

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 27 AUGUST 1931

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Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. C. Taylor, (*Windsor*)) took the chair at 2.30 p.m.

QUESTIONS.

MUNGANA MINING LEASES.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*) asked the Secretary for Mines—

“1. Were not the Mungana mining leases in the possession of the Department of Mines before they were acquired by the company in which a Minister of the Crown held a large number of shares?”

“2. If so, was it not in the power of the then Government to retain possession of the leases?”

“3. When the then Government allowed the Mungana mining leases to pass out of their possession, was it not then known that there was a probability of the Chillagoe smelters being taken over by them, and that it would be necessary to buy back these leases?”

“4. Is he not of opinion that those so responsible, not only failed in their duty to the State, but that they were also guilty of retarding the consummation of the avowed objective of the Labour Party to which they have sworn allegiance?”

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. E. A. Atherton, *Chillagoe*) replied—

“1. The land was vacant Crown land at the time Frederick Reid applied for leases.

“2. Yes, it certainly was in their power; but apparently it did not suit to do so, as otherwise two prominent members of the Ministry—Messrs. Theodore and McCormack—would not have received their share of the £40,000 paid for the leases Reid was allowed to acquire.

“3. Yes. A Bill to acquire the Chillagoe and Etheridge railways and smelters was before Parliament in December, 1916, and February, 1917. The leases were taken up by Mr. Reid in September, 1917.

“4. Yes, I am strongly of opinion that they were responsible, and were certainly guilty, as the avowed objective of the Labour Party is socialisation of industry. The accumulated loss on the Chillagoe smelters to 30th June, 1929, according to the Auditor-General's report, was £360,495, which shows that they failed in their duty to the State.”

RECEIPTS FROM TOTALISATOR AND BETTING TAXES, 1925-1931.

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*) asked the Treasurer—

“What were the total amounts received by the Crown from totalisator and betting tax for the years ended (1) 30th June, 1925; (2) 30th June, 1926; (3) 30th June, 1927; (4) 30th June, 1928; (5) 30th June, 1929; (6) 30th June, 1930; and (7) 30th June, 1931?”

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Wynnum*) replied—

“(1) £100,195; (2) £105,463; (3) £101,374; (4) £98,397; (5) £93,125; (6) £90,822; and (7) £94,016.”

UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF BOARD FOR FEMALE WORKERS.

Mr. DASH (*Mundingburra*) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

“1. Has the Government appointed a special board under the provisions of section 27 (c) of ‘The Income (Unemployment Relief) Tax Act of 1930’ to administer that portion of the Unemployment Relief Fund which the Act empowers the Minister, in his discretion, to apply in and for the relief of unemployment in respect of female workers? If so, who are the members of such special board?”

“2. What amount was expended under this heading during the last financial year?”

“3. What was the number of registrations of unemployed female workers at the various Labour bureaux throughout the State as at (a) 30th June, 1930, and (b) 30th June, 1931, respectively?”

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*) replied—

“1 and 2. No special board has been appointed under section 27 of ‘The Income (Unemployment Relief) Tax Act of 1930’ to deal with the question of female unemployed, as up to the present all demands in this respect have been readily met by the existing facilities at the disposal of the department. Provision has been made whereby applicants for rations or intermittent relief work are permitted to include in the number of their dependants all unemployed girls, irrespective of age, without separate personal application being made by them. All girls living away from home in cases of need are entitled to ration allowance, and, where it has been found necessary, arrangements have also been made to provide lodgings and shelter in addition. In collaboration with the Social Service League, more than one hundred girls per week are given a day’s work in Brisbane to make clothing for free distribution to the families of the unemployed. Consideration is now being given to the question of extending this activity to other centres of the State. The Women’s Employment Bureau in Brisbane has been reorganised on modern lines and housed in centrally situated offices for the convenience of prospective employees and employers. This step has been fully justified by the increased demand for labour made through the official bureau, and its extension may yet be found to be warranted in some of the larger provincial towns. Should there be any unemployed female person living away from home and destitute who does not desire to take advantage of any of these opportunities for relief, such person, on request, may be provided with a free railway pass to her home town. In short,

it may be stated generally that the policy of the department is at all times to give the most sympathetic attention to all questions affecting female unemployed.

“3. (a) 1,179; (b) 2,377.”

CORRESPONDENCE IN RE ROCKHAMPTON “LIBERTY FAIR.”

Mr. DUNLOP (*Rockhampton*) asked the Attorney-General—

“1. Will he kindly lay on the table of the House all correspondence that passed between his office and the Rockhampton Pipe Band in connection with the ‘Liberty Fair’ that was run in Rockhampton by Black and Bosier from the 7th November to the 13th December, 1930, inclusive?”

“2. Is it not a fact that he asked for all cheque-book butts and the two books where Boswood kept the records of the proceeds wherein they show the amounts received for the different illegal games, and will he table these two notebooks?”

“3. Has Black yet paid back to the Pipe Band, Rockhampton, the amount of money that he was overpaid, viz. £96 odd; and, if not, what action does he propose taking to recover same?”

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgroarty, *South Brisbane*) replied—

“1. These papers may be seen at the Justice Department by any hon. member.

“2. I have no knowledge of the notebooks referred to.

“3. All Mr. Black’s permits have been cancelled.”

INCOME TAXATION AND ARREARS, 1930-1931.

Mr. PEASE (*Herbert*) asked the Treasurer—

“1. What was (a) the estimated, (b) actual, receipts from income taxation during the year ended 30th June, 1931?”

“2. What was the amount of arrears outstanding as at 30th June, 1931, in respect to income taxation assessments for that year?”

“3. Of the arrears referred to in (2), how are same allocated in respect to the ‘taxable income’ groups as set out in the Commissioner’s annual report?”

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Wynnum*) replied—

“1. (a) £2,750,000; (b) £2,556,050.

“2. Amount of arrears, £841,182. The proportion applicable to any particular year is not available.

“3. Companies, £259,830; individuals, £581,352.”

NUMBER OF QUALIFIED PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS, 1930-1931.

Mr. MULLAN (*Flinders*) asked the Attorney-General—

“How many persons were qualified to vote for each electoral district in

Queensland as at 31st December, 1930, and 30th June, 1931, respectively?"

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgroarty, *South Brisbane*) replied—

RETURN SHOWING THE NUMBER OF ELECTORS QUALIFIED TO VOTE FOR EACH ELECTORAL DISTRICT IN QUEENSLAND AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1930, AND AS AT 30TH JUNE, 1931.

Electorate.	Electors on Roll, 31 December, 1930.	Electors on Roll, 30 June, 1931.
Albert	8,055	8,194
Aubigny	6,480	6,400
Balonne	5,285	5,126
Barcoo	5,516	5,204
Bowen	6,729	6,670
Bremer	6,305	6,400
Brisbane	4,742	4,790
Bulimba	12,101	12,294
Bundaberg	7,926	8,091
Buranda	6,863	6,920
Burke	4,062	3,905
Burnett	8,168	8,460
Burrum	6,561	6,528
Cairns	8,417	8,409
Carnarvon	6,470	6,489
Charters Towers	3,922	3,925
Chillagoe	3,640	3,386
Cook	4,175	4,142
Cooroora	9,129	8,994
Cunningham	6,184	6,149
Dalby	6,797	6,953
Eacham	6,288	6,140
East Toowoomba	7,291	7,295
Enoggera	12,859	12,939
Fassifern	7,724	7,693
Fitzroy	7,372	7,482
Flinders	3,018	3,377
Portitude Valley	6,649	6,735
Gregory	3,621	3,686
Gympie	5,397	5,390
Herbert	8,697	8,993
Ipswich	7,529	7,594
Ithaca	7,961	8,075
Kelvin Grove	8,857	8,775
Kennedy	7,526	7,729
Keppel	6,528	6,663
Kurilpa	7,066	7,060
Leichhardt	4,656	4,539
Lockyer	5,961	5,980
Logan	12,530	12,697
Mackay	6,739	6,796
Maranoa	5,450	5,270
Maree	7,451	7,502
Maryborough	6,406	6,391
Merthyr	7,619	7,646
Mirani	6,825	6,967
Mitchell	4,524	4,490
Mount Morgan	3,159	3,120
Mundingburra	7,096	7,235
Murilla	5,355	5,392
Murrumba	7,328	7,439
Nanango	7,393	7,496
Normanby	4,515	4,552
Nundah	11,106	11,162
Oxley	11,550	11,685
Paddington	5,950	6,035
Port Curtis	6,736	6,713
Queenton	4,015	4,056
Rockhampton	5,315	5,318
Rosewood	6,592	6,641
Sandgate	9,300	9,370
South Brisbane	6,230	6,315
Stanley	6,605	6,539
Toombul	8,647	8,705
Toowong	9,260	9,426
Toowoomba	8,224	8,401
Townsville	4,847	4,798
Warrego	4,369	4,205
Warwick	6,844	6,978
Wide Bay	7,241	7,299
Windsor	8,842	8,869
Wynnum	8,606	8,724
Grand Total	495,196	497,806

SOURCE OF SUPPLY OF FUNDS TO W. H. JACKSON IN TOWNSVILLE ELECTION.

Mr. BRUCE (*Kennedy*) asked the Premier—

"Will he furnish to the House the source of the information on which he based his statement on Tuesday last that he had verified the statement of Jackson to him (the Premier) that the meat-workers' union had supplied Jackson with the funds for his campaign against Messrs. Theodore and McCormack?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. R. M. King, *Logan*), for the PREMIER (Hon. A. E. Moore, *Aubigny*), replied—

"The hon. member has added his own words to my statement. However, for obvious reasons, I could not divulge the source of my information."

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*) [2.41]: I ask the permission of the House to make a personal explanation.

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

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. KELSO: Late yesterday afternoon I read the following report of the proceedings in Parliament for Tuesday published in the "Telegraph"—

"Mr. Cooper (Opposition) said that the Premier and the Treasurer had sat on their benches while Government members had cast aspersions on the judiciary saying that the judge and jury were corrupt.

"Mr. Barnes (Treasurer): They were never made.

"Mr. COOPER: Yes, they were, and Mr. Kelso made them. I blocked him.

I desire to give an absolutely unqualified denial to that charge. I have a copy of the material part of the debate, and in order that I may clear myself, I would ask the permission of the House to quote a portion of the speech of the hon. member for Bremer. This is what appears in "Hansard"—

"Mr. COOPER: It was not unfortunate. The hon. member for Nundah attempted to make it appear something that it was not. The Treasurer and the Premier sat quite contented on their bench while members on the Government side made insinuations, by way of interjection, that the jury or the judge—possibly the judge and the jury—in the Mungana case were corrupted.

"The Treasurer: Such a statement is untrue, and it was never made.

"Mr. COOPER: Such a statement was made in this Chamber; yet neither the Premier nor the Treasurer took any exception to it.

"The Treasurer: I say such statements were never made.

"Mr. COOPER: They were made, and I expect the Treasurer to accept my assurance that they were made. I am not going to repeat them; but those insinuations were made, and I believe one

Mr. Kelso.]

of the hon. members making the insinuations was the hon. member for Nundah, and I said, "Ah, Mr. Kelso, from you!" and he stopped immediately. I drew attention to the fact that he made the insinuation in that way. Other hon. members opposite also made the insinuation.

"The Treasurer: That is not correct.

"Mr. COOPER: It is correct, and I ask the Treasurer to accept my assurance that I heard the interjections.

"The Treasurer: I am not going to accept your misstatement."

All I can say is that I spoke during the debate, and I think I used fairly straight language. I took particular care to see that I never mentioned the judge or the jury except in these terms—

"The newspapers said throughout Australia that he must be allowed to vindicate his character. A civil action was brought. The case was tried. The jury have delivered their verdict."

A little later, in reply to an interjection by the hon. member for Balonne, I said—

"Here is the hon. member for Balonne saying something which is not correct. The Premier said that the jury came to a certain decision. Very well, that is their business. They are sworn to weigh the evidence and to come to a conclusion. They have done so."

I was particularly careful, and in no way brought the judge or jury into the case. I say that the hon. member for Bremer, in view of the wild statements he was making, made a deliberate misstatement when he attributed those remarks to me, because I say quite unhesitatingly that I never once, by interjection or in any other way, referred to the judge or the jury as stated by the hon. member. I deny the fact that the hon. member pointed his finger and said, "Ah, Mr. Kelso, from you!" That is a figment of the hon. member's imagination. I think the hon. member should be manly enough to withdraw the statement. So far as I am concerned, what I have stated is the truth and the whole truth.

Mr. COOPER (*Bremer*) [2.45]: I ask the permission of the House to make a personal explanation.

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

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COOPER: I regret that I have not the proof copy of "Hansard" from which the hon. member for Nundah quoted. I do not mean the proof that he is quoting from, but a proof of the whole day's proceedings. I am thereby handicapped. Hon. members know as well as you do, Mr. Speaker, that many of the interjections made in this House do not get into "Hansard." The hon. member for Nundah, amongst other hon. members on the Government side of the Chamber, interjected on many occasions, "What about John Wren?"

Mr. KELSO: You are a deliberate liar so far as I am concerned.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to withdraw that offensive remark.

Mr. KELSO: Am I to stand here—

[*Mr. Kelso.*

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. KELSO: Am I to stand here after the explanation I have made, and allow the hon. member to say that?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. KELSO: In deference to your request, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw.

Mr. COOPER: If the hon. member for Nundah says that he is not one of the hon. members who made that assertion, I must accept his assurance. He was sitting at the time on the front cross bench.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Who made the statement?

Mr. COOPER: I understand the hon. member for Nundah made it. He was sitting on the front cross bench.

Mr. KELSO: I was not; I never left my seat on this bench.

Mr. COOPER: If the hon. member for Nundah did not make the interjection, then I am sorry; but at the time I said, "Ah, Mr. Kelso, you too!" I said that at the time, and I desire to draw your attention, Mr. Speaker, to the fact that in the proof of "Hansard" of that date appears an interjection credited to Mr. Butler.

Mr. DUNLOP: That is the man who made the interjection. (Laughter.)

Mr. COOPER: The interjection was also made at a similar stage by other hon. members on the Government side. The interjection, to the best of my recollection, was to this effect, "The jury functioned as John Wren wanted them." (Government dissent.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. KERR: That was never said.

Mr. COOPER: I am sorry: I am speaking without the "Hansard" proof. (Government dissent.) I am in the difficulty that I have not the "Hansard" proof. If the hon. member for Nundah had mentioned the matter, I could have had the proof in rebuttal. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that I saw some such words credited to the hon. member for Port Curtis, and I am sure that the hon. member for Kennedy, who was speaking at the time, can hear me out in that.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS.

SUPREME COURT FUNDS ACT.

Mr. SPEAKER announced the receipt from the Auditor-General of his thirty-sixth annual report under "The Supreme Court Funds Act of 1895."

Ordered to be printed.

PAPERS

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

Fifth annual report of the Director of Infant Welfare for the year ended the 30th June, 1931.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Order in Council under "The Income (Unemployment Relief) Tax Act of 1930," with regard to method of collection of tax on income derived from the sale of opossum skins.

PRIVILEGE.

PUBLICATION OF NOTICES OF QUESTIONS.

Mr. A. J. JONES (*Paddington*) [3.50]: I desire permission to speak on a question of privilege.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it the wish of the House that the hon. member be allowed to speak on the question of privilege?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. A. J. JONES: I desire to draw your attention, Mr. Speaker, to a number of questions published in a morning paper which were to be addressed to the Secretary for Mines by the hon. member for Mirani. As these questions as published do not in any way coincide with the questions appearing on the business-sheet or with those asked by the hon. member for Mirani, I would like to know whether they have been censored, and, if so, is there any way in which this House can protect itself against the publication of questions which are not asked by the hon. member giving notice of them?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have given a good deal of consideration in regard to this matter, and take all responsibility for the editing of notices of questions. This session I have adopted no new rule in connection with the matter, and I am endeavouring to carry out the procedure followed in other Parliaments with respect to the form in which questions should be submitted.

The questions submitted by the hon. member for Mirani yesterday contained quite a lot of superfluous matter, which I ordered to be deleted. I take full responsibility for anything I do in that regard. I always consult the Clerk of Parliament before I come to any decision with regard to the matter. I think hon. members will recognise that recently the privilege of asking questions has been abused in some directions. I do not think it is in order to bring questions of a personal nature before this Parliament at all, and those who wish to get certain information of the kind which has been sought should go to the department concerned. I do not think Parliament should be used to obtain information with regard to which a number of questions have been submitted, because there is a very great danger that grave injury may be done to persons whom the questioner may have no intention of injuring.

Mr. A. J. JONES: In this case, Mr. Speaker, you have protected the honour and dignity of Parliament.

GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL POLICY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Question stated—

"That, in the opinion of this House, the Government's policy of wages reduction, cancellation and suspension of awards, together with curtailment of the general provisions for the health, safety, and welfare of the mass of the industrial workers in this State, has increased unemployment, bankrupted many businesses, and has inflicted injury on the people generally, particularly those for whose benefit the industrial laws were primarily initiated.

This House also records its opinion that such a policy is in direct conflict with, and a gross repudiation of, the Government's pre-election pledges and promises" (*Mr. Pollock's motion*)—

on which Mr. Sizer had moved the following amendment:—

"Omit all words after the word 'House,'

and insert in lieu thereof the words—

'a policy of securing co-operation amongst citizens of all political parties to work for the common good, presents the best solution of our acute national difficulties.'

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*) [2.57]: I believe that we may assume that the hon. member for Gregory spoke for the Opposition when submitting his motion, which possibly may be looked upon as a want of confidence motion. For that reason it is a comprehensive motion dealing with every phase of our national life, wages, conditions, the health or suffering of the community, and every other factor possible.

One of the outstanding factors of the speech of the hon. member for Gregory was in regard to broken promises. "Hansard" will disclose that, while our Government have admittedly broken promises, the Labour Government, when in office and when appealing to the electors, were exactly in the same category.

Mr. PEASE: They were not; they never gulled the people.

Mr. KERR: Take, for instance, such things as promises in connection with childhood endowment and pensions for poor widows and orphans. We know such promises were definitely made by advertisements and otherwise and broadcast throughout Queensland. As none of those promises have been fulfilled, we find hon. members opposite have been in exactly the same boat. Two wrongs will never make a right; and the Opposition have no case in regard to charges of broken promises against this Government, for the reason that the conditions which existed after this Government came into power made it impossible to carry out some of their election promises.

When Mr. McCormack was Premier of Queensland, he promised a reduction of railway freights and fares, and said that the income tax would have to make good the deficit in the railway revenue.

Speaking at New Farm prior to the 1926 election, Mr. McCormack said that he would not increase freights and fares, but immediately after the election the freights and fares on the Queensland railways went up by at least 10 per cent.—in some cases more. There was a definite pledge, and a definite breaking of that pledge.

Mr. PEASE: He may be reported to have said so.

Mr. KERR: It was not a question of being reported to have said it. It was in his policy speech, which was typed out before it was delivered, and the papers published it in full.

The hon. member for Gregory said that the policy of our Government is wage reduction. I challenge that statement. This Government has no such policy; but it is a burning question in our midst to-day; and

Mr. Kerr.]

I am prepared to take the platform anywhere and debate this question with any member of the Opposition. Our policy sets out to achieve and protect a proper standard of living conditions for the people of this State. We have protected hours and wages. When our Government came into power they had the opportunity of placing their own representatives on the Industrial Court, but they were honest enough to retain the personnel of the existing court, as appointed by hon. members. Hon. members opposite must give us credit for being fair in that respect.

Mr. PEASE: You altered the Act.

Mr. KERR: I shall come to that in a minute. In supporting the amendment, I want to stress the importance of good will in the community. No one knows better than hon. members of this House that at the present stage there must be good will between political parties. Recently, in the old country, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the Labour Prime Minister, has given a lead to the world; and it is a most inopportune moment for any party to bring down a motion such as this, which can only cause discord in the community and make things more difficult all round.

Our Government did not like doing what they have had to do—it was no pleasure to them—but criticism like that of the hon. member for Gregory only makes the position more difficult. Of course, he is entitled to move this motion, but at such a critical time he should have refrained from doing so. The hon. member has been here for many years, and must recognise our difficulties. He should give the Government a chance and co-operate with them, for, by the amendment, we are only seeking a little co-operation in our endeavours to assist the State.

The Government have stood for keeping up wages and conditions; and it is nothing new if they have been brought down by the Industrial Court. Every Minister in the late Government signed a petition to the court to reduce wages. That happened only a few short years ago. Have they forgotten it? Have they forgotten that afterwards they went to the Emu Park Convention, where the hon. member who now has the audacity to submit this motion and to say that living conditions are being brought down was one of those who voted for a reduction of wages? He was one of those who said that the basic wage was too high, and should come down from £4 5s. to £4. To-day, with his tongue in his cheek, he complains that our Government are breaking down conditions. They are not. They are maintaining the Industrial Court. The hon. member for Gregory attended that convention, and voted for a reduction in the basic wage, in common with Ministers of the Crown.

Mr. POLLOCK: That is not true.

Mr. KERR: The hon. member knows that he was in the majority on that occasion when the motion was carried by thirty-seven to thirty-five. What is the good of saying it is not true? The hon. member for Leichhardt was another who went up there and voted for a reduction of wages. What hypocrisy!

Mr. A. J. JONES: We voted in favour of arbitration.

[*Mr. Kerr.*]

Mr. KERR: That was not the effect of the vote. The motion proposed that the basic wage should be restored to £4 5s. per week, and Messrs. Theodore, McCormack, and other members of the Cabinet, as well as the hon. member for Gregory and the hon. member for Leichhardt, voted against the motion.

Mr. POLLOCK: You are not telling the truth.

Mr. KERR: I am telling the truth. The name of the hon. member for Gregory was published throughout Queensland.

Mr. POLLOCK: You are deliberately misconstruing. My name was not published as a voter in favour of a reduction of wages.

Mr. KERR: The object of the motion was to restore the basic wage to £4 5s. per week.

Mr. POLLOCK: We voted against Parliament fixing the basic wage.

Mr. KERR: You voted against the restoration of the basic wage to £4 5s. per week.

I can appreciate the attempt of the Opposition in moving such a comprehensive motion with the object of criticising the Government and charging them with breaking election promises. I have to admit that we have been compelled to break some of those promises, but I have also to point out that, when the Labour Government were in power, wages were reduced.

The Government relief scheme and the scheme providing for intermittent work have conferred considerable benefit upon the unemployed people of this State. I do not for one moment anticipate that the Government will be defeated at the next elections, but, if they are defeated, the work that they have done in the interests of the unemployed will stand as a monument to their credit. The Government are not on the defensive, knowing full well that the common sense of the people will prevail, and that they will be returned to power again.

The hon. member for Gregory has stated that the Government are regardless of the welfare of the people, but in his own heart he knows that we have the welfare of the people at heart, and that our work will stand as a monument to our credit.

I should also like to remind the hon. member for Gregory that the Imperial Labour Government has just smashed on the question of the dole, and that a National Government has been set up.

Mr. PEASE: Was that the cause of their downfall?

Mr. KERR: Absolutely!

Mr. PEASE: Rubbish!

Mr. KERR: It is beyond doubt that the MacDonald Ministry was wrecked on the question of how much should be paid by way of dole. The other points at issue were satisfactorily disposed of, but, when the question of dole payments was considered, an agreement was impossible, and the British Cabinet was smashed and a National Government set up in its place. It is absolutely certain that this Government will not smash on the dole question, because we have provided more work for the unemployed than any other Government in Australia or in any other part of the world. It is a deliberate misstatement to say that we are entirely regardless of the welfare of the people. We have set out to provide

work, shelter, and clothing for the people who are unemployed, and we are the only Government who have been able to find work of some kind for every married man. I admit that the problem of the single man presents tremendous difficulties, but not one married man in Queensland, unless he be an invalid in receipt of rations, is unable to draw some money to meet his commitments.

I have to admit that the position is becoming very much more acute on financial grounds, but any man who is not prepared to contribute 6d. in the £1 to assist the intermittent relief worker to obtain double the amount of work is not worth his salt. I sincerely hope that additional work will be provided for the intermittent married worker who has a family. It remained for this Government to extend the proper treatment to the unemployed, but during the fourteen years of their administration the Labour Government had not sufficient incentive or brain-power to formulate a scheme providing work in place of the demoralising system of granting rations.

Mr. POLLOCK: The present Government are utilising the unemployed to cut grass and dig drains.

Mr. KERR: Is that not much better than standing in a queue for hours waiting for a few pounds of beef to be tossed over the counter? That was the system slavishly followed by the Labour Government, and the system on which they were wrecked. Is it not better for us to say to a man, "Go and do your work; and, when you have done it, we will give you £1, £2, or even £3, with which you can buy food and clothing?" Hon. members opposite must surely admit that that is preferable to the old system, under which men lined up in queues at the relief depots, and were handed out various commodities, with the result that a man who received 6 lb. of sugar would probably take it to his grocer, and say, "I don't want all this sugar. Will you give me something in place of it?" The whole system savoured of the days of barter—of the old days in Scotland, when horse-shoe nails were a form of currency. I say unhesitatingly that it is much better to give a man the money, and let him take it home to his wife, who can make whatever purchases she desires. Better by far to cut grass than to stand in a queue in order to get a parcel of food. It is a tragedy to think that the late Government permitted that sort of thing. It remained for this Administration to come forward with a scheme that is without equal in the Commonwealth to-day. No better proof can be adduced to show that the statements contained in the motion of the hon. member for Gregory are wholly fallacious than the following comparative figures showing the relief payments that are being made in the various States:—

	Man with wife and 2 children. (per week).	Man with wife and 6 children. (per week).
	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>
Victoria	11 6	17 6
New South Wales ..	19 7	27 8
South Australia ..	14 11	24 10
Queensland	22 6	33 0

Hon. members opposite, who are so prone to talk about distress in this State, would do well to remember that the Queensland Government is the only one in Australia which is making a genuine effort to help the people. If the hon. member for Gregory has any kick about starving people, it is against his colleagues in the other States of the Commonwealth—not against this Government, whose humanitarian actions have met with widespread approval. I venture to say that 99 per cent. of the men concerned are standing behind the Government four-square in connection with relief work. We know the good work that is being done in connection with that work. For example, at the Windsor State school we know that the relief workers are beautifying the school grounds, and are making it a better asset to the State. Of course, it may be argued that that is not reproductive; but it cannot seriously be argued that anything which tends to the advancement of education—and, after all, pleasant surroundings do that—is not worth while to the community.

With regard to the remarks of the hon. member for Gregory that the health of the community is less favourable to-day than it has been previously, I say unhesitatingly that never in the history of the State has the health of the people been better than it is to-day. Even in respect of the work which the hon. member criticises—the cutting of grass and the digging of drains—we are doing something to safeguard the health of the community. The best proof of the inaccuracy of the hon. member's statement about the ill-health of the community is to be found in the official statistics, which show that the health of the people of Queensland has never been better than during the last six months.

It will be noticed by the papers this morning that the cost of living in Queensland is coming down. I admit that some lines have not been reduced, but there is a reduction in rent, in bread, in beef, and in butter—the "three B's"—and we were told by the Labour Party when they first came into power that they were going to give the people cheap beef, cheap bread, and cheap butter.

The hon. member for Gregory considers it would be very nice to have a round-table conference on these matters—not only an academic discussion, but a real argument. He has tried to do his best to draw a line of demarcation between the producers in the country, who produce all our wealth, and the people in the metropolitan area, who are covered by awards of the Industrial Court. He stated that the Government are establishing pools and boards, and are fixing prices for commodities; and he has tried to draw a red herring between the two sections, hoping that members like myself would stand up and say, "Break your boards controlling butter; smash all your pools controlling wheat; and for the men in the city keep your Industrial Court!" He said, on the one hand, we are doing so and so, and, on the other hand, we are doing nothing. He has to go a little bit deeper than that. Talk of this kind will get him nowhere. We in Australia have to depend at the present time on the primary producers. It is from them that we get our wealth. I have a deep feeling in this regard, and the Nationalist Party is broadminded enough to support pools and other things to give the primary

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producer a decent living, and to retain, on the other hand, the Industrial Court to ensure that the worker shall get a fair price for his commodity, which is his labour. That is where the Labour Party fails.

I read the hon. member's speech very closely, and the inference to be drawn from his remarks is that we should smash up pools and so forth, together with the Industrial Court. Let me repeat that these boards and pools were established by the Government under which he sat for fourteen years. If he has any kick coming against these pools, let him be man enough to stand up and castigate the Government of which he was so ardent a supporter for so long. It is nothing but hypocrisy on the part of the hon. member, who, I presume, is speaking for the Opposition in this connection.

Mr. POLLOCK: I do not desire to raise frivolous points of order, but surely "hypocrisy" is not in order!

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not in order.

Mr. KERR: The word must not be used?

Mr. POLLOCK: You should withdraw.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw the expression.

Mr. KERR: I withdraw. I have examined closely the motion moved by the hon. member, and it shows clearly that he is trying to bring about a cleavage between the two sections of the community without saying definitely what he means. That sort of thing is all right on a public platform, but the hon. member loses caste when he comes into this Chamber and is not game to state his opinions on these matters. That is where the hon. member has failed. The motion is framed in a very clever way; but, when the people remember what has been done by the Nationalist Party, they will not hesitate to stand up for the Government. The people have everything to gain by supporting the present Government. It is true we have had to do many things that we have not liked doing.

The Government recognise that this motion is not aimed altogether at the country but more at the industrial worker. What have we as a Government done for the people? We have given relief to the people who have mortgages over their homes, and there can be no foreclosure until matters have been placed before a court for decision. Our workers' homes are to-day a credit to the Secretary for Public Works, and no person in arrears with rent in connection with a worker's home has been turned out of his home. When the Labour Government were in power, they turned people out of workers' homes when they could not pay their rent, but this Government has taken no action in that direction. There are people who are out of work who cannot pay their rent as they have no money coming in, and the Government have shown toleration and generosity towards them, and enabled them to retain their homes. The Government brought in a Bill for that purpose.

I represent an industrial area, and I would be willing to see an increase of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per loaf before I would cripple the great flour industry. A man in public life has to stand by the producer in that case. If the producers go out of existence, then we shall not get bread. It is exactly the same as wages to-day. If there is no money to pay

them, a man does not get wages; and, if wheat is not produced, we shall get no bread at all. It is our duty as members of Parliament to guard the national purse. I could make myself a hero if I pointed out that the hon. member for Albert, who is chairman of the Butter Board, and the hon. member for Lockyer, who is chairman of directors of the co-operative butter factory in his district, were putting $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a lb. on butter, which I would not agree to. That is what the Labour Government have been doing for years, and that is the difference between the Labour Government and this Government. We say that we shall be returned without any trouble at the next election because we have recognised all sections of the community. It is easy enough by various methods to get support at election time, but you have to carry out your promises if it is at all possible to do so.

The hon. member for Gregory was a supporter of the Government which established pools for primary producers. When speaking the other day, he was trying to run down the pools organised for the farmers, and he is trying to crush them by this motion. We are willing to be judged for our actions at the bar of public opinion in this matter. There is no objection to the fixation of prices so long as Queensland and Australia are in the present difficult position. The hon. member for Gregory mentioned bankrupt businesses in Queensland, but the responsibility for that is not attachable to this Government. If the hon. member considered the matter at all, he would realise that our Government have taken steps in many directions to save businesses from crashing.

I find from the latest figures I have been able to obtain that the value of secondary industries in Australia is £420,000,000, which is a tremendous amount. Those figures show that, taken in conjunction with our primary products, we are going to come out all right. We must recover prosperity with our secondary industries in course of time, and businesses will not become bankrupt so long as people have confidence in this Government. We want companies to come here to develop industries. I will show what the banks have done for Australia in this crisis. Actually they have lent far more money than they have received from the people.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed him under the Standing Orders.

Mr. HANLON (*Uthmaniyah*) [3.30]: It was amusing to listen to the hon. member for Enoggera raging here this afternoon. I think I am justified in believing that the hon. member is losing his nerve as the election approaches. He yelled frantically that the Government are going to be returned; but he never ceased apologising for them.

The motion of the hon. member for Gregory was most comprehensive, and one to which every hon. member could well address himself. It offered large scope for the debate, and it is a pity that the Minister moved his amendment where he did. There is no doubt that we all realise the value of co-operation amongst the citizens of this State in an endeavour to put it again on a sound footing; and every decent citizen in the community would be prepared to

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co-operate with anyone who would endeavour to bring it back to prosperity. The Labour Party has never made any secret of its desire to co-operate with the Government in anything they will do for the benefit of the people of this State. It is a most desirable thing that members of all parties here should co-operate in giving effect to the proposition of the hon. member for Gregory; but neither the Secretary for Labour and Industry nor the hon. member for Enoggera gave any indication that he was willing to co-operate with this party in its desire to restore living and working conditions and the wages of the people of this State. Nor has either of them given any idea that he is willing to co-operate with hon. members on this side in safeguarding the health and happiness of our citizens. Co-operation in the abstract is of very little value to the people of Queensland who are hungry or seeking work. It does not satisfy hungry children, nor will it cover cold bodies in the winter weather. This party has always been willing to co-operate with anyone who would do anything for the welfare of the citizens of the country; and I can assure the Minister and every other hon. member on the other side that, if the Government will give an indication even at this late hour that they are prepared to give effect to the pledges they made to the people in May, 1929, they will have the hearty co-operation of this party.

When addressing this House on Thursday last, the Minister gave us no indication of the direction in which he wished to have co-operation. You can find in his remarks a most venomous attack on the Labour Party. He asked for their co-operation, but he said everything that he could think of that was offensive—everything calculated to prevent co-operation.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I did not.

MR. HANLON: He said everything that under ordinary circumstances would repel everybody from whom co-operation was desired, but made no suggestion of any way in which he was prepared to meet our co-operation in improving the condition of the people of this State. Apparently the Minister's idea of co-operation between political parties is that the Labour Party should follow the example of the Government and forget all about political principles, break all the pledges that it has given its supporters, and drop all the ideals with which it is inspired, throw overboard all its aims and objects for the benefit of the working people; in short, that it should become a spineless accomplice of the Government in their attack on the wages and conditions of the community. If by co-operation the hon. gentleman meant that we should be the accomplices of the Government in these things, then we will have nothing to do with it; but, if the Government will make any proposal which can be shown to be genuinely in the interests of the men, women, and children of this State, then our co-operation will be free and hearty.

The Government have been in power for two and a-half years. Can any hon. member opposite or any other hon. member show me any way in which they have given us the opportunity to co-operate? Ministers have thrown down Bills here, and told us frankly

that they must pass in that form, and that no arguments would be considered.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: We have accepted some of your amendments.

MR. HANLON: Only when the Government were driven to do it in fear and trembling, as they were driven to the decision not to proceed with a five-year Parliament. That was an amendment that was accepted; and it was an amendment that was not moved in this Chamber, but one moved in the City Hall. In similar circumstances, no doubt, the Government would accept other amendments. They would accept amendments when a sufficient outcry had been raised by this party against their proposed action. Then, of course, they gave way to a very little extent.

We have had the spectacle of a financial measure being thrown down by a Minister, and being informed by the Premier that no amendments would be accepted from this side, and that the Bill must go through in its original form. What a fine way to invite co-operation! If there is to be any co-operation between political parties, then the Government should also seek the support and co-operation of the people. It would not do the Government any good to have hon. members on this side so far forget their political convictions, and principles as to co-operate with them whilst not securing the co-operation of the people outside. The mere co-operation of members of Parliament means very little if we have not the co-operation of the people who create the Parliament. Just look at the manner in which the Government sought the co-operation of the people of this State! They barely had time to warm the seats of office when they made an attack upon the living conditions of the people. They did not wait for the opening of Parliament before issuing their ukase cancelling the rural workers' award, thereby condemning the people in rural areas to having their standard of living seriously reduced. At the very first Cabinet meeting held by the present Ministry it was decided to suspend the rural workers' award. They launched their first invitation to the people to co-operate by removing the rural workers from the protection of the Industrial Court, thereby condemning them to industrial out-lawry. That is a fine invitation for co-operation. The present Government made a very big mouthful during the election campaign of their promise to give the boys and girls a chance; but the first action taken in that direction was an attack upon the working conditions and the employment of the boys and girls by wrecking the Apprenticeship Act. Hon. members opposite know that. They even condemned the apprentices who had served their time and had reached twenty-one years of age to work two more years, not as apprentices, but as underpaid journeymen. There was another beautiful invitation to the people of this State to co-operate with the Government—the absolute wrecking of the best features of the Apprenticeship Act, which the people had enjoyed for many years!

No sooner had the Government reached the Treasury benches than the Attorney-General launched his famous ukase to the people of this State, saying, "We are going to ringbark the Arbitration Court." Another glorious invitation to the people of this State to co-operate with the Government in placing the State on a sound foundation! The

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Government also removed the public servants from the protection of the court; they removed the station hands from the protection of the court; and they removed the workers engaged in metalliferous mining from the protection of the court. They condemned about one-third of the people of this State to industrial outlawry, making one law for one section of the people and another law for another. They condemned all these people to industrial outlawry, leaving them open to attacks by any vicious wage-slasher who desired to inflict wage-slashing conditions upon them. That was another invitation from hon. members opposite to this party and to the people they represent to co-operate with the Government.

During the last session of Parliament the Premier extended another invitation to the public servants of this State to co-operate with the Government in an attempt to right the finances of the country. When the Industrial Court refused to reduce the salaries of the public servants to the extent desired by the Government, the Government—by Act of Parliament—inflicted upon the public servants the wage that they thought—not what the Industrial Court thought—would be sufficient. Another invitation to the people to co-operate with the Government in setting the State on a sound foundation! During the first session of this Parliament the Government extended another invitation to the workers of the State to co-operate by increasing their hours of labour by Act of Parliament, thereby adding to an already overcrowded unemployed labour market. Another invitation to co-operate! Another invitation to co-operate was extended last year, when the Government took 1s. per week from the amount allowed for the maintenance of the orphans of this State. I am sure that that invitation for the co-operation of the poor and unprotected section of the community found a very fine response in the hearts of the people. What a beautiful way of asking the people of the State to co-operate with the Government!

Another method in which they evidently expected us to co-operate was the inflicting of taxation on the people, irrespective of the earning capacity of the people to pay. We had the famous taxation measure introduced into this House which put a tax on domestic workers, casual workers, etc.—even insisting on cadging a penny from the unfortunate woman who had to do a half-day's washing. Certainly it was a graduated tax, but it was graduated in the reverse way to that in which the Labour Government imposed taxation. Labour Governments always started with a low rate of tax on the lower incomes and a higher rate as incomes mounted; but in this famous income tax measure the tax started off at 5d. in the £1 on the poorest and most sweated section of the community, and fell by degrees to 3d. in the £1 on all persons in regular work and receiving larger income. The unfortunate person condemned to do a half-day's work in order to get a bit of food in the home was taxed 5d. in the £1. I suppose this Government would expect this party to co-operate with them; but, if that is the co-operation that the Minister means, it is not the conception of co-operation that is held by the Labour Party.

The Attorney-General also issued an invitation to this party to co-operate in taxing

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funds raised for charitable purposes. That is a form of co-operation that we refused; and we make no apology to the people of the State for refusing to tax these subscriptions of the people given for charitable purposes.

We also refused the invitation of the Secretary for Public Instruction to co-operate in the sabotaging of our educational system. We refused to co-operate with the Minister in sabotaging our scholarship system, and undermining the greater part of the value which we had built up in our educational system. Again we have no apologies to make for refusing co-operation in that respect.

Further, we refused to co-operate with the Government when in a previous session of this Parliament they disfranchised many thousands of good white Australians in a Bill which gave a vote to Asiatics. We refused to co-operate in that; we objected, and fought the proposal. In the disfranchisement of the people of this State we will not co-operate. If hon. members opposite can bring forward a proposal to extend the franchise, then they will have our co-operation.

Mr. KENNY: One man one vote.

Mr. HANLON: That is not correct. Either the hon. member is a political dunce, or he is deluding himself. The Elections Act passed by the present Government disfranchised thousands of good white Australians, while it conferred the franchise on Asiatics. I do not think the most bigoted Tory will expect this party to co-operate in that. Hon. members opposite ask us to co-operate in disfranchising the bulk of our people in local authority elections. We refuse to co-operate, and must continue to do so.

Another matter for which the present Government are responsible, and in which they asked us to co-operate, was their attack upon the payments made under the Unemployed Workers Insurance Act. For many years the citizens of this State have paid money under that Act under a contract with the Insurance Commissioner that, in the event of their getting out of work, certain payments would be made. Payments made under that Act are not a dole or a charity grant; they are the honouring of a contract made between the person insured and the Insurance Commissioner. Many faults have been found with private insurance companies because they endeavoured to default upon their contracts on very flimsy grounds; but in this case the Insurance Commissioner is directed by the Government, and that contract has been defaulted upon by the Government, because they have reduced the payments and shortened the period for which those payments are made. Surely hon. members opposite will not expect that a Labour Party, above all parties, could co-operate in that!

Another opportunity which the Secretary for Public Works has given the Labour Party and the people of this State to show how they can co-operate with the Government is in the sabotaging of the inspection system under the Inspection of Machinery and Scaffolding Acts, the Workers' Accommodation Acts, and so forth. This party refused to co-operate because, as we pointed out at the time, the cutting out of inspectors

under these Acts was going to endanger the lives of the people of this State. The Labour Party refuses under any circumstances to co-operate with a Minister who desires to endanger the lives of our working people. We have no apologies to offer for that.

Promptly following upon the cutting down of the extent of inspection, it may have been noticed that in Fortitude Valley a girder weighing 5 tons fell from a crane to the footpath. By a miracle or the work of an ever-watchful providence, who is directing special attention to the unfortunate workers of Queensland during the period that the present Government are in office, it was ordained that no one was standing on the spot where that girder fell. On that spot very often there are hundreds of people waiting for a tram car. So great was the fall of the girder that a plate 3 feet square went 3 feet 6 inches into the footpath; so one can judge that the girder fell with sufficient force to do an injury to any unfortunate worker who might have been hit. This girder fell because there was not sufficient inspection of machinery on the job. A spar had been added to the length of the crane jib lifting this girder, contrary to the provisions of the Act; and no inspector was there to see that the job was carried out in a manner safe to the workers. The natural result of extending the length of the jib of the crane in that manner was that the jib collapsed. The force of the fall was so great that bricks from the side wall of the building which were knocked out smashed through the pancls of the fence on the opposite side of the road. That is a matter in which this party refuses to co-operate with the Minister; and I have no hesitation in saying that not one member of this party will co-operate with any Minister who endeavours, either in the interests of economy or anything else, to do things that will endanger the lives of our working people.

Another action of the Government in which they invited the co-operation of the people was the political victimisation of people appointed to various hospital boards during the term of the Labour Government. Any member of a hospital board who was suspected of having Labour sympathies was immediately kicked out by the present Government, and someone who could be relied upon to support the member for the district was put in his place. That is a sample of victimisation for political opinions with which this party will not co-operate. This party does not believe in political victimisation. It no more believes in political preference. Consequently we will not co-operate in that way.

We also refused to co-operate with the Government when they embarked on that famous political vendetta which has cost this State in the vicinity of £20,000. We do not believe in political vendettas; and this party could not co-operate with the Government in carrying out that political vendetta, which has failed so dismally.

We could not co-operate with the Government in giving away the assets of the State. Hon. members will remember that a jam factory was sold to someone who certainly was not a president of a union or the secretary of the Australian Labour Party. A jam factory which was the property of the people, and played a big part in keeping down the price of jam in this State, was

sold at a price that was less than the value of the stock in hand and the unimproved value of the land on which the factory was built. They also gave our stations away. One, which I understand was sold when the drought was on, was immediately capitalised by a liability company at exactly double the figure paid to the Government. This party refuses to co-operate with the Government in the giving away of the State assets.

Mr. KENNY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in saying that the Government gave away the State's assets?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in saying that the Government gave away the State's assets, and he must withdraw.

Mr. HANLON: I withdraw. The hon. member for Toombul will know that a very common way of advertising is to say, "It is not a sale; it is a gift." The hon. member will know that that slogan is common in regard to any business advertisement; and it was in that sense that I used the expression. I was not attempting to insinuate that the Government gave away a station worth £500,000 for nothing. For all I know, they may have received a few shillings for it. In the same way the Labour Party could not by any means co-operate with the Government in the giving of extensions of leases to wealthy pastoralists at a time that they were saying that conditions prevented them from doing anything for the poorer sections of the community. This party also refused to co-operate with the Government when they attempted to give our most beautiful park—the Acclimatisation Society's gardens—to the Royal National Agricultural Association without a by-your-leave from the City Council, and without consulting anyone outside the Cabinet. This party would not co-operate with the Government in giving away the property of the people of Brisbane without consulting the City Council. We have no need to apologise for not co-operating with the Government in that matter.

We also refused to co-operate with the Government when they arranged with Swifts Limited, who had a property on the river from which they could not get a penny of dividend, to give them a dividend of £25,000 in addition to the capital value of the property. This party considered that there was no need to co-operate with the Government in that matter. Had the Government been endeavouring to give a £25,000 a year dividend to unemployed people, they would have had the co-operation of this party, but they were giving a return of £25,000 a year to a firm which had never made a profit out of the works, and we would do the same again under the like circumstances.

We also refused to co-operate with the Government when they listened to all the urgings of little interested groups in the community who desired to exploit the people. That is a feature of the Government's policy since they have been in power. They turn a deaf ear to the cries of the great mass of the people who are in want, and to the demands of the people who ask them to honour that promise of 10,000 jobs for the unemployed. They turn a deaf ear to the children who cry to them: "What about the promise to give the boy a chance?" They turn a deaf ear to the cries of the

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people who are in need of assistance. They give no hearing to the section of the legitimate business people of the State who are to-day in financial difficulties to a great extent owing to the actions of this Government. But any little section of the community who can get the ear of the Government with some proposal to exploit the people immediately receive attention. Somebody with a "snide" advertising scheme ready to launch in Queensland got the ear of the Minister only a few weeks ago, and got the Government to agree to legalise the giving of coupons in trade, and that not only in the face of the whole of the people and the commercial community but in the teeth of the opposition of traders. While the Bill was being drafted, deputations were going to Ministers and representations were being made to Ministers by the trading community in this State demanding that the present Act should be administered fairly and fearlessly. While all this demand came from the commercial community in Brisbane for fair and honest administration of the Act, the Government, in response to some mysterious person, were drafting and printing a Bill to legalise the trade in coupons.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in order in referring to a Bill that is now before the House.

Mr. HANLON: It has been noticeable also that the Government were prepared to listen in other ways to interested sections of the community. We have an illustration in the beautiful little company known as the Public Development Company, Limited, in which two hon. members opposite were shareholders or directors. That company could get the ear of the Government without having to shout loud enough for the rest of the community to hear them. Nobody in the community heard the cries of the Public Development Company, Limited, for assistance except the Government. In spite of the fact that the Government can hear the whisperings of these companies which need assistance, they cannot hear the cries of the people for assistance. The same thing applies to the Renown Rubber Company. The Government heard the cry of this company, although it was so low that the rest of the community never heard it. Again the Government were prepared to listen to whispers when they could not hear the cries of the people for assistance.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: And they gave them a testimonial.

Mr. HANLON: Yes. Again this party refused to co-operate with the present Government in that famous taxation measure—the Racing Regulation Amendment Act—under which they inflicted further taxation upon the general run of the community but lifted an existing tax from the bookmakers, again showing that the Government had heard the cry that nobody close could hear, and turned a deaf ear to the cries of those in the community who were saying they were being too heavily taxed.

Again, the Government did not hear the cry of the community for relief from the interest burden. The community is crying out for relief from all forms of fixed charges in industry, but the Government turn a deaf ear to that cry. Bankers, trustee companies, money-lenders at various times, owners of property let on long lease, can all make

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their whispers heard, whilst the cry of the community as a whole for relief from fixed money charges receives a deaf ear from the Government. We are not going to co-operate with the Government in such action as that.

From the time the Government reached the Treasury benches until the present they have made a continuous attack on the working conditions and living standards of the people of this State. Hardly a home has escaped their attack, and this party is not going to co-operate with any body of men who do that sort of thing.

In addition to attacking the living standards of the workers, in addition to making assaults upon their wages and working conditions, they have done unparalleled harm to legitimate trade and commerce in the community. Their war on the working people has hit the legitimate business people who are carrying on useful enterprises and depending for a living on the success of their undertakings. The people engaged in legitimate enterprise who put their money into production or industry, the commercial community who depend for their income upon what they get out of their businesses—not the men who merely put their money into preference shares, with whom I am not concerned—these people are going to the wall because they can get no help from the Government. Every Minister seems to lay himself out to protect the people who are entrenched with fixed-money claims and to forget, or appear to forget, the interests of those who have legitimate businesses and depend for their living upon them. Again, I say, this party will not co-operate with anything of that kind.

These are just a few of the activities in which hon. members opposite would have us co-operate. I am sorry I cannot give a full list of the things the Government have done, and which the Labour Party has refused to assist them in doing. To give a full list of their activities of this sort would take the whole afternoon; and I therefore content myself with recounting a few which I can call to mind offhand—things which the Government have done, and which the Labour Party has refused to assist them to do, for which we have no apology to make.

If the Secretary for Labour and Industry or any other hon. member opposite could give a list of the propositions they have made or the Bills they have introduced which were in the interests of the workers of this State, but which this party has refused to assist them in carrying, there would be some justification for accusing us of refusing to co-operate. This idea of co-operation in which one party holds the gun and the other party put up its hands, in which one party adopts a stand and deliver attitude, and says, "You must co-operate. You must sacrifice your ideals and deliver to us your wealth and hand over your goods!" that is not the co-operation we talk about or one in which we are going to take any part.

Mr. POLLOCK: They want us to be accomplices.

Mr. HANLON: Exactly—accomplices in their attacks on the conditions of the people. Any political party which in this political arena comes to the head of the Labour Party and demands the surrender of its principles and the abandonment of its ideals and aspirations, which means the betrayal of the working people who sent us here, is not going to get the co-operation of the Labour Party, but only hard fighting and a resolute defence.

Mr. KENNY (*Cook*) [4.4]: At the outset I wish to congratulate the hon. member who moved this motion on the way he framed it. He was very keen and careful, because he realised that by it his party can get political propaganda for the election which is on the horizon, and perhaps again reach the Treasury benches. I have no hesitation in saying that the Government have nothing to defend and nothing to apologise for, and, therefore, during my remarks I am not going either to apologise for any action of the Government or to defend them for anything they have done. I shall content myself with dealing with a few of the actions of the Labour Party. When we realise the propaganda upon which it is necessary for hon. members opposite to embark before the election, we must sympathise with them. Especially must we sympathise with the hon. member for Ithaca who has just resumed his seat. How hard it was for him to try to fill in his forty minutes! He had a breakdown before he was done, and one wonders how long he sat up last night getting together enough to say.

The hon. member for Gregory objected to the terms in which the hon. member for Enoggera spoke of his hypocrisy. The hon. member for Gregory denied voting against the restoration of the basic wage of £4 5s.

Mr. POLLOCK: That is perfectly true.

Mr. KENNY: I should like to show the House that such is not the case. At the Emu Park Labour Convention in 1923 there was a notified motion to this effect—

Mr. POLLOCK: You read a Nationalist speech and call it truth.

Mr. KENNY: I am quoting from "The Railway Advocate," which does not support this party. This motion was moved—

"That the Government restore the basic wage of £4 5s. per week until such time as the Arbitration Act is amended to include a provision that the basic wage be fixed on the standard arrived at by the Piddington Commission."

The "Railway Advocate" dealt with that motion, and it also dealt with the members of Parliament who were present at the convention and voted against the restoration of the basic wage. I am interested in the sincerity of the hon. member for Gregory, who now says that he did not vote against that motion, and also claims that the Labour Party are interested in the conditions of the workers. Amongst those who voted against the motion were the following:—T. Wilson, D. A. Gledson, J. Dash, E. G. Theodore, J. Larcombe, T. A. Foley, A. J. Jones, J. Mullan, T. Dunstan, G. Barber, V. Winstanley, W. McCormack, G. Carter, T. Farrell, J. Stopford, G. Pollock. Surely the hon. member for Gregory will not deny again that he voted against the motion! He endeavoured to prove that the hon. member for Enoggera was wrong in stating that he had voted against the motion, and he objected to that hon. member saying that his remarks were all hypocrisy.

Mr. POLLOCK: If you say that I voted to reduce wages at Emu Park, you are telling a deliberate lie.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member for Gregory to withdraw that statement. He knows that it is not in order.

Mr. POLLOCK: Yes. I also ask you to ask the hon. member—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to withdraw.

Mr. POLLOCK: I do withdraw; but I ask you to see that the hon. member for Cook accepts my denial.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. POLLOCK: That is also parliamentary. I have denied that I voted to reduce wages at Emu Park. The vote that was taken was not one to reduce wages, but that Parliament should not fix wages; that the matter be left to the court. I ask the hon. member, and all other hon. members, to accept my denial. That is in accordance with parliamentary procedure.

Mr. KENNY: I have read the motion and I have read the names of those who voted against it. I now leave it to hon. members to draw their own conclusions. I am sorry if the hon. member for Gregory objects.

Mr. POLLOCK: I don't mind. I only wanted to put you right.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Do you think he is sincere?

Mr. KENNY: I do not think that he is sincere. No doubt when he voted he did not think that the ghost would come to light.

Mr. POLLOCK: Did you say "ghost" or "goat"?

Mr. KENNY: If the hon. member prefers to call himself a goat, I am prepared to alter the word. The hon. member contends that we are a wage-reducing Government, but such is not the case. He knows full well that the Industrial Court fixes the hours of labour and the rates of wages. Let us consider for a moment the opinions of some of the Labour leaders.

At 4.10 p.m.

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

Mr. KENNY: In this connection I desire to refer to the remarks of the ex-Labour Premier, Mr. McCormack, contained in "Hansard," 13th July, 1922, page 233—

"The only reason for a reduction in wages is because of a reduction in the cost of living. Everybody throughout the world is advocating that we must get somewhere nearer the cost of production in our industries, and the only way of bringing the cost of production somewhat closer to the price that is received for products is by reducing the cost of living and reducing wages."

Mr. POLLOCK: What stand did you take on the removal of the station hands from the protection of the court?

Mr. KENNY: I will tell the hon. member later, and I will tell him what stand he took. The ex-Labour Premier, Mr. McCormack, further stated—

"If we could obtain an effective wage—not an actual wage—to purchase commodities to the value of £4 that previously cost £5, we would be in a much

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better position if our wages were fixed at £4. That is an obvious truth, as was pointed out by the hon. member for Murilla."

There, Mr. Speaker, the late Premier of the Labour Party in Queensland definitely stated that he advocated a reduction of wages in order to reduce the cost of production. Hon. members opposite cannot get away from that.

Let us now consider what the Labour journal had to say about the Labour Party and hon. members opposite who are now condemning the Government by saying that our policy is one of wage-reduction.

We know that the Labour Party were in office from 1915 to 1929. After seven years of their reign, we find the "Daily Standard," which no one can say advocates our policy, saying this on 14th March, 1922—

"The actual money value of the present high wages is 11 per cent. less than during the pre-war period. . . . As a matter of cold fact, the Australian workers were receiving higher wages ten years ago than at any period since."

Yet they are the Government that were allegedly looking after the conditions of the workers, and whose supporters opposite are now accusing us of interfering with those conditions. I go further, and quote from the "Railway Advocate" of 10th February, 1922—

"The basic wage in 1911 was £1 11s. 3d., equal to £4 17s. 4d. in January, 1922. Therefore, the present basic wage is 17s. 4d. per week less than in 1911."

It is only necessary to quote newspapers supporting the Labour Party to show the actions of the Labour Government on the question of wages.

It is quite true that the present Government suspended the rural workers' award. We said we would do that when we appealed to the people at the last election. We got a mandate from the people of Queensland to suspend that award, because we felt that it was good policy to do so, seeing that the primary industries of Queensland were in a state of stagnation. No one realises better than the workers of Queensland that the Labour Government had gone as far as they could go; that they were up against a stone wall; and that what they had given the people was merely a sop for votes to keep the Labour Government in office. In 1929 the people got to the stage at which they put the Labour Party out. We have endeavoured to stimulate industry, and we have removed a large number of restrictions that were hampering industry. Again I need only quote the remarks of the hon. member for Gregory, who, in an article published in the Brisbane "Courier" on 31st October, 1929, referred to the position of the wool industry. I am reminded that that article nearly got him the "sack." (Government laughter.) We know that his own party tackled him over this very article.

Mr. POLLOCK: Do you say that my own party cavilled at me?

Mr. KENNY: I say the Australian Labour Party did.

Mr. POLLOCK: If you say that, you are telling another lie.

[*Mr. Kenny.*

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member for Gregory to withdraw that remark.

Mr. POLLOCK: I withdraw, and I ask that the hon. member withdraw what he said about me.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must withdraw.

Mr. POLLOCK: I have withdrawn, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I have drawn your attention to what the hon. member has said about me.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. POLLOCK: Certainly, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do I understand the hon. member for Gregory to withdraw his statement.

Mr. POLLOCK: Certainly, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Gregory takes exception to a remark made by the hon. member for Cook on the ground that it is unparliamentary. I now call upon the hon. member for Cook to withdraw.

Mr. KENNY: If the hon. member for Gregory takes exception to my remark, I will withdraw it.

Considering that we know that the hon. member for Gregory was hauled over the coals—I will not say by whom—for this article—

Mr. POLLOCK: By the Australian Workers' Union.

Mr. KENNY: I have no hesitation in saying that I am not surprised at the motion he has placed before this House. He realises that there is an election on the horizon, and that those people who took exception to him giving utterance to what he believed was the truth must be placated. Therefore, by bringing forward this motion, he wants the people to believe that he is condemning this Government. We know that there is no sincerity in his motion. Let us examine his own article. This is what he had to say—

"It costs 12.43d. to produce 1 lb. of greasy wool, but the average price obtained at the last wool sales in Queensland—according to the Registrar-General—was 10.64d. per lb. for greasy wool, nearly 2d per lb. below the cost of production.

"If that condition of things is to last, it is merely a matter of mathematical calculation to determine how long it will take for every selector to leave his homestead and every worker in Western Queensland to carry his swag away from the sheep districts. Unless speedy action is taken to produce wool at least at a profit this state of affairs must inevitably ensue. That is, briefly, the position of the Western people."

I ask hon. members if the hon. member for Gregory, in speaking the truth on that occasion, did not realise the necessity for freeing the industry of that restriction, and bringing down the costs of production so that the industry would not lose 2d. per lb. on wool. When we went to the people, we said we would free the industry and suspend

the award, thus giving an opportunity to it to produce at a profit.

Mr. POLLOCK: You said you would suspend the rural workers' award.

Mr. KENNY: I will not be led astray by the hon. member. I will develop my own argument as I desire. In this article the hon. member for Gregory said definitely that, if something were not done for the industry, the workers and those engaged in the industry would have to hump their swags out of Western Queensland. Is it not better to suspend the award and give the workers an opportunity of earning a wage than permit them to hump their swags out of that part of the State? The Government realised that such a state of affairs would be a bad proposition for the workers, and they took such action as they believed would permit them to enjoy a wage and keep their homes and families together by making an arrangement with those employing them. The action of the Government also prevented the settlers themselves from humping their swags. Where is the sincerity in the motion, and in this attack on the Government? I ask the hon. member for Gregory if he has not given us cause to attack his own party for their hypocrisy and insincerity.

I will go further with the hon. member's article and point out that he quoted the value of the production of wool from 1922 to 1927, and showed that the value was reduced from £15,553,572 in 1924-25 to £4,687,500 in 1929. He said—

"For 1929, the reasonable estimate, in view of the continuance of the drought and the impossibility of restocking on present values, would be the production of from 95,000,000 to 105,000,000 lb. of wool, which, if the present prices are maintained, would mean an average of 11½d. per lb. including both greasy and scoured, that again being the official figure supplied me by the Registrar-General. So that our income from wool for 1929 would be £4,687,500, assuming the producing, by splitting the difference, to be 100,000,000 lb. of wool.

"Can anyone view with equanimity the decreased income from one industry of nearly £5,000,000 a year, from the year 1925-27? Similarly, the drop is at the rate of nearly £10,000,000 a year, as compared with 1925. This should give the uninitiated some idea of why there is trade depression."

We have again the hon. member's own argument where he stated that the income in this one industry had fallen by £10,000,000 a year, as compared with the value in 1924-25, and that is why there is trade depression. And then he condemns this Government because there is depression right throughout Australia to-day. He said it was the change of Government that had done it. He forgot that he wrote this article. That is why the people of Queensland put us in, because they realised that the Labour Government had put Queensland into the position in which we found it, and they said, "We will change the Government and give the Nationalists an opportunity of pulling it out." The Tariff Board, in their report for 1927-28, had this to say—

"... One of the most serious difficulties which Australia has to face at

present is the high cost of production of goods in the Commonwealth. For many years the cost of production generally has been increasing, and, unfortunately, these increases appear to have been maintained.

"If Australia were entirely isolated from overseas sources of supply and independent of them, and if it were also independent of overseas markets for the disposal of some of its products, high cost of production would matter less to its people. Seeing, however, that Australia is not isolated, and is dependent to a large degree upon overseas markets, the seriousness of the position lies in the fact that the cost of production in competing countries has declined, while costs in Australia generally have risen, thus increasing the already wide margin of difference between the costs in overseas countries and those in Australia."

We do not need any further argument as to why the cost of production must be reduced.

In addition to the hon. member's own statement, I could quote the speech of the late Premier, Mr. McCormack, on the subject, and also Mr. Collier, Labour Premier of Western Australia, dealing with the same subject. Mr. McCormack stated that, in order to reduce the cost of production, we must reduce the wages of the people. That policy was started by the Labour Party. There was a need for the primary industries of Queensland to reduce the cost of production. We know that not only were those industries declining, but we know, also, from the hon. member that the workers engaged in those industries were placed in such a position that they had to leave their jobs and hump their swags; therefore, there was a need to wipe out the rural workers' award in order to give these workers an opportunity to obtain employment and to give the industry an opportunity to carry on.

Mr. POLLOCK: That was not the rural workers' award. That was the station hands' award. Tell us what you think about the public service award.

Mr. KENNY: I shall deal with the public service award also. I stated in this House that I did not advocate a reduction of public servants' salaries. I advocated that the public service should be reduced in numbers where it was over-staffed. I say now that it would be better for the Government to realise that the public service is over-staffed, and to go on and do the right thing, and reduce it to the extent to which it is over-staffed.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER interjected.

Mr. KENNY: I do not hesitate to say where I stand in regard to the public service. I realise that it is costing the State a lot of money; and I realise that our revenue is taken to pay interest on the public debt and to pay public servants' salaries. It would be better to abolish the position of Public Service Commissioner and put every department under its own head, and go in for a policy of efficiency, under which each head of a department would be responsible to his Minister. A big saving would thereby be made in the cost of government in Queensland.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: You took them away from the Industrial Court.

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Mr. KENNY: Yes, I voted for it; and I told the House at the time that I thought it was the lesser of two evils. I make no apology for voting for that. If the income of a country can only pay a certain wage, then the staff in the public service should not be under an award. If the Government cannot pay them all, some of them must get out. If any public servant to-day is not satisfied, he has the option of going elsewhere to make more money, if he can. A man in an industrial position is not sheltered. If he can make a better wage in a different position, he takes it. There is too much hypocrisy in this House. We know that because a number of hon. members have public servants in their electorates who are likely to be offended by their speaking the truth, they are not game to do it; but they will say it outside this Chamber. Anything I have to say I will say on the floor of the House, and I am not ashamed of it; and I will stand up before my electors with regard to any statement I make.

Our opponents to-day forget the position of the primary producer who has to meet the extra cost of living which is imposed on him by concessions to all sections of industry. We must realise that primary production is going to stabilise Queensland and Australia. Primary industries throughout the State must be stimulated; and with that stimulation we shall get our financial position back to where it should be. The whole position is bound up with the improvement in agricultural production throughout the Commonwealth, because it is that production which creates the wages paid to our people. We realise that the value of that production has been decreasing at the same time that we have had an increase of taxation throughout Australia. The estimated decline in the wealth of Australia to-day is £290,000,000 per annum. I wish to deal with the action of the Labour Government, who were supposed to be the friends of the worker. The worker only gets his wages from the production of the country. I will give the taxation imposed by the Federal Labour Government. In the Budget Mr. Theodore presented on 21st November, 1929, there was an increase in taxation of £5,235,000. Mr. Scullin's Budget of 9th July, 1930, disclosed new taxation to the extent of £12,550,000. Mr. Lyons's Budget on 5th November, 1930, showed new taxation to the extent of £4,820,000. Mr. Theodore, in his Budget of 10th July, 1931, showed increased taxation amounting to £8,000,000. In roughly eighteen months of Labour rule in the Federal arena that is a total new taxation of £30,605,000. I ask any hon. member if we can reduce the wealth production of Australia by £200,000,000 and at the same time impose additional taxation to the extent of £30,000,000 on the people who are earning that reduced income? That is what is being done; and it can only have one effect on the workers of Australia—on those people who are getting their employment and drawing their wages from the wealth production of this country. Yet these men claim to be the friends of the workers! The Government are standing up to what they think is right. They realise that we in Queensland must balance our Budget and live within our means, and stop the squandering of money that has been going on; yet hon. members opposite say we are not the friends of the workers.

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What happened as a result of the squandering that went on in New South Wales under the Labour Government? When pay day came round for the public service—for whom hon. members say they are concerned—the Government who had squandered the people's money had nothing with which to pay it. I ask hon. members, is it better to reduce wages, or to ask men to work for nothing? When the Government could not pay the public servants in New South Wales, other States had to foot the bill; so that we in Queensland to-day are forced to suffer because of the squandering of money in New South Wales, while our own people are walking the streets looking for jobs. Is there any sincerity in the criticism of hon. members opposite? Is there any sincerity in their motion?

Mr. DUNLOP: Is there any sincerity in the amendment?

Mr. KENNY: The hon. member will have the opportunity to speak for himself. I was dealing with the taxation of £30,000,000 in eighteen months, which means so much less money for industry and employment. How can the people expect to get wages when Governments are taking that sum from industry? We can only get what we produce, and tremendous sums are being taken in direct taxation from every man, woman, and child throughout Australia. Take the sales tax, imposed by the Federal Labour Party, who say they are the friends of the worker. That amounts to 6 per cent. on everything we eat and wear, and is estimated to bring in £8,500,000 this year. Why did the so-called friends of the worker, the party of hon. members opposite, impose that tax? Because they are not game to face facts; they are not game to face the position and balance their budget. They say the public servants have to be paid, and that their salaries must not be cut. If they had been game to do the right thing and recognise the claims of the people outside who are without work, and who are entitled to as much consideration as those in sheltered industries—even more consideration than they—the workers of Queensland would not be in the position in which they are to-day. Yet hon. members opposite expect to be able to gull the people outside who are humping their swags or making the best they can of reduced incomes. These hon. members will go out and criticise the Government for reducing the wages of the public service, and expect the people who have no wage at all to vote for them rather than for a Government who were game to do the right thing and stand up and reduce public servants' wages in order to try to make a wage for those who had no wage at all.

On top of that sales tax of £8,500,000, we have a primage tax expected to realise £4,300,000 this year. I ask hon. members opposite who is going to find that tax? The rank and file of the people. Every man, woman, and child in Australia is going to contribute towards that sum, and the people who are out of work will still go without work. Yet the Labour Party says that it is the friend of the worker, because it thinks it can gull him once more!

I listened to the whole of the speech of the hon. member for Ithaca, and I never have heard such tripe in all my life. I tried to take a few notes of statements to which I might reply, but I could not find one statement worthy of attention.

Coming a little nearer home, take the tax which the Federal Government have imposed of 4d. a lb on tea, and on top of that a sales tax of 6 per cent. Why has that been done? Because they were not game to face the position and reduce the wages of public servants and curtail their expenditure. That is why they have imposed a tax on tea.

Mr. POLLOCK: Are you advocating a further reduction in wages?

Mr. KENNY: I said the other day that the Federal basic wage was down to £3 0s. 9d. per week, and that that was as low as it was safe to go.

Mr. POLLOCK: There is no basic wage at all in this State. The basic wage is the relief rate—30s. per week.

The TREASURER: What nonsense!

Mr. KENNY: Let us go a little further. We know that the Federal Government have imposed a tax of 1s. 3d. upon a tin of tobacco retailed at 1s. 11d. Tobacco is the friend of the worker. Some people claim that they do not feel a tax imposed in this way, but is not that tax paid by every man and woman who smokes? When the Federal Labour Party were on the hustings, they said they would not impose these taxes, and they stated that the Bruce-Page Government proposed to tax the beer of the worker. When the Federal Labour Government were returned to power, they imposed a tax on the beer of the worker. Everything they used, everything they wore, everything they ate, was taxed. Those taxes are driving the people on to the unemployed market. The Federal Labour Government also increased the telephone charges, and it must be remembered that many workers use the telephone. In isolated portions of Queensland, like the Cook electorate, people are compelled to send away to the larger centres for drapery. Not only did the Federal Labour Government increase the duty on drapery, but they also increased the postage on the parcels. They increased the postage on all letters sent by these people to friends. How can the Federal Labour Government pose as the friends of the workers? It is amusing to hear the criticism levelled at this Government. Is it any wonder that we have nothing to defend, and nothing for which to apologise? We can, with every confidence, attack the so-called policy of the Labour Party, and we can expose their hypocrisy.

The Federal Labour Government also imposed a super tax of 10 per cent. upon persons in receipt of an income exceeding £200 per annum. We know full well that such a tax is having a serious effect upon industry. It is recognised that the Queensland Government have been instrumental in reducing the cost of living in this State. The Federal basic wage is based upon the cost of living in the various States, and the Federal basic wage to-day is £3 0s. 9d. per week in Queensland, whereas the basic wage granted by the Queensland Court is £3 14s. per week. What becomes of the argument of hon. members opposite if the Federal Labour Government recognise that the Queensland Government have reduced the cost of living?

Mr. POLLOCK: The Federal Labour Government do not fix the rates of wages.

Mr. KENNY: There is a Federal Arbitration Court, in the same way as there is a State Industrial Court. The Federal Arbitration

Court recognises that the Queensland Government have reduced the cost of living, although the action taken by the Federal Labour Government has tended to increase the cost of living. When the Queensland Government were returned to power, there was in operation a Development and Migration Commission. The Queensland Government had made arrangements for an advance of £600,000 for ringbarking purposes in this State.

When the Federal Labour Party were returned to power, they said that Australia could not absorb another man, woman, or child, and cancelled that agreement, which meant that £600,000 was lost that could have been spent in Queensland for the benefit of the workers. It told the world that Australia could not absorb another person, despite its vast territory. We all realise that Australia, and Queensland in particular, has vast potentialities, capable of absorbing a larger population to assist us to bear our burdens. It is by that means that we can make work for our own unemployed.

I now come to the actions of the Labour Government in New South Wales. This is the Government who were to look after the interests of the workers! They squandered their money, and repudiated their just debts. What happened? The Government Savings Bank, which was the repository of the savings of the workers and their wives and children, closed its doors, and was unable to meet its obligations, which amounted to £50,000,000. What arrangements were made for these workers who were dependent on their savings in the bank to buy food? None! They are still without their money. Yet these are the so-called friends of the workers! And they have the audacity to get up and criticise the real friends of the workers, who are game to realise their responsibilities and attempt to balance their Budget, and thus make work for the unemployed! Roughly speaking, New South Wales is paying out £7,000,000 per annum, not in work, but in doles. Every extra million pounds exacted by the Government in that State in taxation will reduce the income of the people, and to that extent cause more men to be unemployed. Yet we see criticism in the "Worker" and the "Standard" levelled at this Government. Their efforts are only an attempt to gull their readers, and to embitter the community by causing class hatred. They cannot stand up to sound criticism.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed him under the Standing Orders.

Mr. DUNLOP (*Rockhampton*) [4.43]: We can argue on both the motion and the amendment quite dispassionately, and without running hot like a railway axle-box, of which I was reminded when the hon. member for Cook was speaking. There will be no half-way house in the remarks I propose to make, which will be uttered irrespective of the opinion of hon. members on either side of the Chamber. While I am a member of this House, my endeavour shall be to be fair notwithstanding that hon. members on both sides may differ from me.

As the motion in question is practically a vote of no confidence in the Government, it should have been moved earlier in the session, seeing that we have already debated

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many of the subjects mentioned in the motion. On the majority of these subjects I voted with the Opposition; on the remainder I voted with the Government. Therefore, to be quite fair, I will now give an impartial opinion on the question now before the House.

I know the hon. member for Gregory, like myself, is immune to criticism, and will take no offence when I state my opinion quite frankly and impartially. After all, the independent members in this House have some standing, and at least are letting the people of Queensland know what is going on, and how business is conducted in this Assembly. Let me say quite frankly that this motion is pure election propaganda on the eve of the forthcoming election. As regards the amendment, it is the best piece of hypocrisy I have ever heard. We listened to the hon. member for Cook endeavouring to chastise the hon. member for Ithaca. Now, although I may differ from the hon. member for Ithaca, I realise that he is a young man and a very intelligent member of this Assembly. On most occasions he speaks his mind, and he talks quite a lot of sound common sense. It was quite unnecessary for the hon. member for Cook to attack him in the way he did. That, of course, is by the way. The hon. member for Ithaca could have spoken for the full allotted time of forty minutes, but he managed to say all he wished to say in less than that time. On the other hand, the hon. member for Cook found that forty minutes were not sufficient for him; as a matter of fact, he would have liked eighty minutes.

Now let me deal with the strong man of this House—the light of the world—the great “I know everything.” He is the person who says in effect, “What I tell you to do you must do; get down on your knees and do it.” I refer to the Secretary for Labour and Industry. He is a brainy man, and he works hard; but he has a very bad disposition—such a disposition as makes him unfit to occupy any high office in either Queensland or the Commonwealth. The hon. gentleman moves an amendment which is an insult to the Government, as I shall proceed to show. Last session we had Bill after Bill brought forward by the Government, and the discussion on those Bills was very warm indeed.

At 4.47 p.m.,

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Mr. DUNLOP: These Bills were debated at considerable length by hon. members on both sides, and we had some very late sittings. Take, for example, the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Bill as one striking instance of the wonderful co-operative spirit displayed by the Minister to whom I have referred. There were 119 clauses in the Bill, and only fifty-four of those clauses were put through without the “gag,” the balance being “gagged” by the Secretary for Labour and Industry. Later on the Minister recommitted the Bill, and in the motion for recommitment he included several clauses for further amendment; but, when the Opposition asked for other clauses to be recommitted, he would not agree to it. That is one instance on the part of the hon. gentleman that I want the people of Queensland to know, and especially the electors of Sandgate.

If the amendment had been moved in all sincerity, I should support it, as it is the

[*Mr. Dunlop.*

policy of the independent party to co-operate on a non-party basis. Knowing the state of the country, why did not the Leader of the Government at the inception of this Parliament move a motion asking for all members to co-operate on non-party lines? His own party meets in caucus, and comes to a decision in regard to any Bill. What are the Opposition for? To criticise and suggest amendments where they think Bills may be improved; but outside a few paltry amendments the Government have never accepted anything of a tangible nature from the Opposition. They have done everything to belittle the Leader of the Opposition. I have as much respect for the Leader of the Opposition as I have for the Premier. He is a brainy man, and the most connected speaker in the House. Whether we agree or disagree with him, we must admit that he speaks sound common sense, and he deserves every credit. I say the same in regard to the Premier. Who was it recommended to the Cabinet that the Government should deprive the railway men, public servants, the police force, and others of the protection of the Industrial Court? The Secretary for Labour and Industry moved an amendment asking us to co-operate in that matter. After taking off your right arm and your right leg off, and a portion of your left arm, he turns round and says, “Now that I have amputated your principal limbs I want you to co-operate with me because I know I have you powerless.” What a wonderful genius! What a wonderful prospect he has in front of him as a Minister! What did the hon. member for Kennedy do in the interests of the public servants whom he is trying to camouflage? He endorsed the action of the Minister.

Mr. BRUCE: You mean the hon. member for Cook.

Mr. DUNLOP: Just before they got a 10 per cent. reduction in the Industrial Court—

Mr. BRUCE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The hon. member referred to Mr. Kenny as the hon. member for Kennedy. Mr. Kenny is the member for Cook.

Mr. DUNLOP: I do not think I said that.

Mr. BRUCE: Yes, you did.

Mr. DUNLOP: I should have said the hon. member for Cook. The hon. member for Cook supported the Government in their action, and, when they got a reduction of only 6 per cent. instead of 10 per cent., they were dissatisfied. So much so that the Attorney-General had the effrontery to state that he disagreed with their opinion, and ultimately the Government deprived the railway men and other State employees of the protection of the Industrial Court.

When speaking yesterday on the Tolls on Privately Constructed Road Traffic Facilities Bill, I asked the Secretary for Railways, “Are these men going to be given the protection of the Industrial Court and to have the basic wage?”

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And I said “Yes.”

Mr. DUNLOP: I hope the hon. gentleman will act up to it. If that is to operate with men coming under a new scheme to be carried out by private enterprise, is it

not a disgraceful state of affairs that public servants who have been operating for years under Government control should be taken away from the Industrial Court? Will the Minister be in favour of again bringing these men within the ambit of the Industrial Court, as in the case of the other men I have mentioned?

The hon. member for Cook was chastising the Federal Government, and no doubt they have faults, and I have criticised them myself. The hon. member also referred to the Emu Park Convention, and to a resolution moved there. He did not quote the actual motion that was moved, but some camouflage resolution that appeared in the Nationalist press.

Mr. KENNY: I quoted the "Railway Advocate."

Mr. DUNLOP: He talked about income tax, and pointed out that the wealth production of Australia had decreased by £200,000,000. I want the hon. member to recognise that a Labour Government made a minimum exemption of £250 in the income tax; but the Government of which the hon. member is a supporter brought it down to £150, taking it out of the lower-paid men. The hon. member for Cook supported the taking of 1s. per week from the orphans, which the Labour Government never did. He steered quite clear of that matter, and tried to make himself, as it were, during the absence of the Premier, a sort of second Deputy Premier, making his voice heard all the way from the Cook electorate to Brisbane. I have been a public servant, and have worked side by side with public servants for twenty-eight years; and while I am on the floor of the House I will never betray them, but see that they get a fair deal and, if possible, get the conditions prescribed by the Industrial Court. Make no bones about it—the public servants will put the hon. member for Cook in his place when they get the quiet opportunity of a secret ballot.

Let me give the exact quotation with regard to the resolution moved at Emu Park Convention. I am not going to reopen the sore, as was done in the Mungana case, but will just correct the hon. member for Cook. I will quote from "The Evening News," Rockhampton, of Friday, 14th August, 1928, the motion actually moved by Mr. Bryan at the Emu Park Convention, which was seconded by the then hon. member for Fitzroy, Mr. Harold Hartley, as per the official record of the Convention—

"Mr. Bryan (Toombul) moved—

'That the Government restore the basic wage of £4 5s. until such time as the Arbitration Act is amended to include a provision that the basic wage be fixed on the standard arrived at by the Piddington Commission.'

"Mr. Harold Hartley seconded the motion, and it was defeated by thirty-seven to thirty-five."

When an hon. member says that a certain body passed a resolution, he should quote the exact resolution. I think that incident is sufficient to show that the young member for Cook has a lot to learn of public experience. So long as I am a member of this House I shall do my utmost to uphold the interests of the public servants, and see justice done, and I shall always return a Roland

for an Oliver to the hon. member for Cook, who talks as though he were speaking on behalf of the Government. I say that hon. members on this side of the Chamber did a grave injustice to the railwaymen, and to the police above all others. The latter are a class of men who have no home life. They take an oath of duty; they are our guardians night and day; and it was most scandalous that the Government should remove them from the ambit of the Industrial Court.

The amendment is designed to put hon. members in an invidious position. Why did the Minister not do this long ago? He is not here now to answer that question. Why did he not ask for our co-operation? Why did he not long ago move a motion to the effect that half a dozen or a dozen members of the Opposition should join Ministers in a committee to discuss subjects, such as wage reduction and the cancellation and suspension of awards, before the Government took any action in such directions? That would have been the honourable course to take; and I am satisfied that, in spite of great party differences, such a committee could have materially assisted in the direction of advancing the welfare of the State. There are two Ministers on the Treasury bench now. I ask them whether they are prepared to suggest in caucus meeting or in Cabinet that the sorry policy to which I have referred shall be dropped during this time of depression, and that we all co-operate on a committee formed from both sides of the House in an effort to arrive at a fair basis in regard to wages and working conditions. Will they say that they will be pleased to discuss the question of putting all these men back under the Industrial Court?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: What about the Independent Party?

Mr. DUNLOP: The Independent Party will back them up. That is what we are here for. I can assure the hon. gentleman that, if there were a difference of only two or three in the strength of the Government and Opposition, they would have been glad to consider us instead of talking so much of the tripe that I have had to listen to during my term in this House. I have had more "chiacking" from hon. members on this side—which I take in good part—than from hon. members opposite, from whom I might have expected it. I could not have taken umbrage if they had indulged in it. To their credit they realised that I stand here as one man, and they have given me a fair deal, because I am prepared to reciprocate. I did support the suspension of the rural workers' award—on which they bitterly differed from me—because I believe that the man on the land should get all the assistance we can give him. I only hope that a similar amendment will not be introduced to disgrace this House again. I said last year that, if the organisation at Terrica House could deprive the public servants of the franchise and, at the dictation of Mr. McGill and others, only give them a certain number of representatives in this House, then I believe it would do it. That matter was discussed by an important organisation supporting the Government, and I challenge contradiction of that statement. That is where I got it; and, if Government members can disprove my statement, I am prepared to tender my resignation to Mr. Speaker at once.

I am an out-and-out advocate of non-party politics, and I am not to be gulled or side-tracked by an amendment of this nature.

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It lacks sincerity; it is pure hypocrisy. If it was the intention of the Government to co-operate as the amendment suggests, then the first step would have been taken by the Premier. Apparently, party politics are here to stay so far as the Government are concerned. With the hon. member for Fassifern, I have endeavoured to kill the curse of party politics. Slowly but surely that end is coming about. Action has already been taken in the Imperial Parliament. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has broken away from the Labour Party, and his action is the forerunner of an ultimate revolution in the party political system. That system must go. Is it not better to get down to common sense? When important matters are discussed whilst travelling in the train or elsewhere, and the views expressed meet with the approval of any person, then, if he is honourable and worth his salt, he will agree. Some Government members are prepared to say, "That is a very good suggestion, and I will bring it up in the party room." That is the spirit that should prevail. The curse of party politics has brought the country to its present unfortunate position. It is a great pity that the Opposition could not influence their organisations in the direction of annihilating the curse of Caucus and trade union committees. They should say to the industrial leaders: "Gentlemen, there is only one way to obtain better wages and improved conditions. We should co-operate with all parties, irrespective of our political beliefs. Representatives from our party should be permitted to meet representatives from other parties, and we should proceed on strictly non-party lines." That is the key to the situation, and that is the only way in which we can assist Australia out of the present mess.

I regret that the Secretary for Labour and Industry is not present to answer a few pertinent questions to enable me to cast a definite vote on this question. If the hon. gentleman was prepared to say, "We are going to co-operate with the Opposition, and I am going to suggest to the Premier that a committee be formed consisting of hon. members on both sides to discuss these important matters," then I would consider that he was sincere. Where is he? Absent! I intend to vote with the Opposition against the amendment, and I intend to do so because there is no sincerity in the amendment. It means nothing. It is pure hypocrisy.

Mr. NIMMO: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Rockhampton said, "The Secretary for Labour and Industry is absent from the House. Where is he?" He inferred that the Minister was not attending to his job. It is only fair to the Minister that I should inform the House that I have just introduced a deputation to him in his room.

Mr. KERR: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. You called me to order this afternoon for using the word "hypocrisy." Is the hon. member for Rockhampton in order in attributing hypocrisy to the Secretary for Labour and Industry?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! As I understood the hon. member for Rockhampton, he did not direct his remark to the Secretary for Labour and Industry. It was merely a general remark.

Mr. KERR: Not at all.

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Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Rockhampton stated that the motion was hypocrisy.

Mr. DUNLOP: Has the Minister been present at the deputation from the time I commenced to speak? I notice that he has just entered the House. I have been speaking for nearly half an hour. Have you been at a deputation?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member to address the chair.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The Mayor of Toowoomba is at present waiting to see me.

Mr. DUNLOP: I am glad that the Minister is now in the House.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: You want to be quick with your remarks, for I am leaving the Chamber again very shortly.

Mr. DUNLOP: I asked previously why the Government Party had not been asked in caucus by the Premier to co-operate with the Opposition, as the amendment suggests, with a view to evolving some proposal or proposals to overcome the present depression? Why did the Minister wait until the reduction in wages took place, and until his Government took a large section of the workers away from the ambit of the Industrial Court before suggesting the co-operation of all sections? There is no sincerity in the amendment, and I am accordingly voting with the Opposition. I want my electors to know that, because they will believe me when I inform them that the Government should have co-operated with the Opposition long ago. If the Minister answers my question now, I shall be prepared to change my vote in a certain direction. I ask the Minister, through you, Mr. Speaker, if he is prepared now, owing to the state of the country, to co-operate with the Opposition, and reconsider all those matters that the Government have done, such as wage reductions, taking employees away from the ambit of the Industrial Court, the restoration of the 1s. per week to orphans, the increase in income tax, and so on. If he is prepared to ask his leader to appoint a committee for that purpose, then they can go to the country on such a policy at the next election.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DUNLOP: You, Mr. Speaker, have been very good to me at all times, and have attempted to guide me as a young member. There is no necessity for me to go over all those subjects which I have previously debated, as a record of my remarks appears in "Hansard." The motion, as I have stated, is purely electioneering propaganda. It can easily be seen that an election is near at hand. The motion—which is practically a motion of no confidence on account of the Government's broken election pledges—should have been moved long ago. I would then have supported the hon. member for Gregory.

There are clever men on both sides of this House. We know how amendments are moved in Committee in a most ingenious way in order that one side or the other may get the advantage. It shows what hon. members will come at. It is to be regretted that the Secretary for Labour and Industry moved this amendment, because I am sure

the Premier is very aggrieved at its lack of sincerity.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The Premier agrees with it.

MR. DUNLOP: I expect the Minister at the very first opportunity to demonstrate his sincerity by removing all the friction and bitterness we have had through three sessions of Parliament, and that he will act in the interests of the welfare of Queensland.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: How are you going to vote?

MR. DUNLOP: I have told the hon. gentleman—I am against his amendment because there is no sincerity in it.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: There is no sincerity in your argument.

MR. DUNLOP: I have the hon. gentleman where I want him. He is in his seat. (Laughter.) Let the hon. gentleman say "Yes" or "No," so that his constituents may know where he stands on the question of getting rid of this wretched party system.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I am doing so under this amendment, and, if you are sincere, you will vote for the amendment.

MR. DUNLOP: It will be a pleasure for me to vote against it, because my electors will believe me when I tell them that there is no sincerity in it.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Then you are a hypocrite.

MR. DUNLOP: The Minister should have shown his sincerity long ago, at least in fairness to his respected leader, the Premier of Queensland. I hope the valuable time of this House will not be taken up in future in discussing these things.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: You are a humbug.

MR. DUNLOP: And the hon. gentleman is a bigger humbug, and that is why he went out of the Chamber when I was speaking.

MR. FOLEY (*Trichhardt*) [5.18]: It is amusing to notice how hon. members on the Government side endeavour to cloak over their own misdeeds by pointing out what has been allegedly done by somebody else. In that attitude hon. members opposite are taking their cue from the Secretary for Labour and Industry, because they get as far away as possible from the real points at issue. We had the spectacle of the hon. member for Cook quite unfairly endeavouring to show that the workers of the Commonwealth have been badly treated by the actions of the Federal Government. The hon. member should have pointed out that the Federal Government are in a very different position from the Queensland Government.

In Queensland we have sovereign rights, and the Government are not hampered through having to depend on another party for support. They are not hampered by a restrictive Upper House, which is likely to throw out any legislation that they attempt to place on the statute-book. In the Federal arena the position is the exact opposite. Since the Federal Labour Government have been in office time and again they have endeavoured to get over the difficulties facing Australia in order to rehabilitate the finances and place the 400,000 workers who are now out of employment in useful employment;

but every one of the methods proposed by the Federal Labour Government has been vetoed by the restrictive Upper House known as the Senate.

Had the hon. member for Cook been at all fair in his argument, had he attempted to win his point by logic, he would have received respect on this side of the House. Instead of that, he omitted to mention some of the most important facts in regard to the Federal Labour Government, the Government of New South Wales, the Government of Victoria, and the Government of South Australia. He omitted to mention that all those Governments are hampered by restrictive Upper Houses, while the Queensland Government are unhampered, and are in a position to carry out any scheme they desire.

The amendment moved by the Secretary for Labour and Industry allegedly is intended to bring about co-operation between the various sections in this State in an endeavour to rehabilitate the financial position and minimise the effects of unemployment in Queensland. If the hon. gentleman was sincere, at the very beginning of this Parliament we would have had some offer to co-operate and discuss important measures before they were introduced into the House; but no such offer was made either by the Leader of the Government or by the Secretary for Labour and Industry. Instead of that, we have had an exhibition of brute force. The Government, by their enormous majority, have forced measures through this House, to the detriment of the working masses in Queensland. Quite a long list of measures detrimental to the workers of this State have been passed. Hon. members on the Government side are continually talking about the reduced national income of Australia and the necessity for a reduction in the costs of production taking place. While the hon. member for Cook was speaking, I endeavoured, by way of interjection, to learn from him what he really means by a reduction of costs. I have endeavoured at different times to ascertain exactly what other Government supporters mean when they talk about a reduction of costs. Taking the administrative actions of the Government and the measures passed in this Chamber by the Government, one can only assume that the Government's idea of reducing costs to meet the altered conditions in Queensland to-day means a reduction in the standard of the great working masses of this State. Every action of theirs up to date has had that effect. The Government amended the laws in regard to arbitration, and, after amending those laws, they had no confidence in the measure they placed on the statute-book, because they withdrew sections of the workers from the protection of the Industrial Court and left the question of fixing wages and conditions to the old method of brute force and "let the strongest man win." The effect is apparent to any man or woman in this State.

If you go through the city of Brisbane or any country town or village in the out-back parts of Queensland, you can notice the effect of this policy of reduction of wages. Pastoral workers who needed some protection on account of the brutality of many employers in the past, which practically reduced them to the level of the blackfellow, are to-day in a position that every vestige of advantage they enjoyed in the way of improved accommodation and rations in order that they might be treated as human beings by the employers is being whittled

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down as the result of their withdrawal from the Industrial Court. We have men in the pastoral industry now working for lower wages than those given to aboriginals under the laws of this State. Luckily, we have a few good employers. I have had instances of some employers in my district who have refused to employ a man below the previous ruling basic wage. These employers have command of the best men in the district, and show a profit by adhering to a fair and reasonable rate of remuneration for services rendered. On the other hand, we have a majority of unscrupulous employers, who take every advantage of getting men as cheaply as they possibly can. We have men to-day in many of our pastoral districts being offered a wage that an employer could not offer to a full-blooded aboriginal. The aboriginal is provided by law with a minimum wage in the vicinity of £1 16s. and keep. We have white men to-day—station hands and general rouseabouts—in those same districts being offered as low as 15s. per week and keep. If the Government consider that such a policy is going to uplift the moral wellbeing of this particular class of workers and improve their status generally, I am sorry for their reasoning powers. There are also other types of workers in the pastoral districts, such as fencers, well-borers, and others who are similarly affected. Men who received fair remuneration for that class of work at one time are now being compelled to compete with each other in their struggle for existence, and have to cut down their prices to the irreducible minimum.

The same conditions apply to the timber workers who cut the timber, such as sleeper-blocks, headstocks, girders, piles, and other classes of timber used by the Railway Department.

When Labour was in power we arranged at one stage that a representative of the timber workers, a representative of the Australian Workers' Union, and a representative of the Forestry Department should travel throughout Queensland and visit every forest where operations were being carried on, and eventually deliberate for the purpose of working out what they considered a fair and reasonable rate of remuneration. The result was that a schedule of prices was agreed upon, under which the men got what might be termed a reasonable return. Immediately this Administration got into power, the agreement was cancelled, although the men had worked very satisfactorily under it for quite a number of years, and the old method was restored. To give a brief illustration of how it operated, let me tell hon. members that men in my district who were supplying sleeper blocks at Birimgan, a few miles out of Blair Athol—in one of the few hardwood forests worth while in that district—were getting 4s. 10d. per block, which was divided between the man who cut it and the man who carted it to the mill. That was quite a reasonable amount when one takes into account the searching that is necessary and the wear and tear on horses and plant. The method adopted by the present Government, after the cancellation of the agreement, was to call, or purport to call, tenders for the supply of so many thousand blocks along the coast between Gympie and Yeppoon. When the tenders were received, they picked

out the very lowest offer in the vicinity of 3s., and eventually worked on an average price of 3s. 3d. a block. Instead of accepting the lowest tender, they sent out memoranda to the cutters who had tendered, and said they were prepared to take from them 100, 200, or 300 blocks, as the case might be, at that low price. The men at Birimgan, away from the coast and working under totally different conditions from those prevailing elsewhere, had either to leave work and hump their swags or cut the blocks at the same price as the lowest tender. If anybody calls that a fair method, I cannot comprehend his state of mind. As a result the price has been brought down from 4s. 10d. in my district to 3s. 3d. for what orders are available—a figure which is practically insufficient to pay the butcher, the baker, and the grocer.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: That was the method adopted by your Government.

Mr. FOLEY: They did nothing of the sort. I have already explained the procedure they followed. Immediately hon. members opposite got into power, the agreement was cancelled, and in one case alone the price for sleeper blocks has been reduced from 4s. 10d. to 3s. 3d., with the result that the cutters have either to take the work at that low figure or starve. There is no work elsewhere, because of the cheese-paring policy of the Government; and the men find it better to stay and work in order to get sufficient to pay the butcher and the baker, even if the grocer has to go short. No section of the working community has been overlooked.

Under Labour administration the statutory income tax exemption was £250, and during those times the then Opposition continually stated that the taxpayers in receipt of an income in excess of that amount were carrying too heavy a burden, even though the times were much more prosperous. But immediately the present Government were returned to power, they brought 40,000 to 50,000 additional taxpayers into the taxing field by lowering the statutory exemption to £150. Those methods are quite in keeping with the methods of Nationalists and Tories throughout Australia and other parts of the world. They have always insisted that the taxpayers in receipt of small incomes should carry a portion of the burden; but Labour has always held that the worker is entitled to a fixed amount free from taxation. We have argued—and rightly so—that the basic wage laid down by the court is sufficient only to keep a man, his wife, and family in a fair measure of comfort according to the standard adopted by the court. That being so, it is grossly unfair to insist that the great army of workers in receipt of a reduced basic wage should contribute towards taxation, thereby reducing their standard to that extent, and thereby lessening the burden upon persons in receipt of higher incomes. If hon. members opposite can combat that argument, then I shall be very much surprised. They must agree that the standard of living laid down by the court represents only a fair measure of comfort for a man, wife, and family. That standard is recognised in the community, but the Government were prepared to reduce that standard to a lower level by the imposition of income taxation. There was no need for the Government to impose that taxation,

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and they acted entirely at the behest of the forces dictating their policy. They had not an Upper House or a Senate to contend with, as is the case in other Parliaments in the Commonwealth.

The motion refers to the effect of the Government policy upon the health of the workers, which is becoming more patent day by day. One of the first attacks upon the mining industry was made last year, when the relevant law was amended. Prior to that amendment the workers in the industry enjoyed protection at the hands of check inspectors, who were paid by the Mines Department to look after the interests of the workers. These men were under no obligation either to the workers or to the employers, and were not compelled to go about their daily duties in fear of victimisation at the hands of the employers. The Government reverted to the old policy, which gives rise to the danger of victimisation.

Just recently a deputation waited on the management of Mount Isa with a request for the appointment of check inspectors to see that the miners' conditions as well as other conditions in the mines were carried out satisfactorily. Under the new method of mining carried on there—it is new to Australia, and is called the "glory-hole" system—the workers are compelled to work in a dust-laden atmosphere. Such dust is had enough in gold mines, where there is no lead in the ore, but in a silver mine, where there are lead contents, it is one hundred times more injurious. The men were unsuccessful, and had to continue to work under the conditions they complained about. The only method they have—and it will eventually lead to that—of enforcing decent conditions, will be shown later on by a hold-up and the throwing down of tools until the conditions are rectified. Immediately the miners down tools, what happens? They will be abused by the Nationalists and the press supporting the Nationalists, while the police will be requisitioned to bludgeon them, and force them back to work under the conditions they are protesting against. I hope that will not take place. I hope that before that comes about Labour will again be in power, and that our party will restore the system so desired by the miners for the protection of their health.

We have the same thing happening in other industries. Recently a member of the Industrial Court bench appointed one of the industrial inspectors to investigate the conditions in the baking industry. Most hon. members have read that report. The work in the industry was regulated, and no one, as a result, suffered. As soon as the present Government were returned to power, the conditions in the industry were abused. Men commenced work before 6 o'clock in the morning, and anyone taking a tramride can see bakers' carts returning to the bakery as late as 8 o'clock at night.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The trouble is that people want to buy the bread early.

Mr. FOLEY: Similar conditions apply in other industries because the Government have dispensed with the services of industrial inspectors. On their return to power eight inspectors were dismissed. These men were directly connected with the industries of this State. A little later fourteen more inspectors were dismissed. The result is that in the

pastoral districts, notwithstanding the fact that no award governs the conditions there, no industrial inspector is operating. The workers' huts are getting into a state of disrepair, and the only opportunity shearers, shed hands, and rouseabouts have of enforcing decent conditions is to threaten a hold-up and enforce decent conditions themselves. That is what we are faced with. Then we find employers appealing to the Government and the Secretary for Labour and Industry, and complaining at their annual conferences against the pinpricks suffered by industry. There are many little pinpricks to-day as a result of the Government's legislation. Then the Minister who is responsible for these pinpricks has the effrontery to move an amendment asking for the co-operation of this party and of the citizens of the State. For what? For a perpetuation and intensification of those conditions. The amendment is extremely vague, and the use of the word "co-operation," as used by the Minister, is capable of many constructions. What does the hon. gentleman mean by it? Has he a comprehensive plan to place before this House?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I mean the same thing that has taken place in the Government of England, and which will have to come here also before very long.

Mr. FOLEY: Speaking for myself—and I am sure the rest of my party have similar sentiments—I can assure the Minister that such a plan will not have the support of this party, because there are other ways of rehabilitating a country than by smashing conditions and reducing wages.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Why has Mr. Scullin reduced old-age and invalid pensions?

Mr. FOLEY: I am not here to explain what Mr. Scullin has done; but I have enough common sense to know that the Nationalists, supported by the financial institutions and the press of Australia, manoeuvred for months to get Mr. Scullin into the position he is now in.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Why don't you answer my question? Why did he do it?

Mr. FOLEY: We know what attitude was adopted by the Nationalists when the Federal Treasurer sought to bring about an alteration in the monetary system in order to bridge the gap until good times came along again. The Federal Government got nothing but abuse. The pressure of the financial institutions and the Commonwealth Bank was used to force the Federal Government to their knees. It cannot be argued seriously that the Federal Government have full control in the Commonwealth to-day. If they had a majority in the Senate, there would be a different scheme in operation to-day, and that scheme would not affect wages and pensions.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Why didn't they go to the country to get the power?

Mr. FOLEY: Probably the hon. gentleman would have liked them to go to the country; but they will do so when, in their opinion, the time is opportune. Notwithstanding what is being done by other Governments—I am not here to excuse other Governments—

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—I want to emphasise that the Labour Governments in Australia to-day have not the same power as the Queensland Government.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: They have in South Australia.

Mr. FOLEY: They are restricted by unsympathetic Upper Houses. However, I desire to get back to my argument—I have no desire to be placed on the defensive. I have given the Secretary for Labour and Industry a “fair go.” I have answered his questions fairly and logically.

Had the amendment contained a proposal to place before this Chamber—a comprehensive plan which would have meant the rehabilitation of this State and the placing of every man, boy, and girl on the pay roll—it would have received the consideration and co-operation of every hon. member on this side of the House. Have the Government a plan such as that?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: You put forward such a proposal and I will support it.

Mr. PEASE: What will your party do?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I will risk that.

Mr. FOLEY: A policy along those lines will be put into operation when Labour, as is sure to be the case, is returned to the Treasury benches after the next elections. Notwithstanding the possible gerrymandering that will take place before the next elections, Labour will be returned to power, and then it will be their job to place every man, boy, and girl on the pay roll. If they cannot do that, then there is no room for the Labour movement. That is their job, and Labour will be equal to the task.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: You suggest a plan.

Mr. FOLEY: I am not going to give the Minister my ideas. The policy followed by the present Government since their accession to power has shown that their only desire is to reduce the conditions of the workers of this State. The first reduction of wages in this State as a result of the restricted arbitration laws meant a present of £2,000,000 to the employers of this State. The Leader of the Opposition pointed out that provision could have been made whereby the Government could have collected that £2,000,000 and used the money for the benefit of the workers of this State. If that £2,000,000 had been used for the benefit of the workers, industry would have been rehabilitated and workers would have been reabsorbed in industry, and the Government would have achieved the object they desire. Instead of that being the case, there has been a further reduction in wages, and a further present to the employers of the State. The position has drifted from bad to worse, with the result that to-day we have an increase of 116 per cent. in unemployment as compared with the amount of unemployment under the Labour Government. Surely the Government have had a good illustration that their policy has failed, and has not achieved the object they expected it to achieve! Their policy has not resulted in placing one extra man in employment, while those out of employment are living under worse conditions than those enjoyed by the average aboriginal in this State. The aboriginals in

the Government settlements are enjoying better conditions than those enjoyed by the average intermittent worker; and the average aboriginal employee in the pastoral areas receives from £1 15s. to £1 16s. per week, while many white workers are compelled to work for less than that wage. When Government members were on the hustings, when they were posting huge placards all over the State, and paying from £20 to £50 an issue in the capitalistic press of this State in order to gull the workers, they promised, not 10,000 jobs on one day a week, but they promised to place 10,000 men in constant employment. That was the impression they wished to create.

The Minister claims that 30,000 men have been provided with employment by the Government. What have been the terms of the employment? When the Government started out with the unemployment relief scheme, a worker could only get a maximum of twelve weeks work at a time; but even that has been reduced, and the Government have established an intermittent system of relief work, the ultimate result of which will be to drag those already in employment down to the same standard. The Government are gradually doing that by the scheme which they have established. When the Labour Party gets back to power, it will change this state of things.

I would again ask the Minister if he has a semblance of a plan which will enable the conditions I have mentioned to be put into effect. If it is possible in other countries, surely it is possible in Queensland! Does the Minister mean to say that we are facing the same conditions in Queensland as existed in Russia prior to the 1917 revolution? Does he think we have gone through the same war privations and famine that they have gone through there? They are now carrying out a reconstruction plan that has appealed to the imagination of the greatest men in the world to-day. Even Bernard Shaw in his brief visit to Russia recently had to admit that the Russian plan was a stupendous undertaking, and that there was no fear of failure.

Mr. TEDMAN (*Marce*) [5.57]: I regret that time will not permit me to expound my views on this question. I say most emphatically that this is one of the greatest opportunities ever offered to hon. members opposite for political propaganda. We have listened to some of the most insincere statements we could possibly listen to in Parliament. An opportunity was given to the Opposition to-day to grapple with the vital questions affecting Australia. Just as those questions are being handled in the British Parliament, so surely will they have to be handled not only in the Federal Parliament but in all the Australian State Parliaments before we get upon a proper basis.

The question of the reduction of wages has come up in this discussion. To listen to the arguments advanced by hon. members opposite, one would think that this State was the only State which is suffering a reduction in wages, whereas there have been reductions in every State in the Commonwealth, some of which are under Labour Governments. (Opposition interjections.)

At 7 p.m.,

In accordance with Sessional Order, the House proceeded with Government business.

[*Mr. Foley.*]

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. BUTLER (*Port Curtis*) [7 p.m.]: I desire to make a personal explanation.

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

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BUTLER: My attention has been drawn to the "Hansard" report of an interjection attributed to me during the course of a speech of the hon. member for Kennedy on Tuesday last. That interjection reads—

"They functioned the way John Wren wanted them."

I wish to deny most emphatically having made any such interjection. I did interject—

"Did you call for three cheers for John Wren?"

It was the statement made by the hon. member for Bremer in the course of his personal explanation this afternoon in reply to the hon. member for Nundah that drew my attention to the alleged interjection.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BILL.

INITIATION.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgregarty, *South Brisbane*) [7.2]: I beg to move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to provide for the reduction of the number of members of the Legislative Assembly, and of the number of electoral districts to sixty-two; for the distribution of electoral districts, and to make provision for the better representation of the people of Queensland in Parliament."

Question put and passed.

TOLLS ON PRIVATELY CONSTRUCTED ROAD TRAFFIC FACILITIES BILL.

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. TEDMAN (*Maree*) [7.3]: Perhaps the bald title of this Bill may not convey to an hon. member the exact scope of the measure. I, at any rate, believe that the Bill goes further than is actually conveyed to one's mind by its title. I approach the question with a perfectly open mind. I listened with some interest to the second reading speech of the Secretary for Railways, upon which I wish to congratulate him. He gave a most lucid explanation of the measure; and I think he left no doubt in the minds of hon. members as to what it was intended to achieve, and the benefits that might accrue to Queensland by its passage. My firm conviction is that the Bill is most important, and one which should undoubtedly be passed by this House. I am sure that much good will accrue to Queensland from the passage of this very important measure.

I listened to the speech delivered by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, more with amusement than with interest. He said that the Government were going back to serfdom

and to the dark ages by the introduction of this measure, which, on the contrary, is going to bestow undoubted benefits upon this State, and particularly upon the unemployed workers, who are badly in need of this assistance. I fail to see how we can be charged with reverting to the dark ages. The thing that appeals to me above all others is the fact that the Bill introduced by the Secretary for Railways has been wholeheartedly supported by every Government member who has spoken, and has been strenuously opposed by every speaker from the other side. I am compelled to ask myself this question: Is everything in the Bill good for one side of the House, and is everything in the Bill bad for the other side of the House, or is the Bill being supported merely by one side of the House because it has been introduced by the Government, and is it being opposed by the Opposition because they conceive it to be their duty to oppose everything introduced by this Government, whether it be good or bad? I have listened to every speech delivered by hon. members on the other side. If one reads the speech delivered by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, then one is convinced that he is not concerned in the slightest degree with what stands for the development, the progress, and the prosperity of Queensland. He is not concerned to the slightest extent with anything that will benefit this State, or with anything that will bring about an alleviation of the conditions of the unemployed. He is not concerned one iota as to whether the unemployed will be placed in a position to secure a reasonable wage. If ever a Bill merited the whole-hearted support of the Opposition, it is this Bill, because it will provide facilities for Queensland under safeguarding conditions which could not be achieved by any other means.

Mr. PEASE: It is a "go-getters'" Bill.

Mr. TEDMAN: The hon. member for Herbert is more concerned with reading into the Bill phrases that are not therein contained, and were never intended to be part of it than he is with the benefits that are likely to accrue to the unemployed workers from its passage.

The hon. member speaks about the "go-getter." It might be well if we considered what he means by that term. "Go-getters" are generally understood as men who endeavour to sell shares in any company about to be floated, whether good or bad.

Mr. POLLOCK: That is one variety.

Mr. TEDMAN: I quite admit that; but I intend to deal with both varieties. There are two varieties of "go-getters." One variety has undoubtedly rendered valuable service, not only to this State but to every State throughout Australia, and perhaps to every country. Although he may be termed a "go-getter," he may still be conscientious in his efforts. He may be a man who is set the task of raising capital for a genuine company. There are a number of companies in existence to-day—perhaps some of the most prosperous and successful of companies—whose promoters found it necessary in the first instance to appoint someone to sell their shares and raise money. Those companies have not only been successful, but have found employment for hundreds, and probably thousands, of men. Take Mount Isa. Mount Isa was placed on the market, and its shares offered for sale. To-day it is

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looked upon as one of the most successful companies, and one of the greatest hopes in Australia. The shares of Mount Isa were offered for sale, just the same as the shares of any other company. Any reasonable-minded man must look upon Mount Isa as a company that is developing the resources of Queensland; and the whole of Queensland and Australia views with great pride the success achieved by it. Let me go a little further. There are those who benefited in the first case by offering for sale shares in Mount Isa; and, secondly, those who have succeeded in selling those shares; but not one word of objection will be offered to those men for selling shares in Mount Isa.

Mr. PEASE: There is no analogy.

Mr. TEDMAN: I want to show the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that, if the result of the formation of the Mount Isa Company had been different from what it was, then those who offered the shares for sale in the first instance might be branded now as "go-getters" of the worst type. I adduce that argument just to show that, after all, an advantage is taken of the term "go-getter"; but, if the man is successful in offering for sale any particular shares, and the company develops and becomes a prosperous concern, then he is not considered a "go-getter." If, on the other hand, the concern is a failure, he is branded as a "go-getter." The question of the "go-getter" is only involved so far as any proposals under this measure may come up for consideration by the Governor in Council.

This Bill has a definite object. It aims at providing opportunities to those who have capital, whether they be private individuals, firms, or companies, to invest that capital in concerns which may be offered to them by the Government or on which they may consider it wise to approach the Government. I take it that, were it not for the fact that certain advances have been made to the Government and that certain proposals are in view, this Bill might not have been introduced; but I say unhesitatingly that the principle of the Bill is a good and sound one. The principle is in vogue in Queensland to-day, and has proved a great success in regard to certain facilities, including the main road over the Cairns Range. Probably the Deputy Leader has, like myself, travelled over that road; and I think he will agree with me that, were it a question of that road being built under the toll system or of its not being built at all, he would favour the construction of the road. Does the hon. member agree with the construction of that road?

Mr. PEASE: I don't agree with any "rake-off" by a private concern.

Mr. TEDMAN: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is afraid to say that he does not approve of that road, because he knows the undoubted benefit which it has conferred upon those who are resident inland from Cairns. Undoubtedly that road has been a great boon to that district.

Let us consider also the Mount Tambourine road, which, with the Cairns road, is operated on the toll system. Those roads were constructed by the Government, and the Government are justified in imposing a toll on account of the special nature of the facilities provided. Those who know the state of the old road to Mount Tambourine can realise that the provision of that facility

by the Government has been a wonderful boon to motorists and other visitors to that district, and, under all the circumstances, the imposition of a toll is well justified.

I think I am right in saying that the only bridge in Queensland upon which a toll is being charged to-day is the Loganholme bridge. It is a recognised fact that the greatest bugbear to the motorists of this city who desire to visit the South Coast towns was the tremendous wait imposed upon them at that ferry. Apart from the long and aggravating delay which occurred to motorists desiring to visit these coastal towns, they were asked to pay a toll over the ferry, just the same as they are asked to pay to-day without the inconvenient wait being imposed upon them. I want to develop my argument in regard to the "rake off," which was so masterfully handled by the hon. member for Gregory. He explained what it was. I think he thought he was putting something over the Treasurer, because he imagined the Treasurer would not understand what he meant.

Mr. POLLOCK: He wanted to know what it meant.

Mr. TEDMAN: Those of us who are as enlightened as the hon. member for Gregory thoroughly understand what he meant by the "rake off." However, as he explained the position to us, there can be no doubt in the mind of any man as to what he meant. The argument put forward by the hon. member for Gregory—although I look upon him as one of the best debaters in this House—was the most simple-minded argument ever placed before this Parliament. He visualised a very rich rural area to which a road may be built; and he visualised the Government being simple enough to allow a certain class of individual, whom he termed the "go-getter," to proceed to that district, buy up the whole of the land, obtain the right from the Government to construct a road, and then mulct the poor, unfortunate individuals who went to that district as land settlers. That is a complete misconception of the provisions of this Bill. It is not pretended for a moment that, by the introduction of this Bill, all roads and bridges required in the future will be built under the toll system. It is only because of the simple-mindedness of the Opposition that such a construction could possibly be placed upon the matter.

Mr. POLLOCK: How much would land values be enhanced by the construction of the Kangaroo Point bridge?

Mr. TEDMAN: We have our local authorities, and we have a Main Roads Commission, which will construct all necessary roads in the future, as they have in the past. But there are facilities which come up for consideration that no Main Roads Commission—which means the Government—and no local authority—which, in the case of Brisbane, means the City Council—believe it would be right to construct simply because they feel they are not justified in expending the capital involved in the construction of such facilities. I want to emphasise this fact: That before construction right in any facility—whether it be a road, viaduct, tunnel, or bridge—will be offered to any company, whether by advertisement or by private negotiations, I hope the opportunity to construct and maintain that facility will first be offered to the local authority in the area.

{Mr. Tedman.

There is nothing in the law of this land to-day which would prevent the City Council from imposing a toll, if it thought fit to do so, upon the bridge which is being constructed from North Brisbane to Grey street, on the south side. I take it that there is no provision in the Bill which would prevent that.

There are certain public facilities in contemplation to-day, amongst which I might mention the proposed bridge across the river at Indooroopilly. There is also a proposal to construct a viaduct from Sandgate across to Clontarf or Woody Point. Another bridge has been suggested at Lota, and, in order to satisfy the hon. member for Gregory, last but not least, a bridge to connect North Brisbane with Kangaroo Point.

Mr. POLLOCK: Are you in favour of that?

Mr. TEDMAN: Perhaps in the minds of the Opposition a man is not permitted to have an independent view in this Chamber, or to view the matter from the point of view of the progress and development of this country. Merely because I happen to represent that side of the river which would undoubtedly benefit by the construction of a bridge from the north to the south side at Kangaroo Point, it is implied that I support this Bill for that reason. Perhaps there is a good deal of difference between the hon. member for Brisbane and myself. I am supporting this measure, which provides for imposing tolls upon bridges in places where they could not otherwise be constructed by the Government or the local authority concerned on account of financial stringency, and allowing them to be constructed by private enterprise, which, having invested capital, should have the right to receive a certain remuneration therefor. The point in which I differ from the hon. member for Brisbane is that I am prepared to support this measure solely on its merits.

Mr. KIRWAN: And I oppose it on its demerits.

Mr. TEDMAN: The hon. member for Brisbane did not oppose the Bill on its demerits, but purely and simply because his party had decided as a party to oppose it. Every hon. member in the House last night fully recognised that the hon. member was afraid to say that he opposed the construction of a bridge from North Brisbane to Kangaroo Point.

Mr. KIRWAN: You read "Hansard." I said that any agreement should be approved of by Parliament.

Mr. TEDMAN: The hon. member for Brisbane is not prepared to say that he is not opposed to the construction of a bridge connecting North Brisbane with South Brisbane, and that a toll may be imposed on it. He shuffled with the question, and tried to evade it—

Mr. KIRWAN: I am never a shuffler.

Mr. TEDMAN: And said that a special Act of Parliament should be introduced to construct a bridge from North Brisbane to South Brisbane.

Mr. KIRWAN: I said that any agreement should be approved of by Act of Parliament.

Mr. TEDMAN: The hon. member said that a special Act of Parliament should be introduced to construct a bridge from North

Brisbane to Kangaroo Point, and then he would agree with the Bill.

Mr. KIRWAN: I did not say that. I said that Parliament should have to approve of every agreement.

Mr. TEDMAN: The hon. member for Warrego said that he believed in the imposition of a toll on any road of which tourists take advantage.

Mr. KIRWAN: You said you would cross the floor of the House if the railwaymen's wages were reduced.

Mr. TEDMAN: I would not shuffle like the hon. member did last night on this Bill.

Mr. KIRWAN: I never shuffled.

Mr. TEDMAN: I think the most futile argument ever advanced in this House was that advanced by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, when he said that the method of taxation by toll would not be equitable, because the rich man would only be charged the same as the poor man who crossed a toll bridge.

The Opposition are barren of argument; no more puny effort was ever put up in this House than that which has been made by them against this Bill. A toll is merely a payment for a service rendered or a benefit conferred. If a bridge is constructed from North Brisbane to South Brisbane and it rests with the people as to whether they use it, Victoria bridge, or the Grey Street bridge, what harm is done? If a company is prepared to spend £1,500,000 in constructing that bridge and to take the risk whether people will prefer to pay a toll to use it rather than travel over either of the other bridges, that company is deserving of every credit and support. If I know anything about the particular district concerned, then a reasonable toll can be placed on such a bridge, which at the same time will mean a definite saving to those who will use it. Take, for instance, people travelling from Ascot, Kedron, or other suburban areas in that section of the city to the South Coast on Sundays or holidays. Take, for instance, anyone who wishes to travel from that part of the city to any of the eastern suburbs such as Morningside, Coorparoo, or Greenslopes. There is at once a possible saving of 2 miles, wear and tear, petrol consumption, and time; and I take it that any man with an atom of wisdom would pay his toll in order to gain those advantages rather than travel the longer distance round. Therein lies the whole basis of the argument in favour of toll bridges or roadways. If a benefit may be conferred upon individuals, upon whom it is not compulsory to use such a facility, then under no consideration can there be any objection; and the man who risks his money in providing that facility is entitled to a certain benefit from the investment.

Another aspect of the matter which rather defeats the objections of hon. members opposite has to do with the provision of employment which the construction of such facilities will provide. The hon. member for Mortheyr elaborated this point last night, and said that somewhere about 700 men would get work on the construction of a bridge across the river from North Brisbane to South Brisbane. The question has been raised whether any advantage will be given to those constructing such a bridge in regard to the wages they pay their men; and it has been definitely stated by the Minister in charge of the Bill that the rate of wages laid

down in Industrial Court awards will be strictly adhered to.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Hear, hear!

Mr. TEDMAN: I want to emphasise the fact that, although tolls on privately constructed bridges and roads are new to Queensland, they are not new elsewhere. I have seen every facility where the toll system is already in operation in Queensland; and this Bill merely gives the Government the right to negotiate with private individuals by advertisement or otherwise for the provision of similar facilities.

Reverting to the suggestion of the hon. member for Gregory that certain advantages might be taken by such people—a thing he pretends to know something about—I would point out that the Bill is most carefully framed to prevent anything of the sort happening.

Every precaution has been taken in the Bill to safeguard the interests of the public. Tenders may be called or private negotiations may be entered into for the construction of a road, bridge, or other traffic facility. The Minister, in conjunction with the Commissioner of Main Roads, can enter into these negotiations.

Mr. POLLOCK: What clause provides for the calling of tenders?

Mr. TEDMAN: I am not going to be side-tracked by the hon. member for Gregory. Every precaution has been taken in the Bill to safeguard the interests of the public.

Mr. POLLOCK: You said that tenders would be called.

Mr. TEDMAN: Certainly they will. Read the Bill.

Mr. POLLOCK: There is no such provision in the Bill.

Mr. TEDMAN: Every precaution has been taken to safeguard the interests of the Government, the local authority, and the public.

Mr. PEASE: That is not so.

Mr. TEDMAN: No work can proceed unless and until an agreement is arrived at.

Mr. POLLOCK: The Minister can enter into an agreement without calling tenders at all.

Mr. TEDMAN: Yes; the Minister may enter into private negotiations.

Mr. POLLOCK: He need not advertise.

Mr. TEDMAN: That is what I am telling the hon. member; but, when I am able to tell him something that he does not know, he replies that I have not read the Bill. It is not necessary for the Minister to advertise a given project; but he has power to advertise if he so desires. I stated that every precaution would be taken to safeguard the interests of the public in the construction of these facilities and in the resumption of private property. The Minister may even go so far as to say that insufficient private property has been resumed for the traffic facility. The question of a franchise, its duration, and the toll to be charged are all matters for negotiation between the Government and the contracting party. The work must be carried out to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Main Roads, acting for and on behalf of the Government. No shoddy work will be permitted. The contracting party will be

at liberty to levy tolls during the period of the franchise, and, having exercised its rights for the duration of the franchise, the matter will come up for consideration by the Government again. The Government have the right to resume facilities so provided. There is a provision in the Bill to the effect that the facility shall revert to the Crown free of cost. There are between 200 and 300 bridges in the United States of America and in other parts of the world constructed under the toll system; and in the majority of cases those facilities—cross river facilities in particular—have reverted to the local authority free of cost. If we could secure an expression of opinion from the people so concerned in other countries, I believe they would say that those who constructed these facilities and conducted them for a certain period provided facilities which they were not prepared to provide at the time; and, therefore, had their greatest blessing, because, after providing the facility and carrying it on for a certain time, they handed it over to the local authority concerned free of cost. That fact in itself would earn for these people a perpetual blessing from those benefited.

Mr. STOPFORD (*Mount Morgan*) [7.40]: The hon. member who has just resumed his seat has evidently not read, or else he has mis-read, the Bill, because he made a fatal mistake when he said that it provided for tenders being called for these facilities.

The TREASURER: He delivered a most excellent speech.

Mr. STOPFORD: From the point of view of the Government, and from the point of view of "go-getters," yes.

Mr. FRY: The speech will make a few hundred votes for Tedman at the next election. (Interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Mr. STOPFORD: I think that the opponent of the hon. member for Maree at the next election will be able to spare him those 200 votes. I distinctly say that, if the hon. member states that this Bill contains a provision for the calling of tenders in connection with any project it seeks to deal with, then he has not read the Bill.

Mr. TEDMAN: You are wrong. I have read it from cover to cover.

Mr. STOPFORD: I ask the hon. member to tell me in what clause that provision is contained. He cannot do so. There is no question of tendering for these facilities. If there was provision for the calling of tenders, there might be something to justify the Bill. The Bill, in the main, makes provision for inviting propositions.

Dr. KERWIN: What is that but a form of tendering?

Mr. STOPFORD: The Minister may advertise for those propositions; but all the Bill provides for is that the Commissioner of Main Roads must receive those propositions.

Mr. TEDMAN: Read clause 4 to the House. You won't do that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! We are not discussing the clauses of the Bill.

Mr. TEDMAN: I am very sorry, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member is not permitted to read the clause.

[*Mr. Tedman.*

Mr. STOPFORD: I am not going to break the Standing Orders; but I will say that any hon. member who reads clause 4 will read that the Commissioner may advertise.

Mr. TEDMAN: That is just what I said.

Mr. STOPFORD: That is not calling for tenders. That is all this Bill proposes. I read it very carefully, and, as a result, this side is going to move an amendment. This clause is merely an invitation for proposals.

Mr. POLLOCK: Hear, hear! Proposals are not tenders.

Mr. STOPFORD: The hon. member for Maree does not know the Bill. The Minister can deal with that phase, if I am wrong. Under this Bill a certain facility, such as the Kangaroo Point bridge, in which the hon. member for Maree is naturally interested, can be built under the toll system. A company like Public Developments Limited, with a capital of £76, might make a proposal, and be granted a franchise to construct that bridge. It will then hawk the proposition around, and might succeed in getting the men who built the North Shore bridge in Sydney to construct it. My point is that tenders are not called. That is one of our objections to the Bill. After the proposals of the promoters are submitted to the Commissioner of Main Roads, he studies them; and, if he agrees to them, fixes a toll which the local authority and the people will have to pay. The local authority and people have no say in the amount of that toll. It is absolutely wrong to say that the Commissioner of Main Roads may accept a tender. If the Minister desires to amend the Bill in the direction indicated, we will give him an opportunity to do so in Committee.

The TREASURER: You are very generous.

Mr. STOPFORD: I hope the Government will be generous enough to accept it, seeing that one of their members had pledged the Government that a certain provision is in the Bill. The Bill will invite propositions. It may be that Bill Brown will undertake to build a certain facility in a certain district. He will submit a proposal, and, if the Commissioner of Main Roads accepts Bill Brown's proposal, there will be no submission to anybody else. Let the Government show their faith in the contract system, and provide that, before any proposal is accepted, tenders will be called for the work. According to the hon. member for Maree, that is what is intended; but, as I read the Bill, it is not so; and that is one of the objections to the Bill. However, I do not wish to be led off the track. We shall have an opportunity of testing the sincerity of the Government as regards clause 4 when the Committee stage is reached.

Mr. TEDMAN: What is the difference between a proposal and a tender?

Mr. STOPFORD: All we ask is that, when a proposal is submitted to the Commissioner of Main Roads, he shall not give away a public right without giving other people an opportunity to submit proposals. In the construction of the Kangaroo Point bridge, involving a cost of millions of pounds, there may be a difference of £200,000 between tenders. Why should we lose the opportunity of getting the work done at

the lower price, particularly as the people who travel over that bridge will have to pay eventually?

Mr. NIMMO: Of course, there is such a great number of people waiting to put money into these things.

Mr. STOPFORD: I advise the hon. member to stick to the Indooroopilly bridge project. The hon. member for Maree was most unfortunate in the arguments which he advanced concerning the facilities which are now operating under the toll system.

The hon. member referred to the Cairns Range road. That is a national highway, and has not been given away to a private company. While we may oppose tolls in principle, they are less objectionable to us if the State does not give to private people the right to exact taxation from individuals. One of the worst features in this Bill is that the Government propose to create a new authority which will be in direct conflict with the local authority. Further, they create a new taxing authority, and give that authority opportunities of levying on the public whether they use the facility in the course of their legitimate duties or as tourists.

The hon. member for Maree also mentioned the Mount Tambourine road. If ever there was a tragedy in the local authority history of this State, that tragedy is the Mount Tambourine road. The Mount Tambourine road was built partly under the system of a benefited area and partly under the system of a toll. No doubt, hon. members will be surprised to know that the cost of the road to Mount Tambourine was greater than the whole of the rateable value of the area served by the road. Hon. members will be surprised to know that the general rate is 5d. in the £1, and that the rate in the benefited area served by the road is 1s. 7d. in the £1.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Your Government built that road.

Mr. STOPFORD: It does not matter who built the road. That tragedy was enacted simply because the late Government, or the present Government, or whoever built the road, initiated a system that the Government intend to perpetuate under this Bill; that is, they are giving the Commissioner of Main Roads power to grant a franchise. But, while we as a Government did the work, in this Bill the present Government are going to give to private individuals the right to make these roads. My reason for agreeing to the construction of the Mount Tambourine road was that the Government of the day were guided by the Commissioner of Main Roads, who laid down a road that cost more than the rateable value of the locality which it is supposed to serve. What was it? A tourist road. The tourist would pay a toll if they used it; and, if they did not use it, it would impose a perpetual burden on the local resident. Now the tourists have locked up their motor cars, and they cannot afford to use the road. My point is that this Bill is a menace to every primary producer in the State. If you are going to give the right to the Commissioner of Main Roads or some board—if you appoint a board, it will, as Mr. McGill said, be like a hand coming out of the shadow, looking for more power. If they get that power, what are they going to do? Build first class roads? Take the Redland Bay district. The Redland Bay district

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is a place where a lot of primary producers are growing fruit. They want a road, but they do not want a first-class road such as Mount Tambourine has got. If they got a road like that, it will be a yoke round their necks for the rest of their lives. Say some "go-getter" goes to the district, and thinks it is a great place to build a road. He is only after the tourist traffic, and he builds a road out of all proportion to the cost of a road suitable to the residents producing fruit in that district, and a toll is put on.

Mr. NIMMO: The Minister will decide.

Mr. STOPFORD: A Minister has a terrible lot of work to do, and he has to be guided by his officers in matters of detail. However, say this road is built, and then a new resort springs up, and the tourist traffic ceases. It does not matter to the private individual who built the road where the revenue comes from—whether from the State or from the local authority—but the primary producers will be left in the mud. I am trying to show how the primary producer will be affected under this Bill. It will be possible under the Bill to build in primary producing districts purely tourist roads that the people do not want. First-class roads should be built only to meet the wishes of those who want to develop a place as a tourist resort. I would suggest that the Government should include in the Bill a similar provision to that which I put into the "The City of Brisbane Act of 1924," to the effect that in all districts where primary production is carried on and a tourist road is built a differential toll shall be levied to help the primary producer. In that Act the Labour Government laid down the principle, so far as primary producers were concerned, that a differential rate would operate for those who held land within the area that was used for productive purposes.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: We moved that amendment.

Mr. STOPFORD: The hon. member did nothing of the sort—he knows he never moved that amendment. I put it in the measure.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: We moved an amendment.

Mr. STOPFORD: I think the hon. member saw that the City Council had been called on to give effect to the section after it was put in.

The Loganholme bridge has also been quoted as one of the toll bridges that have been successful in Queensland. I am sorry the Minister in charge of the Bill is not here—perhaps he has been unfortunately called away on a deputation. If he was here, I know he would agree with me in this. He knows that the Loganholme bridge is paying so handsomely that it is estimated that the tolls will pay for the bridge in three years. The Commissioner of Main Roads, who has control of these things, fixed the upset price for the lease of that bridge at about £2,000, and the man who was running the ferry went up to £11,000. The Treasurer then stepped in, and said, "Let us look at your pass book," and the man went out of the business. I know that the Minister estimates that, with the present revenue from the tolls on that bridge, it will be clear in three years; and he boasts of that and thinks it is a wonderful achievement. It is disgraceful for any Government to say that an asset which will be valuable for fifty years should be allowed to liquidate itself in three years.

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It shows that a burden of an unjust character is being placed on the present users of the bridge. If the statement of the Minister is correct that the bridge will clear itself after three years of tolls, the only reasonable thing for the Government to do is to reduce the toll.

Anybody who understands local authority finance understands that the cost of an asset must be spread evenly over the users of that asset. The weakness of this measure lies in its neglect of that principle. If there is anything in local government law for which the people ought to be thankful, it is that it embodies the principle of taxation on unimproved values rather than on annual values, as was the case at one time. Every reasonable man recognises that the publicly created value of land should contribute in some measure to the cost of a given utility, and the Local Authorities Acts make provision accordingly. Under this Bill, however, a man in Melbourne may own a large area of land in the neighbourhood of a facility which is to be constructed under the toll system. Under the existing scheme of local authority taxation he pays his just quota for whatever improvement may be made in land values on his unoccupied land. Under this proposal he will pay none. When a toll facility has increased the value of his land to an extent which justifies such a course, he subdivides the land, and the users of the bridge or road pay a double tax, both on the land they acquire from him at the figure placed on it by him, and by means of the toll. That is absurd, and will not stand investigation.

Apart from that the Government are giving local authorities no opportunity whatever under this Bill. I suggest that the Government should alter the Bill to provide that, before any traffic facility is constructed, which would involve the local authority affected in any direct or indirect expenditure later on, a vote of the people shall be taken with the full facts before them.

Dr. KERWIN: Are you in favour of the Bill?

Mr. STOPFORD: I am trying to explain to the hon. member's dull "nut" a provision which will make it less obnoxious. I object to a toll. I do not want to go back 100 years. I want to try to educate the Government—at any rate, to protect them from themselves. I do not believe in a "Go-getters' Paradise Bill"—and that is what this is. Every "go-getter" in the country could get rich in a week under this measure. Suppose, for the sake of argument, that a project is in the air to-day, such as the Belmont racecourse—I do not think the Treasurer has anything to do with it, but the Secretary for Railways might have. Suppose a new, and, of course, bona fide racing club comes into existence and decides that it will seek a franchise for a road facility to give access to the course. The people of Belmont would be quite content with a third-class road. They do not want a glass-top road.

THE TREASURER: The hon. member knows that they already have a first-class road.

Mr. STOPFORD: I know that they were willing to sell the tramway constructed by the Government of which the Treasurer was a member, and they were unable to get a buyer. If the racecourse is constructed, then it will be necessary to convey patrons

to the course as speedily as possible, and a road will have to be built. Every racegoer who buys a ticket will have to pay so much in the £1 in addition, plus tax. Every user of the road in the Belmont district will have to contribute the same amount, although quite a number will receive no benefit by it. Anything can happen under this Bill. It is a perpetuation of one of the greatest evils imaginable. Letters have been written to the press opposing this system, and leading articles have been written, too.

I do not wish to allow this opportunity to pass without protesting again against the growing evil of delegating the power of this Parliament to the Executive Council. Any hon. member who reads the measure will find on almost every page and in almost every clause the delegation of power to the Governor in Council. We know that under the Income (Unemployment Relief) Tax Act the Government have power to amend the Act without reference to Parliament. That power was availed of recently by the Government. Not only did they amend the provisions of that Act, but they imposed fresh taxation. We also know that the Secretary for Labour and Industry, with his new Bureau of Economics and Statistics, made a mess of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. When the Government went to the court, they found that they could not obtain what they wanted, and, with one sweep of the pen, the Executive Council altered the law without consulting Parliament. Nearly every second line of this Bill has reference to the power of the Governor in Council, which is unlimited. I feel that, if Parliament passed clause 32 of the Bill, we could dispense with the rest of the Bill altogether. Clause 32 lays down the things that may be done by regulation. It provides—

“The Governor in Council may make by-laws”——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. STOPFORD: I regret that I am not allowed to quote a clause during the second reading stage. That clause gives extensive power to the Governor in Council. That bad practice is not peculiar to this Government; but it has grown up in recent years, and it is a practice that is showing its evil effects to-day. I do not think the previous Government ever amended an Act of Parliament by Order in Council; but I do know that the present Government amended the Income (Unemployment Relief) Tax Act, and imposed fresh taxation by Order in Council, and that they amended the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act by Order in Council. Clause 32 of this Bill empowers the Governor in Council to make regulations for everything prescribed in the Bill, and for everything that the Government may have forgotten to prescribe in the Bill. Under every other measure the regulations so made must lie on the table of the House for a certain number of days while the House is sitting; but under this Bill the regulations become part of the measure itself, and have the force of law immediately they are made and gazetted.

Mr. KIRWAN: They cannot be challenged in any way whatsoever.

Mr. STOPFORD: If this practice is allowed to grow, then sooner or later it will affect the Government just as it hits

us to-day. We, as members of Parliament, are held responsible to the people we represent. What is the Governor in Council? The Governor in Council is the Cabinet. Very often the Cabinet is not unanimous. A Cabinet of ten may be divided six for and four against. The majority of the Cabinet will have power to amend an Act on which their own Cabinet is not unanimous. What is that going to lead to? A strong Premier with a pliable Cabinet, and probably a strong party, will be able to frame by-laws giving him power to do what he likes in recess without the representatives of the people making a word of protest or having the right to protest. Every member of this House owes a duty to the democracy of this State to prevent the Government of Queensland becoming a bureaucracy. It is due to hon. members even now, although they may agree that a danger exists in this Bill, to realise that they have a duty to the public to preserve the traditions of representative government by preventing any encroachment on the privileges of the people creeping into any Bill that is introduced.

Look at some of the clauses in this Bill! Some of them run into pages. We may be told that the powers to be granted to the Governor in Council merely relate to machinery provisions, but the last paragraph of clause 32 is like the sting of the death-adder—its sting is in the tail. It is a farce for us to discuss the measure or even move amendments. I suggest an amendment that all work undertaken under this Bill shall be undertaken by labour paid under the industrial awards of this State. We would be only laughing at ourselves to give the Governor in Council these powers, because under the provisions of that clause by-laws under this Bill will be submitted to a Cabinet meeting held at half-past 12 o'clock and terminating at 1 o'clock, and the Governor will then sign all the minutes. The heads of various departments submit formal matters to their colleagues at a Cabinet meeting, and the members of the Cabinet agree to and sign them. The Minister may hold back by-laws that he thinks not important enough to submit to his fellow Ministers. By allowing the Executive Council to take unto itself powers that the Constitution never intended them to have, we are getting away from principles which were won after some of the greatest fights in the history of Britain, for liberty and representative government. If there was anything in this Bill to cause the Government to pause and reflect, it is the last clause, which makes an onslaught on the rights of this Chamber, and take us back 100 years.

Mention has been made of the unemployed in connection with this Bill. The Governments of Australia should readjust their financial relations with local authorities, and try to view public finance in a different light from what they do. If they viewed them in the light of commercial finance, then deficits in local government would not appear.

The hon. member for Warrego referred the other evening to the town hall costing £1,000,000. I have no objection to that town hall; it is a magnificent structure. What I do object to is that our blind, foolish idea of public finance is such that we build a town hall which will be an asset to Brisbane for a hundred years, and we limit the repayment loan to fifteen years. When we get Australian public men to understand that

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the proper allocation of public loans should be based on the life of the asset, and repayments made so that everyone enjoying it will contribute towards that repayment, we shall get nearer to some conception of what public finance means. When the Secretary for Railways argues that he has accomplished a great deal because he can repay the cost of the Loganholme bridge in three years, he has no conception of his duty as a public man, because, if that bridge can be repaid in three years, it shows clearly that the toll is too high, seeing that the bridge is a concrete structure, and has a life of at least thirty years. The repayments should be based on the principle that everyone who benefits as a result of the construction of that bridge will pay his just proportion towards it. However, I am not going to debate the question any longer. I have again protested against the filching of the powers of representative government, which is a feature of every measure brought before the House by this Government.

Once we pass the initial stage of a measure we have no power to broaden the principles of the measure; yet, although we cannot go beyond the limits of the order of leave, the Executive Council, comprised of a small number of men who may not be unanimous in their decision, may alter the whole principle of the measure to the consideration of which we have brought the combined thought of this Parliament. I urge hon. members opposite to look at this question from the point of view purely of the rights of members of Parliament and from the point of view of the rights of the democracy which returns them to this House.

Mr. DUNLOP: The best speech delivered so far on that side of the House. (Laughter.)

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL (*Toombul*) [8.18]: I admit that the speech delivered by the hon. member for Mount Morgan is the most notable deliverance from the other side of the House, as, unlike his colleagues, the hon. member has not delved into questions which should be reserved for discussion in Committee. The hon. member for Mount Morgan has raised several important issues; and in regard to the enormous powers conferred on the Governor in Council, I prefer to let that matter stand over until the Minister deals with it at the Committee stage. We are all jealous of our parliamentary privileges, and we are anxious to see the control of Parliament paramount. In contradistinction to their predecessors, the present Government are always willing to see that Parliament is paramount in the government of this country. There is a tendency in modern times to filch from Parliament the powers that it undoubtedly possesses; and we have no greater example of that than the Federal Government itself. Almost every Bill framed by the Federal Government contains a drag-net clause empowering the Minister in charge of the department to administer the Bill in such a way as to nullify its provisions. Most hon. members are agreed that Parliament should be supreme, and the Minister is quite prepared to listen to any reasonable amendment, if hon. members consider that too much power is being conferred on the Minister or on the Commissioner of Main Roads.

The hon. member for Mount Morgan said that under a Bill such as this we may have

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a road constructed, such as the Mount Tambourine road, which would inflict great hardship on the settlers, or result in a big loss to the Main Roads Commission. The Mount Tambourine road has been subject to a toll of late years; and evidently the revenue derived from the toll is not sufficient to pay for the maintenance of the road. The main idea in the construction of this road was to induce tourists to visit Mount Tambourine and to relieve the settlers of some of the upkeep of that road.

At 8.22 p.m.,

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

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: We must admit that there has been a great want of foresight in the matter of the settlement of Mount Tambourine. Many years ago Mount Tambourine was in its natural state, clothed with primeval scrub, and was a very beautiful resort to visit, and one of the picked spots around Brisbane. But if you visit Mount Tambourine to-day, you will find that the mountain itself has been practically denuded of that beautiful vegetation; and all that remains of those scrubs is the vegetation in the valleys and ravines which are not capable of being cleared. The result to-day is that Mount Tambourine has been despoiled of its natural beauty, and there is not the same inducement for tourists to go there that there was before the road was constructed. Past Governments have been neglectful of their duty in not reserving for the people of Brisbane the whole of that mountain, as it was the most accessible resort. Had that been done, the Mount Tambourine road would have been a payable proposition to-day. The whole cause of the failure has been the closer settlement of a piece of country that was naturally the finest holiday resort for the people of the capital. We hope that under this Bill such tourist roads will still be constructed; but the Government should take the precaution to see that the natural scenic beauties are reserved for the people for all time.

There is a proposition to build a tourist road to the Lamington Plateau. Fortunately the whole of that plateau has been reserved for the public, and I venture to say that, when the road is constructed, it will be greatly availed of by the people of Brisbane, and will be a payable proposition, in contradistinction to the road built to the top of Mount Tambourine. We all admit that the tolls derived from the Loganholme bridge will be very considerable, and it is anticipated that within three years a sufficient amount will have been collected to pay for the construction of the bridge. It is the intention of the department that the money derived by way of a toll on that bridge shall be spent on the road between Brisbane and Coolangatta. It is all very well to say that, if the bridge is paid for in three years, the toll should be reduced; but it should be remembered that the traffic over that bridge comes from a distance; and it is only right to see that the revenue received from the toll is spent in making the road a first-class tourist road. It may be some time before we can say that we have between Brisbane and Coolangatta a first-class bitumen road with good bridges over the rivers. Until that time arrives and the road is ship-shape,

it would be an unwise policy to reduce the tolls.

Hon. members opposite have been content to say that they are opposed to this Bill because the Labour platform states that all highways should be free to the public. That declaration appears to them to be of such a sacred nature that it is almost sacrilege to advocate anything to the contrary. Ten or fifteen years ago the idea of toll bridges or tolls on highways was unpopular, because the Australian public, in common with every part of the British Dominions, was influenced to some extent by the wave of democratic thought* that swept over the British people. I think most of us advocated years ago that all highways and bridges should be free. Some people even advocated free ferries, free laundries, and many other free facilities. While we were on a wave of prosperity, with money in abundance, it was quite popular in catering for votes to advocate free facilities for the people; but there has been a great change in the activities of our communal life during the last year or two; and we must reconsider the position taken up many years ago. Labour members will not recede from the attitude which they took up ten or fifteen years ago; and, while they accuse us of being Tories, as they term it, I think that the man who holds an inflexible opinion and is content to hang on to ancient shibboleths and time-worn slogans is the greater Tory of the two. To my mind, the Opposition have not progressed with the spirit of the times. I would be quite prepared to advocate free bridges, free roads, and the abolition of tolls if our finances would allow us so to do; but, while there is such a dearth of money and such inability on the part of Governments and local authorities to raise funds for the construction of these activities, I can see no objection to allowing private enterprise to cater for the needs of the people provided the necessary safeguards are inserted in the agreements so that there will be no undue spoliation of the public. Many of us have advocated the nationalisation of all forms of public utilities; and, while there can be no argument about the control by the State of what might be termed natural monopolies or activities which are absolutely essential to the life-blood of the people, such as light, air, and water—still there is no justification for determining that other facilities should be controlled by the Government or local authorities, unless we belong to that school of thought which believes in the socialisation of the means of production, distribution, and exchange. It has been the custom in this State for the Government or the local authorities to construct the highways and build the bridges; but modern conditions are such that the facilities that were afforded by the State and by the local authorities in the past are not sufficient for the needs of to-day. With the growth of arts and sciences and the progress of inventions, we find that the facilities to which we have been accustomed in the past are insufficient to-day. For instance, when the Greater Brisbane Council took office in 1925, it was faced with the position that all the outlying authorities had been content to cater for the road traffic per medium of hardwood bridges. In a few years, owing to storms and floods, those bridges were washed away, and the council was faced with an enormous expense in replacing those hardwood bridges, with concrete structures. That work ran into a considerable amount of money, which the

council was compelled to borrow, and which it is paying off to-day by way of interest and redemption. The question is how far any local authority can go in that direction. I should say that, while the city of Brisbane or other local authority is unable to undertake such a work itself, on account of the heavy load of debt upon it, it would be quite justified in calling upon outside capital for the purpose, giving the concessionaires a reasonable franchise and a reasonable profit, under an agreement by which the facility would be handed back at the end of the term free of charge. Thus no hardship would be caused to the people, and, despite what the hon. member for Mount Morgan may say, no new tax is involved. A toll is but a prepayment for a privilege. It is not a tax in any sense of the word. You pay a fee to go across the river in a ferry, or you pay for a ride in a tram car; and there is no difference between either of those cases and going over a bridge constructed by a private concessionaire under a franchise under which, at the end of a given term, the facility is to be handed back to the public free of charge. How can that inflict any damage on the public? Hon. members opposite say, "We are against all that sort of thing. We want local authorities to construct all these facilities"; to which I answer, "Yes, provided they have the funds with which to do it." But how can the city of Brisbane, with its burden of £13,000,000, afford to pay for a facility such as a bridge across the river? Most likely this question of bridges will crop up, and the council is certainly not in a position to build another bridge. It is already saddled with the cost of the Grey street bridge; and, owing to the state of the loan market—of which it had no warning—it has to finance the balance of the cost of its construction out of revenue, and that is the main reason why the City Council is in such a parlous condition financially.

The fact of the matter is that, despite all these theories, we must bow to the stress of the times—to dire necessity—and, while we would all like the Government or local authorities to build such facilities, the truth is that the Government are unable to finance them; and the next best thing is to get capital to come to our assistance, provided the conditions are such that the public are not unduly exploited. We must provide that the man with the capital gets a fair return. This Bill makes ample provision for the protection of the public, and there is no chance of a monopoly being created to its detriment. Moreover, the idea of tolls on roads and bridges is not a new idea at all.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: It is as old as the hills.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: It is as old as the hills; and it has been tried in all the civilised countries of the world. We have got away from the old turnpike system; nevertheless, in comparatively recent legislation in Queensland we have had the betterment tax and the railway guarantee system, under which the people who benefited by a railway opening up their district paid a tax on the land to make good the loss on the railway.

Mr. POLLOCK: We repealed that.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: In order to catch votes, our friends opposite abolished the railway guarantee. Will hon. members deny that?

Mr. POLLOCK: All our members voted for it.

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Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: Then we had in local government the application of the benefited area principle, under which the people benefited by a given work had to pay for it; but that is quite reasonable. Why should the whole community pay for a special benefit derived by a section? The idea has been incorporated in the legislation of Queensland, and has worked satisfactorily, so that it is no new idea. Hon. members opposite are decrying it simply because they are carried away with the idea that in these times the more benefits you can confer on the people and the more things you can give away, the more votes you can get, and the greater political power you can acquire.

To get down to bedrock in connection with this question, the Bill presents the most practical solution of many of our difficulties. The people of Queensland will acquire facilities without any cost to themselves, and without any cost to the local authorities. The public will get the benefit of the facilities, and at the end of the term, after paying a fair fee for the privilege—for it is a privilege—the facility goes back to the public without cost. Surely that must appeal to any sensible man! The Deputy Leader of the Opposition asked: Why not unlock the capital in the banks? Why not get the Queensland National Bank and every other bank to loan its money to the local authority at 4 per cent.?

Mr. PEASE: No private enterprise will build a bridge returning 4 per cent.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: Does the hon. member think that any bank in Brisbane would lend any money to a local authority unless it had the backing of the Government? Why are local authority securities gilt-edged? Because there is the guarantee of the Government behind every loan. The Government are not prepared to lend their signature to every wild-cat scheme that a local authority likes to put up. Why should the banks lend to the local authorities? After all, local authorities are composed of human beings desirous of doing the best for their own electors. It does not follow that the banks should be called upon to find money to back all their schemes. The banks will not back anything unless the Government endorses the agreement. The hon. member for Herbert knows that very well.

The hon. member for Bremer was concerned with one point. He did not address himself to the main principles of the Bill. He raised the bogey that, if a gas authority, a water authority, or an electric light authority, decided to take its cables or pipes across the bridge, it would be called upon to pay a toll, which, in his opinion, was a very iniquitous thing. If he reads the Bill, he will find that the agreement will provide for all these matters, and it can be taken for granted that such authorities will be amply safeguarded in connection with the construction of any facility under this scheme.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Quite correct.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: The hon. member for Mundingburra drew a rather sorrowful picture of what might occur fifteen years hence. He pointed out that probably a workman engaged in a foundry on the other side of a river would be compelled to pay a toll to cross a bridge if he wanted to get to his work in an expeditious manner; but, if he

wants to save his fee, there is no need for him to cross the bridge. He can go round by the other bridge, or have some other means of transit. He has the choice of several methods of crossing the river; so the argument by the hon. member cuts no ice. I want to inform the hon. member that we cannot consider the possibilities of the future. The needs of the present must take paramount precedence over anything that might occur in the future, and we must deal with things as they are. We have here an opportunity of having these public facilities built by private money on reasonable terms, and we cannot take into consideration what is likely to occur, fifteen, twenty, or twenty-five years hence. We must be guided by the interests of the immediate future. That is the trouble in Australia to-day. While we are all guilty of talking oceans of rhetoric, the country is gradually drifting to a very parlous condition. It behoves us all to adopt any scheme whatever that will have the effect of putting men to work by granting these facilities for developing large cities without any immediate cost to the rate-payers. These facilities have this advantage, that they will aid in the development of both primary and secondary industries.

There are three main features in the Bill. One is that in all these agreements the local authority has the final say. That is to say, supposing we built a bridge over the Brisbane River, and the concession was about to run out, or supposing it had a few years to run, the local authority will have ample opportunity to take it over, if it wishes to do so. The Bill is so framed that the wishes of the local authority are not in any way over-riden. Then the amount of the tolls included in the agreement will be subject to the approval of the Governor in Council. It will be impossible for any private concessionaire to wring an agreement from the Government without the closest supervision of the terms. Hon. members can rest assured that any Government will see that the public are not exploited. The third notable feature of the Bill is that ample machinery is provided to get away from the bugbear of compensation. The question of goodwill always enters into these matters; and, in the ultimate, the question is submitted to arbitration at great expense to the parties concerned. This Bill provides machinery whereby the value of the undertaking can be established without any necessity whatever for litigation. The Bill merely sets out what the authority will have to pay if it acquires the facility, or what the concessionaire will get if the Government take it over. No one can cavil at those provisions. The public is amply safeguarded.

Despite what our friends opposite say in regard to the Brisbane tramways—that a previous Nationalist Government enabled a private company to establish a tramway system in Brisbane and exploit the public, the fact remains that the agreement with the old Brisbane Tramways Company was for a period of twenty-five years. At the end of that time no compensation would have been payable at all; but the Labour Government, in their wisdom or unwisdom, and in order to depreciate the value of the undertaking, introduced legislation which prevented the company from increasing its fares. That was the point which weighed against the Tramways Trust when it appealed to the Privy Council. It was felt

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that on that point the company would succeed. That is why the public of Brisbane were saddled with the enormous cost of £1,400,000 in respect of the tramway undertaking, which the Government could have obtained for under £1,000,000 on the termination of the agreement. It was the fatuity of hon. members opposite, who depreciated an agreement honestly entered into between the two parties, that saddled this community with such a huge debt.

Our friend the hon. member for Warrego is always interesting to listen to; but I am afraid that the question of toll bridges or municipal affairs does not come quite within his ambit. He sneeringly referred to Brisbane as a village of 340,000 people. While it is not a very large centre when compared with some other cities in the Commonwealth, it must be borne in mind that it is the clearing house for the whole of Queensland, and suffers very little in comparison with some of the oldest cities of the world. In order to deprecate the proposal of the Government with respect to building toll bridges, the hon. member compared Brisbane with London and its 7,000,000 inhabitants; and on that comparison thought that, as London possessed seven, eight, or nine bridges, Brisbane should be satisfied with one. The hon. member carried the comparison further afield when he compared Brisbane with New York and other centres; and he endeavoured to show that, taking population as a criterion, Brisbane should be satisfied with one bridge.

In fairness to the members of the Brisbane City Council and their bridge policy, I may say that in 1925 they appointed a commission to go into the matter of cross-river facilities. The members of that commission were Professor Hawken, Mr. W. M. Nelson, engineer of the Brisbane Tramways, and Mr. R. M. Wilson, an architectural engineer of Brisbane. They went into the whole question very exhaustively, and presented their report in January, 1926. My reason for raising this matter is that under this Bill application may be made by private companies for the construction of bridges over the Brisbane River; and I desire to correct the wrong impression held by some hon. members that the Grey street bridge has been a failure. I am not prepared to pit my knowledge against the knowledge of engineering experts; but I say that those hon. members who offered those criticisms have, perhaps, slightly less knowledge than I have on the matter. At any rate, their opinions cannot be taken as having the same weight as the opinions of the members of the commission to which I have referred. In its report the commission suggested that, in order to provide for the requirements of Brisbane for the next few years, it was essential that some additional bridge accommodation to that of Victoria Bridge should be provided. It found by careful investigation that Victoria Bridge was carrying traffic practically up to saturation point. This is what the commission said in paragraph 14 of its report—

“Traffic, so far as space occupied on Victoria Bridge is concerned, has doubled itself during the past eight years. The approaching streets are congested and any additional structure, whether upstream or downstream, if too near Victoria Bridge, would intensify

such street congestion, even though the present bridge might obtain relief.”

Then it dealt with the anticipated developments of the city, and added—

“During the next eighteen years extra facilities, having more than three times the capacity of the present bridge, will be required; and, if the present rate of progress of the city is preserved, other connections should be in progress.”

I cite that to show that, despite the analogy offered by the hon. member for Warrego between Brisbane and the older cities of the world, we have the advice of competent men that the progress of Brisbane had been so rapid that it was necessary to set about a proper system of bridge construction. It recommended the first bridge to serve the existing centres of intensity. It advocated a bridge from Bowen terrace to Kangaroo Point, in addition to which it recommended a shipping canal, 150 feet wide and 35 feet deep, with 20 feet roadways on each side to be cut through Kangaroo Point, and crossed by a single deck 190 feet span bascule bridge. In its own words, “the virtual cost of construction of the project is estimated at £1,510,000.”

Then it went on to say—

“In regard to further cross-river facilities, taking account of the present conditions and the anticipated future developments, we are of opinion that to meet the development of circumferential traffic, particularly through Normanby and the western suburbs and Roma street, and to enable the withdrawal of such traffic from Victoria Bridge, a low-level bridge on piers from the level of Quay street, on the north side, to the end of Grey street, on the south side, should be provided. This bridge could be 30 feet wide, with 5-foot footways, and it is estimated to have a virtual cost of £230,000. It has been located to cross over River road, and thus avoid the city traffic along North Quay. This proposal might economically be commenced at the same time as (1), since it would take less time to build, and could in the meantime act as a relief to Victoria Bridge, especially in view of the anticipated completion of the terminus of the New South Wales Railway (Kyogle to South Brisbane) at Melbourne street.”

I mention that in all fairness to the aldermen of the City Council, to show that the proposal made by the Cross-River Commission was, firstly, a bridge from Bowen terrace to Kangaroo Point, supplemented by a bridge from North Quay to South Brisbane; and the commission recommended that the two projects should be put in hand simultaneously, so that the Grey street bridge would afford immediate relief to the Victoria Bridge, which was then at saturation point.

At 8.52 p.m.,

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Mr. H. M. RUSSELL: The cost of the Kangaroo Point proposal was £1,510,000, and the City Council was unable to finance any such proposal; and that is why it adopted the cheaper proposal to construct a bridge at Grey street, which would afford immediate relief to the Victoria Bridge, and which, according to the plans of the Cross-River Commission, would cost in the vicinity

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of £240,000. But the City Council, in its wisdom, decided that, instead of building an entirely steel bridge from Grey street to North Quay, it would build a steel bridge encased in concrete, and, on top of that, it decided to resume all the land on both sides, which would prevent the very thing that the hon. member for Gregory anticipated would happen. In order to prevent the trafficking in land by "go-getters," as the hon. member would call them, the City Council resumed all the land on both sides in the hope that, when the bridge was completed, it would be able to sell the land at a profit. But, unfortunately, owing to the slump in land values, the council is likely to be saddled with this land for some time to come, so that it is not always prudent for a local authority to resume land before building a public facility. Had things gone right, the profit on that land would have been considerable. The City Council is not in a position to finance the other proposal, and I am sure it would welcome an offer from a private company to build a bridge over Kangaroo Point. It has not the money; but, if there is a private contractor willing to build that bridge, provided the agreement is reasonable and the public are protected. I do not see why he should not build it. The risk is on the contractor, and not on the public; and, if it is a failure, the failure will lie on the shoulders of the contractor, and not on the people of Brisbane. Surely that is a reasonable proposal, which will commend itself to everyone.

I have refrained from going into details. The Bill itself contains a number of controversial clauses, but the House will be quite safe in affirming the principle of building toll bridges. We must admit that Australia, generally speaking, has forged ahead probably far more quickly than would have been the case but for the fact that we have borrowed large sums of money. We have been accustomed in the past to finance all our public undertakings by advancing the money to the local authorities. This money was obtained by the Government from overseas lenders, and in connection with most of these loans the local authority has contracted to pay off the principle and interest over a given period of years, and has included that cost in the annual rates levied on their ratepayers. That system was all right while the Government were in a position to get money.

The hon. member for Warrego mentioned a great number of projects that the country could go on with. I quite admit that there are many projects we should take in hand, but, unless we get assistance from private capitalists, I see no opportunity in the near future for the State or local authorities to get the capital required to carry out these projects. At this serious juncture in the State's affairs we should accept every method of introducing private capital, and there is no greater service that any citizen can render to his State than by coming to its rescue and finding the necessary funds to carry out public undertakings. I think the public will favour the Bill, inasmuch as it will put within our immediate reach some of the advantages we wish to possess, but which, without the necessary capital to carry them out, will be postponed for many years to come. I hope that for the time being hon. members opposite will drop their stupid shibboleth that all public bridges should be

free. It was all right years ago; but I would ask them in all seriousness to assist the Government in carrying out these projects, even if they have to drop this plank in their platform which they look upon with such awe. The party has demonstrated in many ways that it has outlived its usefulness. Hon. members opposite have to admit that many of their shibboleths, many of their catch-cries of a decade ago, are to-day quite foreign to the spirit of the times. Times have changed, and I would urge the Labour Party to write across its platform that phrase which is found in so many parliamentary enactments—"mutatis mutandis."

Mr. HANLON (*Ithaca*): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

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

The House adjourned at 8.58 p.m.