions should take place in a greater number of instances. I do trust the Minister will look into that, because timber stealing is a great menace.

*Mr. Walker.]*

If the department could catch 150 of the stealers, I am quite satisfied that there were 1,000 more that it did not catch, and if prosecutions are only instituted in twenty-five cases, naturally we are not going to get good administration.

Generally speaking, the forestry policy of the Government has been carried out particularly well, taking into consideration the high cost incurred in getting planting and clearing done; but there are [11 a.m.] many other details which need attention, especially with regard to the lantana question. This is the biggest menace we have. We are going to have the whole of the timber burned out if we do not keep this pest under observation.

Again, we want a survey of our timber areas. I know we have had certain feature surveys, but we want more information in regard to the areas cleared, and also with regard to planting. One or two of us may have a better idea than others about it on account of living close to these places.

The scheme is a good one, and is being administered very fairly in my opinion; but I would urge the Minister to discard expensive methods of procedure, and go in for the planting of good commercial pine in conjunction with bananas. The Government will have handed over to them at the end of five or six years an enormous area of good clean land, provided they adopt the right methods. When the pine-trees get up some 20 or 30 feet the land will be free from noxious weeds, and will be handed over to the State as a wonderful asset.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. T. Dunstan, *Gympie*): Before dealing with the comments of hon. members in regard to the Forestry Board's operation and policy, I would refer briefly to the recent visit of the British Empire Forestry Delegation to this State. There is no doubt that their visit here and their inspections and observations in Queensland mark a distinct period in our forestry history. The forestry conference at Canberra arrived at certain conclusions, and recommendations were made in the report which was issued before they left for New Zealand. In that report they review the history of forestry operations and progress in Queensland. I shall read the concluding paragraph of their report referring to this State—

"We understand that Queensland is the only State of Australia which does not enjoy the benefits of a comprehensive Forest Act. The legislation dealing with forests is at present comprised in the State Forests and National Parks Act of 1906 and the Crown Lands Act of 1902 and its amendments. These do not provide for matters of finance or for effective statutory powers for forest administration. It is desirable, therefore, that legislation on similar lines to that in force in the other Australian States should be enacted. It is of the utmost importance that such legislation should provide for continuity in the financing of the forestry programme."

Coming from a conference of delegates who are distinguished in forestry science in other parts of the world, that recommendation must be given due weight. It is a matter for consideration in the Government's future policy, and I can assure hon. members that every consideration will be given to it. Of course, it is to be recognised that a progressive

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forestry policy depends on finance, and ability to provide such finance depends entirely on the taxpayers. So that a progressive forestry policy in this State depends upon the provision of the necessary funds from revenue or loan.

Before this Government came into power, little or practically nothing was done in the matter of afforestation, and the first afforestation station was established by this Government at Imbil. The figures show—and this is in reply to the comments of the hon. member for Toombul as well as the criticism this morning of the hon. member for Cooroora to the effect that we had not expended sufficient in the way of afforestation—that this Government have done infinitely better than their predecessors. I do not know whether the Opposition speak with one voice on the question of a complete and full afforestation policy. I doubt it; but, taking the criticisms of these hon. members as representative of the party, I would like to point out that in 1914 no loan funds were provided for re-afforestation purposes by the previous Government, and that their expenditure from revenue was meagre in comparison with that of this Government. The following table makes an interesting comparison:—

Year.	Net Revenue.	Total Expenditure (Administration and Reafforestation.)	Per Cent.
1914-15 ..	£ 74,700	£ 7,800	10
1927-28 ..	241,564	64,082	25

In 1914, under the previous Government, the expenditure in reafforestation was £1,700, whereas last year, under this Government, it amounted to £30,925, and, in addition, £3,100 was expended on roads and services in connection with the harvesting and marketing of timber. In the current financial year a sum of £40,000 has been provided on the Loan Fund Estimates for reafforestation, being an advance of £9,000 on the amount expended last financial year.

Now I would like to draw a comparison between the expenditure of the previous Government and the expenditure of this Government on reafforestation. These figures are a reply to the accusations or the sudden insistent requests of hon. members on the other side for a more complete forestry policy and a greater expenditure of public funds:—

Ten Year Period.	Net Revenue.	Expenditure, Afforestation and Work.	Percentage.
1905-14 ..	£ 406,186	£ 5,647	1.4
1915-24 ..	1,229,635	246,495	20.0
1919-28 .. (9 years)	1,664,923	314,887	18.9

It will be realised by every hon. member that, if we are to expend money for re-afforestation purposes in excess of the amount derived from forestry operations and the sales of timber, we must of necessity find that money from some other source to make up that application of revenue. It is all a question of whether the people of Queensland

are sufficiently imbued with the importance of a forestry policy for the provision of the timber needs of the future to submit to the expenditure of further funds from revenue on a vigorous reforestation policy.

Mr. HARTLEY: If they go back to bark huts, the department will not be required.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I have not heard the hon. member express his personal views in regard to a reforestation policy in any direction whatever. I personally recognise the importance of providing for the future soft-wood needs of the people of Queensland. It is a very grave problem, and one to which the Government will give due consideration.

The hon. member for Toombul made some reference to the amount secured by the department by way of stumpage. Those figures are to be found in table I. of the report.

The hon. member for Cooroora complained of the lateness in tabling the report. I have to admit that the report was tabled late; but, in explanation, I would point out that Mr. Swain, on whom depends very largely the drawing up of this report—which is of a highly technical nature and demands a great deal of preparation—was exceptionally busy during the visit of the Empire Forestry Delegation to Queensland. Not only had he to carry out a certain amount of organisation, but he also had to prepare several papers to be read at the various conferences, and, in addition, he had to see that several governmental publications were printed and issued to those conferences.

Mr. MAXWELL: Then, if he died, no one else could prepare the report?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The heavy pressure of business on the part of Mr. Swain has been responsible in the main for the delay.

The hon. member for Toombul referred to the sawn timber prices, alleging that they had been increased by the increased stumpage demanded by the Government. If he were in possession of the facts, he would find that his statement was quite the reverse of the truth. The prices for hardwood are lower to-day than they have been for some considerable time.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: I referred to soft-woods.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Sawn hardwood is cheaper to-day than it has been for a considerable time. Sawmillers at the present time are selling large quantities of first class hardwood at 34s. per 100 superficial feet all sizes, without charge for special lengths. Reference to fixed price lists for 1921 will show that the price of first class hardwood was then 37s. to 39s. The case of the hon. member for Toombul against the Government on this score therefore falls to the ground.

If he wishes to compare the prices of sawn timber to-day with those prevailing fifteen or twenty years ago, he must take into consideration the increased costs of cutting and hauling, higher sawmill wages, extra machinery costs and, in fact, the all-round increase in costs which is naturally reflected in timber as in all other commodities.

Pine cannot be decreased materially in price without seriously affecting the output from the Crown forests, and involving wast-

age of the lesser grades which are now finding a market. In the Queensland circumstances of present softwood shortage, any policy which permits such wastage is uneconomic and against the best interests of the Queensland timber trade. A reduction in price of pine logs will inevitably shorten the life of the sawmill industry, and this serious disadvantage will more than counteract any temporary advantage that reducing the price of logs below their value might bring.

The hon. member for Toombul also made reference to an alleged undertaking which the Government are stated to have made with the Commonwealth Government regarding the royalties on timber in North Queensland. As a matter of fact, no such undertaking was given to the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. MOORE: It ought to have been.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: On 9th March last I wrote to the Secretary of the Australian Timber Tariff Board, 422 Collins street, Melbourne, as follows:—

“In reply to your inquiry of 1st March, 1928, in connection with timber tariff proposals, I have to state that, so far as this department is concerned, there is no desire nor any intention to take any action which will result in the nullification of such protection as may be afforded by any increased tariff on timber, nor will the department arbitrarily take any action to increase its upsets against the natural law of supply and demand. As a matter of fact, in order to assist the timber trade, the department has, on two occasions, recently reduced its sale prices for case logs, with such effect that in some instances no net profits have been left it, and in others case logs have been abandoned at the stump because the cost of production exceeded the present sale price on the market. Furthermore, in respect of maple and silkwood logs, the department recently stabilised the prices for 1928 by offering its year's output at upsets considerably lower than obtained several years ago.”

As there is no record of any undertaking given by this Government to the Commonwealth Government, I can assume that the reference of the hon. member for Toombul was to that letter which was submitted to the Australian Timber Tariff Executive, in Melbourne.

Mr. MOORE: That is an undertaking.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: You put your price up 2s. per 100 superficial feet. That is the main thing.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member cannot get away from the fact that the sentence was put specially in this letter to show that the department would not arbitrarily take any action to increase its upset prices against the natural law of supply and demand. As a matter of fact, we had requests from other Northern buyers of maple that we should not further reduce the upsets, in order to stabilise the markets. In August last, from our reports in that district and our transactions since, we found that certain buyers, including a large buyer of 1,500,000 superficial feet of maple and silkwood logs, were prepared to pay £1 14s. per 100 superficial feet—an advance on the then abnormally low price of £1 12s. In the

*Hon. T. Dunstan.]*

last two years prices have fallen, due to the depression in the trade, from £2 14s. to £1 12s. per 100 superficial feet. Nobody will argue that, because a small tariff is put on imported timber, the price of maple and silkwood logs, because of increased demands or revival of trade, is going to stay at the abnormally low figure of £1 12s. We have had several offers to buy at this increased price of £1 14s.—2s. over the abnormal slump price which previously prevailed. The only undertaking that we gave was that we would not seek to nullify any tariff advantage by increasing our upsets against the natural law of supply and demand: we are sticking to our policy.

The demand for the output of maple from Crown forests in North Queensland is quite satisfactory. There was no difficulty in selling all the maple offered at the recent sale at the increased upsets: in fact, a parcel of special logs realised 50s. 6d. per 100 superficial feet, the upset being 40s. The Government are not in any way responsible for the high price reached for Queensland maple. This was the open market value for both Crown and private logs. The Government were delivering their logs to market and selling them, and their upsets only followed the trend of the market.

Reference has been made by the hon. member for Cooroora to the Taungya scheme, whereby certain forest areas are granted under special lease for the growth of pine-trees in conjunction with the cultivation of bananas. Several additional blocks have been opened up that are suitable for banana-growing, although not the best for the purpose, and they are still awaiting applicants. That policy is being continued as rapidly as possible.

Mr. WALKER: If you have blocks, would it not be better to give those blocks away, seeing that the Government will eventually repossess them with an eight-years' growth of timber?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Seeing that we call special tenders in all cases, and that the tenderers are prepared to give high prices for banana blocks, it would be manifestly unfair to charge high rentals in those cases and give other suitable blocks away for nothing. The blocks are considered valuable by the applicants who tender under the Taungya scheme. We are extending that scheme as far as possible; but care has to be taken in setting aside suitable areas that will be adapted not only to the growth of bananas but also to the growth of pine-trees. I have no doubt that in my own electorate the policy is giving every satisfaction.

Mr. GRIMSTONE: Why not let these people have the blocks at a nominal rental seeing that they are laying the foundation of the forestry policy?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Why should we allow them to have valuable banana blocks at a nominal rental when other men, who take all the circumstances into consideration, are prepared to tender for these blocks at a price which they consider is suitable? The fact that in many cases high prices are offered shows that the land is valuable, and the proposal to offer the blocks at nominal rental is quite impracticable.

In regard to the growth of lantana on forestry reserves mentioned by the hon.

member for Cooroora, the Provisional Forestry Board is expending a good deal of money in the eradication of noxious weeds from these areas. It is a fact, however, notwithstanding what has been said by the hon. member for Fitzroy, that in my electorate and in the electorate of the hon. member for Cooroora banana farmers, having exhausted an area of land, deliberately throw that land under lantana for its supposedly high fertilising properties.

Mr. HARTLEY: That would not cause a fire in a forest area.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: As far as our funds will permit, we are clearing wherever we can on forest areas.

Mr. HARTLEY: Your funds do not go very far.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Lantana, which years ago was regarded as a very serious pest, is now welcomed by many banana farmers, who, after exhausting the land by growing bananas, deliberately allow it to go under lantana in order to get a return from the supposed fertilising qualities of that plant.

The hon. member for Cooroora said that there was an enormous loss in connection with the State sawmills from the ravages of white-ants in connection with sawn timbers. That is not correct. At the Imbil sawmill there was a quantity of C class pine that was affected by white-ants, which did damage to the extent of about £20. All that C class pine was recently disposed of as case timber.

As stated in the annual report of the department, there are large stocks of timber on hand at the State sawmills; but those stocks are only equal to about six months' turnover. Anyone who knows of the serious depression in the sawmilling trade of late will know that this depression has caused stocks to increase considerably. One of the chief reasons for the reduction in the profit derived from the State sawmills this year as compared with last year was the carrying over of large stocks of timber as a result of the depressed market. Another reason was the reduction of price due to the same cause. It is not possible in a great business like this always to maintain stocks of sawn timber at the same figure, especially in the prevailing depression.

Some of the mills are now closed, but an endeavour will be made, as soon as the market revives, to reduce our large stocks at the State sawmills. The other suggestions made by hon. members will be given full consideration.

Mr. EDWARDS (Nanango): I notice that the Minister, in replying to the criticism of hon. members on this side, referred to the question of supply and demand. It is remarkable how the question of supply and demand is brought in by the Government when it suits their case. At other times we are told by them that there is no such thing as a law of supply and demand. Seeing the enormous amount of money that has been derived from our timbers, reforestation has not taken the strides that one might expect. The Minister is well aware that even since the present Government took office stampage rates on timber have risen from somewhere around 4s. 6d. to 22s. 6d. per 100 superficial feet, and in some cases up to 32s. and 32s. 6d. per 100 superficial

fect. In supporting these high stumpage rates, the Minister has argued that the wages paid to timber-getters, overhead costs, and many other factors, have to be taken into consideration. These factors have nothing at all to do with the question, as the timber is put up by public auction, and these prices are obtained for it.

[11.30 a.m.]

The people who purchase the timber have to make the roads afterwards. Seeing the enormous amount of money which goes into the consolidated revenue from this source, it would be a good thing to earmark a certain amount of money to be used in reafforestation work, and in some districts to assist to repair roads which are being pulled to pieces by the haulage of this timber.

The Forestry Department needs to be reorganised from A to Z. It is all very well to say that we have an up-to-date department looking after our timber resources. We have a wonderful asset in our timber. Millions of pounds worth of timber have been sold; but we have still large quantities left. We should be given fuller information about the timber reserves held by the Forestry Department. In my own district and that represented by the hon. member for Stanley there are thousands of acres of timber reserves held at the present time; but much of the land has no timber on it, and it would be better to cut it up for close settlement than allow it to lie idle, as it is. It is hard to say what quantity of this land would be available for settlement, as it requires another survey to be made to get that information. There is a large area of land held there which is only breeding vermin in a district settled with small farms and with good railway communication. It would be a great advantage to the State if that land were cut up and put under cultivation, if it has no value from a forestry point of view. It seems to me that this question is not taken into consideration at all. Years ago the Forestry Department made certain surveys, and lands were taken over as timber reserves. It is necessary to get a re-survey of the land to find out whether a great deal of it could not be better used for the cultivation of crops.

As to the replanting of trees, it seems to me that greater care should be taken of the trees that are now growing naturally in the forests. After all, the tree that is growing naturally does better than the tree which is planted artificially. Therefore, the Forestry Department would do well to give consideration to the tens of thousands of small trees which are growing on some of this land to-day. Reafforestation has in many instances been a failure in the past, largely through the way the undergrowth has been cleared. This has caused fires among many of the young trees which have commenced to grow. That method has been a mistake; but the Forestry Department has awakened to the position, and is not attempting to replant trees under the method adopted during the first few years of its existence. After huge sums of money have been expended, a fire could start and wipe out the whole planting in a few hours. This is a serious question in a dry country like Queensland.

These are matters to which the Minister should give careful consideration. I am not at all satisfied that it is necessary to make such enormous sums out of the selling of timber. I believe that it would give better

results to the State if the timber were supplied to the people who use it more cheaply than at present. It is all very well to say that the Government are not getting more than their due for it; but they tell the workers that they are doing all they can for them, and are relieving them of taxation, whereas in this instance they impose heavy direct taxation on them—particularly on the thrifty man who is trying to build a home. It must be admitted that the enormous increase from 4s. 6d. to 20s. and 30s. per 100 superficial feet for stumpage is a heavy impost on the worker who is building a home or the man in the country who uses timber at every turn.

Another thing which seems to be wrong is the policy of the Government in disposing of timber in large quantities, with the result that nobody but the big timber associations have been able to buy, and the small saw-millers have had tremendous difficulty in keeping their mills going. The big associations can buy the lot and treat the small miller as they like; and it would be a good idea to earmark small quantities of timber in each district and give these small mills options over it so that they may be kept running. That seems fair and just, and is better than allowing a big monopoly to crush them out or to allow them just what it likes. The Minister should endeavour in every way to build up industries in the country rather than force all the people into the large centres of population. That is entirely wrong, and is another instance in which we require reorganisation in the department. It seems to me that the officers have been careful to do what they consider is best; but the policy does not seem to work out in the best interests of the people concerned or of the State.

In the areas I have spoken of, such as the Bunya Mountains, there seems to be a large amount of land which is not growing timber and is of no value to the State for such a purpose. It could well be cut out of the reserves and handed over to small settlers.

Another respect in which the Provisional Forestry Board or the Department of Public Lands could give more consideration to the small settler is in connection with the boundary fences of forestry reserves. It is a hard matter for a settler on a small area of land, with a boundary fence alongside a State forest or timber reserve, to do his share; and he gets no assistance from the department in keeping it in good shape. I hope that the forestry officers will assist in these matters, particularly in respect of the cost of the homes of workers and settlers in the country districts.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): It seems to me that the farther we go on this question the more grave does it appear to be, not only in respect of the shortage of timber, but also the shortage of cash. In spite of the fact that the Forestry Department has a big revenue from the sale of timber—timber which it did not grow and in the growing of which it had no hand, because probably it was growing before any of them saw the light of day—the time must come when that timber will be exhausted. Then there will be no more money to fritter away in planting little pretty pine trees in areas where they were never meant to grow, and in the building of roads for which the "bullocky" pays.

It is time that this Committee woke up to the fact that the department has not really improved the position at all in relation to

*Mr. Hartley.]*

the timber industry in Australia. The position facing Queensland to-day backs up that statement. I remember when I was a youngster the pine timber used in Australia was Oregon pine imported from America probably because of the cheap sailing ship freight rates, and the fact that timber was plentiful in the country of exportation. Although we had wonderful pine forests here, we had not in any marked degree established sawmills to cut our own timber. By the evolution of time leading to the establishment of the sawmilling industry of Australia we utilised in Queensland our own forests in which the Queensland Forestry Board and no politician had any finger in assisting one tree to grow. We utilised our own forests and cut out the use of Oregon, Baltic, and Norwegian pine. Now we are getting it back. It is coming into the country in great quantities, both Baltic and Oregon pine. Despite the increased cost of labour in the exporting countries, the increased cost of wages for engineers on the boats, and the increased cost of wages for seamen, these countries are able to undersell our own timber in this country.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Oregon pine has not the same durability as our own pine.

Mr. HARTLEY: There may be two opinions about that. I have seen Oregon pine last longer than Queensland pine. It all depends on what class of pine is referred to. I am not posing as an expert on these matters, but I should like someone to reply to what I have stated. If the department is doing such wonderful work, how is it that our own Queensland pine that we have been nursing, petting, watering, and for which we have been clearing country and growing and caring for trees that they might reach maturity, and, giving in the fact that there has been an increase in wages in Queensland—bearing in mind that there has also been an increase in wages in America and Norway—that in our own country those countries are able to sell their Baltic or Oregon pine cheaper than we can sell our own pine in our own country?

Mr. MOORE: And pay a big duty, too.

Mr. FOLEY: They dump it here.

Mr. HARTLEY: There is always some excuse. They cannot dump it here. I do not know how many thousands of miles of ocean these boats must sail. Then there is the cost of handling the lumber and getting the timber here. The whole cost should make it so high as to be prohibitive in competition against our own timber sold in our own country. That is one aspect of the question.

It is all humbug about the Forestry Board doing anything in the way of reforestation in Queensland. Of the £250,000 appropriated, £245,000 should be cut out and the other £5,000 utilised in sending our forestry experts into the country with a mattock, axe, pick and shovel for two years to learn something about Queensland conditions and about the growing of Queensland timber where God meant it should be grown, and not where the forestry experts think it ought to grow. (Laughter.) God in nature planted this continent with various classes of trees—hardwoods and softwoods. Go to any part of the country where man has not interfered except with an axe to cut down the matured tree for his own benefit, and you will find another tree immediately grows in its place.

[Mr. Hartley.

There you have abundant evidence of how nature on her own reforests better than any artificial aid supplied by man.

I do not know much about pine timber, and I am not saying anything about that, but the same, in my opinion, would apply there. You can get a very striking example of it if you take a trip into the Stanley electorate. Go along the Kileoy line in the train, and just look out of the window. You can still puff your cigarette or cigar—that will not interfere with your observation, as the train goes slow enough, God knows. (Laughter.) You will see where a few of the old giants, 7 or 8 feet in diameter, have been brought down, and, if you have power of observation, you will immediately notice right around the old stump a lot of saplings have grown up—stringybark or blackbutt—as straight as gun-barrels. That is a lesson to the Forestry Department in reforestation, yet the department has not done a single thing in any of these areas. I hope the Minister and the Forestry Department officials will just put a little more ginger into their operations, and that they will get out of their swivel chairs in their office, where members of Parliament talk to them sometimes and try to tell them something of what they have seen or heard in the country, and go into the country. I mean that the head officials—not the office boy, or the junior factor—will get out into the country and stay there—(Opposition laughter)—and that, if they can find a “nark”—I hope the Australian Journalists' Association will duly appreciate that word—(laughter)—like me, they will get in contact with him and say, “What have you got to say about this Forestry Department? What is your trouble?” If a “nark” is no good, I hope they will proceed further. If they come along to where I am—not while the Federal elections are on—I will try and show them some faults around me, and then introduce them to some other “narks” about Kileoy. The Forestry Department has increased the price of timber until to-day we in our own country cannot build a £300 or £400 house for less than about £800—

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. HARTLEY: You need not split up figures or attribute the reason of that to this cost or that cost. There is the bare plain fact, and a great deal of its cause is the overhead expenses and maladministration of the Forestry Department.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: And the enormous stumpage rates.

Mr. HARTLEY: I say harvest the timber, and, if it will not grow again, let the “bloke” who wants timber in the future look to it himself. That is a fairly sound policy. If you want reforestation, assist nature to reforest; do not interfere with nature.

The trouble on the North Coast line is to keep down the young timber. You are foolish to ringbark or fall any great area unless you are ready to put the plough in, or have plenty of stock to put upon the land in order to keep down the timber. If you are afraid of a timber famine—and I am not afraid of it—let the people on the land, whether it is of freehold or leasehold tenure, receive some inducement to allow the timber I speak of to grow, and not cut down beautiful young saplings 50 feet high without a branch except at the top. That

is what is being done in the forest country all along the North Coast Railway.

Give them a bonus or a reduction of land tax per acre of estimated commercial forest-bearing land. That will relieve the Forestry Board to a great extent. At the present time you have a great deal of land locked up, not only in the Stanley but in other districts, that people would turn into more valuable land if they could get it.

The Minister knows I gave him one striking example, in which I am glad he interfered so that the report of the forest ranger was set aside. The forest ranger had reported that a certain piece of land should not be opened up for selection, and the result was that a man, whose father's place was in the neighbourhood, was denied the right of taking up a small block. I am glad the Minister eventually consented to that land being thrown open for selection, because, although it was only a small area, instead of having lantana and black wattle timber, it has now a couple of acres of first-class bananas. It simply goes to show that, when you take away the interference and give the country to people who know how to use it, you will get much greater production from the country than by merely producing timber that has to be sold at such a high price.

I hope what I have said will be considered. I have said it time and again before. It is like a voice crying in the wilderness, but still, while you have a voice, it is just as well to cry. (Laughter.) While I admire their theoretical knowledge of timber, and while I give them every credit for their zeal to reclothe the land of Australia with forests, I want them to remember it is a darned long way to go, and it is a darned costly business if we are going to do it by the methods that they are adopting at present. Let them get out into the country themselves and treat the thing from a practical standpoint—study the question from the point of view of the men who are trying to use the land for something else, so that they will realise that, when they allow the lantana to choke up the gorges on their properties, they are placing a burden on the man who is using adjoining land. That land should be kept clear. Despite what the Minister says, that people deliberately throw their land open for lantana, we have laws to deal with that, because nearly every perpetual lease has a provision that, on pain of forfeiture, the land must be kept free from lantana and noxious weeds. What I said about lantana was that it was stupid to say that the fires in the forests originated from areas of banana land that had been deliberately put under lantana by the men who held that banana land. Any man who did that would be stupid, because the minute he put a fire through his lantana—it may be done, but it is an expensive way of fertilising land—he would destroy all the value of that fertiliser, seeing that it would destroy the mulch coming from that lantana. I hope that before we have this vote to consider again there will be some practical advance made in a practical direction by the Forestry Board.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): I think most members of this Committee will endorse many of the remarks of the hon. member for Fitzroy. Some of his remarks should be given very serious consideration by the department, especially the portion relating to the cost of houses and furniture.

Mr. FOLEY: There is no State forest in your electorate.

Mr. FRY: There is no forest in the electorate which I represent because it is a city electorate; but in my electorate there are working men on the basic wage who are endeavouring to purchase their own homes and furniture with which to furnish their homes, and they are just as much, if not more, interested than anyone representing a timber district. It is in their interests that I rise in my place this morning to support many of the remarks made by the hon. member for Fitzroy, and particularly his statement that stumpage rates had increased until a house which should cost between £300 and £400 now cost £800.

There are two sides to the question of reafforestation. One is the growing of the timber; the other is the utilising of it. One is the provision for the cultivation of the commodity; the other is the supplying to the people of the commodity at a reasonable price which will permit them to receive some benefit. The expenses which are incurred in the production of timber are borne, perhaps to a larger extent than we are aware of, by the wage-earners of this State. In many respects, the remarks of the hon. member for Fitzroy were very weighty and deserve serious consideration; but I do not go so far as to say that we should not go in for reafforestation. I differ from the hon. member on that point.

Although in season and out of season we have had a demand for an increased tariff to protect our timber industry, that increased tariff, granted by the Commonwealth Government, has been nullified by our Forestry Department, and the department is deserving of censure in that regard. I shall instance a case in point. Take the Commonwealth tariff on timber—

	Old Tariff, per 100 Superficial Feet.	New Tariff, per 100 Superficial Feet.
	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>
Undressed—		
12 in. by 6 in. and upwards	4 0	8 0
7 in. by 2½ in. and upwards	5 6	9 6
Less than 7 in. by 2½ in.	7 0	11 0

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the hon. member connect his remarks with the vote.

Mr. FRY: I am coming right to the vote now. The stumpage rates imposed by the department on log timber at Atherton on the 10th of this month was increased by 2s. per 100 superficial feet, which is equivalent to 4s. per 100 superficial feet of sawn timber; so that in that respect the duty which has been imposed by the Commonwealth Government has been nullified by the action of the State Government. Whilst the Bruce-Page Government closed the door to foreign timber, the Queensland Government opened that door. It is no use asking for a tariff to protect our industry if the Queensland Government are going to nullify it after it is granted.

[12 noon.]

Coming back to the question of the cost of houses and furniture, if Queensland, which controls this industry, is going to make log timber dearer, sawn timber will be dearer, and furniture and house timber will be

*Mr Fry.]*

dearer. I protest against the Government taking a narrow view of it, and continuing on the lines I have indicated.

Mr. C. J. RYAN (*Eacham*): In reference to the remarks of the hon. member for Kurilpa, in connection with the increased price of maple, it might be as well for the Committee to know why the price of maple has been fixed at 32s. during the last twelve months. Representations were made by certain people connected with the timber industry to the Forestry Board to fix the price for maple. Attention was called during the very bad slump in timber—and my electorate was considerably affected by that slump—to the fact that the buyers in the South had stated, in view of the fact that maple had decreased from 54s. per 100 superficial feet, and would still further decrease, they were not prepared to buy it. It was pointed out that, if the Forestry Department—which is the biggest supplier of maple in Queensland—was to fix the price and state that it would not be any lower under any consideration, there was going to be a demand for it. That was done, and contracts were made. I have not got the figures, but I know that quite a number of logmen made contracts for supplies of maple to be sent into the Southern markets.

The question of the increase in the price of maple is evidently one of those things which are covered by the remarks made by the Minister with regard to supply and demand. As I have stated before in this Chamber, I am not altogether in sympathy with the Forestry Department in its policy of contract. The Labour Party has not been built upon that principle, and I still object to the principle of supply and demand, particularly in regard to the employment of labour. However, it is just as well to go back a little on this question of increased costs for building material as well as the supply of cabinet woods for furniture. Whilst maple was bringing 54s. in North Queensland, a large amount of money was being made by hon. members opposite in dealing with that timber at that price, and I claim that the high price was responsible for the introduction of Pacific maple and cheap cabinet woods.

Mr. MOORE: The Cairns strike was responsible for that, and you know it.

Mr. C. J. RYAN: The moment any commodity reaches too high a price, particularly when it is something that can be done without, the consumer will either do without it or substitute something else. During the last three years I have made inquiries into the furniture trade, and, notwithstanding what the Leader of the Opposition says about the Cairns strike being responsible for the position, I have found that there were any amount of logs and cabinet timber in the South; and in North Queensland, between Millaa Millaa and Tolga, it was being sold at 54s. per 100 superficial feet on the ramp, while it was bringing up to £12 per 100 superficial feet in the South.

I want to know what happened to cause the difference between 54s. and £12 per 100 superficial feet. It was a common thing for dealers to receive £10 per 100 superficial feet, and it is no wonder that you find people landing Pacific maple in Australia when they can get it more cheaply. I have been cut amongst the timber men, seen the timber, and discussed the question with them. No one ought to have to pay that price for timber; and several manufacturers in Bris-

bane have told me that the most immoral set of men in commercial dealing were a number of timber men connected with the cabinet-wood timbers in Brisbane. I make that statement because men have given me the authority to use their names, if necessary. It is useless for hon. members to say what they have said, because the timber-getter was charging 54s. per 100 feet for timber which sold in the South at from £10 to £12.

Similar remarks apply to the recent increase of 2s. per 100 feet. I do not know the facts, but from what I can learn a Northern group went to the Forestry Department, and said they were prepared to pay the increase. Whether they were right or not I do not know. I am concerned about seeing maple and other cabinet woods kept at a fair price, but I do not see why we should urge the Forestry Department and private owners to decrease their prices and then allow middlemen to increase their profits beyond a fair margin.

I am not going to pose as an authority on reforestation, but I have been a bushman, born and reared in the bush, and lived the greater part of my life there, and I have just as much common sense as the next man; and I think that some of our theories in regard to reforestation are not borne out in practice. In my electorate and that of the hon. member for Chillagoe it cannot be said that the methods adopted have been a complete success; but, on the other hand, we must make some allowance for the fact that we are in the experimental stage. I have read something about red cedar. The hon. member for Fitzroy has said something about a certain species distributing its seed a great distance from the parent tree. I could take hon. members to certain areas in North Queensland and show them instances where cedar trees have thrown their seeds anything from 8 to 10 chains. I do not think, moreover, that the statement—I am not quite sure whether it comes from the chairman of the Provisional Forestry Board or not—that it would be impracticable to regenerate cedar-trees is quite correct, because many places can be shown in North Queensland where the young cedar-trees are almost unlimited in number and their growth very rapid.

I heard the hon. member for Cooroora state that it was necessary to clear an area before replanting trees for the purpose of establishing a new forest. That is quite incorrect so far as our cabinet woods are concerned. The young trees must be protected from the sun, they must have a certain amount of light, and they must be enveloped with a certain amount of undergrowth during their early stages. I could explain these matters with greater ease if I had hon. members in a scrub, where I could point exactly to what was taking place. However, from my observations extending over a period of years I think much more work can be done in attending to the natural growth in our scrub areas—I speak now of softwoods and cabinet timbers—than has been achieved up to the present time by the assistance of nurseries and other like places.

It is only natural that the Forestry Board should have fallen somewhat into disfavour. We are told, and I believe with an abundant amount of truth, that we are threatened with a depletion of our timber supplies, particularly of softwoods, and we are warned that we should establish reserves to supply the timber needs of the future; but I am

[*Mr. Fry.*

afraid that public opinion will demand that the Department of Public Lands shall throw open for cultivation and settlement certain areas now set aside as timber reserves. There is a big portion of North Queensland that could be utilised as timber reserves, of which very little notice has been taken. There is a tendency to keep close to settled areas when embarking on a scheme of reforestation. I suggest to the Forestry Board that it should give some attention to the question of going further afield in furtherance of its policy of reforestation and timber preservation. I suggest that it should confine its attention to places that are more or less inaccessible. There are places in North Queensland which I learn from general discussion with forestry officers are regarded as inaccessible and will be inaccessible for the next fifty years. I have in mind country at the back of Cardwell. I have spent a considerable amount of time in that portion of North Queensland, at one time prospecting there for a period extending over a number of months—and I have seen there forests of kauri pine unequalled in any forest that I know. Unfortunately, very little information respecting this area is in the hands of the Forestry Board. I would very much like to obtain at an early date some further information regarding the timber on areas which are now considered inaccessible. From what I know of the country, it is not so inaccessible as the Forestry Department contends.

There is a tendency on the part of the Forestry Office—I do not wish to be a carping critic—to grow very conservative. Whilst I am not so drastic in giving advice as the hon. member for Fitzroy, I would suggest that the officials allow themselves a little more scope than hitherto. I know they are very busy men; but it is worth while at times to listen to others, and receive the advice that others may or may not freely give. There is much more to be learned on the question of reforestation in North Queensland than is at present known. There we have the soil and the rainfall. The growth of timber is more rapid there than in any other part of the State. There we have a great area of country that is not likely to be required for agricultural purposes, and the Forestry Department would be well advised to give more consideration to what might be termed inaccessible country in that area and to the consideration of how the timber upon that country affects the timber resources of the State.

Mr. CARTER (*Port Curtis*): As the representative of a constituency where there are a good many activities in the timber industry, I would like to make a few remarks before the vote goes through. I listened with a good deal of attention to the remarks of the hon. member for Nanango. I compliment him on his close study of the question and his very complete knowledge of forestry matters, in so far as it affects the small miller and the users of timber in the area where the timber is obtained. I freely endorse all that he said on the matter.

The hon. member also spoke of the need of some of the money obtained in royalties being set aside for the construction of roads into the forests. That is a question which affects the timbergetter very considerably. No consideration has been given to him.

I was pleased that the hon. member for Eacham drew attention to the policy of the

Forestry Department in calling tenders from teamsters for contracts in cutting and hauling timber. By this means they are encouraged to compete with one another. That is a policy which conflicts with the policy of the Labour Party, and one with which I cannot agree. The tendency is to get timber-getters competing with one another to such an extent that often the work is done at less than what is regarded as a fair rate. The teamster has to make his own roads, and in bad weather no assistance is given him. A contractor may go to the trouble of making roads into the forests in order to haul the timber, and these roads are subsequently used by some other contractor who, by the contract system, has been brought into competition with him.

The hon. member for Nanango touched on the cost of timber to the residents of the areas where the timber is grown. If any person has a right to that timber it is the man in the district where the timber is grown. The timber there is too costly for those requiring it for fencing or other purposes. The Forestry Department has and is still performing some very useful work; but I do think that timber is being pushed up to an excessive price to the user of the timber in Queensland. One has to realise that from a country at no great distance from Australia—that is America—we can import Oregon or Douglas pine into Australia more cheaply than we can get our own pine for.

At 12.19 p.m.,

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

Mr. CARTER: This time last year I was talking to the proprietor of a big carriage works in Sydney, who had just returned from America. He is a man with a complete knowledge of the timbers of Australia and is a very observant man. He told me that there were forests of Douglas and other pine in both Canada and the United States of America that would supply the timber requirements of the world for another 100 years. That is evidence that timber can be bought cheaply.

Mr. MOORE: It might be evidence of his lack of knowledge.

Mr. CARTER: The gentleman had considerable knowledge of the business, and had travelled through these timber areas. He is a very observant man, and I am sure he was stating the case very calmly and truthfully to me. The fact that we can obtain timber cheaply from America is proof of that. If that is so, it does seem absurd that in a sparsely populated continent like Australia we should hope to maintain our position by charging such high prices for timber.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We import only a small quantity of first-class Oregon pine. What we chiefly import is only equal to "B" class pine.

Mr. CARTER: At the same time we know that timber can be obtained more cheaply from America than in Australia. There are immense quantities available. Twenty-four or twenty-five years ago Oregon pine was landed in Brisbane in fitches for 2s. per 100 superficial feet. That was put on a ripping bench and cut into the necessary sizes. I was at that time interested in some shipments. We sold it at 14s. Later we were

*Mr. Carter.]*

compelled to sell it at 20s. because the timber combine in Brisbane—Campbell and others—compelled us to put up the price. I am stating these as facts that I know. If timber could be brought in twenty years ago at 9s. per 100 superficial feet ready to be put on the bench and ripped up as desired, I am satisfied that it does not cost a great deal to do it to-day. I am quite satisfied that agents who are engaged in handling timber put excessive charges on the users. I believe the statement made by the hon. member for Eacham that there are some immoral charges for the handling of timber, and that may apply to Oregon. I know the timber ring in Queensland puts on whatever price it likes. I mention that merely to show that timber should be cheap in Queensland. It seems an absurd proposition that Queensland dressed pine, which twenty years ago could be purchased for 18s. per 100 superficial feet, is to-day costing from 60s. to 65s. per 100 superficial feet.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: That is due to the stumpage.

Mr. CARTER: Some of these charges arise from that fact. Of course we know the costs of selling, hauling, and cutting timber are very much greater than they were at that time. I am referring to a pre-war period; but it appears to me that prices are excessive. When we know that timber can be got from overseas at such a low rate, the price of our timber is made too dear to the user. Out of the revenues derived from timber something should be done to assist in the making of roads in to the timber. Perhaps it would be unwise to take any of the revenue from the sale of timber and put it into consolidated revenue; but any expenses incurred in the handling of timber should come out of those funds.

With regard to some of the areas that are reserved for timber purposes, I am satisfied from observation that we have many timber reserves that are not worth keeping as such. One has only to travel up the North Coast Railway past Eumundi and those places to see that pine still grows, despite the fact that the scrub has been felled and the country put under paspalum and other grasses. You see fine timber springing up in those places in spite of whatever may be done. That is evidence that where pine has once grown it will grow again. If one goes through the Good Night Scrub, he will see a magnificent pine area. Although it is exceedingly dry and poor land, yet pine thrives on it. That area would be well worth reserving for timber purposes. On the other hand, if you go into the Mount Larcom scrub, you will not find a pine-tree in it. What folly to reserve an area of scrub land where pine timber will not grow! Yet that is done. I know timber reserves in my electorate where not a useful stick of timber is growing. If pine is growing, by all means reserve the area and cultivate the timber; but there are scrub areas reserved where not one stick of pine is growing, and where it would not be possible to grow pine. I do not know why, because I am not an expert in silviculture.

Mr. MORGAN: That land is used for breeding pests.

Mr. CARTER: Not in all cases, but there are places where pests do grow. Careful inquiries should be made into these matters, and, if no pine or useful timber is growing

[Mr. Carter.

on an area, it should not be reserved, unless, of course, the Forestry Board can prove that some timber can be grown there successfully. If useful timber cannot be grown on those areas, then the land should be made available for settlement purposes.

With regard to the handling of the forests of Queensland, I do think that a business man is very badly needed on the Forestry Board. I have no fault to find with the members of the board, as they are faithfully carrying out their work. They may know all about silviculture and forestry engineering; but from my knowledge of the work of the Forestry Department I am satisfied that a business man is very badly needed on that board. A man may be an expert in some things, but he may be a very bad business man. That is not his fault. He fulfils his duties in regard to which he is an expert; but, when it comes down to the hard facts of business, the expert cannot be expected to be efficient. Somebody is needed on that board who knows business more intimately than any present member of the board. I am speaking candidly, because I know that these things are necessary.

More consideration should be given to the small miller. He sells his product in the district around the mill, and the local people should be considered. On account of the increased building operations in Gladstone, there has been a greater demand for timber from the small mills in my district than in most other districts, and some of these mills have had some difficulty in getting timber.

[12.30 p.m.]

Mr. EDWARDS: They are starved out in places.

Mr. CARTER: I think something ought to be done. Of course, we cannot do everything to please the teamsters, but in many places they do not get as good a deal as they should. I shall be pleased if the department will favourably consider the matter, and try to do something both for the small millers and the teamsters hauling to these mills, despite the fact that it may interfere with the practice the department has established.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): The main feature of the debate has been with reference to the raising of the Federal tariff and this Government taking advantage of it to increase the price of timber here. I have three letters on the subject from timber people, all saying that the effect of the duty has been nullified by the action of the Forestry Department of Queensland in raising the price of timber. It is all very fine for the hon. member for Eacham to talk a lot of nonsense like he did this morning, saying that maple was sold at £12 per 100 superficial feet in Sydney. What happened is that the Sydney millers or Sydney timber merchants buy direct from the North. Green maple is only worth about 70s. per 100 superficial feet in Sydney. It has to be kept and seasoned for two years before it is any good for furniture purposes. There is no truth in the statement of the hon. member for Eacham that logs are sent down from Atherton and sold at £12 per 100 superficial feet.

I was interested this morning to hear the Minister crow about what the Government were doing with regard to forestry in Queensland. I will show what is actually happening and how money is being spent. I have not got this year's figures—these are last year's figures.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You ought to take a year before this Government come into power, too.

Mr. MOORE: I am taking the position to-day. I do not want to go back to the time when the royalty on timber was 1s. 6d. and 3s. 6d. per 100 superficial feet. I am taking the amount the Government get to-day, and not comparing it with what obtained fifteen or twenty years ago. The figures are—

	£
Revenue ... ..	233,540
Expenditure from revenue ... ..	30,230
Expenditure from loan ... ..	42,006

Of every £1 received in revenue by the Forestry Department in Queensland, 2s. 7d. is spent in paying salaries and office expenses, and not one penny on reforestation. That is where that £30,230 goes to. The sum of £42,006 was spent out of loan money for reforestation, while no other State in the Commonwealth spends loan money for that purpose; it comes out of revenue, which is obtained from the timber that is sold.

I have taken out the following figures to show the expenditure from revenue for every £1 received:—

	£	s.	d.
New South Wales ... ..	0	14	8
Victoria ... ..	1	4	8
South Australia ... ..	1	18	0
Western Australia ... ..	0	9	6
Tasmania ... ..	0	11	0

Victoria and South Australia actually spent more than the revenue received. Queensland is the only State which spends nothing out of the revenue received, but puts it all into the consolidated revenue, and uses it to assist in tiding over its financial difficulties, and then it spends loan money for reforestation purposes.

Mr. HARTLEY: It is a perfectly sound policy, because the people who use the forests we are planting will have to pay for them.

Mr. MOORE: But are we not using the forests to-day which have been presented to us? Later on the people who want the timber will not only have to pay a higher price for it, but will also have to pay interest on the loan money which is being expended. Those figures show that £203,310 was grabbed from the State's capital and spent as revenue. Nobody can justify that. Even the Premier, when he was Secretary for Public Lands, said he could not attempt to justify it. The only justification the Government had for taking the money was because they wanted it. The hon. member for Fitzroy cannot justify it.

Mr. HARTLEY: I am not justifying that, but we won't use that timber that the money is being spent on. The people who use it should pay for it.

Mr. MOORE: I would like the hon. member for Fitzroy to look at the diagram in the report of the Provisional Forestry Board for the year ended 30th June, 1927, from which he will see that, of every 20s. expended on forestry under the loan vote of 1926-27, only 7s. 9½d. was spent in reforestation and the rest was spent in forest nurseries, forest surveys, capital improvements, maintenance, land purchases, forest protection, and forest research.

Mr. HARTLEY: What that diagram does not show is how many of the trees withered.

Mr. MOORE: I have seen a lot of them withered. The whole position is unsatisfactory, and it is idle for the Minister to attempt to show that we have done well in reforestation. We have not. We have got the last penny we could out of the people who wanted to use timber. When anybody wants timber at a reasonable price there is an outcry from the Forestry Department to the effect that it wants a higher Customs duty to enable it to counteract the importation of cheaper timbers.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No such cry has ever been raised by the Forestry Department.

Mr. MOORE: Only two years ago Mr. Swain went to the Federal Government and asked for an increased duty on timber.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You are trying to mislead the Committee.

Mr. MOORE: I am not. He and others went South to press for an increased duty on timber because they said too much foreign timber was coming in. There has been an outcry all over Australia at different times from interested people for the purpose of keeping prices up. The Forestry Department, being a big seller and having its own resources, did the same thing, and Mr. Swain was one of the chief advocates in that respect, and they got an increased tariff on timber.

The hon. member for Eacham spoke about the high prices of maple at Sydney. There is nothing in that at all. Everybody knows that the cause on that occasion was the strike, with the result that logs were left lying on the ramps and either split or got borers in them, or were left in the water or on the wharves and deteriorated, with the result that Pacific maple came in. It was not then a question of price, but a question of the cutting off of supplies and the fact that good timber was rendered inferior from the causes I have mentioned. Then the same people went and asked for a further increase in the duty.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We were asked not to increase our royalty on maple still further.

At 12.42 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. MOORE: They say, "We are not going to reduce our royalty any further": and people who think that that price will stand make contracts and buy the timber, thinking they know where they are; but at once there is an agitation for an increase in the tariff because people say Pacific maple is under-selling Queensland maple. The Minister himself admits—he read the letter himself this morning—that he wrote down to the Federal Government to the effect that the Queensland Government did not intend to raise prices unless—practically this is the effect of it—the law of supply and demand required it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The big buyers offered 2s. more per 100 superficial feet.

Mr. MOORE: There is nothing in that. There was a sort of understanding. The Federal Government said, "Will you take advantage of the increased tariff to increase your price?" and the Minister practically said "No," although he put in a sort of addendum that left him a way out if he

*Mr. Moore.]*

thought he could get more money. Consequently the department put up the upset price again, and we find exactly the same thing happening now. There is a cry from Atherton for a further increase because the mills are at a standstill, owing to the fact that the action of the Federal Government has been nullified by the State Government asking for a higher price. You cannot expect any Federal Government to keep on increasing the tariff if the increase is to be nullified by another Government. It is exactly what has happened in other industries. The Tariff Board has pointed it out time and again. Every increase granted has been nullified by the action of the Arbitration Court or some other body.

Mr. HARTLEY: By the greediness of the producer or the manufacturer.

Mr. MOORE: I do not know that the producer is a particularly greedy person. He has to sell his products in the markets of the world at the best price he can get in competition with other producers. He endeavours to get over the difficulty by attempting to secure a higher price on the basis of co-operative marketing in order to recoup any loss that may be incurred on the product exported overseas. I do not think anybody can say that he is greedy for endeavouring to live.

Mr. GRIMSTONE (*Stanley*): We are approaching the time when the Forestry Board will be considering the question of contracts for the ensuing twelve months; and I strongly urge upon the board to lay down prices having regard to the distance the timber must be hauled, and that it does not stick rigidly to the present unfair method of the tender system. I further suggest that, instead of allocating two, three, or four blocks of timber to one individual, the area be shared evenly, or as evenly as possible, between the various teamsters operating in the locality. I have in mind four blocks aggregating 1,700,000 feet of timber which were allocated to one man when he could not possibly shift that quantity; and at the same time there were five or six teamsters willing and anxious to secure that work. I ask the board to give careful consideration to that matter, and apportion the area amongst the teamsters available for the work, and that it be apportioned at a reasonable rate. The present system undoubtedly means a reduction in income to those engaged in the industry. The return to the teamster on the present haulage rates is not equal to the income obtained five or six years ago.

I ask the board also to give consideration to the throwing open for settlement of the Yarraman-Blackbutt reserve, an area of 80,000 acres, a large portion of which is absolutely unsuited for reforestation purposes. That has been proved by results. One has merely to go into that forest and observe what seed has germinated from the seed that has fallen during past years. The evidence is very disheartening, and, if nature herself cannot regenerate these forests, then it will be impossible for man to do so. There may be some areas suitable for reforestation that could be retained; but it would certainly be of greater benefit to the State if the unsuitable areas were thrown open for agricultural settlement rather than be retained in a futile effort to reforest the country. I believe in reforestation, but a successful policy

[*Mr. Moore.*

depends upon securing suitable areas for that purpose. I hold that the Yarraman-Blackbutt area is not a suitable area. Something like £170,000 was paid into the consolidated revenue last year by the Forestry Board, secured by its operations in timber. I enter a very strong plea for the board taking a greater responsibility in the matter of the upkeep of roads in the localities where it is operating.

Mr. HARTLEY: Hear, hear!

Mr. GRIMSTONE: The board has an area of 80,000 acres in the Yarraman-Blackbutt district, and is operating on the roads leading to that area. The local authorities secure no rates whatever from the board, and I strongly urge it to accept a greater share of the responsibility of maintaining these roads, which are considerably damaged as a result of its operations. I quite realise that grants are made to certain localities, but, considering the amount of damage suffered by the roads as the result of these teams passing over them, particularly roads in their natural state, the grant of from £50 to £100 does not go very far.

One section of the road between the Burnett and Brisbane passes through a forestry reserve. We have repeatedly asked for a grant to put this road into a trafficable condition. Teamsters operating on the road have made it practically impassable. I urge that the department should give this matter its very serious consideration.

I now wish to deal with the Taungya system. It certainly does seem that very practical results are going to accrue from it; but I ask, Who is going to get the greater benefit—the banana settler or the Forestry Department? The Forestry Department calls tenders for these particular pieces of land, and gets up to as high as £10 per acre for them. The man taking it up has to get rid of the scrub by felling and clearing it, and is thus adding pounds to the value of the land. He gets his crop for five or six years, but incidentally he is compelled to work for the Forestry Department, as when he hands the area over to the department he has provided it with a valuable asset.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He is a willing tenderer.

Mr. GRIMSTONE: That is not the point. He is anxious to get on the land; but by getting on these areas he is developing our State, and he should be assisted to the extent of giving him the land at a nominal rate. If he does not look after the area his lease is liable to forfeiture. The Forestry Department has adopted a wrong policy in letting this land out at such high rentals. It is true that there is competition for the land, and when there is a rush of applicants one man may be willing to give £3 per acre per annum and another man, who is equally as anxious to obtain it, gives a little more in order to obtain it. The department should offer the land at an upset price, and if more than one application is received then it should be balloted for. The Minister said he had several of these areas not applied for. That might be because they are not suitable. They may be on the wrong side of a mountain, or, perhaps, the price is too high. I hope that the department will discontinue the system of inviting tenders for this land, and that it will offer it at an upset price and, if necessary, ballot for it.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL (*Toombul*): I desire to reply to the statement made by the hon. member for Eacham, that recently he ascertained that maple was being sold in Sydney at £12 per 100 superficial feet.

Mr. C. J. RYAN: I did not say anything of the kind.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: He further stated that that is the reason why trade has fallen off in that timber. I say that you can get all the green maple you like f.o.b. Cairns on the basis of 12 inches by 1 inch at £3 18s. per 100 superficial feet. As a matter of fact, you can purchase seasoned maple in Brisbane at £6 per 100 superficial feet. The former maple has to be kept in stock at least two years before it can be used for furniture purposes.

Mr. C. J. RYAN: You were not in the Chamber when I made the statement.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: That statement should be contradicted. Our friends opposite are constantly saying that the Bruce-Page Government are ruining the timber industry. After the Commonwealth Government have placed a higher tariff on imported timbers, the Queensland Government have exploited that higher tariff by increasing the stumpage dues. That has been proved. The fact remains that the Queensland Government are not sympathetic enough towards the industry. The more imported timber that is brought here the less work for sawmillers and teamsters in Queensland. It is our duty to utilise our own resources. I am not concerned so much about the soft woods, which are a disappearing factor; but the more Oregon timber brought in the less the demand for our hardwood. We should encourage the greater use of hardwood. We find the same thing occurring all over Australia, and, as a result of the introduction of Oregon timber, our hardwood industry is in a very parlous condition. Every encouragement should be given to this industry.

When the debate opened I said that the importation into the Southern States of Pacific maple and Siberian oak was due to the fact that the Southern suppliers were not able to get supplies from the North, owing, in the first place, to the foolish strike that occurred amongst the waterside workers. The industry had hardly recovered from that staggering blow when the Queensland Government increased the upset price. There is considerable agitation in the North against the action of the Government in imposing this extra stumpage, which means another 4s. per 100 superficial feet on sawn maple.

Mr. C. J. RYAN: You are one of the individuals responsible for that.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: I am not; I am merely one of the agents for the sawmillers. Our business has decreased owing to the fact that the imported article has come into the Southern market and is beating the local article. The Government should hesitate before taking any action that will increase the importation of timber to the detriment of the producers in this country.

Mr. C. J. RYAN (*Eacham*): As usual, the hon. member for Toombul, being very much interested in the timber industry, is trying to make out a case on his own behalf. The hon. member was not in the Chamber when I made a certain statement, but relies upon information given him by some of his

colleagues. I did not make the statement that maple at the present time was being sold in Sydney at £10 or £12 per 100 superficial feet, or that a price anywhere near that was being obtained. My statement was to the effect that, when maple was being sold on the Atherton Tableland at 54s. per 100 superficial feet on the ramp, the price in Sydney and elsewhere, where the timber was being used, was anything from £10 to £12 per 100 superficial feet; and I wanted to know from the hon. member, who is interested in the timber industry, why there was such a disparity.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: I deny that. That is not correct.

Mr. C. J. RYAN: It is astonishing that the hon. member for Toombul, who is a broker and an agent, should get up in this Chamber and pretend to plead the case for the producer.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: It is more than you do.

Mr. C. J. RYAN: Is the hon. member not aware that there are quite a number of private people selling maple off their selections?

Mr. EDWARDS: Of course he is. Don't get excited about it!

Mr. C. J. RYAN: Or is he concerned because it may cut down his 10 per cent. or 12½ per cent., or whatever may be the brokerage that he is getting?

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: Don't make the matter personal.

Mr. C. J. RYAN: I think he is getting a "rake off" further than that, otherwise he would not be so energetic.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: That is typical of your dirty mind.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member for Toombul will withdraw that remark.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: I withdraw, but I object to the insinuation of the hon. member for Eacham, and ask that he also be made to withdraw.

The CHAIRMAN: I was not aware that the hon. member for Eacham had made any unparliamentary remark.

Mr. C. J. RYAN: The Leader of the Opposition endeavoured to make political capital out of the remarks he made the other evening. The hon. gentleman did not even have the courtesy to give the names of his informants.

Mr. MOORE: I will give you the names.

Mr. C. J. RYAN: I understand Senator Foll was the hon. gentleman's informant. Reverting to the statements made by the hon. member for Toombul, it would be as well for the hon. member to make sure of his remarks before replying. I did not make any mistake on the matter. I repeat that the statement I made was that, when maple was 54s. per 100 superficial feet on the ramp at Atherton, the price the consumer in the South was paying was £10 to £12 per 100 superficial feet, and, in my opinion, the agents and the middlemen, whom hon. members opposite represent, were responsible for that position, and that the producers of the article were not getting the share that they should get.

Item (Forestry Office) agreed to.

*Mr. C. J. Ryan.]*

## LAND COURT.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. T. Dunstan, *Gympie*): I beg to move—  
“That £5,671 be granted for ‘Land Court.’”

The increase of £840 in the vote is due principally to the appointment of a deputy member owing to the formation of the Land Administration Board.

Item agreed to.

## SURVEY OFFICE.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. T. Dunstan, *Gympie*): I beg to move—  
“That £78,154 be granted for ‘Survey Office.’”

The decrease of £2,142 is due principally to the fact that £1,925 less is being asked for in connection with “Contingencies.” There is also a small decrease on account of there being one officer less.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I wish to enter a protest against the policy of the department in charging in some cases two or three survey fees for the one block of land. I know of instances where the survey fee had been paid when the land was originally selected. Subsequently that land has been surrendered or forfeited, and the full amount of the survey fee has been again charged to the new selector. The Government in those cases received two survey fees for the one block, and perhaps the same thing has been repeated on three or four different occasions. That is not right. If a fee is necessary on the second occasion, it certainly should not be on the same scale as when the land was first thrown open to selection. The Government are only supposed to get the actual cost of survey from the selector, and, when the survey fee has been paid in full by the original selector, the Government have no right to claim a second survey fee when the land is again thrown open to selection. I do not think it is an honest principle. It may be a good thing from a revenue-producing point of view to get extra fees from the people who go upon the land, but I enter my emphatic protest against this dishonest practice.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): There is a belt of land at the Proserpine end of my electorate known as Repulse Bay. Three days ago I was talking to a resident of Proserpine, who informed me that he questioned very much whether there were two men in the whole of the Proserpine district [2 p.m.] who had made a thorough examination of the Repulse Bay lands. Various estimates have been made of the quantity of land there—one authority says there are 10,000 acres, and another that there are 20,000 acres. We should have a proper survey made of those lands with a view to opening them up for closer settlement. I have been told by one man who has carried his swag through the area that it contains some of the richest land he has seen in any part of Queensland. I would request the Minister to give some attention to this matter, and trust that before we meet again next year he will have a survey made of that country.

Item (Survey Office) agreed to.

## IRRIGATION AND WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. T. Dunstan, *Gympie*): I beg to move—  
“That £35,602 be granted for ‘Irrigation and Water Supply Commission.’”

[Hon. T. Dunstan.]

There is an increase of £510 in the vote, which is due to an increase of £2,070 in staff salaries and a reduction in the item for “Contingencies” of £1,560.

Item agreed to.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. T. Dunstan, *Gympie*): I beg to move—  
“That £2,200 be granted for ‘Miscellaneous.’”

This vote remains the same as it was last year.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): I wish to refer to the question of rabbit netting. The people who are converting their lands from what is known as cattle country to sheep country make application to the department with a view to getting assistance in the way of netting in order to protect the land from rabbits as well as from dingoes. In my electorate quite a number of applications have been made during the past two or three years, and it has taken months before the applicants knew whether they were going to get rabbit netting or not. I wrote to the Department of Public Lands in regard to one complaint, and received the following reply:—

“With reference to your letter of the 2nd instant, relative to the applications for wire netting by Messrs. A. S., D. H., and H. J. Rayner, I beg to inform you that the particulars are as follows:—

On 7/10/27 the applications were received by the Land Commissioner.

On 22/12/27 the Land Commissioner’s reports were received at this office.”

At the conclusion of the letter, Mr. Holland, the secretary to the Land Administration Board, writes:—

“The department does not admit any responsibility for any delay; in fact, it has departed from its proper and usual custom, in as much as the material has been ordered before the whole of the documents required for registration of the necessary security have been lodged.”

On 17th October, 1927, the application was received by the Land Commissioner; on 22nd December, 1927, just two and a-half months afterwards, his report was received. The Crown lands ranger who had to report on the application did not reside more than 8 or 10 miles from the selection, which is within 4 or 5 miles of a railway. There is no great distance to travel, and the road is a good one. Yet it took two and a-half months to get the report. I know exactly what happens. The application is referred to the Commissioner, who instructs the ranger to make a report, and under our system, with land rangers spread throughout the length and breadth of the State, with not very large areas to work, and in many cases with motor cars supplied by the department or by themselves, it should not take two and a-half months to get a report as to whether an individual is entitled to netting or not. During that time the dingoes were getting in and destroying the sheep. I claim that one month would have been a fair thing. If you made application to any up-to-date firm on a similar matter, I guarantee that you would have the report in a week or ten days. This sort of thing does not help the settler in the extermination of pests or the conversion of country from cattle—which do

not pay—to sheep, which enable the owners to produce a valuable commodity in the form of wool and enable them to become payers of income tax and other taxes to the State. Here we have what ought to be an up-to-date Department of Public Lands, with all its officials at its disposal, with only a few miles to travel; yet the secretary to the Land Administration Board does not admit that there was any undue delay. I say that it is shameful that such a long period should elapse. I know the case from A to Z; I know the land and all about it; yet, notwithstanding the fact that the circumstances were exceptionally easy, a delay of two and a-half months occurs.

A better system is certainly essential. If the department considers that it is doing well in these circumstances, then it holds a contrary view to my own. Settlers generally do not consider that the department is carrying out the work in an expeditious manner. There are complaints throughout the country districts. I could instance dozens of complaints if necessary; but I consider this one sufficient. When I received this reply I was quite satisfied that the department was prepared to continue its work in a lackadaisical manner, not caring a rap whether settlers received fair treatment from the department or not. In this case the delay in granting the wire netting meant a loss of from fifty to sixty sheep to the unfortunate settlers.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. T. Dunstan, *Gympie*): I am not aware of the circumstances of the case mentioned by the hon. member for Murilla. I know that it is habitual for him in this Chamber to raise his high voice to heaven in a tirade of abuse against this department on any particular case that he cares to bring forward. I can assure the hon. gentleman emphatically that it is the practice of the department to deal with these applications as expeditiously as possible—

Mr. MORGAN: As possible!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Consistent with due inquiry into the conditions of the application. There was some delay in regard to wire netting during the negotiations with the Commonwealth Government as to the terms on which the wire netting would be supplied; but the hon. member for Murilla will find that of recent date there has been general satisfaction with the way in which the department has been dealing with applications for wire netting. We have received general commendation for our work in this respect.

Mr. MORGAN: You are wrong altogether about that. You should go out amongst the settlers.

Item (Miscellaneous) agreed to.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR AND INDUSTRY.  
CHIEF OFFICE.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. D. A. Gledson, *Ipswich*): I beg to move—

“That £2,995 be granted for ‘Chief Office.’”

There is an increase of £100 in connection with salaries for classified positions and automatic increases; and there is a reduction of £100 in travelling expenses and railway fares and freights. If hon. members desire any information concerning the department, I shall be pleased to give it to them.

Item agreed to.

APPRENTICESHIP COMMITTEES AND ELECTRICAL WORKERS' BOARD.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. D. A. Gledson, *Ipswich*): I beg to move—

“That £3,085 be granted for ‘Apprenticeship Committees and Electrical Workers' Board.’”

There is a slight increase in the vote for automatic increases.

Mr. FARRELL (*Rockhampton*): I want to bring under the notice of the Minister a case that has occurred in Rockhampton, which shows how the work of the Apprenticeship Committee might be tightened up. Recently two boys named Bailey and Regan were apprenticed to the C.C.M. Company, in Rockhampton, as motor mechanics. The workshop of the Rockhampton branch of the C.C.M. closed down on 14th August last. Although one boy had only nine months to finish his indentures and the other boy had about a year and three months to finish his time both were simply told that their services were concluded, and they were left, as it were, on the scrap-heap. In one case the mother of the boy and in the other the uncle of the boy interviewed the chairman of the Apprenticeship Committee in Rockhampton, and instructions were given to those boys that they must report every morning for work as usual at the office of the C.C.M., Rockhampton. They have been doing that since 29th August last, and, when I left Rockhampton on Monday morning, they had reported again. During the whole of that time they have gone along to the office of the C.C.M. prepared to accept work, and the manager of the works has told them that nothing was doing. The whole of that interval has been wasted for those boys. The matter was brought under the notice of the chairman of the Apprenticeship Committee in Brisbane, Mr. Hall, something like four weeks ago, but nothing has been done since. It is one of these cases where the Minister might make inquiries and see that the functions of the Apprenticeship Board are carried out.

Mr. MAXWELL: Were those boys indentured?

Mr. FARRELL: They were both properly indentured. They are simply left to walk round the town for the rest of the day. They have been reporting at 8.30 each morning, and have been informed by the chairman of the Apprenticeship Committee in Rockhampton that the C.C.M. are liable for their wages. The mother of one boy is a widow, and the few pounds that he was bringing in made a big difference to her. The all-important point is that since 29th August last up to the present time these boys should have gone through a certain amount of training to fit them for the position of motor mechanics. I bring this before the Minister as a glaring case of how the Apprenticeship Act can be disregarded. I hope that, as a result, something definite will be done to see that the boys are fixed up and that nothing similar will be encouraged in the future.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): Before saying one or two words on the all-important question of apprenticeship, I would like to pay a tribute to Mr. Hall, the chairman of the Apprenticeship Committee. He is indeed a very courteous officer, and naturally with so many youths to be placed it is the privilege

*Mr. Kerr.]*

of a member of Parliament to approach Mr. Hall on a number of occasions. I have always found him willing to do what is possible; but the unfortunate part seems to be that, while he is willing very often and agrees that a certain procedure is essential, he is overridden by the board that has been appointed. There is no need for me to recapitulate the personnel of that board. We know that it is not a truly representative body. That is quite wrong, and we have to grin and bear the fact that they are not to-day giving the satisfaction that is desirable.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Are you talking of the Apprenticeship Committee or the Group Committee?

Mr. KERR: I am talking about the general board which has been appointed under the Apprenticeship Act which deals with many of these applications. I am going to tell one or two things before I am finished.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: You are mixed up.

Mr. KERR: I am not mixed up. On the board appointed under the Act representatives from the Trades Hall predominate.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: You are totally wrong.

Mr. KERR: I am not wrong. In regard to the apprenticeship scheme generally, no one can say that the youth of the country are having the opportunity of becoming apprenticed to some trade or calling. Whilst I am not asking the Minister or the board to take the responsibility for that position, nevertheless it is deplorable that hundreds of young fellows are unable to obtain work when they leave school. We have to ask ourselves whether the Apprenticeship Committee is doing everything in its power to place those boys in positions. Let me emphasise the seriousness of the position by pointing out that out of 1,500 boys who applied for registration last year only 526 were able to be apprenticed. When we realise that secondary industries must progress with an increased primary production, it is a sad commentary upon Queensland that hundreds of our boys should be unable to become apprenticed to essential trades. When the Act was passed we were told that many of the existing evils would be remedied; but, as a matter of fact, the position is getting worse each year. The Opposition were responsible for two very important alterations to improve the position. We were responsible for the wiping-out of the initial examination for apprenticeship. At one time it was essential for a boy to pass a qualifying examination before he could become apprenticed.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: That is not so.

Mr. KERR: The Minister knows that year after year qualifying examinations were held.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I don't know that.

Mr. KERR: Then the hon. gentleman ought to know it.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: It is not so.

Mr. KERR: It was only the year before last that the Opposition, by continual appli-

[*Mr. Kerr.*]

cation, were able to get the initial examinations wiped out.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: That is absolute nonsense.

Mr. KERR: Another important alteration which was made at the instigation of the Opposition was to permit a youth who obtained a position on his own initiative to accept that position without being compelled to go to the Apprenticeship Committee and become what we might term "the next on the list."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You are wrong again.

Mr. KERR: Surely the hon. gentleman knows that it is only of recent date that a boy has been able to go to a firm, ask for work, and take it? For years the Government prevented the youths of the country from accepting work that was offering.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is not true.

Mr. KERR: The hon. gentleman knows that it is perfectly correct.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It is wrong. Why don't you prove it?

Mr. KERR: I will prove it when I have an opportunity of speaking again. Let me repeat that the Opposition were responsible for the wiping-out of the entrance examination for apprentices, and for permitting a boy who was offered a job to take it without its having to be offered to the next on the list.

After the Opposition were able to get these wholly unwise provisions removed, the Government are again acting against the interests of apprentices. A boy may have served three years, or he may be in his fourth year, and may be a good apprentice at that, but what has been the result? I know the Government have cancelled the indentures of boys in their fourth year, irrespective of whether they are good apprentices or not.

Mr. HARTLEY: The Government could not cancel indentures.

Mr. KERR: The Government have done so, or the board has done so. What I say is right, and the chairman of the board will bear me out. I have been to him on these matters. I believe that in one case the restrictions have been removed. A boy in his fourth year had his indentures cancelled because he did not attend the technical college for the time laid down by the board.

Mr. BULCOCK: Is that not one of the conditions?

Mr. KERR: No; it is purely a regulation. Before they took such action as that they should have gone into the question of whether the boy had gained a practical knowledge in business and other facts surrounding his employment. They have not done that, and, merely because the boy did not attend the technical college, they cancelled his indentures. I admit that they gave him notice.

Mr. BULCOCK: Are you defending his action in not going to college?

Mr. KERR: From time to time I have heard from boys themselves and from parents that it is useless attending the college. It has been stated to me time and again by

boys that they are attending the college but are learning nothing further than they can learn in the workshops. After all is said and done, where is the proper place for an apprentice to learn his trade? Is it not in the workshop itself? Of course it is.

Mr. HARTLEY: You want them to turn out botches, not tradesmen.

Mr. KERR: I am not talking about the hon. member's primus stove.

Mr. HARTLEY: That is the trend of your argument.

Mr. KERR: The hon. member will agree that some of the best tradesmen in the old country, and in Scotland in particular—I have been through some of the workshops there—and some of the best tradesmen in the world have not been inside a technical college.

To-day there is a good deal of trimming about this question of apprenticeship. When a boy is apprenticed I want him to get his practical experience in the workshop; and the best man to see to that is the employer.

In regard to the case where the indenture was cancelled in the third or fourth year, I ascertained that the boy was an excellent apprentice. He knew his business; yet that boy was compelled to cease work because of the action of the Government. The Government have to answer for the actions of any board created by them, and which is in close relationship with them. The apprenticeship question is a very vital one, and the collection of regulations in existence is not helping to any great extent. At the same time I will admit that, if all boys could find jobs, the apprenticeship question would solve itself. What makes it more difficult for the board is that there is an insufficient number of jobs to go round. In the paper last night or the night before I saw a letter from a subscriber which stated that the Apprenticeship Committee definitely pointed out that it was not its function to find an apprenticeship for any boy. In the first place I believe that, if any boy can get a job as an apprentice, he should be able to take that job and subsequently register with that person. In the next place I believe that the Apprenticeship Committee should carry investigations a good deal further in order to help to place some of those boys who have not other people to help them to get a job.

[2.30 p.m.]

I believe that, if the Apprenticeship Committee laid itself out to help boys to get jobs, a lot of boys would be helped that way. Without a hard-and-fast rule being adopted the Apprenticeship Committee might ascertain what jobs are available and give them to some of the boys.

Mr. C. J. RYAN: You believe in the rotary system.

Mr. KERR: I do not believe in the rotary system, but in connection with boys who are unable to get jobs for themselves the rotary system might come into operation.

For a number of years boys who could have obtained apprenticeships in certain trades were not permitted to take them up, but that condition of things has since been abolished, and rightly so. It was on the definite recommendation of the Opposition year after year that that improvement was brought about. The Apprenticeship Committee is

displaying masterly inactivity to a great extent on this question, and something more requires to be done. There are many boys who unquestionably look to the Apprenticeship Committee to help them in their troubles, and their parents look to the committee to assist them in securing jobs. While that is essential, it does not say that any boy who can get a job on his own initiative should not be allowed to take it up. It is useless for the committee to say that it is not one of its functions to place the boys. There are representatives of the unions and of the employers on the committee. There must be some way in which they can come together to do something in this matter. In my opinion the quota of apprentices allowed in regard to tradesmen is not sufficient. All the tradesmen in a special department should be aggregated, and the number of apprentices allotted accordingly. We should maintain the rule with regard to the ratio of one apprentice to three tradesmen, which is now in operation; but we would have more apprentices if what I suggest were done.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Allot the apprentices to the trade rather than to individuals.

Mr. KERR: That is the point. I tried to ascertain one year the number of apprentices which would be required under that method, and I found there would be eighty additional apprentices required, while still retaining the principle of one apprentice to three tradesmen. I cannot see why a man engaged in an industry—painting or anything else—should not have an apprentice if he requires one, so long as the present quota is retained in the trade.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: All that is in the law now.

Mr. KERR: I admit there is provision for it in the law; but it is not in the awards.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Awards cannot override the Act.

Mr. KERR: We are not permitting a sufficient number of boys to be employed as apprentices in the skilled trades.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. D. A. Gledson, Ipswich): In reply to the hon. member for Rockhampton, I would like to point out that during the past year or two we have had quite a number of cases similar to those he mentioned. When a firm closes down the Apprenticeship Committee endeavours to place any boys who may have been apprenticed to it with another firm in the same locality to enable them to continue to learn their trade. In this case inquiries were made as to whether the boys could be placed in Rockhampton, but there was no opening; but so soon as a vacancy occurs an endeavour will be made to place them, and they will finish their training as apprentices. I will take the matter up with Mr. Hall, the chairman of the Apprenticeship Executive, and see what can be done.

The hon. member for Enoggera said that the Apprenticeship Committee overrode the chairman, and that it was unwieldy and one-sided. The executive is constituted as follows:—

Representing the Government: A. E. Hall (chairman), R. McL. Riddell.  
Representing the Employers' Federation: T. M. Forster.

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Representing the Trades and Labour Council: F. Harris.

Representing the Employees: W. P. Poole, W. C. Rogers.

Representing the Employers: A. Lind, A. J. Leaver.

I have met these gentlemen on several occasions—about a week ago on the last occasion—and both employers and employees' representatives are doing everything they possibly can in the interests of the boys of Queensland, particularly of Brisbane, in endeavouring to place them in positions and see that their training is carried on in a proper way. Mr. Forster is an enthusiast in his own business and in his work on the executive, and he has been doing all he can not only with respect to his own trade but also to other trades. Mr. Lind and Mr. Leaver also put themselves to no end of trouble in carrying on the work of the committee and improving the condition of the boys and turning them out good tradesmen.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They have done excellent work.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: As the Secretary for Agriculture interjects, they have done excellent work. Similar remarks may be made of the employees' representatives, yet the hon. member slates the executive and says that it is overriding the chairman, and that its work is not in the best interests of the boys. I do not think he knows what he is talking about. I would like him to meet the members of the executive and discuss matters with them and air his complaints. I would be prepared to arrange a meeting for that purpose, because it would enable him to understand something of the work it is doing. I did not know that we had in Queensland employers who were prepared to do as much voluntarily as these gentlemen are doing for the boys. The employees, of course, are doing all they can; but I was more particularly struck with the gentlemen representing the employers, and the enthusiasm they display and the endeavour they are making to help the boys of Queensland.

The hon. member for Enoggera got mixed up between the Apprenticeship Executive and the Electrical Workers' Board. He brought the case of one lad before the Electrical Workers' Board.

Mr. KERR: That was another case.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I am referring to the case of a lad who was brought before the Electrical Workers' Board by the hon. member for Enoggera. He also brought a boy before the Apprenticeship Committee. I want to tell the Chamber what happened in the case of the boy brought before the Apprenticeship Committee. This lad had been four years at his trade, but had not passed the first examination. He refused to attend the technical college, and made all sorts of excuses. The hon. member for Enoggera knows that. The boy said that he would not attend the college, and, instead of doing so, occupied his time doing something else. He was brought before the Apprenticeship Committee year after year. On one occasion the father and the son were brought before the committee.

Mr. KERR: You are exaggerating a bit.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I am not exaggerating. The hon. member knows the case, and I know the

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case. The lad was working at a furniture place at the bottom of Roma street. The lad was brought in with his father, and the matter was discussed. The lad was asked if he would attend the technical college, and he said, "No. I absolutely refuse to attend the college." What was the committee to do? The boy would not carry out his indentures, and the committee gave instructions that they should be cancelled; but immediately they were cancelled the boy was brought in by the hon. member for Enoggera, practically saying, "I am very sorry; I did not know I had to attend the college"; and the hon. member asked that the boy should be given another chance to attend the college. Let me now show what this hard-hearted Government did. The hon. member for Enoggera could do nothing with the Apprenticeship Committee, and the matter came before me. I got in touch with the lad's employer, who agreed to re-employ him on a guarantee being given that he would attend the college. That guarantee was given and the lad was put on again. That shows how this hard-hearted Government treats the boys!

Mr. KERR: It remained for you to overrule the board.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I am stating what was done. The executive committee agreed to the arrangement. The boy has been given another opportunity, although the hon. member for Enoggera was practically encouraging these lads to break their indentures and not carry out the law. How is an employer to train a boy if he will not carry out his indentures? Hon. members of this Chamber assist to pass the law, and they should endeavour to carry out that law, and see that others engaged in the business also carry out the law. The hon. member for Enoggera would be doing greater service to these lads if he would point out to them the necessity for their carrying out their studies in order to become efficient workmen and to equip them to become tradesmen, instead of encouraging them to run about the streets taking part in other things. The hon. member for Enoggera knows all the facts of this case. The lad is now attending the college, and is not following the advice of those who told him that he need not attend the college, and that he could secure his certificate and become a tradesman without so doing.

The members of the Apprenticeship Committee, both employers and employees, are giving their services voluntarily. They may be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred through attending meetings; but they give practically the whole of their time day after day going round the various workshops. I have been round these workshops. These men visit the workshops, imbued with the idea of turning out good tradesmen. Despite what the hon. member for Enoggera has said, the committee endeavours to place lads in position with different employers. It has taken the names of the lads and has placed them with employers in different parts of the city and in different parts of the State.

Let me instance what took place following the closure of the Mount Morgan mine. Lads who were apprenticed to different trades in Mount Morgan were simply thrown out of work, but the Apprenticeship Committee faced the task, and the bulk of the lads—the exceptions being one or two—were placed with employers throughout the city and in different parts of the State.

Those boys are continuing their training as tradesmen in different parts of the State to-day. That is a procedure that is done everywhere. The chairman and the committee of employers and employees are a competent body. They have carried out their work well, and there is no necessity for me to interfere with them. They do a noble work in looking after and placing our lads in order to see that they are properly trained. All they require from those lads is their co-operation in becoming competent tradesmen. If they secure that co-operation, we shall turn out tradesmen second to none in the world. We have shops and factories for the training of apprentices, and men capable of giving them instruction in their apprenticeship. The Department of Public Instruction is doing its work. We find that the educational instructors take a keen interest in enabling these boys to attain a standard of efficiency unknown before. There are quite a number of boys who do not look upon their apprenticeship as seriously as they should, and who do not recognise that it is for their good that the whole procedure under our apprenticeship system is laid down. We have had to cancel a number of indentures because the boys did not realise that it was to their good to attend the technical college to make themselves proficient in their work.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): The Minister took the point of view that I criticised certain gentlemen who assisted as much as possible in the work of the Apprenticeship Committee; and he seemed to build up a case that I had attacked these gentlemen. That is far from the truth. I have made suggestions which might very well be followed for the benefit of apprentices. Neither the hon. gentleman nor anyone else could tell me that the gentlemen comprising the Apprenticeship Committee, whose names he read out, are not doing good service in placing the large number of boys who are out of work. The point which the Minister has ignored is that, if he could secure the allotment of a larger number of apprentices than is laid down in most cases, we would solve the problem of placing our boys. I again throw that out as a suggestion for the hon. gentleman to act upon. I am not supposed, as a member of Parliament, to know every case that comes before the Apprenticeship Committee; but I do know the principle involved in the cases that come before me, and that principle was involved in the case I mentioned to-day, as was borne out by the Minister's statement. He practically admitted my contention. I took exception to a boy in the fourth year of his apprenticeship being dispensed with, and the hon. gentleman said that on my representations he approached the board, and, after representations, he secured the reinstatement of that boy in his former position.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I did not say anything of the kind.

Mr. KERR: The hon. gentleman said that he went to the trouble of ascertaining the particulars from the board, to see whether the board could secure his reinstatement. I hope that the principle of dispensing with boys after serving three or four years of their apprenticeship will be adequately dealt with in the future. If I can help it, a boy is not going to spend the best years of his life in learning a trade and then, at the instigation of any person, have his services

dispensed with before serving his full period. I am glad that practice has been "nipped in the bud." I know what politics are. The Minister has unquestionably taken up the stand that he is doing the very best he can for those young people. That is his defence. I have only a few minutes left, and I intend to quote "Hansard" to refute his statement that I was wrong.

Page 95 of "Hansard" for 1924 will show that, in reply to a question which I asked, the then Secretary for Public Instruction informed me of the number of examinations held for trade apprentices in the years 1922 and 1923, and also stated that in one year 316 boys had passed and 278 had failed in the entrance examination. I happened to know a number of the boys who sat for that examination; they were a particularly fine type. They were in the fifth class at the State school, and, as is usual with boys at that age, became a little flustered at the educational test which was set them. Simply because they failed to pass the educational test they were for ever deprived of the opportunity of becoming apprentices. The Government are responsible for that. Can the Government take credit for year after year depriving boys of the opportunity of accepting apprenticeship? It was only after the continual representations of the Opposition that the Government were forced to wipe out the initial examination for apprentices.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: That is not correct.

Mr. KERR: It is correct.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowoong*): I have a vivid recollection of the occasion on which the present Secretary for Agriculture introduced the Apprenticeship Bill, which it was claimed would remove all evils existing at that time. It was claimed by the hon. gentleman that such a thing as boys not learning a trade would be unknown. What, I would ask the hon. gentleman, is the position to-day?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Many boys are apprenticed who would not have been apprenticed but for the Act.

Mr. MAXWELL: Scarcely a day passes that hon. members on both sides of the Committee are not approached by the mothers and fathers of boys who are unable to become apprenticed and who are concerned as to the future of their sons. Only this morning I had two such applications. I am with the hon. member for Enoggera when he says that there is nothing like the personal touch of the employer in the training of boys. The question that arises is this: Are the boys getting a decent "spin" to-day? I am not blaming the Apprenticeship Committee—I would not do that—but the system I am advocating is to inculcate a greater confidence in Queensland, because, if that were done, capital would be forthcoming for the creation of secondary industries, and the apprenticeship problem would be practically solved.

Mr. FERRICKS: You sent a delegation to London to block the establishment of iron and steel works at Bowen.

Mr. MAXWELL: I did not. We have enough "white elephants" in this country without any more; and quite enough money has been wasted by hon. members opposite, and I do not believe in the wasting of money

*Mr. Maxwell.]*

under any circumstances. It is time that the Government awakened to the necessity of providing conditions that will create work not only for the fathers but for the boys and girls who are leaving school each year. Not even the establishment of an Apprenticeship Committee in every town will solve the problem. The only way is to create that confidence which is so essential to the investment of capital in order that secondary industries may be created, because under those circumstances sufficient work will be offering for every person who desires work.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Tell us why the Americans import their tradesmen?

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): I am astounded to hear a man who once called himself a tradesman advocating that we should go back to the old vicious principle that the proper place and the only place to adequately train an apprentice is in the workshop itself. The reason why the Apprenticeship Act was brought in was because the "bosses" under the competitive system—not all of them, but the great bulk of them—were not teaching the apprentice his trade. He was using him as a boy slave to screw as much profit out of him in the time of his apprenticeship as he possibly could. That is the reason why the present apprenticeship system was brought in, and why representatives both from the working trades and from the employers sit on the committee to see that the boy is not used just as a human instrument in some particular workshop. I remember in the old apprenticeship days when boys worked sometimes for three or four years on one machine alone—on a drilling machine—merely drilling holes, not because there was not work to do but because the "boss" had a contract, and it paid him to get through as quickly as possible. In order to do that he kept that boy on that machine because he could drill a few more holes in the day than, perhaps, a new apprentice could if he was put on. It was to obviate that kind of thing that the Apprenticeship Committee was formed in order to make sure in all apprenticeships that there was an opportunity for the apprentice to gain a thorough grounding and practical knowledge of the trade; and, when hon. members advocate—as the hon. member for Enoggera advocated, and the hon. member for Toowong supported him—that the technical side of apprenticeship training shall be wiped out, they simply show that they do not know the elementary requirements in industry to-day. If we are going to establish our industries here—if work is going to be found, it must be found because our people are of the highest efficiency compared with any other manufacturing State or country with which we have to compete. Yet hon. members opposite wish to eliminate technical college training. The reason why they want to eliminate that is because in a great many instances the apprentice attends at the expense of the "boss," and they wish to save the few paltry "bob" that have to be expended in that way. It is an unsound principle to say that the technical college training of apprentices should be done away with. I agree with hon. members that we are faced with a tremendous problem in this regard—that to-day we cannot find work for our boys or trades for apprentices. Whose fault is that? Your friend Bruce's! The big "bluff" of the Commonwealth, who is importing all this foreign stuff and keeping

[Mr. Maxwell.

our boys and girls out of the factories that should have been built with the added wealth of our Australian products. It is no fault of the apprenticeship scheme. It is the fault of the miserable system of barter at any price—even if at the price of Australia going down—while they build up the industries of other countries so that Bruce and the people they stand for shall batten on the young life of the State. That is the cause of unemployment, and it is humbug for the hon. member for Toowong or the hon. member for Enoggera to try to draw red herrings across the trail and blame it on the Apprenticeship Committee.

[3 p.m.]

We are proud of our system of education and apprenticeship, which qualifies the boys of the State to take their places in industry. The technical college in Brisbane, which hon. members opposite disparage to such an extent, has turned out boys comparable with any in Australia—not the drudge at the lathe or the drilling machine or the drudge with the paint brush, whom you can get as much out of at as little expense as possible, but the highest qualified mechanic—so that when hon. members opposite get rid of their big "bluff"—Bruce—they can build up an Australia for an Australian people.

Mr. W. COOPER (*Rosewood*): Judging by this debate, I think Opposition members have been endeavouring to secure for some of the master mechanics cheap labour in connection with the employment of as many apprentices as they can possibly get. I listened to the hon. member for Toowong, about whom my friend the hon. member for Fitzroy was somewhat doubtful as to his being a mechanic at all. Of course, it all depends upon what you mean by a mechanic. For instance, a painter or a baker does not require so much skill to become a painter or a baker. We can get information on the paint tins to enable a man to do a little bit of daubing on a fence or a house, and it does not take very much knowledge to become a baker. I remember an apprentice to a blacksmith who was quite a failure at blacksmithing, and who got it into his head that he could become a baker. A coachpainter who became convinced that he could not get on in that line came into the factory I was working in and took up house-painting, and in two years he became a master painter and contractor.

Mr. KELSO: What are you driving at?

Mr. W. COOPER: The hon. member will know when I drive a nail into his thick skull.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. W. COOPER: The hon. member is incessantly interjecting, and it is necessary for somebody to tell him the truth.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would ask the hon. member to refrain from making offensive remarks.

Mr. W. COOPER: I do not know whether they are offensive or not; it would not be offensive to me if they told me that. (Laughter.) Prior to the inauguration of the Apprenticeship Committee it was quite a common thing for master mechanics to employ as many apprentices and as few journeymen as possible. In my day—and I can only speak from experience as an apprentice—an apprentice started with 4s.

a week. I was apprenticed for seven years, and started at 4s. a week, with an advance of 1s. per week per year during the seven years. Yet at the end of the fifth year I was earning as much as any ordinary journeyman in that factory. Hon. members know perfectly well that that would prevail to-day unless there was some restriction upon employers who wanted to get as many boys as they could. I can remember when warehouses which employed girls to make pyjamas, shirts, and other garments employed them for six months on probation without wages. Hon. members talk about the unfortunate parents who are unable to find employment for their boys and girls. If we went back to the old regime, we would find that the same conditions would exist. The Apprenticeship Executive, however, has control over the number of apprentices permitted in any factory or warehouse or engineering works, with the result that the journeymen get permanent work at their jobs. It is all very well for us to say that our boys and girls cannot get work, and that our secondary industries are not in the condition in which they should be, but it does not follow that the apprenticeship system is responsible because it provides certain limitations. Have we not made a beginning in training boys and girls who wish to take up trades, by establishing rural schools? I have had some experience of them, because I have one in my electorate, and I know that, when any tradesman wants a boy, he goes to the head teacher and asks which boy would be most likely to be a success in his calling. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the Apprenticeship Committee has selected that boy because it discovered that he was most likely to be suitable. If, on the other hand, we abolish the existing restrictions and permit everyone to go to employers and ask for apprenticeship, we would have five or six, or perhaps seven, apprentices to every journeyman in the motor trade, the engineering trade, and all classes of mechanical work. What would happen then to the families of the journeymen who were displaced?

A lot has been said about mechanics who come from overseas and enter into competition with men already employed here. In some trades in Great Britain conditions are vastly different from what they are here. It is true there is no difference between the hardness and softness of the iron, but there is a difference between the hardness and the softness of the timbers that have to be worked in the two countries.

A new-chum woodworking mechanic has great difficulty in becoming accustomed to the hardwoods of this country, whereas the Australian woodworking mechanic, by reason of his experience with our hardwoods, has the advantage over the newcomer.

It is very difficult for us to secure the very best boys. We have established an Apprenticeship Committee that insists upon boys passing an educational test before being apprenticed; but it does not follow that the boy who can pass educational examinations will make a good mechanic. That is one direction in which I am up against the Apprenticeship Committee. The practical mechanic carries out his work with his hands, and high scholastic attainments do not necessarily suggest efficient mechanical knowledge. I knew of a boy who could get no further than the third class in our ordinary primary schools, but he became one of the best

mechanics I ever saw. The Apprenticeship Committee—I am condemning it in this instance—places an embargo upon certain boys in insisting that they must pass an examination of a certain standard before they can be apprenticed. The committee should bear in mind that there are boys who are born mechanics, with no ability to pass educational examinations, but who, if they were asked to pass any test applying to their own calling, would possibly outshine those boys who were capable of passing examinations as high as the University standard.

Mr. WEIR (*Maryborough*): I do not wish to enter into a comparison between the good mechanic and the inferior mechanic; but from the educational standpoint I wish to add my quota to this debate. In the main, I agree with the remarks by the hon. member for Rosewood, but I say definitely that the Queensland mechanic of whom he spoke would be a still better mechanic if educated. Education is a matter that is not very heavy to carry.

Mr. W. COOPER: They are not all like you. You have been endowed with a certain amount of intelligence.

Mr. WEIR: I think it would be unfair to the electors of Rosewood to say that their representative was not possessed of a certain amount of intelligence. The educational standard will always have my support in this Chamber, whether it be from the point of view of apprenticeship or anything else. Let me build up a case in relation to the educated mechanic. I hope to see the day at no very great distance when the Apprenticeship Committee will not apprentice a boy in his trade until he is equipped educationally. I say that in fairness to the trade. I think it would be better for the trade, for the State, for the Commonwealth, and for the boy. If we provide that a boy must attain the standard of the fifth class in the ordinary school, we are not insisting on a very high standard of intelligence.

We have hundreds of cases in Queensland where boys pass the scholarship examination before reaching the age of twelve years. If that is a fact, it seems obvious that we are not setting a very high standard when we prescribe that a boy shall be equipped with a fifth-class education before becoming apprenticed. I hope to see the day when that will be improved on, for the further we can advance our youth educationally the better we shall advance.

Coming back to the old argument that a good mechanic in the early days was not so successful as now, every hon. member knows excellent mechanics, as the hon. member for Kennedy said, in every branch, but how much better would those men be if they had the advantages of education that the present-day youth has? I presume that those men, excellent as they were, might be better men, and more highly skilled men, if they had the opportunity of education that we have to-day. It was all right in the days when education was difficult of access, but there is not much excuse in the enlightened community of Queensland for a boy not starting a trade unless he has had at least a fifth-class standard education. I have watched boys attending the technical college in my own centre doing excellent work. I commend the Apprenticeship Group for the excellent work it does, but there is just a tendency—and I strike a note of warning here—of some

*Mr. Weir.]*

men on those groups—not in my centre so much but in Brisbane particularly—who have a tendency to jealousy—a jealousy that is built up mainly on the fact that they themselves did not have the opportunity that boys to-day have, and are apt to place hurdles in the way of a boy getting into the trade he prefers. That should not be so. If the boy has the mental equipment for the trade, and he has a natural bent for that trade, then he should be allowed to follow the lines of that bent. If there is no weakness in that regard, the committee should be extremely careful before placing any stopper in the way of that boy following the trade he desires. I commend them for their good work, and, as the years go by, I look forward to a higher standard of intelligence being forced on them to the benefit of the boy and the State.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. D. A. Gledson *Ipswich*): In reply to the question raised by the hon. member for Toowong, I desire to say, as I pointed out to the hon. member for Enoggera, that the placing of boys or girls, as the case may be, in particular industries, is a matter that practically lies with the employer, the lad, and his parents. If the boy has a bent for a particular trade or calling, and the parent can secure an employer in that trade to employ him, the boy registers and becomes an apprentice. It is then that the work of the committee commences. It sees that he is properly indentured, which was not the case in olden days.

Mr. MAXWELL: He was indentured in a good many cases.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: In some cases he was not. I have had indentures before me during the past few weeks which showed that the indentures were not properly completed, and the conditions were such as to place the boy at the complete mercy of the employer, who could do anything he liked with him. The question has been raised again that the Apprenticeship Committee can do something more than it is doing to place boys in a trade. The committee can do nothing except with the co-operation of the employers, and it ill becomes the hon. member for Toowong to make complaints on that score. Everybody knows that, when he was a member of the employing class, he practically did not have an apprentice.

Mr. MAXWELL: You are wrong.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: You told us that yourself.

Mr. MAXWELL: I did not.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: When the hon. member ceased to be an employer, he did not have a boy working for him. We know that the hon. member did not employ the number of apprentices that he might have employed in his own business, yet he talks about what other people should do.

Mr. MAXWELL: I had quite sufficient apprentices.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The members of the Apprenticeship Committees, which are representative of the various industries, are drawn from the employers and from the employees. They have no personal interest in the matter

[*Mr. Weir.*

except a love of country and a keen desire to see that everything possible is done for the apprentices. Mr. Forster is an enthusiast in apprenticeship matters, and gives a helping hand to boys in all trades. I can only commend those gentlemen for the excellent work they are doing in apprenticeship matters.

Mr. MOORE: Why are you stonewalling your own Estimates?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I do not know why the Leader of the Opposition should talk about stonewalling when we are dealing with what, after all, is the life-blood of our State. We are dealing with the training of our boys and girls, and the Opposition "gig" and laugh at such a matter, which is very bad taste on their part. Is it that hon. members opposite have not the interests of the boys and girls at heart, or is it that we on this side are left to see that the boys and girls get a "square" deal?

Mr. MAXWELL: They are not getting a "square" deal; we have to advocate it.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: When hon. members opposite sat on the Treasury benches they did absolutely nothing to protect the interests of the boys and girls of this State so far as providing training for them was concerned.

Mr. MAXWELL: We gave them employment.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: They did nothing to equip them to become the tradesmen of the future, as is being done at the present time.

The hon. member for Rosewood raised the question of the educational standard for boys entering upon an apprenticeship. It may look very nice on the face of it to say that a lad can become a good mechanic although he is not educated; but I agree with the hon. member for Maryborough that a lad who is educated becomes a better tradesman and a better citizen of the State by reason of that fact. We have had lads, such as the hon. member for Enoggera referred to, who have reached the third and fourth year of their apprenticeship, but who had not passed their first year's examination because they did not have the opportunity to do so when they entered upon their apprenticeship, with the result that they found it difficult to absorb the technical instruction given to them whilst attending the technical college. The technical colleges have set out to train apprentices along lines that will enable them to become better tradesmen than the tradesmen of the past. That is very necessary, because at the present time a tradesman must be able to read plans and drawings so that he may know exactly what work he is called upon to perform.

If a lad is unable to prepare or read a plan, how can he build anything? He must have a technical education to enable him to become a thoroughly qualified tradesman. A boy who has been educated up to the fifth-class standard is able to take up an apprenticeship in any trade. If he is not up to the fifth-class standard, he will be handicapped as compared with the other boys in the apprenticeship class. The Apprenticeship Committee sets examinations for practical work, and devotes its time, not only during the year, but at the annual examination, to the practical side of the

work; and it would do members of the Opposition good if they were to go to the technical colleges and view the work done by the boys and girls in those colleges. They would then understand something of the work done by the Apprenticeship Committee and by the teachers in the colleges during the year. In Ipswich at 3 o'clock to-morrow afternoon there will be an exhibition of the work of the students in the Ipswich technical college. If hon. members care to attend that exhibition, they will see the work done by the girls and boys in that district.

I do not know that there is very much more I can say in connection with this matter, but I do want to say a word with reference to the work of the Electrical Workers' Board, which has not been touched on during this debate. That board, since its establishment, has endeavoured to set up such a standard and such an education for the boys who take up electrical work as to make electricity safe for the people of Queensland. Although nothing has been said on this occasion in regard to the board, on previous occasions it has been stated that this board is unwieldy. The last amending Act provided that there should be nine members on that board. That board is looking after the interests of apprentices to the electrical trades in Queensland, and there are quite a number in every part of the State. As the hon. member for Enoggera said, there have been quite a number of applicants for positions during the year, and 90 per cent. of those applicants apply for indentures in the electrical trades. Nearly every boy at the present time wants to be an electrician, and, if he cannot be an electrician, the next thing he desires to be is a motor mechanic.

#### VOTES PASSED UNDER OPERATION OF STANDING ORDER NO. 307 AND SESSIONAL ORDERS.

At 3.30 p.m., under the provisions of Standing Order No. 307 and Sessional Orders of 26th July and 27th September last, the questions for the following votes were put by the Chairman, and agreed to:—

	£	s.	d.
Department of Labour and Industry (Apprenticeship Committees and Electrical Workers' Board) ...	3,085	0	0
Department of Labour and Industry (Balance of Vote) ...	45,687	0	0
Department of Mines ...	68,955	0	0
Department of Railways ...	6,316,069	0	0
Trust and Special Funds Estimates ...	5,368,238	0	0
Loan Fund Account Estimates Supplementary Estimates, 1927-28—	4,243,668	0	0
Revenue ...	416,730	15	7
Trust and Special Funds ...	129,672	15	10
Vote of Credit, on Account, 1929-30 ...	3,500,000	0	0

The House resumed.

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

Resumption of Committee made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

#### SEVENTEENTH ALLOTTED DAY.

##### RECEPTION OF RESOLUTIONS.

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

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

“That the resolutions be now received.”

Question put and passed.

##### ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS.

The resolutions being taken as read,

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

“That the resolutions be now agreed to.”

And hon. members indicating a desire to discuss resolutions 26, 46, 55, 71, 81, 82, 83, 84, and 85,

Resolutions 1 to 25, both inclusive, agreed to.

##### Resolution 26—“Department of Public Works—Services, Public Buildings”—

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*): I desire to draw attention to a discussion which took place earlier this session in connection with the estimated cost of public buildings. I do not say that the Secretary for Public Works, when giving information to which I shall refer, was aware of the actual condition of affairs. I raised the question of the difference between the estimate given for the building of the addition to the Treasury block and the actual cost.

The hon. gentleman told the House on that occasion that the reason for the extra expenditure was because of a tower that had been provided for. I have inspected the plan submitted in 1923, and no tower was provided on that plan. I should like the hon. gentleman to look at that plan for himself. That plan is the plan of the addition to the Treasury Building as it stands to-day. The estimated cost was £230,000. I objected then, and I object now, to information being supplied to this House, when the actual difference in the figure is over £100,000. I am perfectly justified in drawing attention to this matter, and I do so for the purpose of giving the Secretary for Public Works an opportunity of going into the whole matter for himself. I went to the department and asked for the plans. I saw the plans, on which no tower is provided for; therefore, the reply of the Minister has no relation whatever to that plan.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. M. J. Kirwan, *Brisbane*): I am rather surprised at the statement made by the hon. member for Toowong. Evidently he has been supplied by the officers of the department with very different information from that supplied to me when dealing with the matter.

Mr. MAXWELL: The officers did not supply me with any information. I saw the plans.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The information that I gave the hon. gentleman was supplied to me by the officers of the department. I shall certainly have an investigation made to see whether the statement made by the hon. member for Toowong is true or otherwise, and, if it is true, then someone will get a rap across the knuckles.

Mr. MAXWELL: I would remind the hon. gentleman that the officers did not give me any information.

*Hon. M. J. Kirwan.]*

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They must have shown you that plan.

Mr. MAXWELL: I asked for it. I had a right to see it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You had not.

Resolution 26 (Department of Public Works—Services, Public Buildings) agreed to.

Resolutions 27 to 45, both inclusive, agreed to.

Resolution 46—“*Home Secretary's Department—Chief Office.*”

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): The Limbless Sailors and Soldiers' Association has written to the department requesting that a deputation be received; and, from what I can learn, the deputation has not been refused, but has been more or less postponed. I understand that the association desires to submit a request for further licensed stalls to be controlled by these limbless returned soldiers. There is such a stall established at the General Post Office under the auspices of the Limbless Sailors and Soldiers' Association, where tobacco, papers, and other sundries can be obtained. That stall enables two men who lost limbs in the war to secure a living.

I want to commend an extension of this principle of the granting of licenses for similar stalls. I have it in my favour that there seems to be no difficulty at all in Brisbane in securing licenses for such stalls as fruit stalls.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You try and get one.

Mr. KERR: I will give the hon. gentleman my assurance that I do not desire to get one. If the Government extend the principle of granting similar licenses for stalls in many of the streets of Brisbane, they will not be acting detrimentally to anybody. Representations have been made to the Home Secretary and the Premier, and to these I ask that the greatest sympathy be shown. No one would cavil at any concession being granted to these men, even if they competed with them in business. They deserve every consideration that can be shown them. The stall established at the Post Office is very well conducted. It is not an eyesore, and is very convenient. There are many places in and around Brisbane where similar stalls could be established on behalf of members of the Limbless Sailors and Soldiers' Association. They are a very fine body of men, and have associated together to look after their mutual interests. If the stalls are run under the auspices of the association, they will give guarantees of good faith. The Government will have nothing to lose by authorising licenses to be issued in respect of a number. There are some twenty limbless men in the city who are unable to secure work. Their pensions are insufficient, and, if they can be placed in such stalls, something will be done for their good. I do not wish to raise this as a political issue, or to attempt to take it out of the hands of the Government, to whom I commend the suggestion.

Resolution 46 (Home Secretary's Department—Chief Office) agreed to.

Resolutions 47 to 54, both inclusive, agreed to.

Resolution 55—“*Home Secretary's Department—Police.*”

Mr. SIZER (*Sandgate*): My reason in calling for this resolution emanates from the

[*Hon. M. J. Kirwan.*

papers laid on the table of the House a little while ago in connection with a matter which I raised on that occasion. A close examination of these papers reveals a most extraordinary position. I am not concerned about anything which took place between one person and another person; but there are aspects of these police reports which are certainly most alarming and need to be brought under the notice of this House.

The main question to which I wish to address myself is that portion of the police reports in connection with the alleged malpractices in connection with certain pre-selection ballots, wherein it is stated that, after considerable investigation, they have come to a dead-end because certain information will not be handed over to them. It is from that angle that I wish to discuss the matter.

Let me first quietly analyse what those papers showed. In the first place, evidently the Government were of opinion after the statement I made that there was some ground for inquiry, because they acted most promptly. According to the papers laid on the table, investigations were made at 2 o'clock that morning with a view to presenting an urgent report to the Minister the following morning. That shows that the promptest attention was given immediately the case was brought under the notice of the Government. It is true that there is a certain amount of confusion in the statements, but evidence was given which established the fact that the bona-fide members of organisations who signed the affidavits and gave the evidence stood up to them and believed them to be true. When the police investigated the report from the returning officer, they made one significant statement, that there were certain irregularities which confirmed the basis of two charges which I laid—one as to the number of union tickets that were used, and the other as to the men concerned—showing conclusively that up to that stage a fair amount of suspicion had been created that there was something in the charges made in my statement. Up to that point all is well. But there is this significant fact: Bear in mind that the main charge was that a criminal offence had taken place on the part of some people in so far as forgery had been perpetrated. The last link in the chain of the evidence was that the list which would have proved that these men committed the offence complained of should be handed over. It is there the police broke down, and this is a matter of vital importance to this Parliament and to this country.

There are one or two things which the police did not do which are worthy of notice. Amongst the papers and included in the original affidavits were statements to the effect that certain men had been seen in a motor car belonging to a member of the Police Department. A subsequent report by the police discloses that the men were not exactly of the desirable character of men who should be associated with a detective in his motor car. It is most extraordinary that no statement was attached to those papers from the detective concerned, although that is most vital both to him and to the integrity of the police force generally. The question is also most important, because the man who is most concerned—the head of the gang—a man named Funnell—had been seen in the precincts of Parliament House, and yet no report had been received from him.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Why use the word "gang"?

Mr. SIZER: I use the word "gang," which was also used by the hon. member for Ithaca. It is most extraordinary that no statement was received from that man.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He is a member of my organisation.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Oh!

Mr. SIZER: When you examine the career of that gentleman, he seems to be under a special license from the Government. He is able to get concessions in one way or another in a most extraordinary manner. During the previous debate the hon. member for Ithaca said that these men were boosting themselves with the hope of getting certain things. I maintain that they got those certain things. First of all, they got an exceptional advantage from the Government so far as that Edward-street stall is concerned.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to connect his remarks with the vote under discussion.

Mr. SIZER: I am showing the things that the police have not done; I am making that point. That man has had a valuable concession given him at a mere bagatelle rental, which was obtained, not through the usual channels, and not through the department which usually controls these things.

I think the papers relating to that would be most interesting, and should be tabled. He also seems to have received certain immunity in connection with a case tried by a judge of the Supreme Court. The power of this gentleman seems extraordinary. When this case was brought under review by the Labour organisations through the Government, although the judge conferred a sentence of five years, the man concerned was released within eighteen months of his conviction. The judge commented on the fact that the convicted man was in association with the gentleman at the head of this gang, and, in view of the immunity which he seems to have, we are entitled to demand why this power has been given to this gentleman. The gentleman concerned in this matter was actually seen operating in the case which I mentioned. He played a very important part in connection with a previous pre-election plebiscite, and this is corroborated by the hon. member for Ithaca. Surely there is a distinct connection between that gentleman and the Government in one way or another through their organisation! He seems to be "the power behind the throne." When this trouble comes he is not even interrogated as to his action!

Mr. HARTLEY: What right have the police to interrogate him?

Mr. SIZER: They had every right, considering that the Government sent out for information at 2 o'clock in the morning. The first man the police should have gone to was the head of the concern, but apparently the last man they are going to is the head of the concern. Why was Mr. Morrison, whose signature was actually seen to be forged, not interviewed? Why has Mr. Willcocks not been interviewed? Mr. Willcocks says he went to the ballot-box just before it closed, and was told that he had voted, and he denied it. He was shown what purported to be his own signature, and, after he had written his own signature, they showed him the comparison, and he was given a vote, proving conclusively that impersonation had taken place. For-

gery could have been proved if the voting lists had been handed over to the police. These things are most important. It is extraordinary why the police did not investigate that portion of the charge.

Now we come to the other stage—and I think this is the most serious point. They proceed to make inquiries from the official head of the Queensland Central Executive, which happens to be the organisation controlling the Government.

The PREMIER: Why say that somebody is controlling the Government?

Mr. SIZER: I intend to develop my case that the secretary of the Queensland Central Executive was asked for the lists which would have proved that forgery had been committed or otherwise, and in regard to which the police had good grounds for suspicion. When asked for the lists the secretary of the Queensland Central Executive refused to hand them over to the police, and the police state that the secretary even refused to allow them to look at them or to admit that he had them in his possession. He said, "If I am subpoenaed by the court, I will produce the lists if I have got them."

Mr. HARTLEY: That is the right attitude to adopt. He knows that he is a British citizen.

Mr. SIZER: "If I have got them" are very important words. What is the inference to be drawn from them? The inference is that they would not be there if they were wanted. The further inference which can

be put on it is this: One of the [4 p.m.] grounds on which the Queensland Central Executive refuses to hand them over is that it intends to conduct the inquiry itself. How can it conduct an inquiry without those lists? Either the inquiry by the Queensland Central Executive will be a sham without those lists, or for some reason it is trying to evade the position by professing to doubt whether there are any lists at all. That is a most serious question, particularly in view of the fact that the secretary states that, after the Queensland Central Executive has considered the question, and if it thinks there have been irregularities of a criminal nature, it will then consider the question of handing them over to the police. What right has the Queensland Central Executive to consider the compounding of a criminal offence? It has no right to consider it; it should assist in the administration of justice without demur. That body is another power behind the throne, apparently attempting to place itself above the law.

The PREMIER: I don't think you know anything about it except what Talty has told you.

Mr. SIZER: I have not seen Mr. Talty for over a week. The secretary of the Queensland Central Executive says that he will not hand over those lists until he is instructed by his executive to do so. That is a most important matter.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: What right have the police to adopt that attitude?

Mr. SIZER: They have every right.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SIZER: The police have the right, otherwise the Government would not have placed the matter in their hands at 2 o'clock in the morning. Having gone that far, and the police being satisfied that there is evidence of a bona-fide case, they are unable

*Mr. Sizer.]*

to get the last piece of evidence. The police then have to apply for a search warrant. Let me give a case in point. Assuming that a man on a wharf is suspected of doing something and a report is made to the police, the police have information that there is sufficient evidence to get a search warrant, and they immediately get a search warrant and get possession of the evidence which is necessary to prove their case. Why has that not been done in this case?

The HOME SECRETARY: No information has been laid in this case.

Mr. SIZER: I anticipated that the hon. gentleman would say that the reason that was not done was because no information had been laid. I have looked up the sections of the Criminal Code dealing with the question of search warrants. It is laid down that, if the police are satisfied that they have reasonable grounds to suspect that there are certain documents which can supply the necessary evidence to prove a fraud, they can apply for a search warrant. There is sufficient evidence in this case. They can apply for a search warrant if they want to, but they have not done so, and why is that? I ask the hon. gentleman to say why?

The HOME SECRETARY: Does not Talty think there is sufficient evidence?

Mr. SIZER: I am not concerned about him. I am seriously concerned on this point—that apparently for some reason best known to some people there is a studied attempt to smother this thing up. The secretary of the Queensland Central Executive is refusing to give information. One man—a scrutineer—refuses to give information. He says that he will not identify anybody—not that he could not—showing a studied policy of “hush”; and why? Because there is more in this than meets the eye on the surface.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: What do you say is the trouble?

Mr. SIZER: I say that forgery has been going on behind the organisation, and that the Government are reluctant to bring these people to justice. That is my case.

The PREMIER: You are not concerned about our organisation. Did you not go to the police about your own organisation?

Mr. SIZER: That is not true, and, if the hon. gentleman will allow me to make a statement, I will do so. He knows that I am under a certain obligation to the Minister. His suggestion is incorrect.

The PREMIER: Did you not tell the police about your own plebiscite?

Mr. SIZER: I want to say, once and for all, that I have never been in any plebiscite. The statement upon which the hon. gentleman bases his question is of such a nature—I have seen it—that I can say that the facts are so distorted that, although it comes from a very high official, if I were a Minister of the Crown I would not—I could not—accept any report over the signature of that gentleman, because the facts as I know them are quite different. It is a statement only made after three years—just out of his own mind—and no reliance should be placed on it.

The PREMIER: The point is: Was not the attitude of the police there the same as here—that they would not interfere?

[*Mr. Sizer.*]

Mr. SIZER: They were not asked to interfere. That suggestion is quite wrong. Nothing in the nature of allegations was made.

The PREMIER: There was no interference.

Mr. SIZER: There is no question of interference. They were never asked to interfere. The point I want to make most strongly is that the secretary of the Queensland Central Executive says that he cannot hand over these lists, which it is claimed contain incriminating evidence, because his executive will not allow him to do so, or until they instruct him to do so. Who are the executive? According to the “Daily Standard” they are—Jim Riordan, Lewis McDonald, “Billy” Demaine, Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Hon. W. McCormack, Hon. Dave Gledson, Joe Collings, Hon. John Mullan, George Pollock, Darby Riordan, — Bryan, J. Dash, M. P. Hynes, and others—twenty-two altogether. Surely the Premier can see the gravity of the position! It seems to me that, when the Government, as a Government, set the police on the trail, and the trail becomes hot, and the Government and the Queensland Central Executive refuse to hand over the evidence—that seems to be the gravamen of the charge—they should not let the matter rest there. More or less, it is compounding a crime, or they are becoming accessories after the fact, which I say is a most extraordinary position.

The PREMIER: Before the fact.

Mr. SIZER: After the fact. It has been brought to your notice.

The PREMIER: Before the fact. The fact is not proved.

Mr. SIZER: It is an extraordinary position, and shakes the very foundations of our government. Let me refer to the power of this Queensland Central Executive—and I am relying on the “Daily Standard,” which, when speaking on the question of a railway strike, made this significant remark—“The attempt to have a special meeting of the Queensland Central Executive was frustrated by a majority of a committee of eight, which, it appears, has the right to reject, if it thinks fit, any request that the executive should meet. Most workers have thus learned for the first time of the existence of such an inner junta.”

Is it a fair thing to ask whether this inner junta, of which the “Standard” speaks, met and refused to call the executive together to allow the lists to be handed over? That is very much to the point. That is where I say the gravamen of the charge is.

The gravamen of the charge is that the Queensland Central Executive is the Government—not constitutionally, but actually. That body is the ruling power with the Government. It has refused to hand over the lists, which are the evidence for which the police are seeking; and in its refusal it is guilty of the betrayal of a great trust and is undermining the administration of justice of this State. I say that frankly, because it is of vital importance.

I would stress the action that was taken in the House of Commons when a charge was made against the police force on a recent occasion, when, without any demur, the Home Secretary ordered a full inquiry in the interests of the public, pointing out most distinctly that it was vital in the interests of the community that the stability and

good name of the police should be safeguarded, and that the public should be reassured on the question of the administration of justice from the head of the department. An inquiry took place. A further inquiry is now being held. Surely it must be apparent to every hon. member of this House that an inquiry was held into the administration of justice in England on a somewhat similar issue! Surely it is of vital importance that an inquiry should be held into this business! After all, who is being sheltered? Why will the Queensland Central Executive not hand over the evidence? If there is nothing wrong, then the whole thing would end with the production of the lists and there would be nothing more heard of it. Who is being sheltered? Men who are not of the most desirable character, whether they hold the political views of one side or the other. It shows this point, and this is the point that I stress: At the very fountain-head of the Labour organisation dealing with pre-election ballots, where the most influence can be used and where it can have some effect upon the constitution of this House so far as it affects the party opposite, we find the dominating power coming from a most undesirable element. That evidence is brought before the powers that be with the object of securing a conviction for a breach of the laws of this State, but no action is taken by the Government, who really constitute the Queensland Central Executive. This is a crime of the gravest nature, and one that cannot be allowed to rest. I was quite prepared to overlook the other small issues as of no concern; but this is an issue of paramount importance, and I would be lacking in my duty—as would anyone else—who did not bring this matter before the House.

Mr. POLLOCK: Actuated by a stern sense of duty! (Laughter.)

Mr. SIZER: I am dealing with the matter in a much fairer way than the Premier dealt with a certain man named O'Brien. He dragged the record of that man right through this House. I do not intend to raise those questions.

The PREMIER: I intend to speak on this matter.

Mr. SIZER: I certainly hope you do.

The PREMIER: It will not be you with whom I shall deal, but the Opposition.

Mr. SIZER: I care not what the hon. gentleman intends to say. He will not be able to prove any charges of forgery against this side of the House.

The PREMIER: I will prove bribery.

Mr. SIZER: That is a different crime—

The PREMIER: Bribery! Bribery!

Mr. TAYLOR: Cut it out!

The PREMIER: Ask the hon. member for Sandgate to cut it out.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SIZER: I have no desire to bring in the other element. I have kept that out. I am dealing with the matter on the highest possible plane. Personal abuse will make no difference to me in this case. Hon. members opposite can vilify me as they like; I am not concerned about that. I view the matter as being of the gravest importance. I have instanced a connecting link in this

case showing where men have received preferment from the Crown. The police have repeatedly asked for the essential evidence, but it has been withheld by the Queensland Central Executive, which dominates certain members of this House.

The HOME SECRETARY: You are guilty of tedious repetition.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. KELSO: You don't know what tedious repetition is.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SIZER: It is no use getting away from the gravamen of the charge.

The HOME SECRETARY: You have not been near it yet.

Mr. SIZER: According to the press of Saturday last, a meeting of the Queensland Central Executive was held within the precincts of this House.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have allowed the hon. member considerable latitude.

The PREMIER: You will have to allow it to us, too.

Mr. KERR: What have you got to do with it? You are not the Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have allowed the hon. member for Sandgate considerable latitude, because this charge involves me to a certain extent; but I am not going to allow the hon. member to proceed on the lines on which he is now proceeding. He must keep to the vote under discussion.

Mr. SIZER: I only want to make this plain, and I shall be perfectly frank—that my charge will be quite fairly made. The Queensland Central Executive held a meeting within the precincts of this House to deal with matters concerning their organisation, which proves very clearly that the Government apparently control that body. If you rule me out of order, Mr. Speaker, I will not proceed on those lines.

The SPEAKER: Similar meetings have been held within the precincts of the House by members of the Opposition.

Mr. MORGAN: Not by the party organisation.

Mr. SIZER: I just wanted to make that point, and I will not proceed on those lines any further. There is not much need for me to say a great deal more beyond this point which I wish to make, and make strongly—that we have a great tradition in our public life to live up to. It is very essential for the very life of this Government and the people that our public life generally should be clean. When we have charges such as these made which strike at the very foundation of our public life, then it is time something was done in the interests of the public. I would ask the Premier certain questions. First of all, why were the police started on the trail, and then, when they began to get too hot, why were they stopped? Why are the police compelled to report that they can get no further with these investigations? Is it the intention of the head of the police to give instructions for the confiscation or the securing of those lists in order that it can be seen whether they sustain these charges? I ask also that the fullest information should be given and action be taken against those people who seem to be getting preferment

from the Government, who seem so anxious to shield them.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. Stopford, *Mount Morgan*): The hon. member has accompanied his request for information with so much talk that it is hard to know what he wants.

Mr. KERR: It is time you did know what he wants.

The HOME SECRETARY: I have heard him repeat himself eighteen or twenty times: "Why were the police put on the trail?" "Why did we stop them?" "Why don't the police take certain action to obtain certain documents?" If you cut out everything else, apart from the attitude the hon. member adopts in this case, we have only to deal with those three questions. In the first place, Mr. Talty and a number of his associates, who are criminals and very unfavourably known to the police—

Mr. W. COOPER: The hon. member for Sandgate is associated with them.

The HOME SECRETARY: He is their mouthpiece here.

Mr. KERR: You know that is not true.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The HOME SECRETARY: I can infer what I like from the hon. member's remarks. I say that a certain statement which was made regarding the plebiscite referred to was based on the statements of a number of "crooks."

Mr. KERR: You said the hon. member for Sandgate was their mouthpiece.

The HOME SECRETARY: I said he was associated with them.

Mr. KERR: He is not. You withdraw that.

The HOME SECRETARY: He is an associate of an associate.

After the case was raised in this Chamber, a man came to me and laid charges about the hon. member for Sandgate that I would not repeat here because I do not believe they are true. I am in the same position with the hon. member for Sandgate in regard to what has been said in my office as the police are in regard to the charge made by Mr. Talty. They do not believe, and have proved that they do not believe, the statements made by the associates of Mr. Talty. What is the position? Mr. Talty could not even trust the hon. member, and did not trust him, as I shall prove. On 2nd October Mr. Talty made certain definite charges to the Queensland Central Executive, the controlling body that had conducted the plebiscite, asking, as he had a perfect right to ask, that a full investigation should be made into the charges he had levelled. Mr. Talty waited one day, and on 3rd October he repeated his charges, without producing the documents, to the police force of Queensland, whose secretary he is. Two or three days afterwards, without even trusting the police, he dug up the only member of Parliament who would accept a brief of that description.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: He gave him sworn statements of convicted criminals which he had not given to the police. It was Mr. Talty who started the inquiry so far as the police are concerned, and the police, pursuing their ordinary methods in obtaining evidence from well-known criminals, recognised that they had to take the

[*Mr. Sizer.*

evidence of the honest section of the community before any publicity was given to the evidence of convicted criminals. They considered that it would be wise to leave Ryan and Billington's examination until they had checked their statements knowing their characters and how worthless their word was. They might then obtain from Ryan and Billington a statement of a truthful character. Mr. Talty, by giving the hon. member his case, destroyed the work of the police, and they were compelled to act quickly and obtain statements before the newspaper reports reached these criminals. They had to work quickly, and do it that night. That was why they started that night to obtain it, because, if the newspapers came out next morning, both of the criminals would have been in "smoke" when the police went for them. What did we obtain? We obtained one statement from Mr. Talty, and we obtained one statement from a convicted criminal—a recognised liar, named Ryan. Billington never gave a statement. The statement was made by Mr. Talty that a man named King, in conjunction with other men whom he described as political assassins, was engaged for certain purposes. The police called at King's house, but he was not home. He came in next morning with a statement showing that he was engaged by the hon. member's client (Talty), and had been given £2 and two bottles of beer to work for him in the plebiscite.

Mr. SIZER: That does not worry me.

Mr. CARTER: You have no sense of shame.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The HOME SECRETARY: The police themselves said they were up against a brick wall. First they are told that Ryan made a statement. They know Ryan's character. They are told that Billington will confirm certain information, and they know Billington's character. Billington will not confirm the information. They are told that King knows. King turns round and frankly admits that he did certain things and was paid by Mr. Talty for doing those things.

I shall give you an idea of how Mr. Talty works. Immediately the debate arose in the House the police knew that, if they were to prove their case, they would have to work quickly. In the interview with the police Mr. Talty stated that, if they went over to a certain address at Kangaroo Point and interviewed Mr. Carberry, who was the presiding officer, they would get the information required—the full lists and everything else. Acting on the charge laid by Mr. Talty, the police went over and waited on Carberry. What was the result? Carberry refused to give them the documents. These people went to a meeting, at which Mr. Talty was present, and passed a vote of censure on the police, which would be presented to me, because the police had gone to his private residence to make these inquiries. Mr. Talty sat at that meeting knowing that he himself had told the police to go to Carberry's house; and he allowed that motion to be passed. After the House rose Mr. Carberry met me, and I had to tell him the truth about the matter—that Mr. Talty was responsible for the police going to his house. Yet Talty sat in that meeting and allowed that motion to be carried.

To get down to the crux of the whole position, the charge of the hon. member is

that the police have not taken out a warrant to raid the Queensland Central Executive building and obtain certain papers. The police are a responsible body of men who owe a duty to the public, and the fact that they have not done that proves that they are worthy of the confidence of the people of Queensland. I will tell you why. They are given a certain charge. I tell the hon. member that charges have been levelled against him as hon. member for Sandgate in my office—charges which I would not believe. If the police believed every idle rumour that comes to them, they would be searching every home in Brisbane. What do they do? If you lay a charge to the police, they investigate that charge, and, if the investigation shows there is a particle of truth in it, they take out a warrant for any documents or any evidence that may be in the possession of anybody in the State; but they must first be satisfied that the charge shows there is justification for their action. There is no justification for any action in this case. The only sworn statement of any value was from a man named Ryan. Immediately the police saw him he gave an absolutely different statement from the one given by the hon. member for Sandgate. Billington gave a statement saying that he had not voted. Billington's word must be accepted until it is disproved. One or two other people gave evidence or statements that had no bearing on the case. What I want to tell the House is this—that the police found they were up against a dead wall. They could proceed no further, and they were not going to use the machinery of this State to demand certain documents on the flimsy evidence they had. They went to Mr. Talty, who had laid the information, and they pointed out to Mr. Talty that they could not proceed with the case unless they had possession of those documents. Mr. Talty, as an ex-policeman, knew that he had the power to obtain those documents at any moment. If you believe Mr. Carberry's statement, the documents were there for the perusal of any one of the four candidates, and Mr. Talty had a perfect right to peruse those documents. He had a further right—a right he never exercised, although he was requested to do so by the police; he had a right to go before the court, secure a warrant, and the Queensland Central Executive would have had to give up those documents. But he would have to take the responsibility of his action. He does not want to do that.

[4.30 p.m.]

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: The police do that in most cases.

The HOME SECRETARY: The police do not do it in most cases. The police investigate a case, and, if the evidence is sufficient to justify them, they do it. The police say that in this case there is no evidence as far as their inquiries have gone. They then say to Mr. Talty, "Do your duty. Release those documents, and, if they bear out the statements you make, we will do our duty afterwards up to this point."

Mr. SIZER: Read Mr. Carberry's statement on the question of those lists.

The HOME SECRETARY: Mr. Carberry's statement merely means that duplication took place, as it takes place in every one of our electorates. I get a duplication list from the returning officer, and so does the hon. member; but it is not criminal.

Duplication can take place in every electorate.

Mr. SIZER: Carberry proved that there was double voting.

The HOME SECRETARY: I will give an instance of double voting which took place in my electorate. A man named Alexander McKelvie voted at a place called Red Hill. He took the first name on the roll, which was that of his father, and one of them was credited with having voted twice. After the poll the returning officer wrote to me, and said that duplication had taken place in connection with Alexander McKelvie. There was no double voting however; there was one Alexander McKelvie who had not voted at all. What I want to say is this: The hon. member states definitely that the police have not made every effort in the direction of elucidating the charges made by Mr. Talty. In reply I say that Mr. Talty first made the charge. The Queensland Central Executive owe a duty to Mr. Talty, as it is making investigations. It is perfectly justified in refusing anyone to enter into these investigations, because the same Mr. Talty would charge it with having handed over documents which are essential to prove his case when he comes before the Queensland Central Executive again. Not content with that, he hands the case to the police. Not waiting to give the police an opportunity to deal with the matter, although he is the secretary of their union and an ex-policeman himself, he goes to the hon. member for Sandgate, and for the first time in the history of the case gives a signed sworn statement from a criminal with a bad career. Immediately the police come along, he falls down on the job, and gives them a directly opposite statement. Everywhere they went they were met with a contradiction of the facts set out by Talty. Then Talty asks the hon. member to come here and allege that the police did not exercise the power they had—that is to rig up a warrant in this matter on the flimsy evidence they have in their possession.

Mr. SIZER: I have not seen Mr. Talty since they passed the vote of confidence in him.

The HOME SECRETARY: I believe the hon. member, but thousands would not. The hon. member believes the police are a terrible set of fellows. He is not really as honest as Talty, because he never waited for a plebiscite. He is perfectly right in saying that he never fought a plebiscite—he never waited for the plebiscite. He went to the police before nominations were called. I can only give the letter handed to me by the police. The letter which deals with his visit to the police, is dated 16th October, 1928.

Mr. SIZER: That is two days after the report was made.

The HOME SECRETARY: The letter reads—

"RE MR. SIZER AND SANDGATE NATIONALIST PLEBISCITE, 1928.

"Sir,—I have the honour to report that some months previous to the election of the current Parliament for Queensland Mr. Sizer, the then sitting member for the Sandgate electorate, called upon me at the C. I. Branch, where I at the time was second in charge, and complained that he suspected the existence of some intrigue amongst his supposed supporters

*Hon. J. Stopford.]*

in connection with the plebiscite for selection of a Nationalist candidate for Sandgate, the object of such intrigue being to 'dump' him by 'framing' an irregularity in the selection ballot."

(Government laughter.)

Mr. SIZER: Every member of our party knows that that is not true. The officer who made that report is not stating the facts.

The HOME SECRETARY:

"Mr. Sizer produced some anonymous letters which had been written to certain members of his committee."

Mr. SIZER: I can produce the letter.

The HOME SECRETARY:

"He suspected the letters, which cast aspersions on his character, to be the production of some of his 'supporters'—"

Funny supporters! (Laughter.)—

"and asked that secret inquiries be made so that he could expose their tactics at the next meeting. He declined, however, to hand over the letters.

"After going into the matter, and consulting Sub-inspector Head, then in charge of the C.I. Branch, I informed Mr. Sizer that there was nothing in his complaint to call for police action, but, if he insisted that inquiries be made, I requested him to reduce his complaint to writing and attach the anonymous letters and that, if he did that, the matter would be gone into. He, however, did not act on this suggestion, and I heard nothing further from him regarding his complaint.

"I have the honour to be,

"Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"W. H. LIPP, Sub-Inspector."

Mr. SIZER: I only want to say that it is a pure fake.

The HOME SECRETARY: Mr. Talty is in the same position that the hon. member for Sandgate was in. Had the hon. member given these letters and made a definite complaint in writing against his alleged supporters who wanted to "dump" him—(Government laughter)—the police would have investigated the matter. I say to Talty that, if he will take out a warrant and put his name to it to-morrow and take the responsibility, then further inquiries will be made by the police into the alleged malpractices and we will get finality; but the police force of Queensland are not going to be used by Talty, the hon. member for Sandgate, or others to do something they are not prepared to stand behind themselves.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. SIZER: I only want to say that the Lipp report is a fake.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): The Government tactics are such that two days after a certain matter is mentioned in this Chamber they go to the trouble, as the hon. member for Sandgate has said, of faking a report for the purpose of defeating a charge brought against themselves. There seems to be no question at all that, so soon as this matter of plebiscite was raised, the Government went to some pains to dig up what they call "muck" in regard to the hon. member who rightly brought this matter up.

The PREMIER: I knew it all before.

[*Hon. J. Stopford.*

Mr. KERR: The hon. gentleman can say so. It seems extraordinary that the police should lend themselves to such a fake as this. I am absolutely astounded at them. The Home Secretary has tried to raise an Aunt Sally by saying that the Opposition were attacking the police.

Mr. C. J. RYAN: You are the Aunt Sally of this House.

Mr. KERR: It is one the hon. member can't hit, anyhow. It is not a question at all of attacking the police. It is all very fine to try to turn the tables, as it were, like that by saying that an attack has been made on what I call the finest body of men possibly in that category in Australia. (Government laughter.) This is our point—that the police reported to the Commissioner that they had reached a certain stage in their investigations and they could go no further.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Because Talty would not let them.

Mr. KERR: It is not a question of whether Talty would let them. It was a question of whether the Government would let them. That is why we say that this is a definite charge to which the Government have to reply. It is not a question of whether Talty is going to supply this information; it is a question of whether the Government are going to permit the police to complete the investigation on which they have started.

I make this charge deliberately—that the Government have not carried out their duty by not permitting the police of Queensland to carry their investigations to finality. It is all very well for the Home Secretary to make statements that are only half-truths.

The presiding officer, Mr. Carberry, reported to the police that there were three irregularities which required investigation. He said—

"Through a search of my official sheets I have been able to ascertain that Australian Workers' Union tickets Nos. 1176 and 1177 were used to vote at two booths; also one Billington voted at two booths on waterside worker's medal 422."

Whether Billington is a rogue or not has nothing to do with the matter. The returning officer says that Billington impersonated some other person or persons. The police visited Osborne, who made an affidavit relating to the impersonation of Morrison. Osborne stated that everything contained in the affidavit was correct. The police say that Osborne is a man of good character. You will remember that this affidavit stated that he actually saw Morrison's signature forged in the presence of Talty. He actually saw all the men—the Funnels, King, and others—in a motor car with rolls spread out before them. Osborne is a man of good character. Attewell knows very well that someone impersonated him. He was questioned on the matter, and he confirmed it. Throughout the piece the police secured evidence to indicate that forgery did occur. The question is whether we are satisfied or not that forgery has occurred. The police, by their investigation, proved up to the hilt that forgery had occurred, and forgery is a crime in this State. The police endeavoured to carry the matter further, and reached the point when they required the necessary rolls, but the Queensland Central Executive declined to give them up. In ordinary circumstances, if the police received information that certain property had been stolen,

they would proceed to a police magistrate and swear an information that, to the best of their belief, a certain crime had been committed. The police magistrate would then issue a search warrant. Action does not emanate from the informant. It is on the application of the police that a search warrant is issued. What is to prevent the police on this occasion asking a police magistrate to issue a search warrant? The returning officer has given sufficient proof that certain matters require investigation. There are statements by reliable witnesses that forgery has occurred. Is it a fact that the Government have nipped these inquiries in the bud? It appears to be that they have done so. The Premier is the acting chairman of the Queensland Central Executive.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. KERR: I accept the assurance of the hon. gentleman. However, he is a member.

The PREMIER: A humble member.

Mr. KERR: A very humble member! It is the first time that the hon. gentleman has ever been humble. (Laughter.) These charges should be pursued, because the papers have been laid on the table of this House, and, as the matter has become a matter for this House, it is a matter for this House to continue the investigations. Have the police been stopped in their investigations of this matter? The police have definitely reported to the Government, through their Commissioner, that they can go no further. The Queensland Central Executive unquestionably should be compelled to produce these papers, because the evidence we have here is sufficient to warrant such action. It is an injustice to the police to prevent these papers from being produced. It is an injustice to the police. The police are not looking at the question from the point of view that they want to stop investigations. Their honour is at stake, and they unquestionably want to continue the investigations. The Premier and his colleagues, who constitute a large section of the Queensland Central Executive, must have some reason for stopping further investigations from going on. If forgery has been committed, as it has been proved to have been committed in this statement, the Government should clear their honour and integrity in the matter, whether the statement is right or wrong. It does not rest with Talty for any information to be laid. He has lodged a complaint which has been proved right up to the hilt, and why should not a search warrant be given to the police to enable them to continue their investigations? An election is pending, and the cleaner we can have politics in Queensland the better.

Mr. WEBB: Will you start with the Toombul plebiscite? (Opposition interjections.)

Mr. KERR: The Government are capable of attempting to sidetrack every issue. The issue here is clear and definite, and it is no use the Government attempting to sidetrack it. It is always good policy to accuse the other man and to make the attack first. The Government have been sidetracking this issue ever since it has been raised. The Home Secretary has a personal bias against a gentleman connected with this matter.

Mr. FARRELL: Did you say "gentleman"?

Mr. KERR: This question involves a bigger issue than one between the Home Secretary and Talty. The politics of Queens-

land have to be kept as clean as it is possible to keep them. (Government laughter.) Once a matter comes before this House, it is no longer the property of any individual, and once it is the property of any Government it becomes the property of the country. This matter, therefore, has become the property of the country, and the Government, although in other cases they did not investigate them, should at least take this in hand and give the police every possible assistance. I hope something will be done in the matter.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. McCormack, Cairns): The hon. member for Sandgate and other speakers on the other side have seen fit to draw the Government into the controversy, and, as they then proceeded to build up a case against the honesty and integrity of the Government, it might be as well if I, as head of the Government, said a few words.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: It is an extraordinary thing to find members of a political party acclaiming themselves to be so concerned with respect to the integrity and honour of Parliament and raising this question about a plebiscite who themselves were so recently associated with an attempt to bribe a member of this Parliament.

Mr. TAYLOR: We never were associated with that.

Mr. MORGAN: It is a deliberate lie. (Opposition interjection.)

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. TAYLOR: I rise to a point of order.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: I am going to connect up my remarks with this matter which has been raised in discussion.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Murilla knows that it is unparliamentary to say that the statement of another hon. member is a deliberate lie. He must withdraw.

Mr. MORGAN: I say it is a deliberate lie, and no man knows that better than the Premier.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member knows that the remark is unparliamentary.

Mr. MORGAN: I know I shall have to withdraw, but I do so very reluctantly.

Mr. TAYLOR: I also rise to a point of order, and ask that the Premier withdraw the statement that we were associated with any bribery.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Windsor must know that a wider latitude is allowed in referring to a party than in referring to an individual member of the House.

Mr. TAYLOR: The Premier knows that his statement is untrue.

The PREMIER: Let me say at the outset that I am not going to include the hon. member personally in any wrongdoing.

Mr. EDWARDS: Whom are you putting it on?

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Sandgate has questioned the honour and integrity of the Government. May I not be allowed to reply? It comes badly from

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a member of a party—and I am not saying that he was associated with it—who were associated with an attempt to corrupt and bribe a member of this Chamber.

Mr. MORGAN: That was never proved; it is not true.

The PREMIER: Why I refer to it is this—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: I am going to connect it up—not by digging up the bribery charge at all, but by dealing with it as applied to the police in dealing with a similar set of circumstances to those outlined by the hon. member. That is why I raise this question. The hon. member knows nothing about it.

Mr. MORGAN: Nothing at all. It was never proved either. You might have given the money yourself.

Mr. TAYLOR: We had nothing to do with it.

The PREMIER: Individually, I know you did not.

Mr. TAYLOR: Or collectively either.

The PREMIER: Hon. members opposite sit quietly by and allow a member of their party to accuse the Government of dishonesty and wrongdoing, and, when I mention that people closely associated with their party were guilty of bribery—

Mr. MORGAN: They were not guilty of bribery.

Mr. WEIR: You found the "dough."

Mr. MORGAN: Theodore admitted it himself.

Mr. KERR: Why did he bring it before the court?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: As the hon. member has invited me to do it, I will give him some information. It is, perhaps, apropos that it should come to the public at this particular juncture, because I am not wholly ignorant of the bribery case. I was Home Secretary at the time, and I know a lot about it. I did not rise to discuss the bribery case; it has already been dealt with. The courts of our land found that bribery was attempted; this Parliament confiscated the money; and the men who were concerned in offering the money paid the penalty.

Mr. MORGAN: They did not prove where the money came from.

The PREMIER: That is what I am going to deal with. In that case, certain gentlemen—or men—who were concerned with the defeat of this party and the transferment of the Opposition to the Treasury benches, found a large sum of money, and handed it over to two men who were their "stool pigeons," to bribe a member of this House. That is the truth, which no one can gainsay. Had we adopted the suggestion of the hon. member and abused the power reposed in us as a Government, we could have taken certain action to investigate certain sources from which that money might have come.

Mr. SIZER: You should have done it.

The PREMIER: Why did we not do it?

Mr. SIZER: I don't know.

The PREMIER: Because the men who supplied us with the information were, like

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Talty, not prepared to sign a statement to that effect and take the responsibility. They were not prepared to do that. There was a man prepared to make a statement that, if we would take certain action—if we could go to the office of a certain organisation—we could find out the exact amount of money that was paid to a member of this party to go to the other side of the House.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: That is too thin for anything.

The PREMIER: That was stated. The man who said that that was true, like Talty, was not prepared to face the music, and we, of course, were not prepared—nor are we prepared to-day—to go into the private affairs of that organisation merely on the "say-so" of somebody. It was all to the benefit of the man who was accused; but we did not feel, as a Government—nor did the police feel—that they were justified in going into the private affairs of an organisation unless the man who was prepared to make the charge was prepared to stand up to that charge. It is the same in regard to this case.

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not believe that you believed it.

The PREMIER: At that time we did not. Personally I gave them the benefit of the doubt. I did not believe it; but I certainly was not going to abuse my power unless the man who was prepared to be an informer would take the responsibility, and not the police. The same position exists to-day. Later on we found that somebody was prepared to pay a large sum of money to bribe a member of this party to cross over and defeat the Government, which raised one's doubts about the original question.

Mr. TAYLOR: It need not.

The PREMIER: It may not. I am still prepared to give the hon. member the benefit of the doubt. I use that to show that a Government with a majority of one could have been justified in taking such action, and could have made a good case out for taking such action, because a member of this party did go over to the other side. Even then we hesitated to abuse our powers unless the informer was prepared to take the responsibility.

Mr. EDWARDS: That is contemptible.

The PREMIER: What is contemptible?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Your statement.

The PREMIER: Everything that scores is contemptible. I did not bring up this question. The hon. member for Sandgate has brought it up again and again, and I am going to defend my Government on every occasion.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: And, if in the defence of my Government I have to point out the history and character of their accusers, then those accusers ought to sit quiet and not complain.

Mr. EDWARDS: You are prepared to do anything.

The PREMIER: I am prepared to answer the charge.

Mr. LOGAN: Who are the accusers?

The PREMIER: In that particular case certain action was taken, and two men were convicted.

Mr. KERR: You went all round Queensland attacking our party, which was quite wrong. (Government laughter.)

The PREMIER: I ask the hon. member: In whose interests was the action taken? Who was going to gain as a result of a member going over to the other party? Those members of the Opposition, who, I know are wholly innocent of any association with the bribery case, must take their share of the responsibility of their party's action in the Brennan case.

Mr. EDWARDS: He was promoted step by step.

The PREMIER: If the basis of promotion to a position was that a member of this House should stand up to his obligations, then Brennan deserved his promotion. I do not hold that that is the basis of promotion, and never did; but, if you take his attitude—

Mr. CARTER: He was not bribed.

[5 p.m.]

The PREMIER: He refused the bribe. To that extent, at all events, I think he deserved the commendation of everyone in this House. In this charge laid by the hon. member for Sandgate, knowingly or unknowingly, he has made a very serious and definite charge against the Government. The hon. member may not believe that it is serious. It must be serious, or I would not have risen in my place at all. I regard it as very serious.

Mr. SIZER: I think it is serious.

The PREMIER: It is serious, and I think I have shown that in a much more serious case we did not take the action the hon. member suggests.

Mr. SIZER: I think you neglected your duty then.

The PREMIER: That was for the reasons I have given to the House.

Mr. EDWARDS: The political smoke screen is put up by yourself.

The PREMIER: Does anyone believe that someone on this side put up £3,000 or £4,000 in order to confiscate it? Who are the people who objected to the confiscation? The Opposition. (Opposition interruptions.) The cases are identical. The charge made by the hon. members is not sustained. The Government, as a Government, have nothing whatever to do with plebiscites. At the initiation of this plebiscite business the hon. member asked me for a commission of inquiry. I politely told him that I did not regard the question of plebiscites as a matter that affected the integrity or honour of Parliament. The hon. member's own party newspapers supported me in that attitude, and I still hold that it is the correct attitude to adopt. Now the hon. member accuses the Government of manipulating the police force—of an attempt to prevent justice being carried out—and heaps all sorts of ridicule upon the Government because of some difficulty that Talty has had in connection with a plebiscite.

There is no need for me to deal with that aspect of the case. The Home Secretary very fully and convincingly gave the facts of the case to the House. I rose—and I always will rise—when charges are made against the Government of wrongdoing or dishonour. I rose first of all to deny the

charge, and then to explain to the public the characters of the originators of the charge. For that reason I make no apology to you, Mr. Speaker, or to this House for quoting the famous bribery case. Hon. members opposite individually may not have been associated with the bribery case, but individual members of the party opposite knew all about it before it was discovered.

Mr. MORGAN: There is no evidence of that.

The PREMIER: The then leader of the hon. member's party, the late member for Dalby, knew of it. He said at the races that on a certain date we were going out of power. (Opposition interruption.) This is the precious group that is concerned with the integrity of Parliament! All through the ages it is money power that has attempted to corrupt Parliaments.

Mr. EDWARDS: You are a moneyed man yourself.

The PREMIER: The hon. member wants to be insulting. He finds he has no case, and becomes insulting. I am not insulting the hon. member. The verdict of a court was that an attempt to bribe was made by his own party, and that money was put up to bribe members of this party to vote with them.

Mr. MORGAN: Not by this party.

The PREMIER: I say it ill becomes members like the hon. member for Sandgate to set themselves up as Simon Pures in these matters. Above all hon. members, the hon. member should recognise that he is no better and has no higher standard than any other hon. member of this Chamber, and that he has no claim to get on his feet and say that he is concerned about the integrity of Parliament.

Mr. MORGAN: Of course he is.

The PREMIER: Well, he has got poor support from his party. If the Opposition party believe in this attitude of his, why has not the Leader of the Opposition taken up his case? Why have other members of his party sat back and listened to him? My own personal opinion is that the hon. member is only concerned with making political capital—(Opposition dissent)—that he is only concerned with an attempt to create some ill-feeling for party purposes. I have no objection to that—none whatever. It is politics, and, if the hon. member likes to do it, he may; but, when he drags in the Government's name, he is on different grounds altogether. Of course, I happen to be a member of the Queensland Central Executive; but that does not convey anything. I very seldom attend the meetings. The Queensland Central Executive has control of our affairs, just the same as the executive of the Opposition has control of theirs. Their organisation executive selects candidates. I think the Leader of the Opposition is a member if it. All these things are done by political parties. It is no concern of mine what the Leader of the Opposition does as Mr. Moore or as a member of the organisation's executive, and I do not think that anything I do as Mr. McCormack or as a member of the Queensland Central Executive is the concern of Mr. Moore. That is the attitude I take up on these questions. The hon. member is only trying to make political capital. I think he failed. He got a very good dressing-down by the Home Secretary. There is nothing wrong with his

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going to the Home Department in regard to his own affairs, but why does he start to shuffle now?

Mr. SIZER: I am not shuffling. The only point is that I would not hand over the anonymous letters.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman did go to the police.

Mr. SIZER: That had nothing to do with election matters.

The PREMIER: He did go to the police office. He went about damaging letters which had been circulated about him. Quite right! I have no fault to find with him. It was associated with his election.

Mr. SIZER: It was not associated with my election. It had nothing to do with it. (Government laughter.)

The PREMIER: I have no grievance against the hon. member because he went there. There is nothing wrong in doing that when somebody attempts to defame you. (Opposition interjections.) I cannot understand the hon. member's insistence that he did not do this.

Mr. SIZER: I did not do what the police allege.

Mr. POLLOCK: Every defendant tells the same story. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: The police refused to take certain action in regard to the matter.

Mr. SIZER: They were never asked in that matter.

The PREMIER: If the hon. member had laid a charge and handed over the anonymous letters—

Mr. SIZER: I only asked them to make a comparison of the two signatures.

The PREMIER: Why did the hon. member go there? He had forty minutes in which to tell us why he went there.

Mr. SIZER: I had taken an oath, and I did not break my oath.

The PREMIER: I do not know why you want to evade it.

Mr. SIZER: You need not worry; I am not uncomfortable.

The PREMIER: You are at pains to make several speeches during my speech by way of explanation.

Mr. SIZER: I only want you to tell the truth.

The PREMIER: To suit you, I shall say that you went round—not on a plebiscite matter. You wanted some action taken.

Mr. SIZER: No.

The PREMIER: Why did you go?

Mr. SIZER: I went to ask the police—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: Were you making an after-dinner call? Do people wait on the Criminal Investigation Branch by way of social diversion? Let me proceed.

Mr. EDWARDS: You ask a question, and then answer it yourself.

The PREMIER: That is the proper way, and the only way of allowing hon. members with the intelligence of the hon. member to follow an argument. However, the hon. gentleman went there.

Mr. SIZER: You should—

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The PREMIER: The police refused to handle this matter, and for the same reason they refused to handle this matter concerning Talty.

Mr. SIZER: The police were never asked. The statement by the police is perfectly untrue, and the officer who made that report is not worthy of the confidence of any Government. The facts are distorted.

The PREMIER: There are two—

Mr. SIZER: They were distorted to suit the Government. I say that deliberately.

The PREMIER: The hon. member will not allow me to proceed.

Mr. SIZER: You will not permit me to say what I want to say.

The PREMIER: You had forty minutes in which to make a speech.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MORGAN: What you are stating has nothing to do with the case.

The PREMIER: It has this to do with it: The hon. member has made a charge against the police that they did not take action, by search warrant, to compel somebody to hand over certain documents. The police refused to do likewise in his own particular case.

Mr. SIZER: They were never asked to do it.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Sandgate will not allow me to proceed. Mr. Speaker, I ask you to protect me from the hon. member.

Mr. SIZER: You—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: The case of the hon. member is similar to the case of Talty. If Talty was agreeable to do certain things which he did not do, then the police would have to investigate both the Talty case and the Sizer case.

Mr. SIZER: There was no case for investigation. I merely brought them an anonymous letter—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SIZER: And asked for a comparison of the signatures.

The PREMIER: I am not dragging in the case of the hon. gentleman.

Mr. SIZER: Oh, no.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman will not accept that. I do not wish particularly to deal with the hon. member personally. I am not concerned about him. He is only making political capital out of the position, which is permissible. He says that he went to the Criminal Investigation Branch as a social caller. I am willing to leave it at that. I am willing to leave it to the public to believe that he went to the Criminal Investigation Branch merely to call on Sub-Inspector Lipp in a social way, and I am willing to allow the public to decide whether Sub-Inspector Lipp invented those letters.

Mr. SIZER: He did invent that.

The PREMIER: I know other people who have seen them.

Mr. SIZER: What?

The PREMIER: I do not blame the hon. gentleman for the action he took, but I do not know why he is trying to evade it now.

Mr. SIZER: I am not evading it now.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. SIZER: I was—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: I shall get away from that subject, as it disturbs the hon. gentleman.

Mr. SIZER: You have been most unfair about it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You were very fair!

The SPEAKER: Order! If the hon. member for Sandgate will not obey my call to order, there is only one thing for me to do.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MORGAN: The Premier invited it.

The PREMIER: I shall not dwell on the subject any longer. I rose particularly to say that the Government, as a Government, have no knowledge of these things, and the Government have not cast upon them the responsibility of forthwith investigating every charge made by every person in the community.

It is entirely a police force job. Does anybody believe that we, as a Government, have any conception of the thousand-and-one matters that come before the police—of the charges that are laid and of the many charges that are investigated which never come before Ministers? The hon. member has inferred—deliberately inferred—that the Government are concerned in a deliberate attempt to try to cover up dishonest or criminal practices. That is what the hon. member has done, whether he means it or not. That is what he has done, and, if in doing so, he has brought some criticism upon himself, then it is his own lookout. There is a proper authority to investigate any charges arising out of a plebiscite. That authority has nothing to do with the Government or with Parliament. If that authority is satisfied that wrong practices have occurred in connection with any plebiscite held under its aegis, it can immediately cancel the plebiscite and order a new plebiscite to be held.

Mr. SIZER: I am not worrying about that.

The PREMIER: That has been done quite recently.

Mr. SIZER: The question is forgery.

The PREMIER: It has been done in all plebiscites. I believe it has been done in plebiscites held by the Opposition. Officially it is not within the province of the Government to interfere with those things. If the people concerned will lay the charge and sign an information—that is the point—the police, without any interference, will do their duty in connection with such charge. That is all I can say as the head of the Government. The case does not warrant the importance given to it by the hon. member. If he had kept to his political argument, well and good—I would not have replied to him; but, when he deliberately and maliciously states that the whole of this Government are concerned in covering up forgery and corruption, I am compelled to answer him, and I am compelled in doing so to investigate who is the party making the charges.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I had no intention of dealing with this matter until the Premier got up and endeavoured to cover up the neglect of duty on the part of either the police, the Government, or one of his departments, by making some very serious charges against hon. members on this side of the House. He knows perfectly well that the members on this side had nothing whatever to do with the bribery charge he mentioned. That has been admitted by hon. members on that side of the House, particularly at the time by Mr. Theodore. It is no use the Premier working himself into a fury and trying to fasten that on us.

The PREMIER: You would like us to forget it.

Mr. MOORE: That does not matter to me. We know that a judge tried the case, found two men guilty, and put them in gaol. We also know that, after that, the Government brought in a special Act of Parliament for the purpose of confiscating the money. I have not the faintest idea where that money came from.

The PREMIER: I have a better knowledge than you have.

Mr. MOORE: Quite possibly the hon. gentleman had access to the results of investigations which I did not have.

The PREMIER: Your leader knew about it.

Mr. MOORE: No; I do not think for a moment that he did. I do not think that the statement he is alleged to have made on the racecourse had anything to do with the bribery case. It was quite common property that a charge was likely. If he knew anything about it, he kept it to himself, because I did not know anything about it.

Mr. HANLON: I understand you had your Cabinet selected.

Mr. MOORE: We have to recognise the seriousness of the position. The hon. member for Ithaca stated that a criminal gang was going about endeavouring to influence plebiscites. He said he knew that. He also stated that he had fought against it. We know from affidavits that have been made that this criminal gang is still in existence. We know that the Government, after statements were made in this House, set the police to investigate the charges, and that they went to this criminal gang and found out how far they had gone. There is no need for the hon. member to endeavour to cover up the delinquencies of his own party by going back five or six years. We are talking about a case to-day, and, if hon. members opposite are proud of their associates—a lot of criminals—they can be so.

Mr. BRUCE: Are you proud of your bribing and corrupting friends?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MOORE: The police were asked by the Government to go and investigate this case. They knew that the honour of Parliament was involved, as the fountain-head of Parliament is the selection of candidates for this Parliament. If there is a gang about who, the Home Secretary says, are criminals, and who are endeavouring—

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: And who are the informers of the hon. member for Sandgate.

Mr. MOORE: Who are endeavouring to influence the selection of candidates for this Parliament, then it is a most serious matter.

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Mr. FERRICKS: Members of your party sought to influence the selection of a candidate for South Brisbane last time. They interviewed Garbutt to get him to withdraw.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MOORE: If we thought a man was not suitable, we would ask him to withdraw, but that is an entirely different proposition from men who are acknowledged by the Home Secretary to be criminals seeking to influence the selection of a member of this Parliament. That is a serious matter. The Government recognise the seriousness of it, because they instructed the police to investigate it. The police did make some investigations.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: And they said that your informers were criminals who could not be relied on.

Mr. MOORE: The hon. gentleman wants to get away from the main facts of the case.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Those are the facts.

Mr. MOORE: There were other individuals, too. There was also Mr. Osborne, who, so far as I know, is not a criminal. They knew that some of these men were criminals before they asked for the investigation. I suppose they knew them as much as the hon. member for Ithaca did before they ordered the investigation. They knew the class of people from whom they were going to ask for information. They considered there was forgery, and they wanted the last link in the chain to prove it. They went to the secretary of the Queensland Central Executive, who declines to give up the documents that will complete the chain of evidence, that gentleman saying that he will give them up afterwards, if it is considered that there is a criminal charge involved. That is a serious point. The police are asked to investigate the matter, and they knew the character of these people before the Government asked them to investigate it. It is no good trying to cloud the issue by bringing up personal matters relative to the hon. member for Sandgate. This is a most serious matter.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You practically sell votes for 2s. each.

Mr. MOORE: I do not think the remark is worthy of a reply. We know that men become members of an organisation, but we do not compel them to become members.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The man with the most money can always win.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MOORE: I take a serious view of the whole position when a gang of men well known to the Government is known to be going about endeavouring to influence the selection of members of this Parliament. Then, when it comes to a question of getting proof, the police are held up. It is not as though a charge had not been made. A sworn statement has been made by Mr. Talty. I have no information as to his reliability, but he has made a sworn statement. The honour of this Parliament is at stake, and whatever hon. members opposite may think about it, when it is known that there is a gang of men who are prepared to sell their services to try to make selections or to influence the votes in some other way,

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it is vital that the honour of Parliament should be protected. If the Government intended that it should, why did they not proceed with the investigation? I do not suppose the police took this matter up on their own initiative; they evidently got instructions from the Government. The Government knew exactly the position when they asked the police to investigate the matter, and, when they want to get a chance of proving it, does not every hon. member think that the police should have every opportunity of proving whether the charges are right or wrong instead of allowing the secretary of the organisation to say "we will decide"?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you seriously assert that the police have a right to make a search of anybody's premises on evidence given by a convicted criminal, who, later on, goes back on his own statement?

Mr. MOORE: That was only one.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It would be a misuse of power to do so.

Mr. MOORE: In my opinion the secretary should have said, "Here is the list. Look at it. Go through it and see if there has been forgery or not." If that had been done, the whole matter would have been cleared up. The position is most serious. When there is a charge against an individual or a set of individuals, and the police go to that organisation and say, "We think there has been forgery. We want to see the list to convict the person who did it," I cannot understand that organisation not saying, "Well, look at the list, and prove the charge or not." It may be a very useful way to cover up the position. It may satisfy the Government, but it would not satisfy me. I cannot understand the Government sitting down under the position to-day.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Why did you allow Sleeman and Connolly to go to prison?

Mr. MOORE: I know all about Connolly.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. MOORE: I look upon the police to-day as being in a most unfortunate position. They were asked to make investigations on the sworn statement of one of the candidates at the plebiscite.

Mr. CARTER: Talty would swear to anything.

Mr. MOORE: That may be so. That is the position, and the police presumably, from my point of view and from the Government's point of view, should endeavour to find out the truth, and the only way in which they can find out the truth is to get the last link in the chain.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If some convicted criminal said that in your office you had papers stolen from the Government, do you think that would justify the police in searching your office?

Mr. MOORE: Not on one person's statement. You have the statements of half a dozen persons, and also the statement of the returning officer. The easiest and the best thing to do to clear up the whole position is for the organisation to say, "Here is the list. Prove your case, or disprove it." If that were done, the Government could go out and say that certain charges were made, and that there is absolutely nothing in them. But, in order to cover it up, they say, "We

are not going to give up the papers." That makes it very awkward for the police. It leads people to believe that the Government knew what was going on, and knew that this gang was endeavouring to influence the election of members of this House.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You want to give the police power to exercise tyranny.

Mr. MOORE: The hon. gentleman knows better than that. The position is entirely a wrong one, and I take the greatest exception to the innuendo of the Premier in regard to the hon. member for Normanby. It was absolutely uncalled for, and absolutely unfair. In an endeavour to cover up something affecting his own side of the House in regard to neglect of duty, he makes an innuendo that he has no earthly chance of establishing. He was not game to bring in a direct charge, but contented himself with making an innuendo. If that is the way the business of Parliament is going to be conducted, it is time there was a new system. The whole principle is absolutely wrong. The Leader of the Government knows that he had the power to make the fullest investigation at the time, and he did not do it. He has waited for years, and now, in an endeavour to defend himself against an unfortunate position, he makes a disgraceful charge against an hon. member on this side of the House. If that is the sort of defence the Government are going to put up, it shows that there is a good deal in the charge when the Premier has to get down to that kind of thing. It is absolutely disgraceful. I felt ashamed to sit here and be forced to listen to the suggestion. The present position is quite unsatisfactory. The Government, if they do not want to give a warrant to the police themselves, should say to their organisation, "Clear us of this charge! Show us the list! We shall then know where we are!"

[5.30 p.m.]

The SPEAKER: Order!

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Look at the way you treated Bob Shepherd.

Mr. MOORE: There is nothing to be ashamed of with regard to Mr. Shepherd.

The SPEAKER: Order! If the hon. member does not obey my call to order, I shall have to ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. MOORE: I do not wish to labour the point. The position is absolutely unsatisfactory as it now stands, and I do not see how it can be left as it is.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: As a matter of fact, this Talty gang was at work long before the Mace plebiscite. That can be proved right up to the hilt.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MOORE: That makes the matter all the worse.

The SPEAKER: Order! I hope the hon. member will not unduly prolong his present attitude.

Mr. MOORE: The interjection of the Secretary for Public Instruction shows that it is time the Government took definite action in this matter. I want to see the police given the opportunity to go right through with it—to clear up the position, and see that there is not going to be this undue influence exercised outside, and that people are going to be properly elected to

Parliament in this State, and not interfered with by men who go round in this fashion.

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*): It is time that the House and the public were told that this matter was not raised in a bona fide way for the protection of the honour of Parliament. The hon. member for Sandgate raised this question, and upon him is the responsibility. In my opinion he was not concerned with the honour of Parliament when he raised it. His assertion that the police should be called upon to inquire into these alleged charges of forgery is not bona fide. Everybody knows the reason that this question was raised—first, in Committee, and again this afternoon—where your duty, Mr. Speaker, is being made very difficult, and I do not propose to make it any more difficult. The reason for raising it was not to have forgers arrested at all—the Oppositor were not concerned with that—least of all the hon. member for Sandgate. He was concerned with trying to get an opportunity to prove to the public that plebiscites conducted by Labour were not conducted in a fair manner, and so endeavour to undermine the Labour movement. That was the design behind it all. The attitude of the hon. member since has proved it, because, when the Premier had him down, he did his very utmost to get you, Sir, to suspend him so that he could crawl out. He was doing his best for ten minutes to get thrown out, and you wisely decided to let him stay here.

Mr. SIZER: I was not.

Mr. POLLOCK: Of course he was. The Speaker has sense to know when an hon. member is trying to run away. The hon. member for Sandgate did his best to get thrown out. In similar circumstances any other member would have been suspended from the service of the House.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: That is a reflection on the Chair.

Mr. POLLOCK: It is not a reflection on the Chair. It is a proof of my contention—and you, Sir, knew it—that the hon. member was trying to get thrown out because he could not stand up to it.

Mr. SIZER: I won't run away.

Mr. POLLOCK: That proves that the hon. member's action was not bona fide.

Mr. SIZER: I am not going to run away from it.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. POLLOCK: I have forty minutes, and I am going to say what I started out to say, so I will give the hon. member plenty of time to interject if he wants to. All I have to say is this: If his own colleagues were satisfied that he brought this matter up for the purpose of having forgers arrested and brought to book, do you think there is one of us on this side who would not have helped him? But we know that he only raised it for the purpose of discussing our plebiscites—he cannot get away from that. Every effort was made when I was in the chair in Committee—of which you, Mr. Speaker, have no cognisance—to discuss this plebiscite business, and, not being in such a difficult position as yourself in connection with the matter, I ruled it out of order, and I think I was right in my ruling.

With my experience in the chair to guide me, there is no doubt in my mind that the object of raising this matter was to discuss

*Mr. Pollock.]*

Labour plebiscites. The hon. member who raised it and the hon. member for Enoggera, who spoke after him, were principally concerned with the desire to show that the plebiscites of the Labour Party were unfairly conducted, and their supposed desire to protect Parliament and bring forgers to book never entered into their calculations at all.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): After hearing the various speakers, there is something I would like to say. Evidently there are two gangs attached to the party opposite, about some of whom, at any rate, the police have nothing good to say. I am quite satisfied, from the statements we have heard from the Premier and the Home Secretary, that there is nothing good to be said of these two gangs so far as the police are concerned.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DEACON: The Home Secretary, who is in charge of the police, and the Premier, who is head of the Government, consider that neither of these two sets of people is worth inquiry. They must take the responsibility for that. All I can say is that I do not congratulate them on the crowd they have to deal with. But the Premier, in replying to the charges made by the hon. member for Sandgate, made charges against this party which are not true, and the Premier knew it.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DEACON: I am only asking the Government to prove the charges made by the Premier.

Mr. BULCOCK: Were you here?

Mr. DEACON: I was here when he made his speech, and the Premier had no right to make the charges unless he intended to prosecute them and prove them. If he was going to give reasons why the Government were not going to make an inquiry into the statements of the hon. member for Sandgate, he could have done it with dignity, and without abusing members on this side of the House. He could have done it without bringing in an hon. member who is not here, and making a statement for which there is not the slightest foundation.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DEACON: I desired to protest against that, because the Premier had no right to make the charges. If the hon. gentleman is allowed to make charges against this political party, then we should have the right of reply. The Premier said that the Government knew the men who supplied the money in that bribery case. We know that they said they knew at the time the bribery case was on, because the Attorney-General said they knew the men who supplied the money, and that they could and would prosecute them. Right down till to-day, however, there has not been the slightest attempt to prosecute. The matter has been raised again in this debate, and the Government still say that they have the information, although they never at any time have made any use of it. I say again that, if they knew the men who supplied it, they should have made use of the information. If they knew there was anything wrong in this matter, they should have prosecuted. It seems to me that they are not going to prosecute in this case, and all we can say is that all the blame and all the dirt—if there is any dirt—lies on the rank and file of the Government.

[*Mr. Pollock.*

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): My opinion is that, if the Government failed in regard to this charge or the statements which have been made in regard to this party's business, it was in allowing the police to take any notice at all of statements outside ordinary legal practice. Evidently hon. members opposite do not realise their status as private citizens; evidently they do not value their liberty and privileges as they should, or else they do not know how those liberties and privileges are safeguarded. They evidently do not understand the duty of Parliament when they ask this House to investigate contradictions, fabrications, and statements made by people with reputations that do not commend themselves to the House. Because a certain man has a political pain as a result of being beaten in a plebiscite test, they come along to this Parliament and ask it to apply a poultice to heal him and soothe his spleen and pettiness. Whatever happened in the plebiscite does not concern this Parliament. It does not affect the honour or the status of any member here. It is a matter for the controlling political body of which the person concerned is a member. It is of vital interest to this House, and calls for intervention, after a person comes into this House and his public conduct is involved or offers are made to him to sway his political views. It is degrading to the status of Parliament to ask it to take part in these political squabbles based on innuendoes and suggestions. If the police or the Government have failed at all, it is in being in any way interested in the matter. What does it matter to this Parliament how Mr. Talty feels, or how he was beaten, or how certain people were in a motor car with political rolls? That is the position I shall be in at the next election—taking care that every vote is brought in. I shall be there with the assistance of my committee. That is not a crime.

Mr. KERR: It is against your own rules in connection with plebiscites.

Mr. HARTLEY: It is not. The hon. gentleman has a poor conception of rules. His party have no rules in their plebiscites. They feared that a certain candidate for the Keppel plebiscite would be a fairly strong candidate, and, because they did not want him, they allowed the sale of £30 worth of tickets, mostly to Labour supporters, so that they could have a vote at the plebiscite. They sold the tickets at 2s. each, and the man who sold the most votes won the plebiscite.

Mr. FARRELL: They sold £50 worth.

Mr. HARTLEY: The sum has been increased since my last information. Why all this enhancement of the power of the police, and the "sooling" of them on to investigate matters sufficiently covered by the statute? If Mr. Talty feels aggrieved as a result of the pain he received through the plebiscite, and it is hurting him so much and he wants a cure, then he has a simple legal process. He could go to a solicitor, who would advise him to swear an information that certain things had been done contrary to the Criminal Code—that is, if certain things had been done contrary to the Criminal Code. I have not sufficient legal knowledge to express an opinion on the matter. He has a perfect right to do that, and why should he insist upon the police doing what he should do? If he has not sufficient faith in his own case, then the case has not sufficient merit to be introduced here.

They ask this, Mr. Speaker, why was Mr. Funnell not interrogated? I do not know why he was not; but, if I had been Mr. Funnell and the police came to interrogate me, I would have told the police to go to China—or somewhere else. The police have no right to interrogate me as to where I was, or what I was doing, at a certain time, unless I was prepared out of consideration to them to help them in their duty. That is what hon. members lose sight of. They seem to think that the police should be pimps, sleuths, and bloodhounds to track out every act or word of a private person, irrespective of the legal process. Hon. members opposite do not seem to appreciate the law they live under, or that that law is there to safeguard their personal liberty and private comfort, and the police can only act on certain information in certain directions. They have no right to interrogate Funnell, and, if they did so, Funnell would have been quite within his rights as a citizen in refusing to reply. Let me say this about the brothers Funnell, as to the innuendo that the hon. member for Sandgate tried to throw upon this Government, that it is not correct they had got big concessions because of these things.

Mr. COSTELLO: That came from your side.

Mr. HARTLEY: He was not manly enough to say what he meant.

Mr. EDWARDS: What of the Premier and his insinuations about the hon. member for Normanby?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HARTLEY: I could tell you more about your party's action in that respect than you anticipate.

Mr. EDWARDS: If there is anything to tell, tell us.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HARTLEY: I do not want to be drawn away from the subject. I do not want to say that your party is to be blamed for persuading hon. members to go from this side over to that. I can give you an instance in my own personal candidature.

Mr. MORGAN: Were you offered a bribe? (Laughter.)

Mr. HARTLEY: If we put it that way, "Yes," and that straight out at the same time as the hon. member for Normanby crossed over. Now you are fishing for it, and you have got it.

Mr. MORGAN: Let us have it.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HARTLEY: If you want something about myself that ought to be investigated, I will give it straight. I was approached by an agent, who was authorised by your party to do so. We will leave it just there.

Mr. MAXWELL: Why not finish it?

Mr. HARTLEY: We will leave it just there, or I will give it straight out. (Opposition interjections.)

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MORGAN: Go straight on with it.

Mr. HARTLEY: You would be very sorry if I did.

Mr. MORGAN: No; there is nothing to hide so far as we are concerned.

Mr. KERR: Make your own speech.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BRUCE: You don't want him to give it.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HARTLEY: I do not want to go into that business, but at the same time I am willing to do so.

Mr. KERR: It is a pretty cowardly attack, and you know it. You know he is absent.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HARTLEY: We will go right on with the cowardly attack, and afterwards, if there is any action to be taken or investigations to be made, they can be made.

Mr. KING: And don't plead privilege of Parliament afterwards.

Mr. KERR: Go outside and say it.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HARTLEY: That is the lawyer all over.

Mr. KING: Coward's castle!

Mr. KERR: Coward's castle, all right!

Mr. HARTLEY: The incident I have in my mind as regards this attempt by hon. gentlemen on the other side to bring hon. members from this side to that side of the House was afterwards recounted by me on a public platform during an election in Rockhampton.

Mr. KING: Did you implicate any particular person?

Mr. HARTLEY: Yes; I did implicate some very particular persons.

Mr. KING: Name them.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. KERR: Privilege of Parliament!

The SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: We will get a Royal Commission to inquire into this.

Mr. KERR: You are not too keen on Royal Commissions, so don't talk about them.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HARTLEY: I was dealing with the Funnell Brothers, and with the innuendo that had been thrown across the Chamber by the hon. member for Sandgate that one of them had got those fruitstalls in Edward street because he had been of use to this Government. That was practically the suggestion. I know perfectly well that long before either of those men had either of the stalls which they now hold at least two other persons had them. So far as my knowledge goes, the stall in Edward street, near Adelaide street, has been recently acquired, and there is nothing in that. It was purchased, as the Secretary for Labour and Industry reminds me, from the Committee of Direction. That disposes of that. As far as I know, they are honest working men, and whatever they did was in the interests of the views of Labour that they had.

With regard to the disclosure of documents by the Queensland Central Executive, the hon. member for Logan and many of his colleagues know that there is a very simple process by which these documents can be procured.

Mr. KING: I know all about it.

Mr. HARTLEY: Why do you not correct your silly rattle-tongues on that side? Unless you are in favour of throwing as much political dirt as possible, why do you not put them right?

*Mr. Hartley.]*

Everyone knows there was no responsibility on the police to get those papers, because there is a simple process by which they can be obtained. Some party has only to swear an information against a person or persons for forgery or some other crime, come before the court, and the magistrate or the judge will make an order on the Queensland Central Executive to disclose not only those documents but all documents that may affect the case. It is sheer humbug to say that the Government are in any way holding up the processes of law. What I rose to emphasise was that, while I am in this House, I will not allow the police to be used as blood-hounds or spies on the political actions of any man. That is the way to get up a Tammany class such as we have never had in Australia. The duty of the police is to protect the public and to see that the law is enforced—not to interrogate people or to make them come to their office to answer questions. The big trouble in the police force in England concerns the same thing—the improper procedure adopted in interrogating people connected with crime. Some of the leading counsel in England emphasised the view that the police had no statutory right to take a man and subject him to a “third degree” cross-examination in order to get evidence to fit a crime on him or on somebody else later on. So far as this Parliament is concerned, it will preserve its dignity best by looking after its own affairs and not dabbling in the political actions of any political party.

Resolution 55 agreed to.

Resolutions 56 to 76, both inclusive, agreed to.

Resolution 77—“*Department of Public Lands—Irrigation and Water Supply Commission*”—

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): I want to take advantage of this opportunity to try to ascertain from the Minister in charge some information regarding the Dawson Valley scheme, which is one of these picturesque endeavours to make a success of an irrigation settlement, but concerning which I do not think the House has a very keen knowledge, despite the elaborate report which has been presented to us.

I understand that the Development and Migration Commission has spent some time in investigating this scheme, which is destined to absorb a very large sum of money; and I understand that a report was submitted to the Commissioner of Irrigation and to the Government somewhat casting doubts upon the efficiency or possibilities of the scheme. I think we are entitled to hear exactly what that report is, and I hope the Minister in charge of the department will give in his own language just what effect that Development and Migration Commission's report has had upon this most important scheme. The completion of Nathan's Dam will entail a very large expenditure of money, and it therefore seems to me that it is quite fit and proper that we should know all there is to be known in regard to the different views in connection with this proposal. I understand this is the only occasion upon which Queensland has made application for assistance from the £24,000,000 that Great Britain has made available for undertakings of this nature, therefore it is essential that we should be able to have the views of the representatives

[*Mr. Hartley.*

who advise the home authorities, so that we may understand what their idea is in regard to the proposal. These irrigation schemes throughout Australia as a whole have not been a success financially, therefore we should be glad to know whether this particular scheme differs in that respect from others in other parts of Australia. In this connection one is forced to study the figures that are submitted by the Auditor-General, and I see that on page 94 of his report he refers to the fact that approximately 26,000 acres of land were available for settlement on 1st November, 1926. Only 229 blocks had been taken up, comprising 16,352 acres, to 30th June last—that is nearly two years later. That shows that only a little more than half of the total area available on 1st November, 1926, had been taken up by 30th June last, which seems to indicate that something is restraining selectors from taking advantage of that portion of the area which has already been made available. He also calls attention to the fact that a revenue account has been prepared showing a loss of £1,910 on the year's transactions, and reminding the Commissioner and the department generally that in arriving at that loss he has not taken into account the fact that £228,928 14s. 1d. has been spent on preliminary requirements which have not been allocated to the various sections, including this particular one, where the income from settlers has been collected. He points out that a proper share of that £228,928 14s. 1d. should be allocated to the department where the loss—£1,910—is disclosed after taking into account their probable proportion of this debit for overhead charges.

I notice that the Inkerman irrigation scheme for the year just closed shows a loss of £13,319 6s. 3d. This, added to the accumulated losses which this unfortunate scheme has disclosed, makes a total loss on that scheme of something like £212,000.

[7 p.m.]

The accumulated losses on the scheme to 30th June, 1928, totalled £40,464 4s. 11d., to which must be added deferred Treasury interest, £8,555, and £163,344 written off the capital cost in June, 1925. That gives a very serious financial aspect to the Inkerman scheme. I think I am right in stating that most of us hoped that, when £163,344 was written off the capital outlay, with the development of the Inkerman district in sugar-growing we should have seen the end of the loss on the scheme; but, although we are, I suppose, at the zenith of our sugar production in Queensland, this scheme last year lost a further £14,000.

In matters of this description the whole system of cultivation by irrigation comes under criticism. If all our attempts to assist production by the introduction of irrigation are going to result in such financial loss, the question arises as to whether it is a system that is worth proceeding with. I know that when these irrigation schemes have previously been before this House certain speakers on this side have called attention to the fact that irrigation schemes, on the whole, have been financial failures in Australia. We were hoping that in Queensland the experience would be different, and I hope that the Minister can tell us something which will allay our fears in this connection.

There is one particular reference in regard to the Theodore section of the Dawson Valley

scheme that gives some ray of comfort—that is, that 140 acres were put under cotton, and the yield in one instance was up to 2,000 lb. per acre, the minimum being 1,000 lb. per acre.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The American average in their cotton area is only 320 lb. per acre.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: If that is a correct indication of what the yield of cotton is likely to be in that area, then the Dawson Valley scheme really opens up a new outlook altogether.

It is rather interesting at this stage to call attention to the fact that in Queensland to-day practically nothing else but annual cotton is grown, and that ratoon cotton is a thing of the past. I remember that we had a bitter controversy some few years back, when the Government made certain regulations insisting on annual cotton being grown, and certain steps were taken to cause the Government to alter their attitude in that regard. The argument was used that Queensland could not succeed with anything else than ratoon cotton; yet, when the agitation died down and we got to a better system of production free from political interference, we find that the growers, of their own accord, discontinued the growth of ratoon cotton.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It was discontinued because of the method instituted by me of paying on the grade and staple without reference to whether the cotton was annual or ratoon. That sounded the death-knell of ratoon cotton in Queensland.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I accept the Minister's statement, but the fact remains that ratoon cotton is practically a thing of the past in Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is right.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Here we have in this new cotton area in the Dawson Valley a yield which is phenomenal, and I suggest that, when additional land is opened up, we could not look for any better method of cropping it than by planting cotton. If we can get an annual return of 2,000 lb. of seed cotton per acre—which I think on present values will return to the grower not far short of £50 from seed and everything else—then the prospects are bright. I have no desire to criticise the Dawson Valley scheme, which I have not yet been privileged to see—because it is one of those ventures which I have followed with the greatest possible interest, recognising that in the gentleman in charge and his officers we have men who are sincerely anxious to do the right thing. They have complete autonomy in the management, but I am sure that a little outside criticism, based upon the report before us, would do no harm. I trust that the Minister will favour the House with some information on the lines I have indicated.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): Whilst I do not wish to say anything detrimental to this scheme, in which I have taken very keen interest and which I would like to see successful, because it is of much importance to a portion of my electorate, and one of the finest things that could be done in Queensland from the point of view of producing fodder, and whilst I do not want to enter upon a general discussion, nevertheless I have read very carefully the report of the Development and Migration Commission, which is a report

that every member should study. Men who we know are experts in their work have made very frank statements as to what is happening, and in some measure have condemned the procedure in the development of this great scheme—one of the greatest irrigation schemes which have been attempted in any part of the world. It is the duty of the Government and of the Commissioner, who is naturally vitally concerned in the well-being of this settlement, to go fully into the matters mentioned in that report with a view to preventing waste of money which might make the cost so great and the charge for water so prohibitive that we shall have to do as we did at Inkerman and write off a considerable amount of the capital cost before the settler will be able to make a living. Although we may be able to grow prolific crops with the aid of water—I speak with a little experience of irrigation in Victoria and other places—the overhead charges may be so great as to involve a loss to those engaged in their production. Therefore it is in the interests of all concerned and of the State that not one penny should be wasted.

For some time the Commissioner of Irrigation has been engaged constructing a road from the terminus of the Miles-Juandah Railway to the site of the Nathan Gorge dam, 70 or 80 miles away, with a view to facilitating the transport of machinery, cement, and other material that will be required in the construction of the Nathan Dam. Before proceeding to expend this considerable sum of money the Government should have ascertained definitely whether the irrigation scheme would prove a success justifying the construction of the Nathan Dam. It is not proposed to proceed with the construction of the dam for years, and the road which has been constructed will deteriorate unless maintained, which again involves additional expenditure. Very little traffic will pass over the road before the construction of the Nathan Dam is undertaken, and, although this money was expended in my electorate and provided work for people in need of employment, I consider that it was unwise to expend thousands of pounds before further information was secured. The money should be expended with a view to assisting those who proposed to make a living from the land. I understand that there is sufficient water at present on the area provided by the construction of one or two small weirs to enable the Government to demonstrate sufficiently within the course of three or four years whether the scheme will be a practical undertaking. The report of the Development and Migration Commission points out that the suitability of the area for irrigation purposes has not been definitely established. I know from experience that certain soils do not lend themselves to irrigation—in some cases deteriorating with the increased amount of water placed upon it—whereas other soils are of a totally different nature.

The people going upon this area are a very good type of settler—men with a certain amount of capital. The Commissioner has stated that he has no difficulty in placing settlers upon all the blocks, but he is wise in adopting the course that the blocks should not be made available for what might be termed poor settlers, or, in other words, those without the necessary capital. I know a great number of the settlers personally, and I know that they are a very fine type.

*Mr. Morgan.]*

Within the next three years it should be possible to demonstrate sufficiently whether the scheme will be a success or not.

The Commissioner and the Government will have every opportunity of deciding during that period whether they will be justified in proceeding with the expenditure of a further large sum of money in the construction of the Nathan Dam. I hope the dam will be constructed before many years go by. When it is constructed, it will be one of the greatest fresh-water storages in the world, and, in my opinion, it is going to change completely conditions in Central Queensland. The country many miles distant from the area which is going to be submerged will be affected by it. In Victoria, Lake Lonsdale, which is not a natural lake, has been created by the conservation of water such as the proposal in connection with the Nathan Dam, and I know the effect that lake has had, and that particular storage is practically only a drop in a teacup compared with the enormous quantity of water that will be conserved by the construction of the Nathan Dam.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you think it will affect the rainfall?

Mr. MORGAN: I do.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Then the expenditure will be justified.

Mr. MORGAN: We know that, when storms occur, there is a greater rainfall over water, whether on the sea or on land, than there is in places where water is non-existent. I hope and trust that this scheme will be a great success, that the Commissioner will be assisted in every particular direction, and that he will be able to settle the land in the area and bring the scheme to a successful fruition. If he does we shall eventually be able to say he has proved himself in the right way, that the money has been well spent, and unquestionably the State will benefit by its expenditure.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. T. Dunstan, *Gympie*): When the Dawson Valley irrigation scheme was submitted to the Development and Migration Commission as a project to be considered in relation to the £34,000,000 that has been set aside for the Commission, the members of that Commission, in conjunction with officers of the Department of Agriculture, investigated it, and, after their investigations, they came to certain conclusions. It is not correct, as has been stated, that the proposition was officially turned down by the Commission.

Mr. MORGAN: They did not recommend it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Amongst other recommendations they expressed the desire that further investigation should be made as to the suitability of the land in the area for treatment by irrigation. The Government agreed that care should be exercised in that respect, and, following the offer of the Commission to supply £100,000 out of the £34,000,000 mentioned for further investigation and tests, it was decided to defer the immediate construction of the Nathan Dam until those tests were made.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Is that £100,000 in the form of a loan?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It was furnished on the usual terms offered by the Commission, which desires that five

experimental farms should be established on the Dawson River, including the Theodore zone. It is generally recognised that the areas further down the Dawson Valley are more fertile, but they would depend for their irrigation treatment on the completion of the Nathan Dam. The area in the Theodore zone is now being supplied with water from the weir. As the hon. member for Murilla has stated, it can be safely said that the condition of the settlers and their production in the Theodore area has, so far, been very satisfactory. Visitors from other States who have inspected those areas are generally loud in their praise of what has been and is being done.

I think it can also be safely said that the settlers themselves are satisfied. The Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply makes reference to the question of experimental farms in his annual report, which has just been tabled. He differs from the officers of the Development and Migration Commission as to the necessity of establishing a number of experimental farms on the lower river areas. He holds—and I think he is largely justified in his contention—that the Theodore zone, being the least fertile of the areas, will in the course of a year or two amply prove whether those areas are suitable for treatment by irrigation. The following extract is from his report—

“Owing to some doubt in the minds of the officers of the Development and Migration Commission as to whether some of the soils will prove suitable for irrigation, their report recommends considerable expenditure upon experimental farms on the lower river areas, to be operated over a period of five years, to determine their suitability and the returns to be obtained. In each case pumping stations would have to be installed and, as the river flats are 4 and 5 miles wide where irrigation is proposed, only the land near the banks can be dealt with under this proposal. This is a matter for Government decision, but I would point out that the lower river soils are already represented in the Theodore zone, and the observation of the work of practical farmers in the latter area appears to be a more practical and commonsense means of obtaining a thorough trial. Those settlers who were early enough to plant are, so far, satisfied with their returns, and another two-years’ trial should definitely determine the value, or otherwise, of irrigation on the Dawson, particularly as most of the settlers are experienced farmers or dairymen.”

In connection with the Dawson Valley scheme and the construction of the Nathan Dam the question will probably arise, as it does in regard to all irrigation projects, as to how much of the capital cost of an undertaking such as that should be borne by the general taxpayer of the State as a national undertaking, recognising that its benefit may be spread over the whole of the State in the important industries which it will establish as an irrigation scheme in this State.

Mr. WARREN: That is another form of taxation.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is true, but the same principle applies in regard to many railways that were built on the guarantee system. If the whole burden of the construction of these railways

[Mr. Morgan.]

to serve certain country districts were placed upon the settlers in those areas, as it was under that railway guarantee system, the burden would be very great.

Mr. EDWARDS: It will not be the same on the Burnett. Don't you see you will grow a product there that will enter into competition with the crops grown by the people who will pay the taxes?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do you not do the same in regard to the railways? Take the Mary Valley railway, for example, which was built under the guarantee provisions of the Railway Act. That was built to open up settlement in the Mary Valley district. So far as I understand, it has not paid interest and redemption, and I doubt very much if it has paid much over working costs since its inception. In some of those national undertakings such as the Nathan Dam and the Inkerman irrigation scheme, that question also arises, and probably will have to be dealt with in due course.

The statement made in the Auditor-General's Report as to the non-apportionment of certain capital costs to the Theodore area is replied to by the fact that it is not considered desirable by the Commissioner—and I agree with the contention—that a proportion of these capital charges should be borne by the Theodore area until it is completed.

The other portion of the developmental costs such as plant, administration, etc., should not be apportioned to the whole area until the scheme is completed. The Auditor-General says—

"If the cost of the area were determined, it would be necessary to apportion the expenditure of £228,923 14s. 2d. previously mentioned, with the result that the revenue account would show a very considerable loss."

We contend that it is desirable to delay apportioning the capital cost of the undertaking to these areas until the scheme is definitely completed. The question will then arise as to how much of that capital cost shall be borne by the settlers in the area.

The reason why only 229 settlers have been allotted areas in the Theodore zone of the Dawson Valley area since the inception of the scheme in November, 1926, is as stated by the hon. member for Murilla. The Commissioner is exercising—I think rightly so—every discretion in the selection of applicants for land in a favoured area such as that. He is insisting upon the requisite capital equipment and experience. So far the results that have been obtained have amply justified his action. As a matter of fact, these 229 settlers who have been allotted land in the area are out of a total of 3030 applicants, showing that the Commissioner is actuated by a very keen desire to get only the best of settlers with the necessary capital equipment in order to make a success of the undertaking.

The question of the Inkerman scheme was also raised by the hon. member for Oxley, who called attention to the fact that the scheme showed a loss of £13,819 last year. That, of course, is the result of the working after charging to the area the sum of £17,527 loan interest, including arrears, £4,277, and interest on trust account overdraft, £2,369. The total interest charged

for the year was £19,896. The same consideration obtains in regard to Inkerman that will probably obtain in regard to the Dawson Valley area. That is the question of whether the whole of the capital charge of the undertaking, which is instituted for the general benefit of the State, should be borne by the producers in the irrigation area.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: A portion of the cost of the Inkerman scheme has already been written off.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is true; but the undertaking for some years has shown a profit over working expenses, although charged with a good proportion of loan interest and trust account interest also.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: According to your argument, the irrigation settlers ought not to be debited with the capital involved?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They should rightly be charged with a certain proportion of interest on capital cost, but in connection with national undertakings such as the Nathan Dam and the Inkerman scheme, it might be fairly argued that some of the capital cost should be borne by the general taxpayers.

The position in regard to Mount Abundance is somewhat analogous. That estate was bought in the interests of closer settlement, and it was found that to give a full return to the Treasury for the expenditure involved would entail a burden being placed on the settler, and, in the interests of closer settlement and of those settlers, we undertook to charge consolidated revenue and the general taxpayer with a loss of £4,000 per annum.

[7.30 p.m.]

Mr. MORGAN: The Inkerman and Dawson Valley schemes are not on an equality, because Inkerman has no deep water storage.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The capital cost of the Inkerman scheme is higher than it was at first anticipated it would be, and the only alternative in the opinion of some people would be to raise the rate on that area in order to meet the full cost of interest and redemption. We do not think that is advisable, but that the general taxpayer should pay some proportion of the liability.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Don't you think it is just as sound to argue that free capital should be made available for the development of industry in Queensland?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Under the migration scheme some free capital will be made available for the settlement of migrant families on the land from abroad as well as Australian settlers. There is no doubt they will have to be assisted to go on the land in this State under modern conditions.

Generally I agree with hon. members that the Commissioner of Irrigation and Water Supply deserves commendation for the way in which he is carrying out the schemes under his charge. I have every reason to believe that it will be demonstrated in a very short time that the soil in the Theodore area is suitable for treatment by irrigation, and the conclusions arrived at there will be applicable to areas elsewhere in the State.

Hon. T. Dunstan.]

Mr. EDWARDS (*Narango*): I appreciate the information the Minister has given in regard to the irrigation schemes. The question has been raised whether the Dawson Valley irrigation scheme will be successful or not. In the Southern States irrigation has been going on for a number of years. The cost in most cases has been very much higher than was anticipated at the beginning of the schemes, but, notwithstanding that, the Southern States have decided to embark still further on irrigation projects. A wonderful scheme is being carried out on the Murray River at the Hume Weir.

Mr. BULLOCK: Is that where the Federal Government sacked all their men the other day?

Mr. EDWARDS: It is unfortunate that the hon. member makes petty interjections like that. It is a place where men have been employed during the last three years by four Governments. It is a wonderful scheme, being the third largest in the world, and will be of great benefit to Australia. I am pleased that the Minister intends to get further information before a large sum of money is expended in further irrigation development in Queensland.

One of the most important things is markets. Some of the States are extending the areas under irrigation, and it is only natural to expect that many of the crops they will grow in the South will be the same as we shall have to grow in Queensland; and in some cases it is impossible to find local markets at prices that will pay for the growing of them. We are going to spend a huge amount of money before we complete the scheme, and whatever may be the conditions under which we obtain that money, every hon. member would like to see the scheme a success, because, if it turns out to be a "white elephant," it will prevent us from going any further with irrigation.

The Southern States are proposing to irrigate thousands upon thousands of acres more than they are watering at present, and we have to be very careful that the crops we grow here are not the same as they are growing down there perhaps for a local market, otherwise the chances are that people will go on the land only to find that they cannot pay for the water and make a living. It is all right if we can find some product which we can sell overseas. If it is possible to grow a product and put it through the cow to produce butter, which can be sold overseas at reasonable prices, the grower can live.

The Secretary for Railways likened this undertaking to a railway, but there is no comparison between the two because the taxpayers who would have to bear the loss would be largely men producing similar commodities themselves—agriculturists and graziers—and, if there is an enormous loss on this scheme, they would have to come to the rescue and help to put on the market a product in competition with their own.

I know that careful consideration is being given to every aspect of the question; but the point I have mentioned as to the production of an article which may have to compete with that produced on irrigated areas in the South is a big factor, because we can easily glut local markets, and the settlers must grow crops which will keep them going all the year round, even when their products are cheap.

[*Mr. Edwards.*]

I am sure that not one hon. member would like to witness the failure of such a scheme in its early stages, considering the effect that it will have on other schemes in the State. I repeat that it would have been wiser to experiment with smaller schemes in different districts of the State. It stands to reason that one of the big factors in the success or otherwise of the scheme is the cost of placing the product on the market. It would have been better to establish small schemes in different parts of the State to obviate the necessity for paying heavy distributing costs in times of drought, which must be borne when one big centralised scheme is established. I hope that the tests that the Minister mentioned will be carried out, and that the results will exceed all expectations, and that the scheme eventually will be of wonderful assistance in tiding this country over periods of drought.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): It is very pleasing to me to know that so little criticism is levelled against the Inkerman irrigation area in comparison with the criticism of a few years ago, when the ex-Premier of Queensland, Mr. Theodore, and I had to champion the scheme over and over again in this Parliament. I am also pleased to find, according to the Auditor-General's report, that there is already an improvement in the earnings of this scheme. It is on the upgrade, and I have no doubt that, as time goes on, it will continue on the upgrade.

It is also very pleasing to find a gradual increase in the area that is watered. In 1923 the area watered was 4,037 acres, and there has been a gradual increase each year until in 1927-28 the area was 5,136 acres. There is also a gradual decrease in the cost per acre of watering these areas. That is a good sign.

What I want to point out to hon. members is the wonderful production from the Inkerman estate by means of irrigation. From time to time hon. members opposite have referred to the cost of the scheme. I want them to realise that this year the Inkerman mill estimates to crush 160,000 tons of cane from this area, and, taking that product at a money value of £2 per ton, we have a very high value indeed, and, if we estimate it over a period of two years, the cost of the scheme is more than met. Not only is prosperity created round about Inkerman, but prosperity is created elsewhere by the increased traffic on our railways from the carriage of sugar; and work is created by the loading of the sugar and by the value in general available to the community. I am one of those who believe—and it is quite right in principle—that the whole State should carry a portion of the financial burden of any irrigation scheme.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Where is the money to come from?

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member cannot get away from the fact of where the money is coming from. It is coming from production, where all money comes from. If hon. members went into our library and picked up any authority on irrigation, they would hardly find an irrigation scheme in any part of the world which is payable. By payable I mean that it is able to pay interest on the capital expended.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What about Egypt?

Mr. COLLINS: In a general kind of way irrigation schemes are payable propositions just the same as roads. They increase production. I remember the time when I had to stand by in this House for a period of ten years listening to members of the Opposition criticising and ridiculing the Inkerman irrigation scheme. The sugar-growers in that portion of Queensland did not thank the Opposition for the criticism they hurled at the scheme. A few years ago there was only a few people living on the Inkerman estate, while, at the present time, we have more than 1,300 electors on the roll for that area, which goes to show what has been accomplished by the irrigation scheme.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COLLINS: The Government can take a good deal of credit for the increase in population in that district on account of the scheme.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COLLINS: The Commissioner and all those connected with the scheme are also to be complimented on its success and on the lowering of costs. I notice that the amount of coal required to work the machinery has been reduced, and that there is a considerable increase in the earnings, compared with the years gone by.

Mr. EPPHINSTONE: What is this cheap coal that is being used there?

Mr. COLLINS: It is called "duff," a small coal which is supplied from the Bowen State coalmine at a cheap rate. We can congratulate ourselves on the success of the Inkerman irrigation scheme from a production point of view, and also for the prosperity it has brought to trade in the Bowen electorate.

Mr. BRUCE: No one on the Opposition side is game to criticise that speech.

Mr. KELSO: How much of the capital expended has been written off?

Mr. WARREN (*Murrumbidgee*): I am never afraid of a challenge. The Government have entered into all their irrigation schemes blindly. What did the hon. member for Bowen prove in his speech about the Inkerman scheme? He did not prove anything, except that the Government, through goodness of heart, wrote off a considerable capital sum, and allowed the scheme to proceed without being charged with the interest on that money.

Mr. BRUCE: They made it possible for two sticks of cane to grow where one grew before.

Mr. WARREN: Allowing that that is so, can it be disputed that we are over-producing cane? We have thousands of acres of land on which cane can be grown without artificial means. It is, therefore, not wise for the Government to bring in this scheme—engineered by two gentlemen, to say the least of it. No irrigation scheme in Australia is doing anything wonderful. The Government learned a lesson in connection with irrigation from the gentlemen who have come from overseas. I am not professing to be an expert of land suitable for irrigation, but I have seen land in other States which had no right to be irrigated. According to the men from overseas, Queensland may be in a worse position in that respect. It is quite possible they are in a worse position. I have no desire to cry "stinking fish," as hon. members

opposite term it. If we can get irrigation schemes to work, well and good; but the Government should not become involved in the expenditure of large sums of money on wild-cat schemes. I do not say that the scheme should not be tested; but the least we can do is to test them on a moderate scale, and not on the extravagant scale that has been the feature of the past. The speeches delivered in this House were to the effect that we were going to have one of the greatest schemes in the world in the Dawson Valley scheme, which is now being discussed. What is it? It is neither one thing nor the other. It is practically at a standstill. The Government are starting where they should have started years ago—they are making a test of the soil. Fancy embarking upon such an undertaking without previously making an analysis of the soil! At Leeton and Griffiths, in New South Wales, they are trying to grow rice, and to a certain extent they are succeeding. Hon. members on this side want to see dry country irrigated, but they are not in favour of a huge debt having to be carried by posterity. All we advocate is that caution should be shown.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We are naturally cautious.

Mr. WARREN: That may be a heritage of the hon. gentleman, but it is not applicable to his party. (Laughter.) Mr. Theodore forced this scheme upon Parliament against the wishes of the party.

Mr. BULCOCK: What are you talking about?

Mr. WARREN: I am talking about the Dawson scheme, which it is well known was forced upon the people of Queensland by a former Premier, Mr. Theodore. It is time that we took stock of the situation. We should embark upon these great schemes with more caution than has been displayed hitherto. Last session it was not even known what the land there was capable of growing, because, when the question was asked in the House, it could not be stated definitely what was intended to be grown in that area. When the representative of the Commonwealth Government came to inspect the area, he could not be told definitely whether the land would grow lucerne. I have information that lucerne is growing there. I am not going to say that it will not grow, but I am doubtful whether we can get definite information to-night that lucerne will grow in that area. Take the Leeton and Griffiths schemes. That country will grow crops for a few years, but the soil is too shallow, and it will become sour and swampy. Unless on the banks of the rivers and the alluvial flats, there is no country in the area suitable for irrigation purposes. The Hume scheme is a different thing altogether. That land has been tried for years, and it will stand a moderate amount of water artificially applied. There are many places in Queensland where moderate schemes could have been started with only a fraction of the work, and there would be much less danger of their becoming a big national loss. It is wrong for the people of the State to be taxed for a scheme that is not of a national character. The Dawson Valley scheme is no more of a national character than are the fruit farms around Buderim. It is a question of those settlers working out their own salvation with the assistance of water. If the Government are going to charge the consolidated revenue with the cost of a scheme such as that, we do not know how far it will go. It is a

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wrong principle to charge the cost of such a scheme to consolidated revenue unless it is intended to reticulate the water over a large area of country, as is done in connection with the irrigation schemes in Victoria. Vast tracts of country in the mallee and Wimmera districts are watered by those irrigation schemes. In those districts there are thousands of miles of channelling.

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS:** All condemned in the initial stages.

**MR. WARREN:** These schemes were a success before the hon. member ever thought of such a thing. They were started in a small way, and were extended gradually. These channels in the first place were for the purpose of watering dry country, and not for irrigation purposes.

**MR. BRUCE:** The Dawson scheme would irrigate the whole of Victoria.

**MR. WARREN:** Evidently the hon. member has never been in Victoria. He should go down there and take a look round. When I was quite a youngster these channels in Victoria were being constructed, and they are constantly being extended.

[8 p.m.] No one will ever object to going in for a scheme of that description in this State. There is no question that there is room in Queensland for such an undertaking.

**MR. C. J. RYAN:** You just said there is no good land in Queensland.

**MR. WARREN:** It is hard to deal with a person who will not tell the truth. I said there are not the deep alluvial soils in Queensland. Our soils are just as good for the purpose; in fact, we have better soils in Queensland. We have a good deal more good country in Queensland than any other State.

**GOVERNMENT MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. WARREN:** But I would not say that it is as good for irrigation purposes. I am not saying this for political purposes. I have seen these schemes in the South from my infancy, and have watched their development. I have seen similar schemes in Egypt and other countries. If Egypt had the same soil that we have in Queensland, irrigation would be a failure there. It is the deep soil in the delta of the Nile that makes irrigation such a wonderful success there.

**MR. KELSO (Nundah):** Year after year the hon. member for Bowen defends the Inkerman irrigation scheme. He was rather jubilant this evening when he found the Opposition had nothing to say about the Inkerman scheme. The hon. member is determined whenever possible to uphold that scheme. I do not blame him for that, but I do not agree with his arguments. He told us to-night that Inkerman is now getting to be a payable proposition, but any proposition could be payable under similar conditions. Inkerman could be a splendid proposition if the Government were to write off the whole of the capital debt, and the hon. member for Bowen would be jubilant if they did so.

Let me show what the Auditor-General has to say on page 96 of his report with regard to Inkerman—

“The operations for the year disclose a loss of £13,819 6s. 3d., after debiting Profit and Loss Account with interest on Trust overdraft £2,369 6s. 11d., and interest on loan £17,527 10s. 3d. (includ-

ing arrears, £4,277 11s. 7d.). For the financial year 1926-27 the loss on this area was £15,860, but this also includes deferred interest amounting to £4,277 11s. 7d.”

Yet the hon. member is pleased with Inkerman! To understand Inkerman properly from the financial point of view, it is necessary to go back to its inception. On that the Auditor-General says this—

“The accumulated losses to 30th June, 1923, total £40,464 4s. 11d.; to this must be added deferred Treasury interest £8,555 and £163,344 written off the capital cost in June, 1923.”

A total amount of £212,000 has been written off this famous Inkerman irrigation scheme.

The hon. member for Bowen says that you cannot expect an irrigation scheme to pay as an irrigation scheme, but you have to look at the collateral advantage in the settlement of 1,300 people on the land. If, instead of going in for some of their socialistic schemes, such as State stations—wild-cat schemes—the Government had devoted that money which has been written off to encouraging industry by advancing it at a low rate of interest, we would not be crying out so much about the need for secondary industries in which to employ the rising generation, and about mitigating the evils of unemployment. The hon. member's arguments are absurd in the extreme, and, if he had any sense, he would keep off Inkerman.

**MR. COLLINS:** I invite you to go up to Inkerman and make the same speech there that you are delivering now.

**MR. KELSO:** The question is whether it is true. It cannot do any harm to tell even the people at Inkerman that they are getting money at the expense of the State. There is no reason why there should not be hundreds of Inkermans under the same conditions. When the Government launched the famous Dawson Valley scheme, hon. members opposite talked, not in hundreds of thousands, but in millions of pounds. It was to be the biggest artificial lake in the world—everything was to be on the biggest scale. On another occasion we were told that the Government proposed to spend £5,000,000 on erecting State iron and steel works at Bowen. Fortunately, these schemes were nipped in the bud, and, in regard to the State iron and steel works, the State has been saved a considerable amount of money. I question whether the very able head of the Irrigation Commission would advocate the Dawson Valley scheme in its entirety as propounded at the opening. I believe that the proper policy of the Government would be to establish quite a number of moderate-sized schemes all over Queensland rather than spend millions on a scheme in one part of the State. We would not have all our eggs in one basket. The Development and Migration Commission—men who are expert in sizing up such undertakings—would, I am sure, be only too glad to help Queensland by advancing some of the large sum of money which is available at 1½ per cent., because the ultimate object is to settle people on the land from overseas.

**MR. BRUCE:** Good Australians!

**MR. KELSO:** These men recommended that the Government should not be advanced sufficient money to complete the Nathan dam

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or the Dawson Valley undertaking in its entirety, but that the Government should be cautious. So there is an appropriation of £100,000 for the purposes of experiment, and the Government need to get all the advice they can from experts in order to find out whether the expenditure will be of lasting benefit to the State. I think it is wrong to launch these huge schemes in any part of Queensland.

Irrigation can be profitably extended to other sections of the State. I have heard the hon. member for Warwick make a very fine speech pointing out that, with the expenditure of a reasonable sum of money, a very profitable irrigation scheme could be instituted in the Warwick and Killarney districts. His arguments were irrefutable. If the Government are in earnest in desiring to make irrigation a success in this State, they should establish schemes in different portions of Queensland to enable the people in those areas to share in the benefits to be derived. The Government should not confine their efforts to one particular section in order to be able to say that they constructed the largest artificial dam in the world.

I hope the hon. member for Bowen will not continue to weary the House by talking of the great success of the Inkerman scheme. If we are going to have success with our irrigation schemes on the same lines of success as have been achieved on the Inkerman estate, then Queensland will be bankrupt. If the hon. member would only study the financial side as well as the other side, he would surely honestly admit that the Inkerman scheme has not been a success, but has been a great burden to the State.

Mr. COLLINS: It is a splendid success from the point of view of production. You cannot understand that.

Mr. KEISO: An irrigation scheme can be made a success if the land is suitable and the burden of liability of a huge debt has not to be carried. According to the Auditor-General's report, this little irrigation scheme has had written off no less than £212,000. I am quite certain that, if the Government were faced with another scheme similar to that at Inkerman, they would absolutely turn it down. It would be their duty to do so. The scheme is in the electorate of the hon. member for Bowen, and he has to puff it up, but it is not a good thing for his own Government. He places them in a false position by boosting the scheme and speaking of its success. It is a most lamentable failure from the financial point of view, and is a big burden to the State, notwithstanding the fact that there are 1,300 people on Inkerman.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): Members of this party representing the Central and Northern divisions are obliged to the last two speakers for their remarks on the irrigation projects of Inkerman and the Dawson Valley. I can assure those hon. gentlemen that I shall preserve their speeches, and quote them during the next elections. They are characteristic of the paly outlook of those hon. members—so characteristic of them when considering big schemes for the welfare of the State, a factor that assists this party considerably during elections. Both these hon. gentlemen miss this point in connection with both the Dawson Valley and Inkerman schemes. Prior to the applica-

tion of the efforts of this Government to those schemes by the establishment of plants for raising the water and distributing it over the country, these areas, as far as Inkerman is concerned, were practically waste country and non-productive. Any scheme that will transform waste country to productive country and support a population of 1,300 adults must be pronounced a success, irrespective of the financial position. The figures quoted by the hon. member for Nundah were wrong. The sum of £163,000 was the amount of capital cost written off the Inkerman irrigation scheme. The hon. member adds up the interest that would have been earned if it had been paid. The fact remains that, owing to the action of this Government in establishing these irrigation works, there is a big increase in production and a great number of people have now contented, happy homes on that area.

As regards the hon. member for Murrumbidgee's remarks about the Dawson Valley scheme, the Dawson Valley was always a good tract of country for raising cattle. It had the big disadvantage that, at certain periods and seasons, it was subject to big inundations and big floods, and that, at other periods, it suffered from severe droughts. It could only produce cattle, and there was always a danger when the herds were at their greatest point, and when everything seemed to be going right, that a drought would come and half the cattle would be lost. That meant a big loss in wealth, and many people have been ruined in the Dawson Valley, although it has the advantage of having one of the biggest rivers in Australia, if you take it singly. Owing to the action of this Government, a big safeguard will be made annually in the cattle industry against drought as against that tremendous loss that occurs every five or six years when drought comes. Is it not worth something to spend £1,000,000 or £2,000,000 on a scheme to make insurance against drought, to increase the cattle wealth which was only cattle before into better cattle and into produce? It is all very well to say, "What does the country grow?" One hon. member wanted to know the depth of the soil. What is the use of measuring it when you can see the soil in the biggest river for a depth of 30 or 40 feet? Before the hon. member could get a grindstone out of the pyramids, he would want to drill the pyramid to see if there was enough stone for what he wanted. That is about the measure of his mind.

I hope there will be no hesitation on the part of the Government to proceed with this scheme. It does not matter about the report of the Development and Migration Commission. This Government decided to proceed with the scheme long before Mr. Theodore became Premier. One of the main men in advocating this scheme was the gentleman who sits in front of the hon. member for Murrumbidgee on the Opposition bench—a former member of this party—the hon. member for Normandy. It was one of the main planks in the 1915 election, and the Central members agreed that they would push for a big system of irrigation on the Dawson Valley. That was for two main reasons—a big settlement, and agricultural production to provide agricultural wealth and fodder for the West and Central district, and also as an insurance against drought. I hope that the Government will not hesitate or monkey about with anybody's opinion. We have our own opinions and have our

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men working on it, and what money can be made available will be made available to push the work on actively and energetically, because in that way great losses will be avoided, and capital expended which is not earning interest will then earn interest.

Resolution 77 (Department of Public Lands—Irrigation and Water Supply Commission) agreed to.

Resolutions 78, 79, and 80 agreed to.

Resolution 81—“*Department of Labour and Industry (Balance of Vote)*”—

Mr. KELSO (*Jundah*): The Industrial Arbitration Act can be dealt with under this vote. On a previous occasion I asked some questions with reference to the duties which it is incumbent upon the judges of the Board of Trade and Arbitration to perform.

Mr. BULCOCK: You made a speech.

Mr. KELSO: I may have made a speech, as the hon. member suggests, but I also asked a question, and the answer given was not satisfactory. We are paying a large sum of money to three gentlemen who are charged with certain duties, and I think the time has arrived when they ought to carry out those duties. These gentlemen were appointed under the Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment Act of 1925, and they took office under certain conditions. The Act says they have to do certain things. When the measure became law the judges were new to their positions, and it can be understood that leniency would have to be extended to them—that they would have to be given time, just as, we will say, the Bruce-Page Government will have to be given time.

Mr. BRUCE: They ought to be given “time” all right. (Laughter.)

Mr. KELSO: They naturally were given time on big questions, and I think that in a month or two we will see the effect of that. But do we see much effect from the work of the judges on the bench of the Board of Trade and Arbitration? They are called together, they have their conferences, and they give their decisions: but they are not paid a large salary of £2,000 a year simply to decide cases in the court.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not propose to allow the hon. member to make an attack on judges.

Mr. MORGAN: It is not an attack.

The SPEAKER: I am the judge of that.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. KELSO: The Act says that these judges shall make reports on certain things. I propose to show that the reports that should have been made have not been made. Under section 5 of the Act of 1925 it is provided that the administrative functions of the Board of Trade and Arbitration shall be—

“To acquire and disseminate knowledge on all matters connected with industrial occupations, with a view to improving the industrial relationships between employers and workers and combat the evils of unemployment;”

I do not see much fruits of that—

“To collect and publish information relating to or affecting industrial conditions;”

We have not seen any of that—

“To propound schemes for welfare work and report to the Governor in

[Mr. Hartley.

Council on all matters relating to such work and to the insurance of employees against loss or injury caused by unemployment, sickness, accident, or industrial diseases;”

The second part of that was already in operation. Then we have about the only thing that they have done—

“To report on any matter referred to it as to the prices of commodities or services and as to whether or not monopolies or trade rings exist for the purpose of unfairly keeping up the prices of commodities;”

Then I have not seen any report about this—

“To report upon the productivity of industries, the number of employees in any industry, and the effect or probable effect of the regulation of the conditions of any industry upon such productivity;”

Then they are supposed—

“To consider and report upon the industrial efficiency of the community, the organisation of the labour market and opportunities of employment, and all questions relating to unemployment;”

We are still in the dark as to what their views are in that regard—

“To collect and publish from time to time statistics of vital, social, and industrial matters and on labour, employment and unemployment in specific industries and on other prescribed matters;”

“To encourage and assist in the establishment in different industries of mutual welfare committees and industrial councils, and of subsidiary shop committees for individual enterprises;”

We are still in the dark as to what they think on that—

“To encourage and assist schemes for mutual co-operation between employers and employees;”

“To encourage and assist in the establishment of hostels for women workers and workmen’s clubs and libraries;”

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Are you making your speech by reading from the statute?

Mr. KELSO: I am stating what the duties of the judges are.

Mr. BRUCE: I think they will all resign to-morrow when they know what they are. (Laughter.)

Mr. KELSO: Hon. members on the other side do not like it. They introduced the Bill with a flourish of trumpets, and said they were going to enlarge the opportunity, as they called it, of the judges to do certain work. They have also—

“To report and advise on schemes for the better housing of the people; and to consider and report upon any other matter referred to it by the Minister.”

I would like to know whether the Minister has suggested to the Board of Trade and Arbitration that he wanted it to report on other matters. These are things we want to know. This Board of Trade and Arbitration costs the State a considerable sum of money, and because it was going to cost a considerable sum of money the Government of the day said, “We are going to put men in there capable of carrying out the work.” I am not calling into question

the ability of these gentlemen, but I want to know why it is that these reports, which should have been made available to the public, are not furnished by the Board of Trade and Arbitration, and I want the Minister to explain what his procedure is going to be. Is he going to suggest to the members of the Board of Trade and Arbitration that they have certain functions to perform, a majority of which have been neglected? Is he going to ask the Board of Trade and Arbitration to furnish Parliament with reports on the various matters I have mentioned? Is he going to ask the Board of Trade and Arbitration to disseminate information on these vital economic questions which the members are supposed to have the ability to go into? I would suggest that the hon. gentleman should do that so that the State will get full value for the money paid to these gentlemen. I am not saying that they have deliberately neglected their job, but there is a fair amount of comment outside as to what the Board of Trade and Arbitration ought to do, and, until they have made an effort to carry out the duties laid down by the Act, they are not carrying out the functions for which they are paid. They have had a good breathing-space, and the time has now arrived when they ought to be asked to carry out, as far as possible, the duties specified in the Act under which they were appointed.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. D. A. Gledson, *Ipswich*): I want to point out to the hon. member that, under the Act, the Board of Trade and Arbitration has two functions—one judicial and one administrative. It is a judicial body appointed by Parliament, and it carries out its judicial work, being responsible only to Parliament in that respect. If the hon. gentleman does not know that, he ought to know it. Certainly the Act does provide for wide administrative powers, and the Government, if they so wish, could ask the Board of Trade and Arbitration to inquire into any matter—such as the housing of the people and so forth.

Mr. KELSO: It says they "shall" do so.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: If it is necessary to inquire into these matters, we have a body competent to do the work. However, we have a proper housing scheme in Queensland now, and the Government see no necessity to refer that to anybody.

Mr. KELSO: Why put it in here?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: It is there if it is necessary, but it is not necessary because, under the Workers' Dwellings Act and the Workers' Homes Act, we provide a proper housing scheme for the people of Queensland. The hon. member will find that a report has been received under the Profiteering Prevention Act, and, if he reads that report, he will see what work the Board of Trade and Arbitration has been doing in Queensland. The Board of Trade and Arbitration deals not only with the wages, hours, and conditions of the workers, but [3.30 p.m.] also with any matter that may arise between employer and employee or between the retailer and the consumer. What has been the result? The result is that Queensland, although for the last two or three years going through the most severe drought in the history of the State, is in

the fortunate position of having the lowest cost of living of any State in the Commonwealth.

Let us see whether the board has functioned in the interests of Queensland. The best we can do for the workers of any State is to keep the cost of living within reasonable bounds, because it means a great deal to them if the cost of living is kept down and not allowed to rise to such a height as to prevent them from living comfortably under the standard fixed by the board.

Mr. KELSO: You are labouring something which I admitted.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The Board of Trade and Arbitration presented a report showing that at the end of June last, taking the index figure of £1 as the basis in 1911, the cost of living in the different capital cities of the States at 30th June last was—

	£	s.	d.
Brisbane ... ..	1	11	2
Melbourne ... ..	1	14	9
Hobart ... ..	1	13	3
Adelaide ... ..	1	15	5
Sydney ... ..	1	17	1
Perth ... ..	1	15	4

showing that Queensland is in an advantageous position under the operations of the Board of Trade and Arbitration, so far as the cost of living is concerned.

Let me show the improvement in the purchasing power of the £1 during that particular term. Take the capital cities for food and groceries for the June quarter of 1923. Taking the period from March, 1920, during which time practically the Board of Trade and Arbitration has been in operation, the amount in Brisbane has been reduced from 40s. 4d. to 33s. 5d. There has been an improvement in the purchasing value of the £1 during that time of 6s. 11d.

Mr. KELSO: What are you stonewalling for?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The hon. member for Nundah asked what the Board of Trade and Arbitration is doing.

Mr. KELSO: I told you that they were doing that.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: When I point out what the Board of Trade and Arbitration has done, the hon. member wants to know why I am giving him this information.

Mr. KELSO: Tell us about something else.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I will answer the hon. member's question in my own way. The improvement during that term was—

	s.	d.
Queensland ... ..	6	11
Sydney ... ..	5	8
Perth ... ..	3	5
Adelaide ... ..	1	2
Hobart ... ..	1	9

while Victoria—the State hon. members opposite are always crowing about—went back to the extent of 3s. 9d. That is the position in regard to the improvement effected during the years the Board of Trade and Arbitration has been in operation.

I want to point out that the latest figures given by the Commonwealth Statistician show that the sum of £4 5s. (the basic wage

*Hon. D. A. Gledson.]*

in Queensland) is equivalent to the following amounts in the other States:—

	£	s.	d.
Tasmania .....	4	8	4
Western Australia .....	4	10	2
South Australia .....	4	14	0
Victoria .....	4	14	5
New South Wales .....	4	19	5

That shows the position we are in in connection with the Board of Trade and Arbitration. There is a very important report which has been submitted by the Board of Trade and Arbitration to this House, which shows what has been done by the board to improve the conditions of the workers in Queensland.

The hon. member for Nundah raised the question of unemployment and statistics. Something has been done along that line. A statistical survey has been made by the Government.

Mr. KELSO: I am not talking about the Government, but about the Board of Trade and Arbitration.

Permanently employed .. .. .	126,946		
Casually or part time employed .. .. .	73,488		
Domestic labour .. .. .		200,434	
		34,387	
Unemployed registered at Labour Exchanges .. .. .			234,821
			11,687
Number unemployed on account of disability, sickness, old age, and other causes .. .. .			36,119
Number of employers .. .. .			23,618
Number who work on their own account and who do not employ labour .. .. .			64,872
Dependants, ministers of religion, persons of independent means, inmates of charitable and religious institutions, etc. .. .. .			532,002
Estimated population of the State as at 31st March, 1928 .. .. .			903,119

The Board of Trade and Arbitration makes every effort to provide for all contingencies. It is doing a tremendous work. Whenever a call is made its members are ready to go from one end of Queensland to the other, deal with industrial disputes, and secure industrial peace. They have done wonderful work in this respect. It is only when it is regarded with a fair and unbiased mind that their work is realised. I think that replies effectively to the hon. member for Nundah.

Mr. KELSO: It is a bit of special pleading.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: There is no need for special pleading, because the people know what they are doing. In Queensland we have had more industrial peace and less time lost through strikes than any other State, as the statistics of the Commonwealth Statistician show. We are in a better position to have our disputes dealt with expeditiously than any other State, and I do not think anyone can say a word against the work of the Board of Trade and Arbitration.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): I am very much afraid that, in spite of what the Minister has told us, the opinion throughout the community is that the board has not justified its existence. Quite apart from the question raised by the hon. member for Nundah, I say that, as an industrial tribunal, it has not justified its existence. Nobody can say that it has been able to enforce its awards. Nobody can say that there has not been considerable industrial strife under its regime, although when the late Mr. David Bowman supported the industrial legis-

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: A statistical report has been obtained with regard to unemployment.

Mr. KELSO: From the Board of Trade and Arbitration?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Not from the Board of Trade and Arbitration. The Board of Trade and Arbitration has all these figures submitted to it. The statistical survey as at the 31st March, 1928, discloses the following:—

Number employed on the 31st March, 1928 .. .. .	151,937
Number unemployed on the 31st March, 1928 .. .. .	11,687
	163,624

(NOTE.—Domestic labour in private homes is not included.)

The statistical survey for the quarter ended 31st March, 1928, resulted as hereunder:—

lation in 1907, he said that under it there would be no more strikes. Last year there were thirty strikes, or two and a-half a month. Huge sums have been lost through direct action, and throughout Australia, where the legislation is on similar lines, all our shipping has been in chaos for years.

Huge sums have been lost to the producer and to the consumer through direct action: but the Government were utterly incapable of enforcing the law. I do not know whether the fault lies with the Board of Trade and Arbitration, with the Act under which it functions, or with the Government, who should enforce the law. However, the facts are as I have stated. I am dealing now with only one branch of production—the sugar industry—the one with which I am best acquainted. It is a very modest computation to say that year after year the producers have lost a shilling per ton of cane as the result of direct action methods, amounting on the 1927 crop to approximately £177,000. The loss in the South Johnstone mill area in one year through direct action, first on the part of the millworkers, then on the part of the railway workers, and then on the part of the waterside workers, amounted to £56,000, which had to be borne by a limited number of farmers who supplied cane to the mill. That position has continued for years, and would be continuing now were it not for the fact that the waterside calling was placed under Federal control as from 10th September last. Previously there were continual holdups, and no attempt made to prevent them. When the Premier was appealed to he weakly replied that he could not make men work.

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Contrast his attitude with that of the Prime Minister. No one suggested that he should make men work; but we did say that the men who wished to work should be protected by the Government. After the settlement of the South Johnstone strike, which was brought about by direct action, which was at first discountenanced by the union, condemned by the Government, and declared an illegal strike, the workers who had complied with the award—they were members of unions—were driven from the district, and their portraits were circulated so that they could not secure employment throughout Australia.

Mr. HARTLEY: That always happens to loyalists.

Mr. SWAYNE: Mr. Bruce is taking care that it will not happen this time. The awards have been continually flouted by the rank and file and by the officials. In dealing with the South Johnstone dispute, the President of the Board of Trade said—

“We think the time has now arrived for the board to make a definite order in this matter. We did not invite the unions, Mr. Riordan, to submit the terms to the South Johnstone strikers. Their insolent reply is only what might have been expected.”

In the face of that statement, will anyone claim that the law has not been flouted by a few for whom so much has been done?

At Cairns, after the award was made, the watersiders took a ballot on the following question:—

“Are you in favour of accepting the decision of the Board of Trade, delivered on 31st August, 1928?”

That discloses the absolute contempt with which the board has been treated by the people for whose benefit it was created.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Did the farmers take a secret ballot on the Dickson award?

Mr. MAXWELL: How many times have you said that?

Mr. SWAYNE: I have two proofs of the manner in which the Minister has administered this Act. At the beginning of this session I drew his attention to the illegal strikes taking place in the Northern seaports, and asked him whether section 65 of the Act was first complied with. That section requires that due notice of a strike must first be given. The hon. gentleman replied that he did not know that there was an illegal strike in progress, yet I have the reports of two industrial magistrates at two of those ports stating that there were illegal strikes. Evidently the Minister does not know what is happening in Queensland.

There has been a decided loss of efficiency under the Board of Trade and Arbitration which makes for heavier costs on the producers. A report from Cairns stated—

“For the period to 30th March, 1927, the associated shipping companies at Cairns paid £53,438 9s. 8d. in wages to the waterside workers for handling 188,363 tons. In the same period in 1928 the wages amounted to £62,451 0s. 6d. for the handling of 194,580 tons. Allowing for the increased tonnage, companies paid an amount exceeding £7,000 on account of loss of efficiency brought about by the variation.”

All through the same thing obtains. Again, I find that they raised the question of whether

they would grant the request of Mr. Dunstan, a member of the Board of Trade and Arbitration, who asked them to give a guarantee. Mr. Dunstan went up there on one occasion to settle one of those interminable disputes constantly taking place at that time. In view of such happenings as these, am I not justified in saying that, so far as the enforcing of their awards and gaining the respect of those they are supposed to hold jurisdiction over, these men hold the Board of Trade and Arbitration in absolute contempt? To be successful, arbitration must be administered with equal-handed justice to both parties in the matter. That has never happened in Queensland. Queensland has gained unenviable notoriety through this. I have read the award for waterside workers given by Judge Beeby in the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, and I find that he is constantly referring to what has taken place in Queensland and to the position here. Speaking of how the award has been flouted and the way the provisions of the award are being ignored throughout the whole of Australia, and more particularly in Queensland, he states—

“In the case of Rockhampton there are some glaring instances. For example, the rules prescribe five hours' notice before picking up labour, forbid any work under any circumstances on Picnic Day, limit the sling to nine bags in the case of wheat, dictate what men a single or double gang shall comprise. It does not seem to be fair that while there, as here, the employers are, under agreements, bound to give preference to members of the union on the lines of the agreements, they should be coerced by the branches to submit to provisions which are not in the agreements nor in any award of any court.”

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member for Mirani in order in reading through a report by a so-called judge in a voice that the Chamber cannot hear?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Sit down!

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is in order in quoting from a report that is pertinent to the question under discussion.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): The board has not justified its existence.

Further on Judge Beeby points out—

“It is now necessary to consider the motives behind this policy. Employers in every port admit that 80 per cent. of the workmen are capable men who follow the occupation regularly as their means of livelihood, and who, if left alone, will work peacefully under awards. The workmen, however, attempt to justify breaches of the award by stating that they run the risk of union fines unless they obey local rules and the directions of their branches.”

It will be seen that an irresponsible power has been created amongst themselves that claims to be superior to the law of the land. We know that these awards are a part of the Act under which they are made, and are read in conjunction with the Act; yet we find men, particularly in Queensland, who evidently hold the opinion that the law does not apply to them.

Mr. Swayne.

They have done a most unfortunate thing in the crisis that has lately arisen. The waterside workers enjoyed great privileges, and so long as they subscribed to the rules their conduct was not questioned; but, after having reached a stage when it meant that either their organisation had to succeed or the Commonwealth suffer, the Commonwealth authorities intervened. I must say that the way the trouble was handled by the Federal Government compares more than favourably with the action of the Queensland Government and the Queensland tribunal.

Furthermore, the subject of preference is open to question. Every reasonable man will agree that, if preference is to be granted, it will have to be granted in such a manner that a monopoly will not be given in such an important class of work as waterside work. For the sake of the community certain conditions will have to be prescribed, because, unless the work is carried out, the community will starve. Before a monopoly of that class of work is given to any section, it is essential and it is only fair that they should be called upon to give an assurance that they are not going to abuse that monopoly. I take that stand whether the monopoly be one of capitalists or one of workers, because the community must be protected at all times. The monopoly in this case has been abused, and, if it is to be granted in future, then the public will have to be amply safeguarded. We know that the position in Queensland has been such that the producer could not fatten a beast, grow a bushel of wheat, a bushel of maize, or a ton of cane and, after going to the expense of producing the article, be sure that it would be marketed.

Mr. BRUCE interjected.

Mr. SWAYNE: I cannot hear the hon. member, but am I to understand that he approves of that state of things? If hon. members opposite approve of that kind of thing, we leave it to the producers to deal with them at the next election. The position should be made clear. Although hon. members opposite represent districts where the trouble has arisen and where the farmers have all turned out to assist, we never hear of any of them assisting when there has been any trouble of the kind, and produce has been held up. They are quite prepared to see the producer go down.

Is it a fair thing that people who do not hold certain political opinions should be forced to subscribe to political funds or go without a job? I believe in unionism, but politics should be kept out of it. I recognise that organisations of the kind are necessary and desirable, but, as I have already said, the common rights of the community and the conscience of the individual have to be conserved. In the Brisbane "Telegraph" of 10th October, 1923, this paragraph appeared—

"The Queensland Trade Union Congress ended yesterday. One of the resolutions adopted at the final session urges that Labour Councils and the Australasian Council of Trade Unions undertake the immediate organisation of a delegation to Russia, to leave Australia in the first quarter of 1929."

If members of a union do not subscribe to Bolshevist doctrines, they should not be compelled to contribute towards the cost of sending a delegation to Russia. Those who believe in it should be perfectly free to do as they like, but those who do not subscribe

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to these doctrines should not be compelled to devote part of their earnings towards the furtherance of Bolshevist views. What right has anyone to say to the individual, "You must join our body, otherwise you will not get work, and, whether you agree to the political creed or not, you will have to subscribe to the political funds of the party." If preference is to be given, the public must be protected from tyranny of that kind. What I have said illustrates the position as regards the Board of Trade and Arbitration and also raises the question as to whether the Act requires amending. Those who come under the Act should be compelled to abide by the decisions of the Board of Trade and Arbitration, and

[9 p.m.] direct action should cease. That would be better for the country at large and for the workers. It is only common sense that those who go to a court should not have the right to take the law into their own hands. That should apply both to employers and employees, just as in the case of individuals they are not allowed to take the law into their own hands; they should all abide by the decision of the court.

Mr. BRUCE (Kennedy): It is rather difficult to hear many of the remarks of the hon. member who has just resumed his seat, but apparently he dealt with Federal as well as State arbitration matters. In his remarks he attempted to blame the workers of Queensland for the industrial upheaval which is creating so much loss and trouble to the sugar-growers and other producers in Queensland. I do not intend to allow those remarks to go by without contradiction. The Prime Minister recently said that he deeply regretted the fact that this chaos and upheaval was taking place during the harvesting season of Australia. He himself is responsible for its taking place during that time. His Government have been in power for three years, and, if they believed it was necessary to make an alteration in the arbitration award, it was quite possible to have done that during the slack season, when the harvesting was not in operation. What happened? After six years of control, what is known as the Beeby Award was finalised some months ago, but the operation of the award was put forward to 10th September—right in the middle of the wool season and the harvesting of sugar in Queensland, as well as in the middle of the wheat harvest in other States. Then we have the announcement of the Federal elections on 17th November, after 10th September is notified as the time for the commencement of the operation of the award. The Waterside Workers' Union advised its members to return to work. The men, as a whole, did not obey that advice, and tried to drive out the moderate men in the Waterside Workers' Union. The Federal Government fined the executive of the union £1,000—definitely to keep up this industrial turmoil for election purposes, and without any care or thought for the primary producers of Queensland or Australia as a whole.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: You do not believe that.

Mr. BRUCE: It is not a question of believing; it is a question of knowing. After fining the executive £1,000, it was known that there was every likelihood of the men returning to work, in Brisbane in particular, and urgent

wires were then sent through that the Transport Workers Act had been introduced in the Commonwealth Parliament. Why? In order to keep those workers out as long as they could, and to hold up the industry of this State and of Australia as a whole. They cared nothing for the primary producers or worried over the sugar-growers. They would destroy them all for political purposes. They are wreckers of this country. When the Transport Workers Act had been effective in keeping the men out for a longer period, what do we find? We have a further move to cut out the preference clause in the arbitration award—definitely done for the purpose of bringing out the workers again to carry on this industrial dispute till 17th November, if possible. The preference was cut out. After the men had gone back, at the suggestion of the Prime Minister as well as the Federal Arbitration Court, the preferential conditions were cut out of the award. They said, "You can go back under the Beeby Award." They ultimately went back under the Beeby Award, although after some delay.

After they had taken away the preference, they introduced, or endeavoured to introduce, a weekly system instead of the prevailing system in order to try to force the workers to remain out longer and to carry out the strike and industrial turmoil as near as possible to the 17th November. In the "Courier" the other day we read that the Prime Minister said, "My antagonism to unionism is that there are extremists in the union ranks"—his antagonism to unionism! In his policy speech he said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I have to admit that there are extremists on both sides." But, whilst he is antagonistic to unionism, he has yet to declare his antagonism to the employers. The fact is that Judge Beeby has gone out of this dispute. Judge Dethridge now handles it—it is no longer the original Beeby award. Prior to the award there was a dispute at only one port—Cairns. Otherwise the harvesting of the sugar was being carried on. The wool and wheat in other States were being taken to the market. It was the introduction of this award that upset the conditions that existed. It has been said that the State award was incorporated in the Federal award.

Mr. SWAYNE: George Lawson said that.

Mr. BRUCE: Generally speaking, that is correct, but the conditions which the waterside workers enjoyed were largely the result of agreements between the workers and the employers in the different ports of Queensland, which were not incorporated in the State award, so that by the incorporation of the State award in the Federal award all these beneficial conditions were cut out. It took quite a lot from the waterside workers.

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

Mr. BRUCE: When I look at the intelligent face of the interjector, I wonder whether it is my eyes that are failing or my brain.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Your brain.

Mr. BRUCE: I leave these smaller matters and get back to the subject. We have this matter raised under a law by which they legalise Chinamen to take the place of white Australians. (Opposition dissent.) Hon. members know it is true. There is no comparison between what the Federal Arbitration Court has done and what our State Court—

which hon. members opposite criticise—has done. Hon. members opposite call the Prime Minister "Uncle Bruce." They should put three balls over the place where he is living, because, having been brought up as a seller of rags, he naturally sells everything he can, although it may belong to the people. He sells the Commonwealth line of ships, the Commonwealth woollen mills, and anything that is of value to the people of Australia. Make no mistake, the sugar-growers of the North understand the position.

Mr. EDWARDS: What about the dairymen?

Mr. BRUCE: The hon. member was brought up on milk, and has lived on it ever since. He is still a baby. Perhaps that explains why the hon. member is so soft.

Getting away from our milk-fed baby, the sugar-growers understand thoroughly what has been done. They have gone down to the different ports to obtain the sacks necessary for the bagging of their sugar and have loaded the sugar on to the boats. No antagonism has been shown by the waterside workers. There has been no friction between these men on this occasion. They thoroughly understand this time that the Federal Government are endeavouring to victimise them through the machinery of the Federal Arbitration Court, and they realise that the Federal Government have overstepped the mark.

Mr. DEACON (*Cunningham*): After listening to the hon. member for Kennedy, one can easily see he has a very short memory. He forgets the part that his Government took when the sugar-growers were in difficulties during the harvesting period last year. What did they do in connection with the dispute at South Johnstone? The Board of Trade and Arbitration said that the men were in the wrong. An award was made. Some hon. members opposite who voted for the establishment of the court backed the men in their actions. Not only did the men strike against the award of the court, but, when the unions advised them to go back, they would not go. This was right in the middle of the sugar season. Hon. members opposite advised the men to hold out, and, when there was no prospect of a settlement, the Government stepped in and sacked all the railwaymen in the country, whether they were prepared to work or not. They "fired" them all. Where was the concern on the part of hon. members opposite for the primary producer then? Where was the hon. member who has just been speaking so blatantly? He never did care twopence for the primary producer. When we remember that strike and hear all the humbug that we have heard to-night, it makes one wonder whether the hon. gentleman has a memory at all. Let him recall his own actions. Does he remember the time that he advised his members to defy the court? Is there any sincerity in his boasting of arbitration? Is there anything in his statement condemning the Federal Government? The Federal Government have done a good deal for the workers of Queensland.

The Beeby award is a fair award. Not a single member opposite has ever said that it was not. They have not been able to show any part of it that is unfair to the men. We have not had any explanation from union members or leaders or members of the Government as to the direction in which the award was unfair. If they had played the part of men, they would have advised the workers to work under it, instead of leaving

*Mr. Deacon.]*

the control of the dispute to irresponsible men who did not know their business, but advised the men to go on strike knowing that they could not succeed. They knew that there were thousands of men in Brisbane out of work willing to do any work that they could obtain. Still, they allowed these men to go on strike. Hon. members opposite have displayed no sincerity whatever in connection with the Beeby award and the waterside strike. They did not play their part as union men and as Labour leaders. When they have done that they can talk to us.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): In both cases cited by the hon. member for Cunningham and the hon. member for Mirani attempts were made to break down unionism.

In the case that came before the Board of Trade and Arbitration in Queensland it was a case of the manager of the mill attempting to break down the strength of the union there by employing foreign labour—mostly Dagoes, the friends of Mr. Bruce. Those are the people they want to flood this country with, so as to break down the power of the White Australian unionist and the conditions under which he lives. That was the genesis of the South Johnstone strike. With regard to the present unfortunate strike on the waterfront, again the same sinister influences were at work. This Chamber should consider whether we should pass any vote for arbitration and conciliation at all, because the position has gone past that. The struggle at South Johnstone and the present waterside struggle have come to a challenge between the Federal and State Governments as to who shall direct the domestic affairs of the State. That is where I am taking my stand to-night—not as to whether the waterside workers were right or wrong. I say this deliberately.

Mr. KERR: When the men were out on strike we saw very few Labour politicians helping them. You all take to shelter when they are out on strike.

Mr. HARTLEY: The hon. member evidently does not understand the movement of Labour politicians. A lot of Labour politicians gave advice in this strife, but unfortunately they were ignored. I heard part of the paeans of praise, and I heard the miserable attempt on the part of the hon. member for Mirani to try to show that this party by its actions approved of a policy of holding up the produce of the country. He knew jolly well, in spite of his claim, that that is not so; but he simply runs along in a mumbling voice when making a speech, and it beats me how on earth "Hansard" can get him. He tried to put that over this House. He knows very well that this Government and this party stand for peace and industry so long as it is an honourable peace with decent conditions for those engaged in it.

Let us get back to this question of the waterside workers' strike. It was deliberately planned, and the time was deliberately chosen. First the Federal Arbitration Act was altered; then the Beeby award came on some eight months back, but its operation was postponed. Another factor about it was that the Queensland waterside workers had never come before the Federal Arbitration Court. After reading the opinions of men like Sir Samuel Griffith, I doubt whether the Commonwealth Government have the constitutional power to appoint a Federal court to fix conditions and wages in industry. But, whether they had this constitutional power or

not, the waterside workers in Queensland, although part of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia, have always definitely refused to go before the Federal Arbitration Court, and until this occasion have never worked under a Federal award. In spite of that, Judge Beeby decided to include in his award the waterside workers on the Queensland coast. It was a deliberate conspiracy on the part of the Bruce Government to bring dislocation to Queensland industry. Time will prove that that is right.

Let us go a point further. There is a big similarity between the Beeby award and the Queensland State award as regards the waterside workers; but what the hon. member for Kennedy says is perfectly correct. The Beeby award wiped out the usages and customs at ports that were recognised by the Board of Trade and Arbitration.

Mr. MORGAN: A good job it did, because there were more strikes in those ports than anywhere else.

Mr. HARTLEY: The hon. gentleman may know—

Mr. MORGAN: I do.

Mr. HARTLEY: I do not think he does. For instance, one local rule on the waterfront in Queensland was that so many men work at a sling. If so many men were working there, then a certain number of bags were loaded into that sling, and so many were put down into the hold below. With that local rule wiped out, it means that the stevedore in charge simply allocates as many men as he likes; it does not matter whether the number is four, six, or eight.

Mr. KERR: Why shouldn't he?

Mr. HARTLEY: Why not go back to the Port Arthur days when the convicts had to carry a weight and were withdrawn one by one until the remainder were finally crushed under it?

Mr. KERR: Nonsense!

Mr. HARTLEY: In Queensland we have built up by union effort a set of conditions that are fair for the preservation of the health and the wellbeing of the workers. The waterside workers have just as much right to consider the preservation of their health and their wellbeing as any of your shipping sharks and combines.

Mr. MORGAN: They should do a good day's work for a good day's pay.

Mr. HARTLEY: I do not think the hon. member could have worked alongside the least of them.

Mr. MORGAN: I have done as much work as any of them.

Mr. HARTLEY: In the mind of the hon. member—yes. There are a lot of people who are great workers when they have their heels up in a chair and a cigar in their mouth; but, when they are out on the track they peter out.

Mr. KERR: If you have their interests at heart, why do you not go out and help them in their troubles?

Mr. HARTLEY: I will be in this fight as soon as there is a chance of doing any good. I have never sat back—not for any little "swashbuckler" like the hon. member for Enoggera.

The SPEAKER: Order!

[Mr. Deacon.

Mr. HARTLEY: When you hear a chatterbox like the hon. member, well it makes you annoyed. When you hear that he swung into this House merely on his reputation as a returned soldier, then it makes you dog-tired. Then to think that he sides with the people who are doing the most to ruin the country—with the man Bruce, who betrayed the best friend that the returned soldiers ever had, Billy Hughes! (Opposition laughter.) When Hughes came to an election and there was a doubt as to whether he would be opposed as leader, this swashbuckler Bruce said, "I would never take up the leadership of the party over Mr. Hughes," yet they were no sooner back than Bruce was made the leader, and Hughes, who had left his party to serve them, was chucked out. This humbug Bruce came on to smash down unionism. Before he smashes it he is going to have a bigger fight than ever he put in overseas—don't make any mistake about that. He has won this time; but my advice to the watersiders is to just take it steady, choose their time, hold what they can, and, by re-establishing a spirit of solidarity among the unions, win back what they have lost.

Mr. MORGAN: They have got a beating.

Mr. HARTLEY: Yes; they are going to get a beating—Bruce and men like you are out to knock them down as far as ever you can.

Mr. MORGAN: They knocked themselves down.

Mr. HARTLEY: Here is the position in Brisbane to-day: The Commonwealth Government called upon the Queensland Government to give them police protection, and to see that the law was carried out; and the big, whining, hypocrites are themselves breaking the law to-day. They beat the waterside workers in some of the ports of Queensland. We admit that. Unfortunately, the waterside workers went in for the strike at the wrong time. That does not matter. We will not cry about getting a belting. We can come again. What is this man who stands for constitutional procedure—who says that he stands for even-handed justice between the workers and the shipping companies—doing to-day? What are Bruce and the judge of the Arbitration Court doing to-day? Standing behind the shipping companies. To-day, when they have won this fight, they have instituted a lockout. What was a strike has turned to a lockout.

Mr. KERR: There is no lockout.

Mr. HARTLEY: Last week a majority of the waterside workers registered under the "Dog Act," and took out licenses. To-day they went to the proper picking-up place to offer for work and they were barred out.

Mr. MORGAN: Serve them right!

Mr. HARTLEY: We are glad to know that the Opposition stand behind Bruce in the breaking of his own law. There was to be no victimisation; when men offered for work, there was to be no discrimination, but they have discriminated. They have taken in the "scabs." There is a special card of entry—not the license under the "Dog Act" or the Transport Workers Act, but a special ticket is now being issued to the "scabs," and only the holders of these tickets will be admitted to the picking-up sheds. Although what is left of the Beeby award stated that

there was to be no discrimination and no victimisation, the waterside workers who were formerly out on strike are now locked out. In other words, Bruce refuses to carry out his own law. We know now who is standing right behind the shipping companies in the breaking down of union conditions and the lowering of wages. My word to the unionists of Queensland is this: "After what has happened"—

Mr. MORGAN: It is a better world now.

Mr. HARTLEY: For years and years the hon. member has taken so much of the cows' babies' food that he has become like them in mind and feature. The position is that, as far as ever he can, Bruce, through the Arbitration Court, is going to break down the conditions of the waterside workers, and afterwards the Transport Workers Act will be applied to every other union. It is only a question of trouble having to come up in connection with the Carters and Drivers' Union when they will override the State award, and we shall have the same dislocation and confusion in that industry in Queensland. This Parliament should take immediate steps to challenge the Transport Workers Act and also the Beeby award.

There is no excuse now that the waterside workers are not obeying the court. They signified their willingness to work, and the shipping companies are not sticking to the picking-up places where they have been chosen before, showing very clear discrimination against unionists and favouring "scabs." When we consider the position, it is time that this Parliament should challenge both those Acts, and the sooner we do that the better.

At 9.30 p.m.,

The SPEAKER: In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 307, and the Sessional Orders agreed to by the House on 26th July and 27th September last, I shall now proceed to put the resolutions not already agreed to by the House.

Resolution 81 ("Department of Labour and Industry—Balance of Vote") agreed to.

Resolutions 82 to 88, both inclusive, agreed to.

## WAYS AND MEANS.

### RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Wair (Maryborough), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, in the chair.)

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

"(a) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1923-29, a further sum not exceeding £7,189 626 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 1923-29, a further sum not exceeding £3,468 238 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 1923-29, a further sum not exceeding £2,743 658 be granted

Hon. W. Forgan Smith.]

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 1927-28, a supplementary sum not exceeding £416,730 15s. 7d. be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.

“(c) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1927-28, a supplementary sum not exceeding £129,672 15s. 10d. 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 1929-30, 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 1929-30, 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 1929-30, a sum not exceeding £600,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.”

At 9.32 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN took the chair.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed.

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

Resumption of Committee made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

#### RECEPTION AND ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*), the resolutions were received and agreed to.

#### APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 2.

##### 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 SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*): I beg to move—

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

Question put and passed.

##### COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1 to 8, both inclusive, schedule, and preamble agreed to.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

[*Hon. W. Forgan Smith.*

##### THIRD READING.

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

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

Question put and passed.

##### PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. SIZER (*Sandgate*): I desire to make a personal explanation.

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

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. SIZER: In reference to the report by Inspector Lipp read by the Home Secretary and his comments thereon, inferring that I had made certain charges to the police bearing upon my selection as a parliamentary candidate, I desire to state that I have never interviewed the police on any such matter. I have never been in a plebiscite. My interview with Inspector Lipp arose out of my receipt of a filthy anonymous letter, and I merely consulted him as a handwriting expert to get his opinion for my own information. I did not ask that any action should be taken, and the letter remained in my possession. It is significant that, although this interview took place nearly three years ago, no report was made of it until 16th October of this year—two days after I raised the matter of the Labour plebiscites in this House.

The House adjourned at 9.43 p.m.