

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER 1931**

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Act Amendment Bill to minimise prostitution, venereal disease, etc., what action does he propose to take to either stamp out or considerably minimise the traffic done in the several wine shops in existence, where young girls and young women very often frequent, thereby putting great temptation in their way and no doubt leading many of them astray?"

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. C. Peterson, *Normanby*) replied—

"The women police exercise a supervision over wine shops."

PAYMENTS TO BANKS IN RE MUNGANA ROYAL COMMISSION.

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

"In connection with the payments to banks of the amount of £68 8s. 4d., which is included in the return supplied by him as one of the items of costs of the Mungana Royal Commission—(a) what are the details of this expenditure; and (b) what services were rendered by the banks to justify the public expenditure of funds in this particular direction?"

The PREMIER (Hon. A. E. Moore, *Aubigny*) replied—

"(a) Refunds of overtime paid by banks to their officials for the preparation of particulars of various bank accounts and the securing of relevant cheques, deposit slips, etc.—

	£	s.	d.
Australian Bank of Commerce	2	0	0
Bank of Australasia	50	8	0
Bank of New South Wales	15	14	4
Refund to Bank of New South Wales of cost of cartage of ledgers to and from court	0	6	0

£68 8 4

"(b) The information sought was considered necessary by the Crown Law advisers, and the banks were recouped the cost of obtaining it."

WEDNESDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER, 1931.

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

QUESTIONS.

PHARMACY BOARD OF QUEENSLAND.

Mr. KIRWAN (*Brisbane*) asked the Home Secretary—

"1. Who are the members of the Pharmacy Board of Queensland?"

"2. Are any fees paid to the members, and, if so, what are the amounts paid to the various members of the board?"

"3. Under what section of the Pharmacy Act is the statutory authority given for payment of fees to members of the board?"

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. C. Peterson, *Normanby*) replied—

"1. President—J. L. Neilson. Members—Messrs. A. B. Chater, J. C. Minnis, J. Richardson, J. P. Davies, J. Lunn, and R. C. Rutter.

"2. Fees are only paid to members of the board of examiners.

"3. Paragraph (vii.) of subsection 1 of section 30 of 'The Pharmacy Act of 1917.'"

CONTROL OF WINE SHOPS.

Mr. DUNLOP (*Rockhampton*) asked the Home Secretary—

"Seeing that he is now piloting through the House a very useful Health

[*Mr. Dash.*

PAYMENT OF ARREARS OF MAIN ROADS REGISTRATION DUES.

Mr. BULCOCK (*Barcoo*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. Has a decision been arrived at in connection with the half-yearly payment of main roads dues?"

"2. What amount is in arrears in respect of these payments?"

"3. Will favourable consideration be given to the payment of main roads registration dues in instalments in cases where the person concerned is unable to meet the full amount in one payment?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. Godfrey Morgan, *Murilla*) replied—

"1 and 3. It is considered that considerable expense would be incurred in the collection of main roads dues by instalments, and, in view of the fact that sympathetic consideration is always given in cases of proved hardship, it is considered no alteration should be made in the system at the present time.

"2. The amount outstanding at August as shown is normal compared with previous years. The amount shown as outstanding due on 28th September is current work, and cannot be wholly looked upon as outstanding."

AGRICULTURAL TRAINING OF BOYS AT RIVERVIEW.

Mr. BULCOCK (*Burcoo*) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

"1. Is it a fact that an arrangement has been completed whereby certain boys are to receive a training in agriculture at Riverview?"

"2. If so, how many boys will participate in the training, what will be the duration of the course, and who will be responsible financially for the maintenance of the boys?"

"3. What is the area of the farm upon which the boys are to be trained?"

"4. What is the nature of the instruction it is proposed to impart?"

"5. On the completion of training, is it proposed to make the boys so trained available to farmers?"

"6. What conditions will apply to their employment when absorbed on private farms?"

"7. Who is responsible for the selection of the boys who will be admitted to training?"

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

"1. Yes.

"2. Successive groups of approximately twenty-five boys. The duration of the course will be twelve weeks. The Government will be financially responsible for the maintenance of the boys, which will be paid out of relief tax funds.

"3. Three hundred and sixty-three acres.

"4. Elementary rural training.

"5. Yes.

"6. Individual agreement will be made between the guardian of the boy and the prospective employer.

"7. Mr. A. E. Hall, Chairman of the Apprenticeship Executive."

PAYMENT AND CONDITIONS OF NURSES AT BRISBANE GENERAL HOSPITAL.

Mr. BULCOCK (*Burcoo*) asked the Home Secretary—

"1. What were the wages and hours prescribed for each grade of nurses employed at the Brisbane General Hospital by the award in operation at 30th June, 1930?"

"2. What were the wages and hours prescribed for each grade of nurses by the award recently cancelled?"

"3. What are the wages and hours at present operating in respect to all grades?"

"4. What sections of the nursing staff are being rationed, and to what extent does this rationing apply?"

"5. As a further reduction in wages and a lengthening of the hours for nurses at the General Hospital is now notified, what are the projected wages and hours for all grades of nurses employed?"

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. C. Peterson, *Normanby*) replied—

Wages.	Award 30th June, 1930.	Award Recently Cancelled.	Present Rates from 19th September, 1931.
<b>Trainees—</b>			
First year .. ..	£36 per annum	£32 per annum	£22 16s.
Second year .. ..	£45 per annum	£41 per annum	£30 9s.
Third year .. ..	£65 per annum	£61 per annum	£47 9s.
Fourth year .. ..	£75 per annum	£71 per annum	£55 19s.
<b>Staff Nurses</b> .. ..	£110 per annum	£104 per annum	£85 14s.
<b>Sisters</b> .. ..	£120 to £160 per annum, with annual increments of £10.	£109 to £149 per annum	£92 5s. to £126 5s. 1d. with annual increments of £8 10s. Senior Sisters £134 15s. to £151 15s. 1d. (with annual increments of £3 10s.).
<b>Matrons in Hospitals whose average of occupied beds is—</b>			
Under 6 .. ..	£150 per annum	£144 per annum	General Matron £376.
From 6 to 11 .. ..	£160 per annum	£154 per annum.	Assistant Matron, £262 5s.
From 11 to 35 .. ..	£170 to £200 per annum with annual increments of £10.	£159 to £189 per annum with annual increments of £10.	Matron, Lady Bowen Hospital, £228 5s.
From 35 to 100 .. ..	£200 to £230 per annum, with annual increments of £10.	£189 to £219 per annum, with annual increments of £10.	Matron, Children's Hospital, £219 15s.
From 100 to 200 .. ..	£230 to £270 per annum, with annual increments of £10.	£219 to £259 per annum, with annual increments of £10.	Relieving Matron £185 15s
From 200 to 300 .. ..	£270 to £320 per annum, with annual increments of £10.	£259 to £299 per annum, with annual increments of £10.	Matron, Wattlebrae Hospital, £185 15s.
Over 300 .. ..	£320 to £370 per annum, with annual increments of £10. Uniforms, board and lodging supplied in addition.	£299 to £349 per annum, with annual increments of £10. Uniforms, board and lodging supplied in addition.	Matron, Convalescent Home, £135 15s.
			Assistant Matron, Lady Bowen Hospital, £177 5s.
			Uniforms, board and lodging supplied in addition.
<b>HOURS.</b>			
88 per fortnight exclusive of meal hours, not more than 10½ hours to be worked consecutively by any employee other than Matron.		96 per fortnight exclusive of meal hours, not more than 10½ hours to be worked consecutively by any employee other than Matron.	96 per fortnight exclusive of meal hours, not more than 10½ hours to be worked consecutively by any employee other than Matron.

"4. Trained nurses (i.e. staff nurses and ordinary sisters), six weeks during twelve months or three weeks during each half-year.

"5. See answer to No. 1. The hours are the same as in operation prior to exception of the employees from the operation of the Industrial Arbitration and Conciliation Act."

**MAINTENANCE AND INCIDENTAL EXPENDITURE—BLIND, DEAF AND DUMB INSTITUTION.**

Mr. A. JONES (*Berke*) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

"What was the expenditure on 'Maintenance and Incidentals' in respect to the Blind, Deaf and Dumb Institution for that part of the financial year 1930-1931 when this institution was under the control of the Department of Public Instruction?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. R. M. King, *Logan*) replied—

"The Blind, Deaf and Dumb Institution is not under the control of the Department of Public Instruction. The responsibility for the administration of the school for the blind and deaf was transferred to the Department of Public Instruction as from the 1st February, 1931. The expenditure on account of 'Maintenance and Incidentals' (excluding salaries) for the five months ended 30th June, 1931, was £351 12s. 5d. In respect of this period receipts from pupils were paid direct to Consolidated Revenue Fund."

**CHEQUES PHOTOGRAPHED IN "SMITH'S WEEKLY."**

Mr. KENNY (*Cook*) asked the Attorney-General—

"1. What are the particulars of the cheques of which photographic copies appeared in the last issue of 'Smith's Weekly'?"

"2. In what way do these cheques correspond with dividends arising out of the sale of the Mungana mines to the Queensland Government?"

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

"1 and 2. The particulars are as follow:—

Mungana Dividends.—Cheques—Goddard (manager of Chillagoe smelters) to Hon. A. J. Jones (Minister for Mines).

Fifth Dividend—Date paid, 29th January, 1924. Amount per share, 4s. 6d. Amount per 100 shares, £22 10s. Date of cheque, 1st February, 1924. Amount of cheque, £22 10s.

Seventh and Eighth Dividends.—Dates paid: Seventh—9th September, 1924. Eighth—31st January, 1925. Amount per share: Seventh—6s. Eighth—6s. Total, 12s. Amount per 100 shares, £60. Date of cheque, 25th May, 1925. Amount of cheque, £60.

Ninth (Final) Dividend.—Date paid, 30th June, 1925. Amount per share, 11s. 8d. Amount per 100 shares, £57 1s. 8d. Date of cheque, 29th July, 1925. Amount of cheque, £57 1s. 8d.

I may add that the cheques of which particulars were given in the article in question totalled £304 11s. 8d., one-hundredth part of which is £3 0s. 11d. The nine dividends arising out of the sale of the Mungana mines to the Crown total £3 0s. 11d."

**MR. DUNSTAN'S REPORT ON GEOPHYSICAL METHODS OF METAL AND OIL DISCOVERY.**

Mr. A. J. JONES (*Paldington*) asked the Secretary for Mines—

"1. Is Mr. Dunstan's report, as a result of his visit to England and Europe to inquire into geophysical methods of metal and oil discovery, available?"

"2. If so, being scientific and highly technical, will he have it published in the 'Mining Journal'?"

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. N. F. Macgroarty, *South Brisbane*), for the SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. E. A. Atherton, *Chillagoe*), replied—

"1 and 2. The main section of Mr. Dunstan's report was published in full in 'Queensland Government Mining Journal' for March, April, and May, 1931. Mr. Dunstan's first report dealing in general terms with his itinerary in Europe was published in condensed form in 'Queensland Government Mining Journal' for January, 1930."

**WALLAVILLE-GOODNIGHT SCRUB RAILWAY.**

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Queenton*), for Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*), asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. What is the length of the extension made to the Wallaville-Goodnight Scrub Railway?"

"2. How many bridges and culverts have been constructed on the extension?"

"3. What number of men have been employed on the extension?"

"4. What is the approximate cost to date of the extension?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. Godfrey Morgan, *Murilla*) replied—

"The information is being obtained."

**TENDERS FOR INSTALLATION OF LIFT AT MATERNITY HOSPITAL, BUNDABERG.**

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Queenton*), for Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*), asked the Secretary for Public Works—

"1. The number of firms tendering for the installation of lift at the Maternity Hospital, Bundaberg?"

"2. Amount of tenders submitted, respectively—(a) maximum; (b) minimum?"

"3. Were all the firms given the option of quoting for both new and second-hand lifts?"

"4. Is it correct that the Department of Public Works and Home Department have decided to install a second-hand lift?"

"5. Was the installation of the second-hand lift recommended by the Home Department to the Hospital Board?"

"6. Was the installation of a second-hand lift recommended by the Works Department's engineering experts?"

"7. What is the difference between the costs of new lift and second-hand lift?"

"8. Has the Hospital Board accepted the Department's recommendation to install a second-hand lift?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. R. M. King, *Logan*) replied—

"1. Four.

"2. (a) £1,690; (b) £1,311.

"3. No quotations for second-hand lifts were called for, but one firm, on its own initiative, submitted an alternative offer of a second-hand machine.

"4 to 6. The matter is under consideration.

"7. £180 in respect of the particular quotation received.

"8. See answer (4 to 6)."

STATISTICS IN RE ACTIVITIES OF PUBLIC CURATOR.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Queenton*) asked the Attorney-General—

"Will he furnish the following details in connection with the activities of the Public Curator, namely:—

(a) Total profit earned by the office since its inception to 30th June, 1931?

(b) Value of assets of Public Curator's Office as at 30th June, 1931?

(c) Approximate value of all estates being administered as at 30th June, 1931?

(d) Receipts since inception of office to 30th June, 1931?

(e) Expenditure since inception of office to 30th June, 1931?

(f) Amount lodged with Public Curator for investment purposes as at 30th June, 1931?"

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

"The information is being obtained."

STATISTICS IN RE ACTIVITIES OF STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE.

Mr. HANSON (*Beranda*), for Mr. HANLON (*Ithaca*), asked the Treasurer—

"Will he furnish the following details in connection with the activities of the State Government Insurance Office, namely:—

(a) Total profits since the inception of the office to the 30th June, 1931?

(b) Value of assets as at 30th June, 1931?

(c) Total amount of claims paid by the office since its inception to 30th June, 1931?

(d) Total amount of receipts since inception of office to 30th June, 1931?

(e) Total amount of bonuses paid or credited to policy holders since inception of office to 30th June, 1931?

(f) Estimated value of the saving to the insuring public on account of reductions in fire insurance policies up to the end of the last financial year?"

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

"The details will be obtained."

RAILWAY INTERLOCKING GANGS AND POOLING SYSTEM.

Mr. KIRWAN (*Brisbane*): I desire to ask the Secretary for Railways whether he has an answer to the following questions which I addressed to him on 24th instant:—

"1. How many men are employed in the interlocking gangs, and what are the respective classifications, if any?"

"2. When was the pooling system introduced, and what are the general conditions governing same?"

"3. What is the average weekly wage earned by these men under the pooling scheme for the respective callings?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. Godfrey Morgan, *Murilla*) replied—

"1.

Classification.	No.
Signal ganger, 1st class ... ..	1
Signal ganger, 2nd class ... ..	1
Signal ganger, 2nd class (acting) ...	1
Blacksmiths ... ..	2
Signal adjuter ... ..	1
Skilled labourers ... ..	16
Labourers ... ..	2

"2. On 4th May, 1931, pooling commenced at the rate of one week in four. On 3rd August, 1931, pooling was increased to one week in two in consequence of reduction in work and to save dispensing with services of a number of married men.

"3. To prevent the average wage earned for the week worked is as follows, viz.:—Signal ganger, 1st class, £4 13s. 9d.; signal ganger, 2nd class, £4 9s. 1d.; blacksmith, £4 12s. 11d.; signal adjuter, £4 1s. 5d.; skilled labourer, £3 15s. 2d.; and labourer, £3 14s. 4d."

ALLOCATION OF EXPENDITURE ON "BUILDINGS" BETWEEN DAY LABOUR AND CONTRACT.

Mr. BOW (*Mitchell*): I desire to ask the Secretary for Public Works if he can give me an answer to the following questions which I addressed to him on 17th September:—

"1. What was the allocation of expenditure incurred in respect to 'Buildings' during the last financial year from both revenue and loan apportioned as between (a) activities under the votes in question carried out by day labour, and (b) under contract?"

"2. What was the number of jobs, etc., undertaken by day labour by the Department during the period in question?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. R. M. King, *Logan*) replied—

"1. (a) £49,605 6s. 8d.; (b) £76,853 8s. 5d.

"2. 3,222. Amongst these jobs there were 3,224, costing under £500 each, of which 3,094 were small maintenance items costing less than £50 each; there were eight jobs costing £500 or more, which were undertaken by day labour for special reasons, such as the urgency of putting the work in hand immediately or the particular nature of the work making it unsuitable for a contract."

## INADMISSIBILITY OF QUESTIONS TO EX-MINISTERS.

Mr. KELSO (*Yundah*): I desire to ask the hon. member for Paddington, without notice, the following questions:—

“In view of the statement made by the—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! It is not in order to ask questions of any ex-Minister.

## PAPERS.

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

Report and balance-sheet of the Public Curator of Queensland for the financial year ended 30th June, 1931.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Regulations under “The Financial Emergency Act of 1931.”

## FEDERAL AID ROADS AGREEMENT APPROVAL ACT (VARIATION OF AGREEMENT) APPROVAL BILL.

## INITIATION.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. Godfrey Morgan, *Murilla*): I beg to move—

“That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to approve, adopt, authorise, and ratify a further agreement made between the Commonwealth of Australia and the State of Queensland in relation to the construction, reconstruction, maintenance, or repair of Federal aid roads in the State of Queensland.”

Question put and passed.

## INCOME (UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF) TAX ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

## SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*) [2.45]: In rising to move the second reading of this important measure, I propose to give a general review of the operations of the Act since its inception, together with a forecast of future operations after this amending Bill is passed. Before proceeding to do so, however, there are a few general observations which I would like to make at this stage.

First of all, it need not be repeated that unemployment is not the local concern of Queensland; neither need it be reiterated that unemployment has not been created by this Government. It existed before this Government took office; and it is existing all over the world; but it is interesting to note that unemployment is not so acute in Queensland as in other parts of Australia and all over the world.

Mr. KIRWAN: That is owing to the £5,000,000 which Labour left you when you vacated office.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: In Great Britain they have 2,500,000 unemployed, in the United

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States of America 6,500,000 unemployed, in France—where previously it was stated that there were no unemployed—1,500,000, in Germany 8,000,000. The Commonwealth Statistician's figures show the average unemployment for Australia to be 25.8 per cent., whereas in Queensland it is only 14.1 per cent.—

Mr. KIRWAN: That is more than double since you came into office.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Showing—while I do not deny that it is serious—that the position is not so acute in this State as in other States of the Commonwealth or in many of the older parts of the world, where they have more resources in the way of gold and in other ways for absorbing the people. I think these figures show that this is not a local problem.

We come now to what is being done in those other places to cope with unemployment in any way whatever. Dealing with the Australian States, in South Australia there is no relief work; but rations are being provided at the rate of approximately £1,000,000 per annum. In Victoria there is very little relief work, and they are spending approximately at the rate of £2,000,000 in relief rations. In New South Wales there is very little relief work, and rations are being supplied at the rate of over £6,000,000 per annum. Comparing that with the fact that even under the amended scheme we are budgeting in the region of £850,000 or £900,000, for which work will be done, the position in Queensland is easily the best when comparison of numbers of unemployed is made, and also from the point of view of the value received by the community from the efforts being made to cope with unemployment. We are carrying out the work of relief on better lines than any of the other States of the Commonwealth. So far as we can gather, the other States have contented themselves with giving doles and getting little work in return; and the position in other countries is similar. We can say in this State that, whatever may be said about our scheme—and I do not think it is perfect by any means—it is at least a comprehensive, organised scheme for dealing with unemployment.

So much for a general review of the position. I come now to the necessity for this Bill. I mentioned yesterday that last year, with a tax of 3d. in the £1, we received approximately £702,000, and by very careful administration we were able to finish the twelve months with a surplus of £2,000. When it is borne in mind that we collected that sum of £702,000 by means of relief tax stamps and by means of the assessments of the Commissioner of Taxes, and that we administered the fund and handled between 25,000 and 30,000 men, and that the total cost of administration was only 4.3 per cent., I think it will be agreed that great credit is reflected on the officers of the Department of Labour and Industry and those co-operating with them in the work of administration. I pay to them the tribute that is their due for the tremendous amount of assistance they have rendered, for the energy they are putting forth, and the initiative they are displaying in helping us to deal with this great problem at this critical time. They are doing excellent work; and no one could grudge the cost of administration of an organisation such as this when it is carried on at such a low

figure. I doubt whether any private business concern with the corresponding agencies we have to handle, dealing with 12,000 men scattered throughout the State, North, South, East, and West, involving an organisation of foremen and the distribution of engineers all over the State, could show better results.

Mr. PEASE: What about the collection costs?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I shall give the different items directly; and I propose also to be quite fair to the House and to the community generally, and to give a review of just where and how the money has been spent. I think the people are entitled to know.

It has to be borne in mind, first of all, that the Department of Labour and Industry has not set up a new organisation, which is usually the case in such new undertakings. It is quite a common thing to see a new organisation provided in such cases, with a fresh lot of officials to direct it. We have sought and obtained the co-operation of all the other departments, and this has made this low administrative cost possible. The police, especially, have done excellent work. They are co-operating splendidly, and I have received no complaint from the officers who are doing this work. They are concerned with giving the maximum amount of wages to the men who are unemployed, and their attitude receives my warmest admiration.

Mr. BRUCE: And getting their wages reduced at the same time.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I have heard some criticism from members of the Opposition, which can generally be divided into two classes. One of them was developed by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition yesterday, when he said in the first place that there should be no tax.

Mr. PEASE: I said you should keep your promises.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: And in the next that there should be increased pay for the unemployed. I would ask him and hon. members generally: With the financial position as it is, how is it possible to pay more wages if there is no means of raising the revenue? I just put those two statements of the hon. member side by side in order to show the foolishness and the insincerity of the hon. member. The only other point I would make, so far as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is concerned, is to remind him that he took a prominent part in obtaining the return to power in New South Wales of a Government under Mr. Lang, which has increased the unemployment relief tax to 1s. in the £1 and is spending £6,000,000 or £7,000,000 per annum chiefly on relief rations for the unemployed. If that is the policy required by hon. members opposite, then it is well that the House and the country should know it. It appears to me that that is what they require.

The Government have been told that they are not paying a sufficient amount to the men concerned; but the ration rate, which is the basis of the intermittent relief scheme, is the same rate as was paid by the Labour Government at a time when money was plentiful and the cost of living was higher

than it is to-day. What do hon. members opposite really want? The Commissioner of Prices has shown that there was a decline of 8.8 per cent. in the cost of living between June last year and June this year. He has also shown that for the March quarter of 1920 it required 40s. 4d. to provide a certain quantity of food and groceries, whereas for the June quarter of 1931 the amount required to purchase a similar quantity of food and groceries was only 22s. 2d., or an improvement in the purchasing power of 12s. 2d. Those figures definitely prove that the cost of living has fallen, and that contention is supported by every Arbitration Court in Australia, because wages have been reduced accordingly in every instance. If we had followed the effects of the judgments of Arbitration Courts, we would have reduced the ration rates by at least 10 per cent. If we did that—and it would be a logical course to pursue—we would reach this position—that, instead of a man, wife, and four children being in receipt of 28s. 6d. per week, they would receive 25s. 8d. per week. Under the scheme introduced by this Government a man does not receive 28s. 6d. per week; but he gets three days work per week in the service of the community, for which he receives 32s. Do the Opposition want us to go back to the ration rate; or do they wish us to continue the scheme which provides for three days' work per week with a payment of 32s.?

Mr. HYNES: We want you to place the tax on the shoulders of those best able to bear it.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Hon. gentlemen opposite cannot have it both ways. We could abandon the scheme and go back to rations, but the people would get less. If we did that, we would still keep at the same rate as Labour maintained when they had millions of money, and when there was a period of prosperity. We could abandon the present scheme to which hon. members opposite offer plenty of criticism, and could save a tremendous amount of departmental administration by going back to rations, whereby the men would get less money than they do to-day. I ask hon. members which they prefer?

Mr. HYNES: That is not the only alternative.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: That is the alternative. What do hon. members opposite mean?

Mr. HYNES: You could raise sufficient money by taxing the people who have got it, and exempt the people who cannot afford to pay the tax.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I will deal with the interjection of the hon. member for Townsville later. He said yesterday that there were no travellers at the time the late Government were in power. I will quote figures, and class the interjection of the hon. member in the light of the accuracy of that specific statement. We have to bear this fact in mind—that this Government increased the rate in a time of depression, although it has called upon those men to give service to the community; but an overwhelming majority of them are prepared to give service to the community. It must be also remembered that periodically the Government give one extra day a week to intermittent relief workers to enable extra conditions to be

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obtained. Surely that shows that there is some appreciation of the position by the Government, and that an earnest attempt is being made to give to the workers a maximum advance, in contradistinction to the callousness displayed by those in power prior to the advent of this Government!

While we are making that point—and it should be made—it is worth while showing what the Government are doing for the unemployed as compared with what Labour Governments in other States of Australia are doing. That is a fair test. The argument the Opposition are attempting to make is that, if they were in power, they would give a greater measure of relief and a smaller tax. Labour claims to be one party in Australia, although I know that it is smashed to smithereens at the present time.

Let me quote the rates. Is there any reason to believe that Labour in this State, which never did anything for unemployment, will be different from other Labour Governments in Australia? For the information of hon. members, let me quote the amount of relief given in the various States.

The rates for a man, wife, and one child are—

	s.	d.
Victoria	10	0
New South Wales	14	8
South Australia	12	4
Queensland—		
Rations	18	0
Intermittent work	21	6

The rates for a man, wife, and three children are—

	s.	d.
Victoria	13	0
New South Wales	19	7½
South Australia	17	4
Queensland—		
Rations	25	0
Intermittent work	27	0

The rates for a man, wife, and six children are—

	s.	d.
Victoria	17	6
New South Wales	27	8½
South Australia	24	10
Queensland—		
Rations	35	6
Intermittent work	38	0

The rates for a man, wife, and eight children are—

	s.	d.
Victoria	20	6
New South Wales	27	8½

Mr. BULCOCK: To which must be added childhood endowment.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Not at all. (Interjections.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY:

	s.	d.
South Australia	29	10
Queensland—		
Rations	42	6
Intermittent work	44	0

If there could be any more complete exposure of the hollowness of the arguments advanced by hon. members opposite, then I should like to find it. I repeat that no attempt was made to handle unemployment

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in any form before the present Government took office.

Mr. BRUCE: It didn't exist. (Government laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I do not desire to quote the figures quoted by my predecessor in office, but hon. members will remember that they numbered many thousands.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: We will give you the figures up to date on the same basis, if you like.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The Labour Government were troubled with unemployment, but they ran away from the trouble, and did nothing to ease the plight of many people. Now hon. members who supported the Labour Government and who are sitting on the benches opposite are trying to belittle a genuine attempt to overcome the position. They would allegedly do more than we are doing; but the absurdity of their argument is shown by the fact that Labour Governments in other States undergoing a similar crisis are not doing as much as we are doing in Queensland. Summing up the position, I would emphasise that although the purchasing power of money is greater to-day than when the scheme was inaugurated, the rate payable under the scheme has not been lowered, but, on the other hand, has been increased.

Coming now to the question of collection and a review of the work which has been done, we are frequently told that this money is all spent in Brisbane.

Mr. BULCOCK: So it is.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Not at all.

Mr. O'KEEFE: Generally speaking, it is.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: That is incorrect, as the following official figures will disclose:—

	Expenditure under Relief Scheme.	No. of Unemployed.	Percentage of Unemployed.
Metropolitan Area	£270,000	12,000	60
Country	400,000	9,000	40

Mr. BULCOCK: Are all sources other than Brisbane deemed to be country sources?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: If the hon. member can understand plain English, he will realise that £270,000 was spent in the metropolitan area and £400,000 outside the metropolitan area. (Opposition dissent.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BULCOCK: Does that include Rockhampton, Toowoomba, etc.?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Is Rockhampton in the metropolitan area? (Opposition dissent.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I must insist on hon. members obeying my call to order. A continuous fire of interjections makes it quite impossible for the debate to be carried on in the orderly manner in which it

should be carried on. I ask hon. members to restrain themselves.

**THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY:** Let me repeat those figures.

**Mr. BULLOCK:** Repeat them honestly.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order!

**THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY:** I resent the hon. member for Barcoo saying that I have quoted the figures dishonestly. These figures—which are taken from the official records audited by the Auditor-General—have been supplied to me by the Under Secretary of my department; and they disclose quite definitely that the expenditure in the metropolitan area was £270,000 as against an expenditure of £400,000 in the country; that is, outside the metropolitan area, although the figures also show that the percentage of unemployment was 60 per cent. in Brisbane compared with 40 per cent. in the country.

Those are the official figures, and the hon. member can read them for himself. Those figures completely answer the allegation that we have spent all the money in the metropolitan area. The actual fact is that the percentage of unemployment is greater in the metropolitan area, and we have been drawing men from the metropolitan area and sending them to the country districts.

**Mr. RYAN:** What about Townsville?

**THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY:** I will give the Townsville figures presently.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! I must ask the hon. gentleman to address the chair and not take notice of interjections in the way he is doing. If he addresses his remarks to the chair, he will probably find that he will get on very much better. I must insist on a cessation of these continual interjections.

**THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY:** Having given the figures as to how the money has been spent, it is necessary to say on what work it has been expended. I regret that at times it is necessary to do some work which is not purely economical. Everyone knows that the aim must be to get the maximum amount of value—reproductive value and economic value—for any money that is spent; and I claim that that has been done. I propose to quote the definite work that has been done. It must be borne in mind that we have not built up any new organisation. All relief work has been done through the existing departments. This is a summary of the work done under the various departments:—

The Main Roads Commission has constructed—467 miles of road to main roads standards, including some hundreds of culverts and bridges; seven aeroplane landing grounds have been cleared and prepared; six large drainage schemes have been completed, particularly the main drain at Rockhampton; numerous parks and reserves have been improved; and 130 acres have been cleared and ploughed for the tobacco farms at Mareeba.

The Public Estates Improvement Branch has constructed 197 miles of access roads in the Upper Burnett and Callide Valley land settlement areas (214 sections taken up); 200 inverts and culverts; a bridge across Prospect Creek and a bridge over the Nogoa River; 58 acres of scrub have been felled at Biloela; 2½ miles of access roads have been

constructed at Upper Tallebudgera; the Cootharaba Lake channel has been deepened; and other minor works have been carried out.

The Department of Public Works has improved over 100 school grounds, including excavation, grading, making of roadways, preparing of basket ball courts, tennis courts, sports grounds, playgrounds, cricket pitches, football grounds, the filling in of unsightly holes and gullies, and generally giving every facility for marshalling the children and teaching them how to play.

All these improvements have been of distinct benefit; and I ask any member to say whether it is a waste of money to provide for the future citizens of this State by making playing areas in which they will learn to play the game of life, and to make this State the great State it will become. If that is a waste of money, well I plead guilty to the charge.

I ask the hon. member for Buranda whether we have not effected improvements to the schools in his electorate. Of course we have. That is one aspect of the matter. But we have not confined our activities in one direction. It is open to hon. members and the country to criticise the expenditure of the money, and to say whether they think we are spending it wisely or not.

Then take the Forestry Department.

In eleven districts of the State, ranging from E-cham in the north to Staithorpe in the south, from Fraser Island in the east to Inglewood in the west, no less than 828 acres have been planted with 562,000 soft-wood seedlings; 1,194 acres of forest plantations were tended and cleaned; 20,495 acres of natural forests were improved; 147 miles of fire lines were constructed and maintained; 5 miles of fences were erected; 6 miles of road were constructed in forest areas; 513 acres of scrub were felled for plantation purposes; and 130 acres of maize were planted as cover crops for seedlings, and 1,161,000 seedlings were raised and tended in nurseries. I ask if that money has been wasted.

In conjunction with the local authorities, we have done work throughout the State under this scheme. Practically every hon. member has had some work constructed by his local authority. I ask hon. members opposite if the local authorities in their electorates have wasted the money. If so, I cannot be held responsible; but I say definitely that they have not wasted the money. The work has been approved of by the Commissioner of Main Roads; and it has been economically done, and has been of tremendous value to the local authorities of the State. And I would point out that there is no interest charge to operate as a boomerang at a later date.

I now come to the Brisbane City Council. The department is criticised, through the City Council, on the ground that the work that is being done is not reproductive. We are desirous of carrying out reproductive work, but the trouble has been, and is still, that the local authorities cannot provide their portion of the material from their finances. That is the one big trouble. The local authorities could do much more permanent work if they had more resources with which to buy material. In view of that position, one should realise that the local authorities are circumscribed; particularly when we

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bear in mind that the Brisbane City Council has to provide work for 5,000 extra men. I ask any hon. member, whether he be connected with a private organisation or not, if he could easily absorb an additional 5,000 men. Under the circumstances a great deal of work has been done by the Brisbane City Council, as will be seen from the following statement:—

Mileage of new streets formed and made trafficable, 53 miles; mileage of streets recon-ditioned, 176½ miles; mileage and class of drains constructed—

	Miles.	Chains.
New open-cut drains ...	9	51
Open-cut drains cleaned and graded ...	1	40
Storm-water and general sewers (pipes from 9-in. to 6-ft. diameter) ...	2	51
Sectional sewers—house drainage ...	0	19

Mileage of spade-cut water-channelling cleaned and trimmed, 260 miles.

In addition to that, the Brisbane City Council has performed the following:—

Reclamation work and flood prevention work—

(a) Clearing mangroves, etc., from 9 miles of the banks of Breakfast Creek.

(b) Included in item 3—new open cuts—approximately 5 miles were for reclamation and flood prevention. In addition to this 2 miles 34 chains of open cuts were made in mosquito infested swamps.

Foreshore work—3,840 lineal feet of new stone wall constructed; 6,000 lineal feet of old walls repaired; 1,000 cubic yards of filling placed behind walls.

Parks work—Twenty-six parks were worked on—approximately 175 acres were cleared, levelled, etc., to form sports grounds; 2 miles of roads and drives recon-ditioned, widened, etc. Extensive planting of trees, etc.; at Victoria Park an eighteen-hole golf course constructed.

Victoria Park has been converted from an eye-sore into a benefit to the community and a revenue-producer to the city and the State. To-day, in spite of all the difficulties of the Brisbane City Council and all the criticism which occurred because here and there one sees a man doing a non-productive job, we can say that something has been accomplished.

Again, the following sewerage and other work has been done:—

Sewerage—At Toowong, over an area of 66 acres, 12,545 lineal feet of sewer and house connections, also fifty-three manholes were constructed.

Any other work—including gravel and metal produced—

	cu. yds.
Gravel ...	18,173
Metal ...	19,574
Spalls ...	6,123
Overburden ...	14,000

These are things which have been accomplished to the definite and permanent improvement of the city.

That brings me to the work of the Railway Department. The application of the

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Government relief scheme to railway work generally has been extended over a large area, and it has been introduced in each division of the State, viz., Southern, Central, and Northern. The principal work undertaken in the metropolitan area was an improvement at Roma Street, where

(a) A large section of the market shed and portion of the southern and western goods shed were dismantled, and the buildings were re-erected in the north yard, with consequential alterations to sidings and construction of additional siding accommodation; and

(b) The hill between the southern and western shed and main line was also excavated and material utilised for filling-up purposes.

The largest number of relief workers employed on this work at one time was 110. This will all make for the more economical handling of traffic.

In addition to that, from the Unemployment Relief Tax fund we have completed the work on the North Coast line of re-grading the section between here and Gympie; and last Thursday the first train went over the new line, conveying 510 tons of freight, compared with the previous best load of 370 tons. It is purely a matter of mathematical calculation to determine how long it will be before that work becomes fully productive and pays for itself. Bear in mind also that the portion of the work which we have done under this scheme represents no interest burden on the community; it has been paid for, and the benefit will be felt by the community as the years go by. In addition to that, we have constructed 20 miles 24 chains of branch lines, including all equipment, such as earthworks, formation, permanent way, bridges, etc. That work includes the extension of the line to the Goodnight Scrub which will open up that timber area, and bring extra traffic to the railway system.

The department has also relaid 6 miles 12 chains of line; and the re-grading of lines, involving also the construction of deviations, tunnelling, steel and concrete bridges, concrete culverts, etc., was carried out for 31 miles 33 chains.

Certain branch lines were recon-ditioned for a total distance of 33 miles 57 chains, which work involved the lifting, packing with sand and ashes, and respacing of sleepers. The rails on the Winton-Springvale line were removed for a distance of 9½ miles. A considerable amount of quarrying work for the purpose of obtaining stone, gravel, and sand was undertaken at various places. Other works performed consisted of the removal and re-erection of buildings; cleaning out cuttings; construction of siding accommodation; levelling and improving station yards; repairs to roadways and pathways; repairs in consequence of flood damages; drainage, excavation to improve water supplies, loading of rails, stone, and gravel; improvements to cesses; reclamation work by filling up ground, etc. Is that reproductive work, or is it not reproductive work? Does that work come within the category of "chipping grass"—an expression which is used so glibly?

Judging by the interjections of hon. members opposite, one must conclude that they object because we are doing work of

a permanent character. On the one hand, we are criticised for carrying out non-productive work; and, on the other hand, we are criticised for performing work that is productive. Those contradictory attitudes create an impossible position; but I do believe that the majority in this House and the majority in the country will admit that the Government have achieved quite a lot of reproductive and developmental work. In addition, many men have been financed from the fund to enable them to prospect for gold all over the State. Is that non-productive work?

Mr. BRUCE: That was done by the Labour Government.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Not to the same extent. If we had to depend upon the consolidated revenue, then the work could not be done to the same extent at the present time.

Mr. COOPER: Does not the taxation secured under this law amount to revenue?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: It is not credited to the consolidated revenue. It is entirely different from the revenue obtained from income taxation and other forms of taxation. In the latter case the revenue is utilised for the maintenance of the ordinary services of the State; but the taxation secured for unemployment relief purposes is earmarked for a specific purpose. The tax is levied upon those who have, with a view to providing a fund to assist those who have not for the time being. The money is returned to circulation, and is not lost to the community. It also aids in the adjustment of incomes during a time of abnormal depression. This is probably one of the most drastic steps towards socialism that this Government will ever take. I am sure that hon. members will appreciate the difference between the ordinary revenue for the maintenance of the services of the State and the revenue derived for the specific purpose of alleviating unemployment.

I have not given the whole of the ramifications of the department. With the aid of the fund, we have been able to co-ordinate the social organisations of the community. The Social Service League is doing a considerable amount of good work.

Mr. BRUCE: The Government will not assist it.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The Government have assisted the league by making available from the fund a sum of £5,000, and we have been able to give work to a number of girls and to pay them to provide a service for the unemployed.

Mr. HYNES: What number?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Up to date, work has been given to 120 girls a week; but it is now proposed to extend this system to other centres as and when it becomes necessary.

Mr. HANLON: The girls receive work one day a month.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: No—one day a week in the most necessitous cases. More girls will be employed as fast as we can make provision for them, and as the need becomes greater. It must not be forgotten that before this Government attempted to grapple with the unemployment question, and before the pre-

sent department was appointed by the present Government to administer it, girls were not provided for at all.

Mr. BRUCE: Of course they were.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: They were not provided for at all. They received nothing. To-day girls receive an allowance for services rendered, and other allowances are made to them. This is a drain on the funds, but it is a justifiable drain. What is more, this department of the governmental activity is being extended. Surely that is some benefit! We are not competing with industry generally, and the work is wholly and solely for the benefit of the unemployed. It must also be borne in mind that, since this department was created by the Government, we have raised the age of boys eligible to be included in the relief family from fourteen to eighteen years, while unemployed girls are included up to any age. That is a departure never attempted by any previous Government. That has been a justifiable expense under this scheme. In addition, we have adopted the principle that the single man who is the breadwinner of the family and has dependants, becomes eligible for relief on the same basis as the married man. This is another concession which was never previously thought of or considered. Those are matters of administration that were never attempted by any Government until the present Government introduced this scheme.

We have also inaugurated a system of farm training at Riverview for boys in order to equip them for going on the land. That is another charge on the fund; but it is a justifiable one. The Government have been compelled to make experiments in every direction possible. Hon. members must bear in mind that, when this scheme was created, there was no precedent to follow; and every move made was more or less experimental before a larger scheme could be embarked upon. This training scheme for boys is intended to equip them with the fundamentals of farming to enable them to go on the land and be of some value to farmers. If it is successful, and if the response both from the farmers and boys warrants it, there will be a further expansion of the scheme not only in the metropolitan area but in other parts of the State. To-day we are forced to make experiments at the nearest point of contact, and where facilities can be afforded at the cheapest possible rates. Portion of the fund is being expended in that direction. Every person knows that the boy problem is a most acute one, and our endeavour in this crisis is to give some measure of relief. On 12th October another experiment will be embarked upon. Under this scheme 1,000 boys throughout the State will be given a vocational training in part. That will be a further charge on the fund.

Mr. FOLEY: What are the boys going to do when they get the training?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: That is the problem; but the point to be borne in mind is that a general crisis exists all over the world, and that these problems cannot be solved by a wave of the hand. If the man can be discovered who is able to solve them, then he should be enshrined.

Mr. KIRWAN: You were returned to solve them in six months.

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The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: At least there has been an earnest and honest effort to tackle a problem, the magnitude of which was never known before. We have attempted to deal with the problem in a more comprehensive manner than has been attempted in any other State. Of course, if the world's markets improved by 50 per cent., it would go a long way towards solving our problems; but I have never claimed at any stage that the scheme which we have put forward is a solution of unemployment. We do, however, aim to provide a scheme under which that section of the community which is affected will be able to maintain its self-respect and morale. Hon. members will realise that, if boys are given the opportunity of acquiring a vocational training, their minds will be directed along channels that make for improvement. We shall endeavour to establish an unemployment bureau in connection with this part of the scheme, and will undertake systematic canvassing for employment for these boys in the country. Whilst engaged on that work the boys are taken from the harmful influences of inactivity, and their minds will be occupied. It is an infinitely better proposal than has ever been attempted previously, and if it is only partially successful it will have done some good. That work will mean a charge on this fund, and if the scheme is extended it will mean a further charge on the fund. I ask the critics of the Government and the critics of the scheme can it be truthfully said that money is wasted when spent in that direction?

Coming now to the question of land settlement, hon. members will have read the controversy which has taken place lately as to the merits and demerits of land settlement under certain circumstances. I want to make the position quite clear. Whilst the Government do not close their eyes to the possibilities of land settlement as a help in absorbing a portion of the unemployed, they object to the promiscuous putting of men on 5 acres of land, irrespective of the quality of the land, of the markets available, and of the prospects of success. The Government do not propose to go on with any such foolish scheme.

Mr. MULLAN: Nobody ever suggested that.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The proposal put to me was to put men on 5 acres of land on which they would be at least 60 per cent. self-supporting. But who is to provide the remaining 40 per cent.? The history of soldier settlement is very fresh in our minds; and we know of one instance where £850,000 was placed on the Estimates of an Australian State to provide for farmers settled on properties insufficient to yield a reasonable living. Regardless of all these things, we have people still contending that land settlement on small areas is a solution of the problem. We do not say that land settlement does not offer a future. Wherever a man can get land of sufficient area to make his prospects of success likely, the department will investigate his case and assist him by way of intermittent relief work rates or rations, if he is eligible for them. But we must first insist that the man has a reasonable chance of success, having regard to all factors to be considered, including the nature of the soil, etc. Surely hon. members opposite do not

expect us to rush in and waste money on unsatisfactory proposals!

The Government have not a big quantity of land available around Brisbane; and just imagine settling people around Brisbane on land which mostly consists of schist, and where there would be very little prospect of success! How could people live on that land without irrigation? What we are doing is to put people on land where there is a possibility of success. We recognise that most of our good land has been alienated under one tenure or another. It would be too costly to resume that land; and we are endeavouring to evolve a system whereby we can settle suitable persons under suitable conditions on areas which the present owners are unable to use to the full extent. In these instances, if careful investigation shows it to be desirable, assistance will be given by the Government to bring the land under greater production. Hon. members will realise that, if we can succeed in utilising alienated land to the full extent, particularly under the control of expert farmers, that land will be permanently settled. Along those lines we think there is a prospect of success; and, as soon as this Bill is passed, we intend to proceed in that direction as rapidly as possible. Already we have carried out a number of experiments along those lines, and the experiments justify an extension of the scheme. Generally speaking, we intend to co-operate with the Department of Agriculture and the Agricultural Bank to see that no wild-cat schemes are undertaken. The moment such a scheme is announced, it will be found that quite a number of people have land to sell to the Government which may not be suitable for the purpose. The owners may claim that it is suitable; but, when inspected by impartial officers, it may be found to be a horse of a different colour. We intend to utilise the officers of the Department of Agriculture and the Agricultural Bank, and largely on them will depend the amount of assistance that will be given. If we can get the co-operation of the farmers, much could be done along these lines. In addition, it is proposed to utilise some of the lands that have fallen back into the hands of the Agricultural Bank. These proposals will be put in hand as soon as this Bill is passed; and that is one of the reasons why we must have the power, which was denied to us previously—to grant loans to private individuals. It is necessary to have that power, which is provided in this Bill with ample safeguards. I remember well the argument which took place when this proposal was originally suggested. All sorts of fears were suggested, which I realise could happen, but which, under reasonable administration, will not happen. I emphasise this: If we could not utilise money in some such way we would be forced back upon unprofitable work. Because we would not have profitable work to do. It is not an easy thing to find profitable work for 12,000 people scattered all over the State. It is argued in some directions that some individual may get a benefit.

The fact remains that the money so used will be for the relief of unemployment, and if, by careful safeguards, we can increase the productivity of the State, generally increase the wealth of the community, and ultimately banish unemployment by the utilisation of these funds, even although some benefit may go to a private individual, I think we are justified in doing it. That aspect would be amply

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safeguarded by the officers of the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Public Lands, and the Agricultural Bank. Nothing will be done without their recommendation. There will be no political patronage, as hon. members opposite suggest. These schemes will be examined and recommended to the Governor in Council on their merits. The undertakings selected will be those which will employ the most men and be instrumental in producing the greatest amount of wealth for the State. There is very little difference between this proposal and the system of helping a man who goes prospecting, and who, if he finds a show, sells to a company. The individual, in the case of a mining show, would get some wealth, but the State would get benefit indirectly—the man would get the value of his wages. I see very little difference between the two cases.

I am not going to lay myself open to any charge of political patronage. There will be no recommendations made by me to the Governor in Council which do not bear the recommendations of the expert officers who investigate the matter. I am not going to leave behind me in the department any records which will be likely to give anybody—no matter who follows me—any grounds for saying that there was political patronage in connection with my administration. I would not be foolish enough to leave myself open to such a charge. What would the Government have to gain if they gave two or three people political patronage? It would be more likely to unmake than to make the Government. I hope hon. members opposite will not impute motives of that kind, and that they will realise that, in order to get the most value for the State for this expenditure, we must have the additional powers we ask for amply safeguarded. I do not think it is fair to use criticism about non-productive work on the one hand, and, on the other, to prevent our doing work which will be productive. I hope the proposal will be accepted in the spirit in which it is made. It is intended to give men the maximum amount of work and to get the maximum amount of benefit for the community as a whole.

I could go on at considerable length giving more details of the scheme, but those are, briefly, the outlines of the proposal. The administration under this scheme will be carried out as efficiently as the general administration of the Department of Labour and Industry. I believe that, with these extra powers, we shall be able to do far more good to the community. We shall take up vigorously the matter of land settlement in connection with the unemployed. If possible, we shall clear more land where it is available, exactly as we did at Mareeba. Our critics having mentioned the matter, I repeat that the tobacco industry was established at Mareeba under the relief scheme.

MR. W. FORBES SMITH: As a matter of fact, the initial experiments at Mareeba were carried out three years before you came into office.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: You can grow tobacco on a scientific plot and produce a beautiful plant, but the undertaking has then to be placed on a commercial basis. If we had not acted quickly, there would have been no crop last year. The necessary impetus to the tobacco industry has been given by the work of the

twenty-five farmers who were established under the relief scheme on plots of land at Mareeba. They have done well, and that has been a propelling force and has given an impetus to tobacco-growing in the State; so that we have not been unmindful of the necessity for doing productive work. These are the lines on which we shall operate in the future as far as practicable. In order to give one or two concrete cases of assistance to men going on the land, let me quote the following instances of share-farming agreements. In the case of one man—a dairy farmer—we provided him and his family with railway passes to Gunnepwin, near Injune, out of the fund, the money to be repaid by monthly instalments. That was a very easy method of assisting that man. In another case we sent a man into the Esk district, and supplied him with rail fare and materials for a shack, which was all he wanted. So that, if hon. members want concrete cases of assistance we can give them. A man who is going to one area is being supplied with the material for building a shack. I do not believe that in the early stages of settlement men should sink all their money into a home. They ought to put it into the land; and we are providing that man with the amount he would receive in intermittent work for a period of six months, and at the end of that period we shall review the case in the light of progress reports.

MR. WIENHOLT: That is not his own land?

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: It is not his own land; but he has a lease for a period of years; and, when he gets on his feet, he may be able to make other arrangements. In the metropolitan area there has been an arrangement to allow a man to get upon a piece of good land free of rent for a year, and at the end of that period for 10s. a week for three years, with, I think, the right to purchase it if he so desires. The department has endeavoured to meet that man by giving him the amount he would receive were he working under the relief scheme, and that is all he wants. In that way we are helping wherever we get the opportunity; and, if the man himself is prepared to rough it to some extent and to use his initiative and make an effort to establish himself on the land, we are prepared to help him, because thereby we get an asset for the State. We do not want a man to be assisted too much in the first two or three years of early settlement, so that he, perhaps, gets an advance of £600, and at the end of that time it is all gone. I am sure hon. members will realise that it is most difficult to lay down hard and fast lines of policy; but these are typical cases, and I believe that they illustrate a justifiable way of spending money from this fund.

I could deal with quite a number of other things, but I think I have given a fairly comprehensive review of our operations in the past and the lines we propose to follow in the future.

There is only one other point I desire to mention, and that is the question of single men.

MR. HYNES: It is an important point.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: No one knows that more than I do. It has to be remembered that in that connection we are only carrying out the

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same policy as the late Government. There has been no alteration, except that under the late Administration single men used to get so many pounds of flour and other goods; but we give them an order with which they can buy goods of their own choosing to the amount of that order. That is a distinct advantage. In addition, we have been absorbing as many single men as we possibly could in relief work; and we aim all the time at spending as much of the fund in that way as is humanly possible.

The hon. member for Mundingburra said that we had done nothing at Townsville.

Mr. DASH: I did not say that the Government had done nothing.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The inference was that we had done very little.

Mr. DASH: That is so.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Since the inception of the relief scheme, 470 married men and 166 single men have been drawn from Townsville for relief work. At the present time there are 190 men engaged under the intermittent relief scheme in Townsville. On 25th August, twenty-five additional single men were selected for six weeks' work at Mount Spec, and, commencing from Monday next, forty men will be selected and granted three days' intermittent work at Mount Spec. We are endeavouring to spread the fund over the greatest number of men possible.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: Do the figures include the men employed in connection with the Commonwealth grant?

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: No. None of the figures I have quoted have anything to do with the Commonwealth grant.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: The hon. gentleman included those employed in connection with the Commonwealth grant when replying to a question in this House the other day.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: They are not included in the figures I have quoted to-day. The following amounts have been made available for relief work in the Townsville and surrounding districts through the departments named—

	£
Commissioner of Main Roads ...	17,000
Local authorities ... ..	2,658
Railway Department ... ..	3,850

Since the inception of the intermittent relief scheme last May, over £4,000 has been paid for intermittent work alone in these districts. Those figures do not bear out the contention by the hon. member for Mundingburra that the Government have done nothing in Townsville.

The hon. member for Townsville stated that, when the Labour Government were in power, the single men were in employment. I propose to give the figures relating to that aspect of the matter. The Opposition realise that I am somewhat thorough on these questions, and that I do not allow their statements to go unchallenged. Hon. members opposite have referred to the number of travellers walking the State in search of work or rations. The official figures of the number of travellers who drew rations, taken from annual reports, are—

1925-26 ... ..	53,462
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[*Hon. H. E. Sizer.*]

Mr. POLLOCK: Fifty-three thousand different men?

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The figure represents the number of travellers' rations issued.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Ah!

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: These figures have been taken from the annual reports of the Director of Labour.

The inference to be drawn from the hon. member's remarks was that there was no one at that time drawing travellers' rations, and that they were all working. The figures which I have to give this House in reply to that statement are very illuminating, and I know why I have disturbed hon. members. The figures for the following years are—

1926-27 ... ..	90,527
1927-28 ... ..	40,558
1928-29 ... ..	64,244
1929-30 ... ..	76,834

Therefore, even with all this depression, and with all the talk from hon. members opposite, the figures for the 1929-30 period, for which this Government is only partially responsible, must be increased by 14,000 to reach the figures of the late Government in 1926-27. These figures are available to hon. members, and are taken from the annual reports which are printed, presented to this House, and circulated to hon. members.

Mr. HYNES: That does not apply to the number of individuals but to the number of "hand-outs."

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: It does not make any difference. The hon. member for Townsville can compare the figures in any manner he chooses. If we use his own language, there could be no "hand-outs" if there were no persons to hand out the rations to. That completely destroys the argument that no one drew travellers' rations when the late Government were in office. I repeat that the policy carried out now is the same policy that the hon. member's party administered, except that we have liberalised it to a point, and, if it is humanly possible, we will liberalise it further.

Hon. members must bear in mind that this Bill is necessary to enable the Government to help the unemployed. If hon. members opposite vote against the Bill, then they do not want us to give work to such people. The position very clearly is that on a falling income—estimated next year at only £90,000 on a 3d. in the £1 tax—we shall not be able to do those things during this depression that we would like to do. I am asking in this Bill for the minimum amount of increase in the unemployment relief tax that is necessary to enable us to give to the unemployed what we are giving—if possible something more—and to extend our operations in other directions. The Government cannot do that unless this Bill is passed. The question for the Opposition is: Do they want those operations extended; or do they want us to close down all relief works and go back to the issue of rations? If this Bill is not passed, we must close down relief works, as we shall not be able to finance them. Therefore, when a vote is taken, we shall see whether the work is to be continued and

in a more generous manner if circumstances permit.

I have given a fair review of the position. I am sorry if I have wearied the House; but, as the Government have spent hundreds of thousands of pounds of public money, the public and Parliament are entitled to know how that money has been spent, and how the Government propose to expend the extra levy that is to be imposed under this Bill. That is my justification for speaking at such length. In considering this question, if hon. members have any concrete proposals to improve this scheme, financially or otherwise, the Government will be glad to hear and accept them; but, without this increased tax, we cannot cater for the unemployed. I beg to move—

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

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) [4.4]: I listened very carefully to the speech of the Secretary for Labour and Industry. I desired to hear from him some justification of the principles contained in this Bill. Very little was said by the hon. gentleman about it. It is noteworthy that the report of his department dealing with the operations under the Act for the financial year ended 30th June last is not available to Parliament. It is three months late. That report should have been available to Parliament before this Bill was introduced. A great part of the Minister's speech was taken up with a retrospect of the operations of the department since the Acts were passed last year. To some extent the hon. gentleman has anticipated the report of the department. He gave what were probably carefully selected portions of that report, and then concluded by moving and carrying a vote of confidence in his administration and that of the department.

In dealing with a Bill of this kind I want to protest against the lack of information that is given to Parliament. Yesterday the Minister secured the suspension of the Standing Orders in order that this Bill should be carried through all its stages without the procedure laid down in the Standing Orders. The Government must have known for several weeks past what their policy was in regard to the amendment of the Income (Unemployment Relief) Tax Acts. They must have made up their minds in the matter, and I contend that before Parliament was asked to deal with the amendment of those Acts it should have been furnished with a departmental report of the operations of this law for the past financial year. By that means hon. members would have been enabled to determine whether or not this Bill is justified in the light of the facts.

In addition to that, the throwing down of lengthy taxation resolutions without previous consideration of those resolutions is treating Parliament in an arbitrary, contemptuous fashion, and to a large extent is destroying the prestige of Parliament. If there is one thing that justifies parliamentary government it is the control of finance and taxation. The whole history of the fight for representative government is based on the desire of the people to wrest from the Crown and from arbitrary authority the control of taxation. The supremacy of Parliament dates from the time that Parliament asserted that the representatives of the people,

and they only, should control taxation. But the Government, who came into office on a plea that they intended to restore confidence and to re-establish parliamentary institutions, introduce a Bill of this kind, throw it on the table of the House, and use their majority to pass it through all its stages without proper debate and consideration by hon. members, and without the public outside—and they are affected by these things—having the ordinary opportunity of making representations on the matter.

This Bill perpetuates some very vicious principles, the first of which is an unjust taxation policy. We know, although the people did not know at the last election, that the policy of the present Government is to lift the taxation from the shoulders of the wealthy sections of the community and spread it over all sections of the community. (Government dissent.) That is proved by the record of the Government. The number of taxpayers for income tax purposes has been considerably increased. The Government have reduced the exemption previously granted to persons in receipt of small incomes; and under this Bill they perpetuate a policy that is contrary to every sound canon of taxation, as will be admitted by anyone with even an elementary knowledge of economics.

A sound basis of taxation has always been considered to be the capacity of the individual to pay. The real test of any proposal is not so much what the individual pays in tax, but how much he has to live upon after he has paid the tax. That is the real test, and that is the method whereby an equitable system can be established. But under this Bill everyone is taxed without regard to his income at all. The washer-woman who does half a day's work and gets 5s. for it pays the same percentage tax as the individual on £5,000 a year. The whole principle is unsound. It is unjust in its incidence in every respect; and the Government have prevented this Parliament from carrying amendments since the inception of the principal Act was devised, with a view to relieving the burden from the shoulders of the people who are least able to bear it. The scheme, on the basis of taxation, establishes and lays down definitely a vicious system of taxation by the Tory Party, and indicates clearly their intention and desire to lower the effective wage and the purchasing power of those who work for wages. Imagine the idea of taxing a person on £2 a week on the same percentage basis as a man receiving £10 a week! The thing cannot be sustained in any logical argument. The Minister very definitely evaded that question in the course of his review of the administration of his department.

There is another phase of the Bill to which I am opposed, and that is the method of determining the value of the work done. The Minister argued in the course of his speech—he gave a number of figures in an endeavour to sustain his argument—that they had given employment to thousands of people who otherwise would not have done any work. The real test of those figures is: First of all, how many of them were normally unemployed; and, secondly, how many of them were the creation of the present Government? We know that the Government dismissed men from the public works of the State, and later on had those

works completed under the unemployment relief scheme. The deviation on the North Coast Railway was commenced on the recommendation of the Commissioner for Railways. That was a necessary work, having regard particularly to the condition of that line during the wet season. The men on that work were employed under the railway award, the lowest average rate under which at that time was £4 17s. per week. The Government that hands itself bouquets and passes votes of confidence in itself dismissed all the men on those works, and later commenced the works again as relief works. In other words, the public works of the State are being carried out under the guise of unemployment relief work; and that is one of the bases for criticism of the Bill. So far from these men being engaged in unemployment relief work, they are being taken advantage of under the scheme. The Government take up the attitude that unemployment is rife.

They know the economic circumstances of an unemployed man. Particularly do they understand it in the case of a married man with his dependants, and the consequences following on the dismissal of men from public works. They say to them, "We have work for you on this railway line, for which we propose to pay you at the rate of £3 per week—10s. a day in the case of married men and 8s. a day in the case of single men. That is less than the measure of value for that work as laid down by the Industrial Court, but we are going to disregard that, and, unless you accept this form of employment, you and your wives and families will be left destitute and get no assistance whatever from the State. (Government dissent.) In other words, they take advantage of the economic distress of the working people of this State to force them to accept employment under conditions which at normal times men would resent as an insult.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL interjected.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: The Attorney-General may interject as he likes, but he cannot get away from the logic of the case I am stating. I am stating my own case, and not making a speech prepared for me by an officer of the department, as the hon. gentleman did last night.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: When you lose your temper you behave like a maniac.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: The elegance of the Attorney-General, Mr. Speaker, fills me with admiration.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You are not a man's bootlace.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: The hon. gentleman refers to people as maniacs, and to me as not being a man's bootlace. The Attorney-General, by virtue of his training and experience, should have the capacity to state his case in a much better way than he is doing; but I intend to proceed with my speech. I am putting my case, and will not be deterred by interjections either from the Attorney-General or the Secretary for Labour and Industry. They do not like these unpalatable facts. I do not like to have to state them; but it is my duty as the Leader of the Labour Party to call attention to the truth, no matter how unpalatable it may be to the Attorney-General or any other hon. member opposite.

[*Mr. Smith.*

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: If you say I had my speech prepared for me, you are telling a deliberate lie.

Mr. KIRWAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Is the Attorney-General in order in saying that the Leader of the Opposition is telling a deliberate lie?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I repeat it. If he says I had my speech prepared for me, he is lying.

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

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I withdraw, Mr. Speaker, but, speaking to a point of order, I ask that the Leader of the Opposition be asked to withdraw his statement that I had my speech prepared for me. It is untrue. He has no ground for saying it, and it is a lie.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition must withdraw the statement to which the Attorney-General takes exception.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: I would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that the Attorney-General says I am telling a lie, after he has withdrawn the statement.

Mr. KERR: Withdraw first.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the Attorney-General accept the denial of the Leader of the Opposition?

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: The Attorney-General has just repeated his statement that I am lying.

Mr. SPEAKER: I ask the Attorney-General to accept the withdrawal of the Leader of the Opposition.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I am prepared to accept his withdrawal.

Mr. SPEAKER: I now ask the Attorney-General to withdraw the last statement he made.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: If it was a withdrawal by the hon. member, I accept it.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: It is rather a pity that Ministers do not remember the dignified positions they occupy. They should endeavour to behave like gentlemen.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Look at the language you have used to me!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: I accept the Attorney-General's denial. It is a pity that the Minister suffers from the failing of Narcissus, who, if I remember rightly, fell in love with his reflection in a pool. I repeat that the system of dismissing men from the public works of the State and re-engaging them on the basis of relief rates of wages is taking advantage of their economic circumstances, and it intensifies and aggravates the problem of unemployment. The real value of the scheme, on the basis of the figures which have been quoted, would be determined by the number of men engaged on work which otherwise would not be undertaken, and the number of men on work which would ordinarily be the public works of the State or local authorities; and I repeat that the tendency of such a policy is to depress the general wage level. If this policy of the Government continues indefinitely and it is extended in a number of the directions that have been suggested in various quarters, it is obvious that it will have a depressing

effect on the wage level. It will have the result of forcing down the basic wage to the level of the relief work wage. Indeed, it has had an effect in that direction already. In many directions the Government have suspended industrial awards. The men engaged in the occupations affected are being paid considerably less than the measure of the value of their work as was the case under awards previously; and it is obvious that the creation of a large army of unemployed engaged in only casual work in which advantage is taken of their economic position has the effect of fixing the wage, not on the basis of what is just and equitable, but on the basis of what starving men with dependants are compelled to accept. That is the objection I have to a measure of this kind—an objection which will be found to have greater force as time goes on. I repeat also that Parliament has not been supplied with information which should have been made available in official reports, which are not before us, covering the operations under the Act during the past year.

The Minister has been asked on quite a number of occasions to give information bearing on the state of this fund and its administration; and he has always given the reply "The information will be disclosed when the department's report is made available." I claim that the report should have been available prior to the discussion of this Bill; and I maintain also that such measures should not have been brought down without giving hon. members full opportunity to debate them and consider in what respect improvements could be effected.

There is a feature of local authority work to which I wish to draw attention. Quite a lot of such work is being done under this scheme. I agree that it is desirable that essential work should be done by the expenditure of this fund. No good purpose is served by digging a hole and then filling it up again; but I argue that, where useful work is done, the men engaged on it should be paid the value of it.

There are cases on record where local authorities have intimated their willingness to pay award rates in respect of work carried out under this scheme; but the Government would not permit that to be done, thereby indicating their intention deliberately to depress the wages level. In a town of any dimensions a certain amount of civic work is performed every year, having regard to the capacity of the local authority to raise the means and to provide the improvements within the area. Under normal conditions local authority expenditure provides useful employment for a considerable number of people in this State. It would be interesting to know the number of men employed by local authorities in Queensland to-day compared with the number employed three years ago. If works of a permanent nature are carried out under this scheme, providing for relief rates, then the unemployment problem in the area is intensified and aggravated. If rates of wages are reduced by from 30 per cent. to 40 per cent.—and that applies to a large number of individuals—it means that that amount of money is withdrawn from circulation in the area; and to that extent unemployment is intensified and aggravated. If the work is carried out in the area at less than its value, then it makes for an increase of unemployed, with a permanent loss to the people of the area.

The Government are unwise in carrying out a policy of this kind. There is the psychological aspect of industry that cannot be ignored. It is well known that men and women can give their best service only when they are happy in their work and feel that they are being fairly treated. If men and women are engaged upon work that is dull and sordid in character, if they are smarting under an injustice, and if they feel that they have been taken advantage of as a result of their poverty, then the output must inevitably be less, no matter what endeavour is made by inspectors and others to discipline them on the work. The Minister has stated through the press that discipline must be maintained on these jobs, and that, if any man is dismissed, rations will be withdrawn from his family. In this way the Minister hopes to obtain discipline by the old iron heel methods of the past. The best way to secure the maximum output of a labour unit is to provide fair and equitable conditions for the men employed.

**THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** What would you have done?

**MR. W. FORGAN SMITH:** I would have taken advantage of the section of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act under which a special award could be made in respect of the employment to which I have referred.

**THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** At how much per week?

**MR. W. FORGAN SMITH:** I am not in a position to say; I am not the court. The Minister can deal with that matter, if he feels so disposed. The men engaged on these works should be subject to award rates and conditions. The men engaged upon the public works of the State, whether carried out by the Government or by local authorities, should be paid the award rates provided for that kind of work. That is a perfectly sound proposition from every point of view. The award would be a special award for the purpose. The work would then be carried out under conditions that would be equitable and just and free from the moral injury inflicted on men who feel that they are suffering an injustice.

Subsidies could be granted to local authorities for those works, and the difference between the subsidy and the actual labour cost of the work could be made a charge on the local authority. If the funds were not sufficient to enable the same number of days to be worked as at present, would it not be better to have men engaged for three days under decent conditions rather than for four days under bad conditions? Under such a system the value of the work would be better reflected than is the case under the present system.

Unemployment has increased considerably since the present Government have been in power. The Minister referred to certain investigations made in 1928 by his predecessor. The Secretary for Public Instruction used those figures the other evening when he was addressing that select section of the electors that he usually prefers to address. The Commonwealth Statistician's figures relating to unemployment for the second quarter of 1929 were 7.6 per cent., while the figures for the same quarter of 1931—the latest figures available—were 16.1 per cent., or an increase during the period under review of approximately 112 per cent. That

*Mr. Smith.]*

is a remarkable increase in the amount of unemployment. I shall deal with the general question of unemployment further on in my speech, together with its causes, and the effect on this country and on other countries.

The Minister referred to the survey made by his department during the period that Mr. Gledson was Secretary for Labour and Industry. Those are the figures which were used by the hon. member for Kurilpa in this House when he obtained permission to have them inserted in "Hansard" without reading them. That review was full and comprehensive, and it dealt with all the people who were not engaged in productive employment. In many cases it adopted arbitrary methods in arriving at conclusions. The method adopted by those investigators is subject to criticism; but, in view of the fact that Government members have always accepted the basis, and have used the figures as a basis of criticism against the late Labour Government, I propose to accept that basis for the purpose of comparison. If that investigation of 1928 be accepted as a basis, then the number of wage-earning breadwinners for whom no work was available in September, 1928, was 46,146. The percentage of unemployment, as stated by the Commonwealth Statistician, was 6.8. By a simple proportion calculation the number of wage-earning breadwinners for whom no work was available at the end of June, 1931, with an unemployment percentage of 16.1, must logically approximate 109,205. That is the proportion worked out on the basis of criticism used by hon. members opposite, and which was recently used by the Secretary for Public Instruction in the course of his speech at the meeting of the Queensland Women's Electoral League. If those figures are sound and can be accepted as any criterion, obviously the proportion still operates. That is the position that obtains now.

There can be no doubt that unemployment has increased to an alarming extent. I am not blaming the Government for every form of unemployment that exists in Queensland; but everyone who has investigated the position and considered it fairly agrees that the policy of the Government has aggravated the situation and intensified the suffering very considerably. (Government dissent.) Take, for example, the number of shops and warehouses in which are displayed placards reading, "Relief orders taken here." Further, in advertisements in the newspapers men and women are in some cases offering to give their services in return for food and shelter. Many instances can be found of the type of advertisement which appeared recently in the "Telegraph" to this effect—

"Keen young business man offers £15 and services for permanent employment."

I could quote from the "Toowoomba Chronicle" and many other newspapers to a similar effect.

These are the conditions that apply at the present time; and, no matter how the Government may seek to deny it, and no matter how their press apologists may attempt to distort and suppress the facts, the position is known to the great bulk of the people of this State.

Another phase of this Bill that must present difficulties is the proposal to lend money to private individuals. There is also a proposal to enable the Minister to make a grant

[*Mr. Smith.*

to local authorities. These proposals give the Minister an interesting form of patronage in view of the forthcoming elections. The proposal to lend money to private individuals presents a greater ground for criticism than is the case where money is lent to a public authority, either governmental or municipal. The Bill proposes to give the Minister arbitrary power to lend money to private individuals without setting out in the Bill the terms and conditions under which that money shall be given. The Agricultural Bank is limited in its operations—limited to a greater extent than it has ever been before—but any loans granted under this scheme should at least have the conditions of inspection and terms of repayment attached to them that apply to applications to the Agricultural Bank, otherwise it is obvious that certain people will receive preference over others.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: They will not.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: It is obvious that the Minister cannot give every application favourable consideration. Some people must be chosen for the purpose of making advances; and this will create a position under which one person will be allowed to develop his area under a condition of loan with forced labour, whilst his neighbour who has obtained financial accommodation in the ordinary way will be called upon to pay a higher rate of wage. This differentiation between settlers will create the same difficulty that now exists in the case of public works that are carried out on relief work rates. The position was clearly stated in a leading article published in the "Daily Mail" of 21st July, 1930.

A similar clause was in the Bill last year. It was one of the Minister's pet lambs—one of the things that he cherished most dearly—but the party that support him and the public outside raised such an outcry against the proposal that it was dropped at the Committee stage. Now it is being trotted out again, and apparently Government members have agreed to accept it, realising that this form of distributing largesse to the supporters of Government members may assist them in a material respect. The quotation that I give is from the "Daily Mail" of 21st July, 1930. The article, which is headed "A False Step," contains the following:—

"It is nothing less than grotesque that men earning the basic wage, servants, and washerwomen should be taxed to provide funds to be loaned to settlers. The Government would be well advised to drop without further delay these fantastic addendums, and confine the proposal to what it was originally conceived to be—namely, a plan to provide funds for relief works to be administered by the Government, local authorities, and public bodies only."

At 4.42 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Roberts, *East Toowoomba*) relieved Mr. Speaker in the chair.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: I am satisfied that the "Daily Mail" is entirely sound in that article. The principle is correct, and it applied with equal force to the original Bill as it applies to-day. The proposition is one that should not be considered. If the Government can obtain funds for the purpose of assisting settlement, then they ought to do

it. What a ridiculous position! A Government that proposed to stabilise industry, that offered such glowing promises to the people that supported it, finds itself unable to supply sufficient funds to the Agricultural Bank, and proposes to tax the washerwoman, the newsboy, the maid servant, and the casual worker in order to obtain funds to lend to some of their political supporters.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Do you pay the tax for your washerwoman?

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: I wash myself every morning, and I do not require any aid in that direction; but if the Minister pays his accounts as regularly as I do he will not have any difficulty with those people with whom he trades.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I may send out an inspector. My information is rather interesting.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: The hon. gentleman's information may be rather interesting. He can send an inspector any time he likes, and it would be only in conformity with what the Government usually do. I may tell the Minister that he and his Treasury friends can publish my income tax papers and anything they desire. None of their paid slanderers have anything on me, and I challenge them again to go their hardest.

The TREASURER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in inferring that the Secretary for Labour and Industry and the Treasurer have paid servants who are going to find out what his taxation is? I say it is a slander, and he should be made to withdraw. I know no more about the hon. member's taxation returns than that chair, and I ask that the hon. member withdraw.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If the Leader of the Opposition made the statement which the Treasurer says he did, then I must ask him to withdraw.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: The Secretary for Labour and Industry suggested that he would send an inspector to my private home to investigate my affairs. I said that he might do so if he liked, just as the Treasurer has power under a regulation that he himself caused to be gazetted to examine my income tax papers.

The TREASURER: The hon. member used the term "paid slanderers," and I want that withdrawn.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If the Leader of the Opposition used the words "paid slanderers" I hope he will withdraw.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: Certainly, I will withdraw. I am sorry to have hurt the Treasurer's feelings, but there are obvious inferences to be taken from the suggestion of the Secretary for Labour and Industry. I suggest that the Ministers should allow me to proceed with my speech in my own way. So far as I am concerned, they can go their hardest.

Another phase of the Bill which I intend to criticise is the power given to the Governor in Council. Under this Bill and under the principal Act the Government take arbitrary power, not only to do the ordinary things that are right and proper under regulations, but also power to legislate. One of the Orders in Council issued by the Minister gazetted out of operation certain sections of the Act itself. Some of

the Orders in Council which have been issued under the Act have been most extraordinary in character. I realise that under conditions such as obtain at the present time rapid action is required to cope with certain problems; but it is extraordinary that we should be asked, and that Parliament should agree, to give the Minister or the Governor in Council power and authority which should only be vested in Parliament. I opposed those clauses when the original Bill was going through, and I oppose them now.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Tell me the ones you object to.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: The general power that the Government are taking to legislate without the authority of Parliament is a striking commentary on the policy of the present Government and the conditions that now obtain legislatively. The Minister in the commencement of his speech dealt generally with the problem of unemployment as such. He quoted the number of people unemployed in America, Germany, France, Great Britain, and elsewhere, and suggested that the percentage of unemployment was greater in those countries than in Queensland. I hope that is true, but that is no comfort to the unemployed. It is no comfort to the man who finds his home being taken away from him, and realises that his children have no future. If the percentages of unemployed to population were taken out for those countries, it would probably be found to be no more than the percentage in Queensland. For example, with a population of approximately 45,000,000 in Britain, 2,000,000 represents a lesser percentage of unemployment to population than the figures I have quoted from the "Year Book." Those figures do not convey to any real extent the suffering caused to the community by this menace. It is no use saying that somebody over the fence is worse off than we are. It is our job to deal with Queensland, to deal as far as we can with the citizens of this State, and to mobilise the resources of the country in the interests of the people.

What are the causes of unemployment? It is perfectly obvious that the whole system of production, distribution, and exchange has got entirely out of gear. The Government Party and their supporters have no remedy. Their economists, their writers, their apologists, they themselves, take up a Micawber-like attitude and say, "By and by we shall turn the corner and everything will be all right." Unemployment at present is obviously due to a series of defects in the organisation of society itself. Take Australia as a case in point. Nature has been kind to this country. We have every variety of climate and soil, every kind of mineral, everything necessary for human well-being and the maintenance of a high standard of living. There is in the natural resources of Australia sufficient to maintain a very large population in a standard of comfort not hitherto properly contemplated; yet, with a small population of a little over 6,000,000, we have thousands of people on a lower standard of living than is necessary to maintain a reasonable state of health; and we have also—perhaps the most lamentable spectacle of all—thousands of children leaving school and growing up with little or no future, no prospect for their manhood. These conditions are the direct

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result of our system of society, which produces lies, knavery, hate, and every manner of evil. It is this from which we are suffering. It was said that the Great War was fought to make the world safe for democracy. Every country which was engaged in the war, both victor and vanquished, is paying the cost to-day, not only in the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives on the battlefield, but also in the maimed bodies of those who were wounded, and in the poverty and distress of millions of our fellow citizens. No effort of an organised character is being made to deal with these things. The Minister talked of price levels, and of an increase in price levels being the means of salvation. The hon. member for Gregory interjected very aptly, "What if price levels do not rise? What if in some respects they fall?" We have never endeavoured to control international relations. We have never endeavoured to control the internal economy of our own country in order to stabilise price levels. I believe that it can be done to a very large extent; and I believe that, if it were done, the result would be of great advantage to the people of this Commonwealth. But a rise in price levels will not, of itself, remedy the position, because the immediate causes of our present troubles are to some extent due to the aftermath of the war—the war indebtedness absorbing as it does a very large proportion of our new wealth production. But, in addition to that, more important than that, is the fact that the capacity to produce has far outpaced solvent demand. It is not that the things that are produced are not required. No one can say that we have surplus production when some people in the community have not sufficient bread. Millions of people in the countries of the world have a standard of living lower than that which we prescribe for our stock, for the beasts on our farms. It is not a question of production beyond our requirements, but of production outpacing the solvent demand, and of consumption and demand not being organised to give to the people of this and other countries the benefits of science as applied to agriculture, of inventive genius as applied to industry. These things are bound to be intensified as time goes on, as new machinery is installed, as the mechanisation of industry goes on, displacing more and more men from the avenues of production. What is going to be done with those people who are so displaced?

At the commencement of the industrial revolution new industries were developed, new activities were entered upon, and the volume of employment extended considerably; but under present-day conditions, with the means of life held and controlled by a few individuals, production is carried on for the profit of those individuals and their friends, whilst a number of people have no future except one of despair, and no means of looking forward to better conditions while that system lasts. It is an outrage on humanity, it is a reproach to our alleged Christianity, and it is a startling commentary on our common sense that unemployment should exist to the extent that it does to-day, and that sound steps are not taken to alleviate the conditions that give rise to the evils to which I allude.

At one time it was possible for shallow thinkers to push the unemployed problem aside, and, for their own comfort, to say that it was due to defects of character, and

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that the unemployed did not want work. We hear those sentiments expressed to-day on occasion by well-to-do people; but those excuses will not do at the present time. Unemployment is coming into the homes of professional men. Men are out of work who never knew what it was to be out of a job before. Skilled mechanics and artisans—the cream of our industry—who are capable and willing to work and able to compete with similar men in other parts of the world are unable to find an employer—unable to sell their labour. It requires little thought and little investigation to prompt the question: How long is this likely to last? Every effort is being made to suppress these questionings on the part of organised society. No system of government and no form of society can continue to exist if it perpetuates and extends in a more intense form every year that aggravated form of maldistribution which is the basis of all the evil to-day. The productivity of labour was never greater. Nature has been kind and bounteous. Any amount of work waits to be done, with willing workers available to do it. Why is it that these men are not put to the work that is there to be done? Why are they not organised for the purpose? Why is society not organised along more equitable lines? These are the questions that the people are asking themselves to-day. That is a challenge to this and other Governments. It is a challenge to every political party, and it is a challenge to every thoughtful individual in the community.

Again, we have our monetary standards—standards based on conditions that disappeared years ago. Conferences have been held at which it has been decided to return to the gold standard—a decision which had the definite effect, and probably had the objective, of increasing the monetary value of gold in the interests of the bondholder and in the interests of those holding liens on production. As the value of gold increases so does the value of commodities depreciate, and the amount those people take from industry correspondingly becomes greater. I believe that to a large extent the financial institutions, entered upon a policy of deflation with a view of entrenching and further consolidating the position of those who have already leaved too much from industry. Recently the gold standard was abolished to a large extent. People proceeded to talk about gold as if it was wealth. Why, as far back as the days of Adam Smith, it was pointed out in his work "The Wealth of Nations" that gold was only a yard stick or measure of value, and that goods were the real wealth. By goods he meant wheat, wool, butter, cheese, and all those things that are the product of labour; and the currency of nations should be just sufficient to enable the productivity of the nations to provide finance where liquid assets in the form of money are required. Yet this fetish has been followed for a long time. Mankind has been martyred and crucified on a cross of gold. In whose interests? Certainly not in the interests of the unemployed. This Bill is a palliative based on the Government's policy. It carries out a scheme of inequitable taxation: it imposes the burden of taxation on people irrespective of their capacity to pay, and it also extends economic pressure in the direction of forcing down the wage standards of Queensland.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. KENNY (*Cool*) [5.3]: I listened very carefully to the academic speech just delivered by the Leader of the Opposition. He followed the Secretary for Labour and Industry, who gave a very explicit exposition of the subject we are dealing with. The Leader of the Opposition complained that the Minister said very little regarding the details of the Bill; and he also complained that the report of the Department of Labour and Industry should have been available to hon. members before this Bill was introduced. He had no cause to complain of the lack of information given by the Minister. That speech was one of the best speeches that have been delivered in this Parliament. He traced the activities of the Department of Labour and Industry from the inception of the unemployment relief scheme. He gave an explicit statement regarding the amount of money collected by way of tax for the relief of unemployment, and showed just how and where that money had been expended. Hon. members must have been struck by his statement that this money has been expended for the benefit of Queensland as a whole. The Minister gave us facts, showing that in a great many instances the unemployed had been engaged on reproductive work. In fact, he showed step by step what the policy of the Government has been in overcoming the problems of unemployment and ameliorating the conditions of those unfortunates who have been thrown out of work in consequence of this unparalleled depression.

The Minister has shown just what his policy is, and how he is prepared to alter it if it can be improved. He has shown that his objective is to deal with the unemployed position that exists to-day; and one of his aims is to establish men on the land and create productive work.

As he usually does, the Leader of the Opposition came to light with his sob stuff, and offered nothing constructive to deal with the position. The hon. gentleman dealt with the raising of price levels. May I remind the Leader of the Opposition that the Labour Government were in power for fourteen years—and the hon. gentleman occupied ministerial rank for a considerable period—yet during all that time the Labour Government took no steps to improve the price level. We know the position that met us when we came into office. The unemployed were waiting on our doorsteps. The Leader of the Opposition said that it was a startling commentary on the social system that there should be so many unemployed. He was invited by the Minister to offer some constructive proposal to overcome the difficulty, and was reminded by the Minister that any suggestion that would benefit the unemployed of Queensland would receive the utmost consideration. The hon. gentleman and other hon. members of the Opposition merely retorted, "It is your job," showing that they are not prepared to help the Government in any measures that are taken to deal with the unemployment problem. They said they would deal with it when they became the Government. I ask hon. members opposite in all sincerity if they are content to allow the unemployed to starve in the meantime.

Mr. Bow: You have the job.

Mr. KENNY: The Minister invited the Opposition to put forward any proposals that would overcome the position, and signi-

fied his willingness to accept any reasonable suggestion. But hon. members opposite are content to allow the unemployed to go on in any old way so far as they are concerned. It is merely typical of their actions when they were the Government. One remembers how tragic it was in those days to walk past the labour bureaux and see hundreds of men vainly searching for work. Hundreds of unemployed called at Parliament House asking for assistance. To-day the position is altered, although hon. members opposite have offered no help, but have contented themselves with the glib phrase, "It is your job." Surely these hon. members realize that they are paid by the people of the State to give of their best; and the unemployed working on intermittent relief work are also paying for them.

Mr. KIRWAN: The unemployed are paying for them?

Mr. KENNY: Yes; because the unemployed who are working on intermittent relief are assisting to improve the position. Whilst they are doing that the Smith-Pease combination—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! It is usual to refer to hon. members by the names of their electorate, and not by name.

Mr. KENNY: If it is offensive to hon. members, I withdraw. I refer to the combination that is contributing to the unemployed. By their own speeches they are content to allow these men to go without any assistance. They are not prepared to give the Government the benefit of their knowledge. Why cannot they make some useful suggestion? They are not paid to sit over there and say, "The job is yours." They are paid to give their best service to the State. They are devoid of all constructive ideas. During the fourteen years they were in office they had no policy, and could not remedy the position. Now they say they have a policy which they will put into operation when they get over here. I say definitely that they are afraid to face the position as it exists to-day. They are afraid to accept the opportunity of making any suggestions. I invite the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to get up after I resume my seat and give us the suggestions of the Opposition.

I regret very much the necessity for the Bill. The Secretary for Labour and Industry has explained the position very well, and he has shown that the fund is not great enough to cope with the position. We know that to-day quite a number of men who were not registered when the Labour Government were in office are registering so that they can get work. When the Labour Government were in office, they could only get rations; to-day they are registering so that they can get work and money. As I said, unemployment is on the increase, and that is the necessity for this Bill. We cannot leave these people without the means of existence; therefore it is necessary to impose this tax. I have been in touch with a number of people in employment, and they are quite satisfied that the tax should be imposed. They are satisfied, while they are lucky enough to be in work, to contribute towards a fund to provide work for those out of employment. I do not believe that taxation is a remedy for unemployment. When you increase taxation, you are only intensifying the position; but this tax does not go into the consolidated

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revenue. This tax is definitely for the relief of unemployment, and the money is spent on the relief of unemployment. It only cost 4.3 per cent. to administer the fund last year, which was a great accomplishment. I maintain that the Federal Government today are to blame for a great deal of the unemployment. The tariff policy of the Labour Party in the Federal Parliament is to blame for the unemployment.

Mr. PEASE: The Senate.

Mr. KENNY: The Senate has nothing to do with it. The Labour Government put their tariff policy into effect, and the whole development of Australia is tied up with the tariff policy, no matter who may be in power in the Federal Parliament.

Mr. BEDFORD: You talk like a child.

Mr. KENNY: The hon. member for Warrego may say I talk like a child. His is the prattle of an old man with the brains of a child.

Mr. PEASE: Get on with your speech.

Mr. KENNY: I will get on with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The hon. member said that our Government were the greediest Government in the whole history of Queensland, because they were taxing the people to find work for the unemployed. Is the remark of the hon. member not a compliment to the Government, who are trying to benefit the unemployed and to relieve them in the unfortunate position they are in? Let us look at the figures with regard to taxation in this State. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition said we were the greatest taxing State in Australia, or in the world for that matter. I would like to quote the taxation per head in this State for the last few years, these figures not including the unemployment relief tax—

		Taxation per capita.		
		£ s. d.		
1927-1928	... ..	5	10	9
1928-1929	... ..	5	1	4
1929-1930	... ..	4	12	4
1930-1931	... ..	4	10	1

It will be seen that there has been a reduction in taxation per head of population since this Government came into power. The Government recognise that taxation is not a remedy, and that to get over the present position we must relieve the people from taxation.

Mr. KIRWAN: You have had a deficit of £1,500,000 since you have been in power.

Mr. KENNY: It has been argued that an increasing number of people contributed to taxation last year. We increased the number of people contributing taxation in the State, but we also added to the list of deductions. Hon. members opposite now complain that those people who cannot bear the taxation are the ones who are bearing it.

At 5.17 p.m.,

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Mr. KENNY: I wish to deal with the person on the basic wage, which is fixed for a man, his wife, and three children. Let us take the taxation paid by a man, his wife, and three children. That man has to earn £402 per annum before he pays one penny of taxation. Any man drawing over £400 per annum is entitled to pay a tax. Where, then, is the argument of the Deputy Leader

of the Opposition that we are forcing those who cannot afford to bear it to pay the taxation? It is those who are earning over £402 per annum who are paying the taxation of the State. They are also paying the unemployment relief tax on the same basis as every other person in the country. What have hon. members opposite to complain about? I have shown that increased taxation is not the trouble in Queensland. Let us see what is the position of the Federal Labour Government. The new taxation since the Labour Party took office in the Federal sphere has been very great. From 21st November, 1929, to 10th July, 1931, the Federal Labour Government increased the taxation by £30,605,000, on a national income that has been reduced during the same period by £200,000,000. The Leader of the Opposition stated that the people have been crucified on a cross of gold. He said the production of our wealth had decreased, and I agree with him. Our wealth production has decreased by £200,000,000, yet the Federal Government have increased taxation by £30,000,000! The taxation in the Federal sphere is the cause of the trouble. I quoted figures a few weeks ago showing that it was estimated that the sales tax would this year produce £9,000,000 and the primage duty £4,500,000. That is direct taxation on every man, woman, and child in regard to everything that we eat, wear, and use.

If hon. members opposite are sincere and they wish to obtain relief for the unemployed, I ask them to send a deputation of their leader and deputy leader down to Mr. Scullin to ask him to revise the tariff policy of the Federal Government, to withdraw the sales tax, and get on with the job.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that we should not have introduced this Bill, and that we had no mandate from the people to try to relieve the position. Does he wish us to go on in the same old way without making any effort to overcome our difficulties? He said that we should have fulfilled our promise to find £2,000,000 to relieve the position. We have spent more than £2,000,000; but hon. members opposite know quite well that, so far as finding £2,000,000 of new money is concerned, no such amount of loan money is available. The Premier of New South Wales, Mr. Lang, whom the Deputy Leader of the Opposition went down to support, made a lot of promises to the people of New South Wales. Did he keep them? He attempted to do it, and he closed the savings bank of New South Wales. He said that he would not reduce wages; but his public servants had to go without their pay until Queensland and every other State in the Commonwealth came to their rescue. Hon. members opposite say that our Government are responsible for the position in Queensland. When the Labour Party took office, they said that the Upper House prevented them from doing their job. They got rid of the Upper House. Then they said that Mr. Bruce was the cause of the trouble; and now that Mr. Bruce is no longer in power they blame us. If we are reducing the standard of living, what about the Labour Governments in other States and in the Federal Parliament? Our Government have not reduced the wages of Federal public servants. Our Government have not sacked the thousands of returned soldiers who were in the employment of the Federal Government. Our Government did

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not reduce the old-age pension by a flat rate of 2s. 6d. in the £1. Our Government did not reduce invalid pensions. Our Government did not tax the tea the workers drink, the tobacco they smoke, or the clothes they wear. These reductions in the standard of living were brought about by the Federal Labour Government, who said they would not do these things; these are increases of taxation made by the Federal Labour Government. They may argue that Labour was forced to do these things. If they do argue in that way, how can they argue that our Government do what they now propose from choice? Yet no doubt hon. members opposite, as they speak on this question, will argue that Labour was forced to do the things I have enumerated, but that our Government are doing this from choice.

I realise that we owe a duty to the unemployed and to the people of this State. I admit that the Federal Labour Government had no alternative but to carry out certain things that they have done. It is no use the Opposition in this Parliament contending that we have reduced the standard of living. Every Government in Australia has had to do that, and to do many things they did not like doing. They had to attack the conditions of the people because there was no alternative. The Opposition should at least make some constructive suggestions. I am sure that the Minister will be only too pleased to adopt any suggestion of a constructive character.

The Opposition contend that the imposition of this additional tax will result in further unemployment. If that is so, then what about the position in New South Wales and other Labour-governed States? New South Wales has five times the number of unemployed that we have. The mother State provides the unemployed with rations, but does not make any work available. The argument of hon. members opposite is devoid of logic and reasoning. They cannot hold up New South Wales as an improvement upon Queensland, nor can they boast that the system of providing rations in that State instead of employment is preferable to our own. It is well known that it is costing the New South Wales Government approximately £7,000,000 per annum for the relief of the unemployed in the form of rations. It is also well known that the cost in Victoria is approximately £2,000,000, and in South Australia about £1,500,000 per annum. In New South Wales a tax for this purpose commences with 1s. in the £1, and there is a suggestion to increase the amount to 2s. and perhaps 2s. 6d. in the £1.

Mr. POLLOCK: What has that to do with the Bill?

Mr. KENNY: I am referring to the Labour policy. If the Labour policy is carried out in the Federal arena and in New South Wales, then it is only reasonable to assume that, if the Labour Party are returned to power in Queensland, a similar policy will be adopted here. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition visited New South Wales as the representative of the Queensland Labour Party to assist the return to power of the Lang Government. He returned to this House and said, "I have been doing good work in New South Wales. I put Jack Lang in." We know very well that after he came back he advocated the

Lang policy. He advocated repudiation, and so did his party.

Mr. POLLOCK: What has that to do with the Bill?

Mr. KENNY: It has quite a lot to do with the unemployed, and this Bill deals with the unemployed. If we repudiate our indebtedness, how are we to get the necessary money to relieve the situation? What is to be our position if the policy of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is adopted? How are we to obtain fresh capital to absorb the people in industry? The Opposition have admitted that they are unable to offer any constructive suggestion. They are prepared to allow the position to drift until, as they say, they reach the Treasury benches, when, as they say, they will do the job. It is only reasonable to argue that the job will be done in the same way as it has been done in New South Wales, in the Federal sphere, and in other Labour-governed States. The Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition have argued that the relief workers should be paid the basic wage. I should be very pleased to be able to go to my people and say that every man employed in Queensland was in receipt of the basic wage. It is necessary to provide the work, but we must first find the money.

When we go looking for money, we all know that we are at once referred to the Loan Council. The Loan Council controls the finances of Australia and also all borrowings. When we approach the Loan Council, we are then referred to the banking institutions. We know quite well that the Loan Council consists of the Premiers and Treasurers of the Federal and State Governments, including the Federal Labour Prime Minister, the Federal Labour Treasurer, and the Labour Premiers of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia. Hon. members opposite have freely stated that Australia is to-day being ruled by the banks, and that these institutions are the cause of all our trouble. There again they attempt to shift the responsibility from the shoulders of the representatives of the various Governments to the shoulders of the banking institutions. We have had evidence recently to show that the banks do not possess the money which hon. members opposite have alleged. We all know that a run on the bank caused the closure of the New South Wales savings bank, that two banks in Brisbane closed their doors, and that the Primary Producers Bank of Australia entirely suspended operations. Still hon. members opposite say that the banks have all the money! They know quite well that the banks are merely the custodians of the deposits of the people who lodge their money with those institutions for safe keeping. They also know that the banks, in turn, lend that money to Governments and industry. So liberally have the banks advanced moneys that they have loaned out 100 per cent. of the deposits and 5 per cent. of their reserves. Could we have any more proof of the fact that the banks do not possess the money that hon. members opposite argue they do? That is acknowledged by the Federal Labour Treasurer and the Federal Labour Party, because they have for some time past been advocating a fiduciary currency.

In trying to grapple with this problem and the financial position throughout the world

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the various Labour leaders are beginning to realise that Labour's policy cannot be given practical effect to. That is tantamount to acknowledging that Labour has no policy to solve the problem. Only recently we had the fact of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the late Labour Prime Minister in Britain, forming a National Government to overcome the economic crisis. If Labour should be unfortunate enough to recapture the Treasury benches of Queensland, we would find, when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition attempted to put into effect his policy of repudiation, that the present Leader would probably not support him.

The Minister has dealt very fully with the whole question of unemployment. He has shown what has been done, and what the policy of the Government is. According to the information he furnished, 25,000 men have been granted some form of employment. There are still a great number of works waiting to be done in North Queensland.

Mr. PEASE: Including the reconditioning of the Etheridge railway.

Mr. KENNY: I am glad the Deputy Leader of the Opposition interjects, because that reminds me that I asked him the other day if he were speaking for his party when he said that he objected to that work being done under the unemployment relief scheme, and he said he was.

Mr. PEASE: We object to it being done at starvation rates.

Mr. KENNY: I am not convinced of the sincerity of the objection of hon. members opposite to that work. I maintain that the work of reconditioning the Etheridge railway should be done; and I am asking the Minister to carry out this work, even if it must be done under the unemployment relief scheme. I shall not cease my advocacy for that work until it is an accomplished fact.

If it is not done by this Government, then I will not cease to urge it on the next Government. There is plenty to be done so far as this work is concerned. I maintain that men are better employed earning that money in the outlying portions of this State where they have an opportunity to establish themselves on the land than in being idle. This is the only comprehensive scheme that has been evolved in Australia. I do not say that the scheme is the last word in the solution of the unemployment problem; it can be improved upon. There are works in North Queensland—more particularly in my own electorate—which could be undertaken, where roads could be opened, and adjoining land selected with advantage to men who would be given a living area and established for life. That, of course, is different from the scheme that was put forward to the Minister under which men would be given 5-acre blocks, on which they could do no more than starve. Too many instances have already been brought to our notice where men on insufficient areas have had to invoke the assistance of the Government in order to carry on. I do not intend to speak further, but, in conclusion, I would urge the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues to offer something constructive—something that will imply a better scheme than the existing one. I know the Minister will be only too pleased to accept any sound suggestion.

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Mr. COOPER (*Bremer*) [5.37]: The hon. member who has just resumed his seat has asked us to put forward a better scheme than that which is now in operation; but I am afraid the suspension of the Standing Orders will not permit me to do so. The hon. member for Cook has given us a fine illustration of a type of politician we have been reading of in the last few months. The Treasurer would probably know the type; they live on racecourses and are known as "hedgers."

Mr. KENNY: Mr. Speaker.—I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Bremer has insinuated that I am a person known as a "hedger." The term is offensive to me, and I ask that the hon. member withdraw it.

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

Mr. COOPER: Certainly, Mr. Speaker, if the term is offensive, I withdraw it; I have no alternative. I did not intend to be offensive, but I do say that on the racecourses there are persons known as hedgers. That type of person invests a rather large sum of money in a certain direction, and then, to save himself, he lays off a certain amount here and there. He is not unlike the type of politician who, having placed all his political faith on a certain party's policy, towards the end of his speech lays off a little bit. The hon. member for Cook, towards the end of his speech, said that, while this scheme was the very best that could be designed, it was not all that it ought to be. As the hon. member said, "I could give something better myself. I could suggest something much better than a 5-acre farm on which men would starve; and I will sit on the doorstep of this Government and on the doorstep of all governments until the end of my time or until I get the things I desire." That is what I meant by "hedging."

The hon. member also displayed that conservative type of mind that earnest but misguided young men generally have. He referred to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's defection from the Labour Party in England. I would remind the hon. member that the scheme to which the great bulk of the British Labour Party objected was in connection with the desire to save £96,000,000 in one year and the decision that £66,000,000 of that should be saved from the payments to the unemployed. The objection of the Labour Party to the scheme was the fact that the bulk of the saving would be effected at the expense of the underdog. Enough of the hon. member for Cook!

I was struck with some of the information given to us by the Minister in his speech. He told us that of the money that has been spent £200,000 has been spent in the city of Brisbane and £400,000 outside in the country. He just drew that broad line between Brisbane and its suburbs and the rest of Queensland, and I was struck with the remarkable definiteness of the line. It was clear cut, and showed clear differentiation between Brisbane and the rest of Queensland. And I was just wondering why the Minister could not induce his Government to make similar clearness in the matter of the demarcation of electorates in the Electoral Districts Bill with which we dealt a little while ago.

The Minister also said that this expenditure of money showed how the unemployed in the country had been catered for at the expense of the unemployed

in the city; and he said that, by their large expenditure of money in the country, the Government were taking the unemployed from the city to the country. It is not fair for the Minister to try to have it both ways. He cannot talk about the expenditure of £400,000 for the benefit of the country unemployed if he says the expenditure of that £400,000 had the effect of attracting many of the unemployed from the city to the country. That remarkable double statement trying to get the benefit both ways was made by the Minister.

**THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY:** The work is done in the country.

**MR. COOPER:** The work is done in the country, and the city unemployed are engaged on that work, as the Ipswich unemployed know. When the Minister tried to make out that the Government had been particularly good to the country unemployed at the expense of the city unemployed he is endeavouring to make out a case that his figures will not sustain.

**THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY:** That is not my case.

**MR. COOPER:** It is part of it. I would be sorry to try to deal with the whole of the Minister's case in the short time I am allowed. The Minister also particularly stressed the fact that under the relief scheme goods shed work had been done at Roma Street and regrading had been done on the North Coast line between Brisbane and Gympie, with the result that where 278 tons of freight could be hauled in the past to-day 510 tons of freight could be hauled. That is a big work; but I want to point out that that work was commenced by the Labour Government, and paid for at the best wages. Over and above that, the work at the goods shed at Roma Street, the North Coast deviation, and the regrading work was all objected to by the Nationalist Party when they sat on this side of the House. Now they are asking to be given credit for doing this work—not from general taxation—not from the deep pockets of the whole of the people of Queensland—but from the shallow pockets of the workers. Works such as the enlargement of the goods shed at Roma Street, the construction of a better line between Brisbane and Gympie so that a higher tonnage may be hauled, is work of a national character, which should be borne by the national exchequer; and it is doubly wrong to ask the unemployed and the basic wage workers of this State to bear the burden of such national work. The Minister cannot deny that this money is being taken from the pockets of the workers. Again the Minister cannot have it both ways. He said that this tax was in itself a redistribution of income. It took from those who had and gave to those who had not. Yet at the introductory stage of this measure, when the Opposition moved that there should be an exemption of £104 per annum, what did the Minister say? He said, "I cannot accept such an amendment for the simple reason that one-third of this tax would not then be collected." If one-third is to be collected from people who receive less than £104 per annum, can you conceive of a more iniquitous tax? Again I say that either the statement of the Minister that this is a redistribution of income is not a statement in accordance with fact, or

his other statement that one-third of the tax will come from people in receipt of less than £104 per annum is not a correct statement. Again, the Minister cannot have it both ways.

I notice that the hon. gentleman made reference to the training of boys in various directions, and I see from the papers that they are to be trained in woodwork, sheet-metal work, and in some other directions. This is alleged to be a help to boys who go upon farms. Nobody who has given any study to the subject can deny that there is good in the elementary training of boys in this direction. I myself have seen a good deal of the training of boys who at the present time are unable to get employment. I have seen capable boys doing splendid work in connection with woodwork, engineering, and sheet-metal work. I say that that is the real work of the Government, and it should not be the duty of parents to provide the money for the training of these boys. If one-third of the money under this scheme is to come from those who receive less than £104 per annum, surely it is fair to surmise that at least two-thirds of the money will come from people with incomes of £200 a year or less. If two-thirds of the money is coming from workers on and under the basic wage, I say it is an unjust imposition to put upon those parents the whole cost of the training of their children in this particular direction. One of our boasts in this State is that education is free, but there can be no freedom in education where the parents are charged with such a heavy impost for the education of their children.

There is a dangerous aspect in regard to this question. I believe the most dangerous man we have to-day is the jack of all trades and master of none. He generally is more costly to the country than useful, and we are likely by this scheme of the Minister's, unless we are very careful, to turn out a great army of half-educated youths who have no trade whatever, and who will not be able in the future to apply in the earning of their livelihood what they have learnt.

The job of the Government is to do the job they told the parents they would do—to find employment for our boys and girls, to provide apprenticeships which the boys and girls are waiting for to give them that position in life afterwards to which they are entitled. One of the tragedies of the policy of the Government is that they are a "from day to day Government"; they have no perspective, they cannot see into the future. They have done nothing to provide for the future in any way whatever; their only concern is for the immediate needs of to-day and to-morrow. They have not the foresight which will allow them to do something for the rising generation. All they seem able to do is to attempt to make some provision for boys to get upon a farm in some way or other, and to be trained in this or that particular way, but they have nothing definite in regard to their future. Can this Government assure the boy who goes on to a farm that, if he trains as a farmer, he will be able to get land on which he may put to good use his knowledge as a farmer? Is this Government doing anything to provide markets for the extra produce which will be grown as a result of training these boys to become primary producers? Is there

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any scheme, for instance, by which the wheat they will grow will find a market overseas?

**THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS:** What did your Government do in that direction? Absolutely nothing!

**MR. COOPER:** The Secretary for Railways knows, if any man in this House knows, how sadly the parents of this country were betrayed by this Government. He knows the promise made to the mothers and the fathers as to what would be done for their boys and girls. He knows, for probably he made them with his tongue in his cheek, that these promises were made deliberately to mislead the people. I want to know who is going to do the canvassing for the jobs about which the Secretary for Labour and Industry spoke a little while ago. He said it would be their endeavour to find jobs for these boys. What jobs? Where? I would like to refer the Minister to the statement made by the President of the Chamber of Manufactures in the city of Brisbane just after his Government came into power. He urged every employer throughout the length and breadth of the State to find one more job for one more man. That was the appeal of Alderman Campbell.

**MR. KIRWAN:** The Graziers' Association at Longreach said the same thing.

**MR. COOPER:** It was a great appeal issued by a great Nationalist in a great Nationalist cause. The trouble is that it was issued in the Nationalist cause, and not in the National cause. The appeal was issued to save the Nationalist Party. Alderman Campbell could have issued that appeal six months earlier, when the Labour Government were in power; but he preferred to issue it after the Nationalist Government came into power—not for the sake of the people who were out of work, but for the sake of the Government who had then come into power. Hon. members opposite cannot say they belong to a National Government in the widest sense of that term. That stands out very plainly from what has been done by them in the last two and a-half years.

The Minister also spoke about a land settlement proposal. If I were to say anything about land settlement, I would say, "Beware of experts, particularly in land settlement." I do not think any hon. member need be told of the pitfalls into which the previous Governments were led in connection with land settlement—particularly for returned soldiers—by the experts. Practically every settlement that was undertaken was guaranteed by the experts; and how many of them failed?

**MR. BOYD:** Are you referring to Beerburum?

**MR. COOPER:** I am, and to others.

**MR. BOYD:** Your people were in charge.

**MR. COOPER:** It was thoroughly recommended by the experts of the department. It was not recommended by any Minister, but earnestly by the experts of the department; and in the case of every other settlement the recommendation was made in exactly the same way. There was a gentleman in this House, the hon. member for Windsor, who was on the Land Settlement Committee. I think it may have been yourself, Mr. Speaker. He said that the Land Settlement Committee had done its work in a very excellent way. He gave to it

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every possible credit, because he believed it had done its work properly; and, whatever the mistakes that were made, I believe they were made on the advice of experts. What of the Coominya settlement, near Ipswich? It was boomed by the Chamber of Commerce in Ipswich. They came to the Minister, and urged the Government to settle soldiers at Coominya. Graziers, farmers, men who had wide experience in the West Moreton district, urged the Government to fix the settlement at Coominya. The settlement was fixed there; and I do not believe that one man remains on that settlement to-day.

**MR. MAHER:** There is one there.

**MR. COOPER:** Perhaps in the whole of that district there was one little pocket of suitable soil. The whole of that settlement was a mistake—not a mistake so much on the part of the Government as a mistake on the part of the experts, who so earnestly and continually advised that settlement. I warn the Minister of experts. So far as experts in land are concerned, I certainly stand with the hon. member for Bowen in having the greatest suspicions of them. The Minister has stated that it will be possible to settle people on unused alienated land with the consent of the owner, and to assist them by granting rations up to the value of the intermittent relief work to which such a person would be entitled. The Minister has also stated that it might be contended that the person should be entitled to a reward in the same way as a prospector who discovers a mineral field. He pointed out that, if a prospector discovered a mineral field and floated a company, he was entitled to all he got. We on this side agree with that; but we also say that, if a man takes up five or ten acres of private land, makes it productive and becomes successful, then he is just as much entitled to the whole of his product as a man who discovers a mineral field. If an unemployed man takes up five or ten acres of alienated land and makes a success of it, then he should be given the land as his.

**MR. KENNY:** But you do not believe in the freehold tenure.

**MR. COOPER:** I believe that there should be no further alienation of Crown land. That is the platform of the Labour Party.

**MR. KELSO:** You are hedging.

**MR. COOPER:** I am not a hedger. The platform of the Labour Party has for twenty years contained this plank, "No further alienation of Crown land." The Labour Party has never threatened alienated land except by way of taxation. If the Minister is prepared to use alienated land, then in common justice to the person who makes a success of the land such person should be given the land as his. He should be given that land if he makes a success of land that was not previously successfully used. As a prospector is entitled to all the minerals he finds, so the man who makes a success in production from the land should be entitled to the whole of the production; and he cannot have the whole of the production unless the land is his.

Some little time ago a man in Ipswich having between £70 and £100 wrote to the Minister asking to be put upon one of these five-acre or ten-acre blocks, saying that he was prepared to sink in it the money he had in hand, provided the Minister guaranteed him rations until such time as he was

on his feet. Up to the present he has received no reply to his proposal; and I believe it has been received somewhat with a cold shoulder. I cannot understand that. If it is a good thing to place men on the land who have no money, then surely it is a better proposition to place on the land men with £70 to £100 who are prepared to use the money in the purchase of implements and stock.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Supposing he has £300?

Mr. COOPER: I should say that he would then have no need to go to the Minister for assistance. A man with only £70 to £100 cannot possibly support himself for six or twelve months. He can merely buy a few head of stock and a few implements; but a man with £300, £400, or £600 could probably do for himself by obtaining the aid of the Agricultural Bank. The man with a small amount of money cannot do for himself; and I ask the Minister to give particular attention to the case of the man I have referred to.

I appeal to the Minister for a liberalisation of this scheme. The man who does a day's work is entitled to what the country considers to be a day's pay. It is the boast of the Minister and of the people in charge of intermittent relief work, at least up my way, that the men engaged on intermittent relief work are giving as good a day's work as the men employed by the local authorities or anywhere else.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Quite right.

Mr. COOPER: The work that these men do—the relief work and intermittent work—is hard labour, and it is laborious labour. When a man received rations previously, having practically no work to do, his inroads on the larder were not very great; but, when a man does a hard day's conscientious work, he comes home tired; and, so that he may build up the physical energy that is destroyed, he makes greater inroads on the larder than is ordinarily the case. In doing so he must take from his wife and children. Every wife and mother knows that; and naturally the bulk of the food that is purchased must go to the wage-earner who has to do the one, two, or three days' hard work for the money he receives. I urge the Minister to make up the earnings of the relief work at least to the basic wage. The little extra money thus received will allow the good housewife to make that provision for the energy which a man uses up by reason of the laborious work, and at the same time give to her and her children their fair share of the amount allowed them, insufficient as it is. Failing that, I urge the Minister to consider the question of giving the relief workers an extra day's work.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: If it is financially possible, that will be done.

Mr. COOPER: I urge the hon. gentleman to make it financially possible. He has great scope in the incomes from £250 or £400 or £500 and upwards to allow that to be done. I want to draw the hon. gentleman's attention to another matter, and that is to make provision as far as he can for the women and girls of Ipswich and district. They are a section of our workers who have enjoyed in the past a fair amount of work.

We had a shirt factory in Ipswich which is now closed, and the only two woollen mills in the State, which employed females to a large extent, are not working regularly. We also have a clothing factory in Ipswich, but that is not working with absolute regularity on account of the depression; therefore, much work that was given previously to female workers is not now available. That means that there is a big number of women and girls in the Ipswich district out of work.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Establish your Social Service League in Ipswich, and I will see what I can do to assist you.

Mr. COOPER: For many years there have been two benevolent societies in existence in Ipswich. Even in good times there are people who need assistance, while in bad times the number grows, and grows considerably. For long years—longer perhaps than the Minister himself can count—these benevolent societies have been in existence, and have done good and faithful work. It has been their job in good and in bad seasons to continue that work. They have the place organised probably as no other centre in Queensland is organised. They know the needy people, and they know those who are likely to try to impose on them. In a small centre like Ipswich you cannot put over much imposition because everybody is known. But because these societies, having done their work year in and year out faithfully and well to the satisfaction of their subscribers—because these two societies have not joined up with the Social Service League, they are banned and considered to be outside the pale.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: They need only affiliate.

Mr. COOPER: They were asked to pay a fee and contribute towards the expenses of the organising secretary.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: A purely nominal fee.

Mr. COOPER: That is a shocking imposition to put on women who have given of their best in the service of the poor and the needy. That is a poor recompense to people who have acted so faithfully. I urge the Minister to waive the instruction about affiliation with the Social Service League. I can assure him, as can others also, that overlapping cannot exist for very long in Ipswich. In any case, surely it is better that overlapping should exist than that there should be underlapping.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Let them affiliate.

Mr. COOPER: These societies, which have done noble work and are doing noble work, feel very bitterly the fact that a subsidy has been denied them. Now the Minister has an opportunity to do something, to let the past go, and give the societies that recognition which is their due. Into no better hands could the work be given. I can guarantee that no money allocated under this scheme could be better applied than to the societies which I have mentioned. I ask the hon. gentleman to review the situation, and, in the largeness of his heart, to give to those societies that which is their due.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: We ask them to affiliate.

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Mr. COOPER: That is a minor point. After thirty or forty years' service to the poor it is a very weak tribute to think that a subsidy is denied to them because they refuse to affiliate.

If the Minister cannot do all the things asked for, I urge him to do some of them. Christmas is drawing near; we are within three months of it. There are some demands made upon us at Christmas; and I ask the Minister not to overlook this season, at any rate. If he can do nothing else in regard to the appeals I have made, I urge him at least to give to all men on intermittent and relief work a full week's work on the basic wage just before the season of "Peace on earth, goodwill toward men."

Mrs. LONGMAN (*Bulimba*) [7.4]: It is very unfortunate that it has been found necessary to increase the unemployment relief tax. The Government regret that very much indeed, and they have not done it because they like doing it. We have heard repeatedly that this is a form of raising taxation, and we have been asked, "Do you think the people can stand any more taxation?" The Government fully realise that the people cannot stand more taxation if there is no necessity for taxation; but there comes a time when we have to choose between two evils. We cannot choose to let the people suffer more than can be avoided, and, when those who will bear the burden of this extra taxation know, as many of them do already, the splendid work that has been done by the department to provide work in order to give people food, then they will be quite ready to render that extra help towards those more unfortunate than themselves. The Minister is to be very much congratulated on the way in which he has carried out this difficult work. No doubt it has been a tremendous task; but, from what we know—and we on both sides of the House do know what has been done to deal with this difficult question—we cannot but give him praise for the way in which he has performed the work; and we should be ready as one body to help him forward.

It is distinctly creditable that, in spite of all the extra work that has been involved in connection with these schemes, so little extra cost has been incurred. The Minister has told us that the cost involved in the administration of this fund has been only something like 4.3 per cent. That is very creditable indeed. We have been told throughout this discussion that unemployment has increased tremendously in Queensland. Of course it has increased; but I should like to point out that since January of last year it has increased in New South Wales by about 25 per cent., and throughout the metropolitan districts of New South Wales it has increased by almost 50 per cent. We can congratulate ourselves that Queensland is in a much better position. It is disappointing that at this crisis in the nation's life we, as the representatives of the people of Queensland, should not be working together and giving of our best towards a solution of this problem quite irrespective of party.

To-day the Leader of the Opposition, in a passionate outburst of words, gave us what he considers will be a solution of the trouble. We all know that this scheme is not the ultimate solution of the trouble. We have said from the very beginning that it is only

[*Mr. Cooper.*

a palliative. We still say that it is a palliative; but none of us is unaware of the fact that there are big things that must be done throughout the world if we are to bring about financial and economic stability. The Leader of the Opposition spoke on this matter at considerable length; but I fail to see that he, as the leader of a party, is helping us at all in Queensland to-day to deal with the immediate problem; and that must come first. In Queensland there should be a coalition, or at least a co-operation, of both parties working together to make better the lot of the unemployed; to make better the conditions in industry; and, although the Government are strong enough both in numbers and in will and ability to go ahead and do what has to be done to help Queensland through this difficult time, yet how much easier and better it would be for the whole of the State if we had the co-operation of hon. members opposite! I think that, when we know—and we do know—that some of them at least realise that we are doing the best thing it is possible to do; and when we know that they feel that, and that they are not loath to say so in private conversation, it is most disappointing that here—and I cannot but think it is only for propagandist purposes—they do nothing but vilify what the Government have done and are doing to-day. Just after listening to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition I read the words of Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland when moving the third reading of the Economy Bill in Great Britain, and I could not but contrast the two. I would like to read those words, which are fine and noble words, and which will ring across the world to-day and bring hope to many—

"The crisis was confronting other countries and would confront nearly every country in the world. It was not merely a difficulty that could be surmounted, leaving the world just as it was before. These difficulties were really pains that went before the birth of a new state of affairs, and that was a fact that everyone would be forced to recognise. Within ten years from now there would be a regime of international agreement on economics and finance surpassing anything hitherto contemplated. This question would equal, if not surpass, in importance the question of armaments. Coal would have to be dealt with, as would international lending of capital, and quite possibly concerted action for preventing undue fluctuations in credit. That kind of action was coming and would quite intimately affect the welfare of the masses of people in all the different countries. It would affect intimately employment and the standard of life. People looking back some years hence would realise that the international steps were the inevitable outcome of post-war conditions and that it was only the jealousies and suspicions of the nations that had made the approach to them uncertain and fumbling."

Those words express to a certain degree the sentiments of the Leader of the Opposition here to-day. But what did Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland do in the hour of his country's crisis? He joined with his erstwhile political opponents, and is doing his best to bring about an immediate amelioration of the conditions of the people of Great Britain. He is not waiting until some great

scheme is launched. He hopes some international action will come, and he is doing his best to bring it about; but in the meantime he is dealing with the immediate affairs of the nation. He is not standing apart and thinking of his own party: he is not thinking of his own position. He feels that it is necessary to join with other political parties, and thus help to bring about better conditions for the whole country. If we could do that in Queensland to-day, there would be no danger of the people, when they listen to the speeches that have been put forward in this discussion, thinking that they would like to turn out some of us and bid us "make room for honest men." It may be that this way of dealing with matters has grown up in our midst. It seems to me that it is almost impossible to deal with any big question without dragging in party; but, for all that, I think it is to be deplored. I have hoped and hoped that there might be some members of the Opposition who would be brave enough to stand up and say, "I think you are doing the very best thing that could be done at the present time." I believe some of them think it. I know that, if they were to express their opinions honestly, they would say, "Well, this is the best that can be done" or even "This is good, but we can help you to make it still better. Let us help you." The position is unfortunate, and I think Queensland will suffer because of that.

We have heard a great deal to-day of criticism about the way in which the women have been provided for under this scheme. We have heard too much of this talk. Everybody realises that it is very difficult to provide relief work for women—more difficult than for men—but it is not fair to allow it to be said that nothing has been done for the women. Certainly the relief work which has been given to them in the way of sewing has proved of great benefit to those who have had it. Up to the date of the last return, 688 individual women had been employed at this sewing work, and we have now 120 each week. We hope that other kinds of work will soon be available. Apart from that, very soon after this scheme came into operation rations were given to single women; and it was not long after we came into office that we realised that there was a certain hardship in connection with the ration system which had to be rectified.

The baby under six months of age got no rations at all. Of course, that was an anomaly. If the baby did not need the rations, the mother needed the extra food; and that defect was remedied almost immediately. Every single woman was given rations wherever necessary.

We have heard a great deal from hon. members opposite about the washerwoman. I am sure that, when they hear of what has been said by hon. members opposite, they will think that at last they are being remembered by some of their comrades. They have been used extensively in this debate. I know very many of them, and have the very greatest respect for these women, who, through force of circumstances, have to go out and earn their own living in this way when they should be at home looking after their children; and I know quite well that, if they are permitted to help a little those who may be worse off than they are themselves, they are ready and willing to do it;

and they are doing it quite apart from this scheme. As a matter of fact, most people who are employing casual labour pay the tax themselves. I feel that members of the Opposition must be feeling very sad and sorry, when they think of these poor washerwomen, that they did not, when in office, and when there was so much more money about, give them pensions or provide for their children the childhood endowment which has been talked about for so many years.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: You think all this soft talk will save you.

Mrs. LONGMAN: I am not thinking of saving myself. I am thinking of saving the people of Queensland. (Hear, hear!) That is what we on this side stand for. We hear too much talk in this House about saving ourselves and our skins. It is time that someone stood up and reminded us that we have been elected as representatives of the people, not for the good of ourselves, but to work for the people who sent us here and do our best for them. I feel proud of the fact that the Secretary for Labour and Industry and his department have been able to do as much as they have done in this direction.

Mr. HYNES: In saving your political skins, too.

Mrs. LONGMAN: That is a taunt I very often hear in this House, and it does not reflect credit on the men who throw that sort of remark across the Chamber.

Mr. HYNES: It is true.

Mrs. LONGMAN: It may be true of the hon. member who interjects, but, thank God, it is not true of every hon. member.

We have heard quite a lot during this discussion about the intentions of the Minister to make loans available to farmers to enable them to give employment. That is a very important feature, and one that I regret was not adopted last session. If it had been adopted then a greater number of our boys would to-day be in employment and off the streets. I hope that the scheme will be brought into operation at a very early date. Some doubts have been expressed as to how it will be operated, certain members opposite being afraid that the money will be used by way of small gifts to the friends of the Government. I want to assure the Opposition that they need have no fear on that score; the present Government do not do things in that way. The Leader of the Opposition referred to the proposed loans at a low rate of interest as a distribution of largesse. I do not like these nasty suspicions, but I feel that they must be rooted in things that happened during the regime of the Labour Government. I do not like to think that. I hate to be suspicious, but, after hearing the remarks from the other side of the House, one is compelled to think as I am thinking. However, I assure the Opposition that there will be no danger of the money being distributed as gifts; everything will be aboveboard. The money will be made available to people best able to employ those in need of employment. It will be provided for those who will help our boys and the men who are with them, so that they will eventually have a liking for the land, and will settle there after the present crisis is over. I believe that will assist this State to a greater extent than any scheme we have in hand at the present

*Mrs. Longman.]*

time. Before long I hope to see a spirit of compromise and a spirit of co-operation—

Mr. DUNLOP: Cut out party politics.

Mrs. LONGMAN: Cut out party politics! We should cut out the partisan spirit. I believe that we shall always have party politics, but in a time of crisis we should be big enough to do away with the feeling of partisanship. Let us think of our country before ourselves and before our party. I notice that at a time of crisis the Labour Party as a whole—I do not say all Labour people—is found wanting; the party cannot meet a crisis. The truth of that is to be found in these circumstances. At every time of difficulty and in every crisis in the country the best men of the Labour Party leave the party. That has happened over and over again. We have it in Great Britain to-day, and we have it in the Federal Parliament to-day. We have had it in this State on other occasions. The best members of the Labour Party will not stand amongst those who put partisanship first. They put their country first, and consequently have to come out of the party. I hope that some members of the Opposition will come out, and will be bold enough to say that they are prepared to assist us in our national work. I should like to see the hon. member for Brisbane come out.

Mr. KIRWAN: I know you too well.

Mrs. LONGMAN: I should like to see him come out and say: "I am going to help you. I am still a Labour member, and I adhere to Labour principles; but I feel that what you are doing is bigger than party. I will become one of you for the time being, and I will help you in your big task."

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*) [7.30]: The hon. member for Bulimba has suggested that the parties in this House might well adopt the spirit of compromise. It depends on what is meant by compromise. There is an illustration of the meaning of that word in the old story of a young man who was engaged to be married. He told a friend of his that the girl and himself could not make up their minds as to the wedding day on account of a difference of opinion as to what sort of bedclothes should be used. One of the bones of contention was that the lady desired linen sheets, and he insisted that cotton sheets were quite good enough. This friend, who advised him to compromise, met him a month later, and was delighted to find that he and his lady were married. He also learnt that his friend had at last compromised on the question of the bed linen; but the compromise was that the wife had got all her own way, and that she had secured all linen sheets. Naturally that is the kind of compromise which the Government require from the Labour Party. The Government require two linen sheets; and I do not believe that they want one linen sheet and one cotton sheet.

Mrs. LONGMAN: We always stand for the best.

Mr. POLLOCK: The idea of the Government as to the Opposition compromising with them is that we should adopt their principles or become accomplices in the policy they have adopted. We decline that kind of compromise. I think I can say for every member on this side of the House that, where we can lend our aid to a genuine scheme that will in any way permanently

relieve unemployment, we are prepared to help.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Where is that scheme?

Mr. POLLOCK: As I proceed, I will indicate just where this scheme falls short. The man who would object to doing anything either to relieve unemployment or distress in these times, considering the amount that is around us to be seen by anybody, would indeed be a hard-hearted man. I believe hon. members on this side, with their knowledge of working conditions, and with their experience as workers themselves before they entered this House, are sufficiently acquainted with the difficulties of the people who are unemployed to understand just what their problems are. Most of us on this side were wage-earners before we came here.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: And on this side, too.

Mr. POLLOCK: I am not disputing that. Certainly most of us who have been wage-earners realise the difficulties associated with unemployment, and the dangers of continued unemployment with its misery and despair, especially in the case of those who are unemployed for any length of time. Because we know these things we are prepared to lend a hand to any scheme that offers anything like a satisfactory solution of the problem.

The first thing we have to do in examining a Bill of this kind is to call things by their right names. This is not a Bill to cure, or even temporarily relieve, unemployment. That is true, whether we like it or not.

Mr. KELSO: It does not pretend to be a cure.

Mr. POLLOCK: The Bill does not propose to provide any permanent solution for unemployment; and, so far as I can read the Bill, and have been able to follow the principles upon which the Minister has worked since the unemployment relief tax was imposed last year, it merely seeks to continue the dole and compel people to work for the dole. I will not dispute for a moment the question of the desirability of men working for value received. It is true that the money paid under this scheme is a dole, because the men receiving it are expected to earn it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Any money received for work is not a dole.

Mr. POLLOCK: The rates these workers are paid are so low that we cannot get away from the dole principle on that account. If a measure of this kind were intended to be permanent, I would say that it should get to the root of unemployment, and that it should seek to cure the causes of unemployment. That is, if it were a genuine measure to attempt in any way to stem the tide of unemployment. If the measure is recognised merely as a temporary expedient, then it is designed to fill a gap and relieve distress for the time being. If that is the case, we ought to call the Bill by its proper name, for it is not an Unemployment Relief Bill at all. If this Bill merely plays with the dole, recognises, encourages, and continues to encourage and recognise the dole, then it is a dangerous thing for this House to play with. In an attempt to have a measure to deal definitely with unemployment it is necessary to get at the causes of unemployment as we know them. I do not believe that

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anything I say will be news to anybody in this House; but at least, so far as I can, I am trying to clarify the position so that the public shall be under no illusions as to what this Bill means.

The main root cause of unemployment to-day that has spread over a period of twenty years has been the growth of modern automatic and semi-automatic machinery. Automatic telephones, pipe lines instead of carts to convey oil from steamers, motor ploughs as against large numbers of horse ploughs that were ordinarily used on big sugar plantations, adding machines, talking picture entertainments—all of those things are prolific causes of unemployment. The huge number of people who have been thrown out of work in every country in the world because of those improvements has grown to alarming proportions, and is still growing. Take, for example, the automatic telephone as a case in point. The day on which the automatic telephone system switched over in Brisbane over 300 people were thrown out of employment—300 people who ordinarily had some sort of constant employment. If you go down the Brisbane River, you will see the Texaco Company's oil and petrol depot at Hamilton. Prior to the installation of a pipe-line something like fifty men were employed three or four times a year shifting the oil from the ship to the depot. To-day a tap is turned on, and the oil is run through a pipe line. Nothing wrong with that; but it is a cause of unemployment. I think it was the Fairymead plantation which years ago had seven or eight hundred people working on it, looking after horses, and working the ploughs and cultivators required on the plantation. Now the work is done by many-furrowed ploughs pulled by motor tractors, and, in place of 700 of 800 men, there are probably from twelve to twenty men doing the same amount of work. The installation of adding machines in offices has meant the displacement of large numbers of men and women. The talking pictures have thrown practically all our musicians and entertainers out of work; and there is very little scope for these people to exercise their talents and cater for the amusement of the public. These and a thousand other things I could mention have been responsible for huge numbers of people being thrown out of work. To place those people back in work is the problem of any Government, whether the Government be Labour or Nationalist. That state of affairs has gone on, and will continue to go on, whether the Government be Nationalist or Labour. How to deal with it is the problem. In considering this case it occurs to me that a huge sum of money must have been paid to these people during the time they were in that employment that is now being diverted elsewhere. Where is it going to? Who is getting it? Is the product any cheaper for the general public; or is the money that used to go in payment of employees going into the hands of a few people who have invented these machines, or is it in the hands of others who own these machines? And, if so, how are we to get back sufficient of the money to enable these one-time workers to live decently? Is the dole the only solution?

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Advertising takes a lot of it.

Mr. POLLOCK: Advertising may take some of it, but there is a big wages fund that must make someone increasingly

wealthy, while a big proportion of the people are thrown on the labour market.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: A lot is going in interest on the money borrowed to pay for those machines.

Mr. POLLOCK: The fact remains that these people are out of work, and they will continue to be out of work; and the job of all Governments, whatever their political colour is to find work for them of a permanent nature to take the place of the work they have left.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Tell us how to do it.

Mr. POLLOCK: If it is desired I can deal with this question from a party standpoint and abuse the Government; but I do not desire to do that. I desire, first of all, to examine the causes that have led to this vast amount of unemployment in order that we may find out whether the thing we are doing is best calculated to relieve it. Take the motor car that is run purely for pleasure. That is something in Australia that obviously will have to go unless these people who are thrown out of work are to remain on the breadline and a few people are to be permitted to live in luxury. The imported motor car, which is made mostly by American labour, run in this country on American petrol, produced and refined by foreign labour, is something that has taken a vast amount of money out of this country. It has displaced horses and the horse-breeding industry in this country; it has thrown out of work the producers of feed for those horses, and has in every way tended to create more unemployment. I am not so much a troglodyte as to believe that you can push back the march of science and invention; but these things are going on in almost every country every day, and they are continually displacing people. Our own resources are not being used. Our coalmines, which supply our railways with coal, are working half-time, while we are importing American petrol to run motor cars in competition with the railways. In a well-ordered State those things could not happen. I am trying to get below the surface in this unemployment problem, in order to find out whether we are tackling it in the proper manner. The neglect of our trams, trains, and so on, has been quite a large cause of unemployment, and that has meant much money going overseas for the purchase of motor cars and petrol to run them, when we have adequate conveyances in this country that could be run with our own fuel, and with engines and trains made by labour within this State.

There is another thing that has caused unemployment, and, to be fair, one cannot ignore it. That is the fall in prices. There can be no doubt that the general fall in prices has been responsible for quite a good deal of unemployment. Whether that fall in prices takes place under a Labour Government or under a Nationalist Government, the effect is very considerable upon people who have to work for a living. When you examine the unemployment caused by the fall in prices, it is questionable just what is to happen if price levels remain as they are. The plane upon which this question is being handled is that, when prices fall, wages fall, and people are thrown out of employment in a wholesale manner. Apparently the Government are staking everything upon this Bill, which is merely a temporary expedient—

merely a continuation of the dole in the hope that prices will again increase. If prices do not increase, then the logical inference is that the thousands of people who are out of work in Queensland, carrying their swags on the verge of starvation, forced to work for whatever an employer is prepared to offer them, must still be prepared to do that until prices rise again. No attempt is made to argue that, when prices fall, anybody but the general casual worker should be forced to bear some share of the burden. If we were to agree to compromise sufficiently to help the Government to put into effect a policy which would continue these men on the track every time there was a fall in prices, which would reduce wages to the coolie level every time there was a fall in price, and only give to working people a decent living wage at a time when prices were raised sufficiently to enable employers to live in luxury, then obviously the working man in this State is at the mercy of overseas prices; and his standard of living is entirely dependent upon whatever prices we can get for our primary products. That should not be the case in a well-ordered community.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: How can we obviate that?

Mr. POLLOCK: I argue that, if prices are to remain at their present level, sacrifices must be made by other people to feed the people who are now unemployed—sacrifices by the people who can best afford to make them.

I did not get up with the object of dealing with this question from a party standpoint. There are certain things in the Bill to which I object very strongly; and I do not believe that the Bill is in any way calculated to remove the sum total of unemployment. I am trying to show that at the very utmost all it can do is to continue the payment of the dole—to recognise the dole—to give certain political patronage and favouritism to some people while others are continuing to walk the track.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: You are spoiling your speech now.

Mr. POLLOCK: Of course, I am spoiling my speech the moment I start to criticise the Minister's actions; but that is not worrying me. Some of the leading thinkers of the world are arguing to-day that this fall in prices, this depression—which most people believe is a temporary depression—is not a temporary depression at all. Henry Ford, who probably is as well informed as any business man in the world, holds the view that these are the normal times, and that the period from 1920 to 1930 was the abnormal period. If that is the case, then are we not justified in connection with a Bill of this kind in considering just what is to be the policy of the Government, if prices remain as they are to-day? That is the thing that disturbs me. If prices remain as they are to-day—and some great thinkers believe they will remain so for many years to come—then obviously our people will have to get something better out of the social order than they are now getting. If we do not give them something better, it will be impossible to avoid some social disturbance that will upset all our preconceived ideas. We have in this country to-day over the age of 21 a community of people everyone of whom can read and write, everyone of whom has been used from childhood to the best of food and good clothes. They are people who are

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educated, who can read and write and understand the problems of the day as well as most members of this House—some of them, perhaps, a good deal better. You cannot take from those people a decent and sensible standard of living which gives them enough to eat and drink and reduce them to the standard of coolies without making trouble. It is obvious that these people know to-day that they are as good as anybody else, and that they are as much entitled to a decent living as anybody else. You cannot reduce them from decent conditions to the conditions which existed forty or fifty years ago without very serious social disturbance. So I say that those in this Chamber who seriously consider this question, and who believe in the existing social order and the desire to continue constitutional government and parliaments and democracies, must bend their energies to seeing first of all that these people are properly fed and clothed. This Bill does not even pretend to do that.

The Minister says that he wants suggestions. I frankly admit that, if we were to sit here from now until New Year's Day, we would not get any nearer a solution of the unemployment problem than we are to-day. It is not my function to show how the problem can be relieved; but I hope that from what I have said there may be obtained a germ of an idea which will help someone else. That is all that any man can hope for, because this trouble is as old as the hills, as deep as the sea, and as wide as the world; and all that we can hope for here by the Bill or any other measure is to palliate it.

Mr. KENNY: You cannot give us any better suggestion than this?

Mr. POLLOCK: If the youthful member for Cook understood that there are 6,000,000 unemployed in the United States of America, the creditor nation after the war, 8,000,000 in Germany, and 2,500,000 in England, he would surely see that we would be super-men if we could put forward a scheme which would solve the problem.

Mr. KENNY: Why condemn this one?

Mr. POLLOCK: One would be foolish to attempt that. I am trying to show that this Bill does not even touch the fringe of the subject. I object in particular to one principle in it—the payment of wages lower than the fair rate fixed by the Industrial Court. I object because it means that men will work for less than the economic value of their labour; and I think that is a fair objection to the Bill. If a man does three days' work per week as an intermittent relief work labourer, then obviously he ought to be paid the value of that work—that is, the value of that work as determined by the arbitration tribunal of the State. I do not know how hon. members opposite can object to that, because every one of them, the Premier included, said when he went to the country that he would stick by arbitration. Some even went so far as to say that they would cross the floor of the House and vote against their party if arbitration were withdrawn from the workers. Whatever the rate of pay is to be, it should be a rate commensurate with the value of the work which a man performs.

The PREMIER: What is the value of it?

Mr. POLLOCK: The Industrial Court is the body which determines the value of

labour. I cannot tell the hon. gentleman what it is, nor is Parliament competent to tell us the value of labour. If we could tell the value of labour, why should we set up an arbitration tribunal? I say that this scheme of payment of less than award rates tends to level down the value of wages. That is obvious. Everywhere reduced wages are paid they become, where there is no award—and there are many places where awards have been abolished by this Government—the basic wage for that district. The law of supply and demand does operate there. The Minister knows it. If a man can get relief workers for three days for 30s., that will be the rate which everybody will pay. Whether we like it or not, or whether that is intended or not, the scheme has the effect of reducing wages down to the level prescribed by the Minister under the scheme, where there are no awards to protect wage levels.

Let me show, if I can, just where the scheme falls short of our requirements to-day. The Minister will agree that comparatively few men are employed under the scheme in comparison with the total number of unemployed. Some are getting more or less permanent relief work, whilst others are working under the intermittent scheme. The total number who will be employed, or can be employed, under the new scheme after this taxation has been raised will not be more than a mere percentage of the total number of unemployed. Last year this tax was estimated by the Minister to yield £990,000; but it yielded only £702,000. It is now estimated that, after doubling the tax and providing for an exemption of £104 per annum, the yield will be between £850,000 and £900,000. It is safe to say that it is not likely that that estimate will be realised. I do not think the Minister is so optimistic as to be sure that it will be realised; so that, even after doubling the tax, we are not able to obtain very much more than was obtained by the imposition of half this rate of tax last year. What will be the position next year? Obviously this is a permanent measure. It is just as well to face the situation now. Next year probably it will be necessary to double the already doubled tax in order to obtain the amount of money that will be obtained during the current year. It will probably be necessary to increase the amount to 1s. in the £1, if the depression in prices continues for another year, bringing about a reduction in the taxable income in this State. The extra £200,000 that the Minister proposes to obtain this year will not provide either ordinary relief work or intermittent work for the total number of the unemployed in Queensland—nothing like it. Nor will he be able to add a further day's work and pay to those who are at present employed under the relief scheme. If he could do that, then it would be contended by those who were unable to obtain any work at all under the scheme that, as the basis of the relief scheme was the spread of the fund as far as possible, they would be entitled to that day's work in preference to others who were already in receipt of two or three days' work per week. No matter what may be the basis of taxation, and no matter even if the Minister's estimate is realised, he will be in the position of not only not being able to give any additional work to those at present in employment, but he will also be in the position of

not being able to extend the operations of the scheme; so that, even after doubling the tax, we shall be in exactly the same position as we were in before it was doubled. No further work can be provided for the thousands of men who cannot obtain a job even on relief work, so that obviously this scheme, which the Minister alleges is the best he can think of to relieve unemployment, does not even give the dole to all the people who are waiting for work. Likewise, it is not able satisfactorily to keep the people who are at present getting two or three days' work a week.

If we take the figures of those who were unemployed when the Government came into office and compare them with the figures showing the number of unemployed to-day, it will be found that not only have the Government failed to solve the unemployment problem so far as those who were out of work when they came into power are concerned, but they have not in this or any other scheme been able to place in work those people who have been thrown out of employment by the Government and private employers. To say that the Government have dealt with unemployment is to say something which is quite untrue. Despite this scheme, unemployment is 112 per cent. greater than in 1929.

One of the things which appeals to me in connection with this relief work is the great care that should be exercised wherever relief work is carried out—and it will be carried out whether the Opposition approve of this Bill or not—to see that the men placed in charge of relief workers are men who understand what is required of them.

**THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY:** Every effort is being made to do so.

**MR. POLLOCK:** The man in charge of relief workers should be a man who realises the suffering that these men undergo when they take on a new job after being out of work for a couple of years. They should realise that months of semi-starvation are not conducive to efficiency. They should realise also that the rates provided under this scheme are not sufficient to enable them to keep themselves and their families in a decent standard of comfort or provide proper food.

**THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY:** The rate is 11s. per day.

**MR. POLLOCK:** I am not complaining about the rate of 11s. a day; but the work is for three days a week only, and that is not sufficient to keep a man, his wife, and four or five children in the ordinary necessities of life. It is not sufficient to do that without paying rent and buying clothes. It is not sufficient to do that let alone paying back rent and back grocery bills, and still keep body and soul together in the case of men who have been eighteen months or two years out of work. When a man starts work after such an enforced period of idleness, he would rather go without food himself than see his wife and hungry kiddies deprived of the necessities of life. These men cannot be considered to be at their best on any relief job. The men put in charge of relief work should be selected with meticulous care, and should be men who understand what men are capable of doing. There is the problem of sore hands after a long period of unemployment, and the problem of putting a clerk to do a navy's work.

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Men who are placed in charge of these jobs ought to know that a clerk who has never had a shovel in his hands before cannot keep pace with an experienced navvy.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Our instructions are that the men should do their best.

Mr. POLLOCK: Of course, many interpretations could be placed on what is to be considered a man's "best"; but, broadly speaking, if those principles are adhered to by the Minister where unemployment relief is given, and where men are working under this scheme, the men will at least be given the opportunity of carrying on.

Mr. KELSO (*Nundah*) [8.5]: We have had addresses from the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Gregory, and from their own point of view I really think both hon. members have tried to analyse the position. At the same time they have damned this Bill with faint praise. I do not know that, when the Labour Government were in power for fourteen years, during which unemployment increased by leaps and bounds, they did anything very striking to cure the unemployment which they now say has been in existence for a long time.

The Leader of the Opposition was very careful to show the increase in unemployment in Queensland during a certain period, but the hon. gentleman was not fair enough to give also particulars of the unemployment in the other States during the same period. Some of those figures have been quoted by the Minister, but I want to make another comparison. The Leader of the Opposition told us that, comparing the position for the first quarter of 1929 with that of the first quarter of 1931, unemployment in Queensland had increased from 7.1 per cent. to 14.1 per cent, or an increase of 100 per cent. To say that during the time the present Government have been in power unemployment has increased by 100 per cent. would of itself be a very damning statement, but, after all, progression or retrogression is only a comparative affair; and, seeing that we are all part of the Commonwealth, it is only fair, when hon. members give figures, for a comparison to be made with other States. If those comparisons are in favour of Queensland, then it must be assumed that the actions of the Government now in power tend towards prosperity to a greater extent than the actions of those Governments in the Southern States. Comparing the position in the other States for the same period, we find the state of unemployment reflected in the following figures:—

State.	First Quarter, 1929.	First Quarter, 1931.	Increase.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	
New South Wales	9.7	29.2	300
Victoria ..	8.6	24.4	290
South Australia	13.2	30.6	230
Western Australia	8.5	26.1	310
Tasmania ..	8.7	26.6	300

Surely these figures prove conclusively that Queensland is in a much better position than any of the other States. It is only fair to quote these figures to show the relative progression or retrogression in the other States.

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Another point that the Leader of the Opposition argued was that this was an unfair tax because of its incidence. The old parrot cry of hon. members on the other side is that their object is to put taxation on the shoulders of those best able to bear it.

Mr. KIRWAN: That is the fundamental principle of just taxation.

Mr. KELSO: Hon. members on the other side are quite agreed upon the statement I have made. I should like to know why, when they were in power and passed the Unemployed Workers' Insurance Act, they did not put that principle into operation. In 1922 the Unemployed Workers' Insurance Act was brought into operation.

Mr. FOLEY: That is not taxation at all. That is an insurance scheme.

Mr. KELSO: That is the way they side-step when they are faced with basic facts. The first tax was 3d. a week on the employer, 3d. a week on the employee, and 3d. contributed by the Government on a flat rate. The lowest paid servant under an award up to the highest paid employee paid the flat rate of 3d. In 1927, when they were amending the Act, they had an opportunity of putting into operation this principle of taxing those best able to bear it. But what did they do? They altered the tax to 4d. on the employer, 4d. on the employee, and 4d. contributed by the Government. Then they found that unemployment was still increasing and was likely to increase; and in 1928 they raised the tax to 6d. for the employer, 6d. for the employee, and 6d. contributed by the Government. Now we find hon. members opposite, and the Leader of the Opposition particularly, taking great exception to the fact that there was no graduated tax in connection with this unemployment relief tax; yet we are following the very same principle that was adopted by hon. members on the other side, and we are blamed for doing it.

Mr. FOLEY: They got fifteen weeks' sustenance under the Unemployed Workers Insurance Act.

Mr. KELSO: I am not disputing that. At that time there was no likelihood of 95 per cent. of the Government servants coming on to that fund; yet they had to pay their share to the fund. I know that; but at the same time I am pointing out the inconsistency of hon. members opposite in criticising the Government for imposing a flat rate when they themselves on three different occasions brought into operation a flat rate in connection with the Unemployed Workers Insurance Act. It shows the insincerity of the criticisms of hon. members opposite.

The main point made to-day both by the Leader of the Opposition and in the very temperate speech made by the hon. member for Gregory has been an honest endeavour to try to find out if it is possible to find a cure for unemployment. I say quite frankly that I do not look upon this Bill, nor did I look upon the measure passed last year, as a solution of the unemployment question. It is a mere palliative; but we are faced with the difficulty, just the same as hon. members on the other side were faced with the difficulty, and we have to meet it. When you have a number of people out of work—I am glad to say this applies whether it is a Labour Government or an anti-Labour Government—those people must be fed. No

man is allowed to starve in a community like this. We have to find the money; and how are we going to do it?

A few minutes ago the hon. member for Gregory pointed out that the Minister, when introducing his first Bill, expected a tax of 3d. in the £1 to bring in a certain amount; but, owing to the fact that incomes had decreased and there was a shortage all round, the tax did not bring in the required amount. In order to get a little more than the required amount, the Minister has now to bring in this Bill providing for an increase of 3d. in the £1, showing that the incomes of the people were not bringing in the required amount. That shows—whether it is 100 per cent. more, or what it is—that we have to get more money to give these people food. It is to our credit that we are the first Government in Australia to give the unfortunate man who is out of work and in need of sustenance the opportunity of getting away from the dole and earning the money coming to him. The Labour Party, when in power, gave these men rations, and never asked them to do anything for what they got. The same thing has applied in England ever since the war. There they are to-day spending £100,000,000 per annum in sustenance. Boys have grown up, married, and have had children, and are living all the time on the so-called dole. England cannot see her way out of it. They have never thought of trying to allow people to retain their self-respect by working for the money they get. Hon. members have had men coming to them saying, "Thank God your Government have instituted means by which we can work for everything we get. No one can say we are receiving money we do not work for." I hope that system will be instituted throughout Australia. Do hon. members opposite think it gives us any pleasure to give these men only two days' work a week? The Leader of the Opposition said during the emergency session that we could get by taxation the money to solve the financial problem; but the figures with regard to unemployment prove that we have got to the limit of taxation. In one sense I do not look upon this as a tax. So far as I am concerned, this is a contribution—a grateful contribution—by the people who are in work. I have never met a man in work who regretted that he was taxed 3d. in the £1 in order to help to provide some work for his poorer brother. I look upon this as a grateful contribution from men who are in work; and it gives them the greatest pleasure to assist their more unfortunate brethren by making this donation required by law. In that sense it is not a tax, although in another sense it is.

Mr. DUNLOP: Why do you call it a tax?

Mr. KELSO: I am speaking for myself, and saying what I think of the Bill, and repeating what has been said by quite a number of workers who have personally expressed to me their gratification that the Government have given them an opportunity to work for what they are getting; so that no one can say that they are living on the dole.

One of the vital things which the Leader of the Opposition and other hon. members opposite have referred to is the fact that, owing to the great number of labour-saving machines in operation, thousands of men

are put permanently out of work. The hon. member for Gregory asked what was going to be the end of it. The student of history can find the cures adopted for the removal of evils many years ago, and probably similar cures would meet the circumstances through which we are passing at the present time. I have had the pleasure of reading "Ridge's Business Journal" for this month. There is a very fine article at page 94 which I would commend to hon. members as well worth reading. It is an address by Robert P. Lamont, who is the Secretary of the United States Department of Commerce, Washington. I think any unprejudiced reader will come to the conclusion that a gentleman who occupies that position at any rate speaks with a great deal of authority.

Mr. POLLOCK: Does he know that there are 6,000,000 unemployed in his own country?

Mr. KELSO: The very point referred to by the hon. member for Gregory is the occasion for this article. I wish to read one small extract—

"What, then, of the contention that, due to technological and other factors, unemployment has become a permanent problem? As you know, there has been much recent discussion of technological unemployment—meaning, of course, that which grows out of the displacement of men by machines and other labour-saving devices and shifts in industry. It has frequently been assumed that this type of unemployment is a distinctive characteristic of this particular depression, and that the rapid displacement of workers by machinery coupled with the over-expansion of many industries is likely to result in a permanent unemployment problem. That this technological displacement of labour in many of the basic industries has been going on at a rapid rate during the past decade is apparent to everyone, but there is ample evidence that these changes have resulted, not in unemployment, but in the shifting of workers from agriculture and manufacturing to the newer service industries. Moreover, this phenomenon is by no means a new one; it has been going on at a more or less rapid rate during the past two centuries, and there is every reason to believe and hope that it will continue in the future as in the past."

He goes on to say—

"Almost fifty years ago, during the depression of the middle 'eighties, the first report of the United States Commissioner of Labour was published, and in this volume an entire section is devoted to a very interesting discussion of 'Machinery and Over-production.'"

I shall give one short extract from that report of fifty years ago—

"What is strictly necessary has been done oftentimes to superfluity. This full supply of economic tools to meet the wants of nearly all branches of commerce and industry is the most important factor in the present industrial depression. It is true that discovery of new processes of manufacture will undoubtedly continue, and this will act as an ameliorating influence, but it will not leave room for marked extension, such as has been witnessed during the last

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fifty years, or afford employment to the vast amount of capital which has been created during that period. . . . The day of large profits is probably past."

Commenting on that report, he says—

"Reading these comments now, half a century later, it seems almost incredible that they were written in the age of zinc bathtubs, Brussels carpets, kerosene lamps, horse cars, mud roads, red flannel underwear, and cotton stockings. However, there is some comfort to be found in the fact that, after these dire predictions, the world really did find something to do during the next half century. Despite the fact—or rather because of the fact—that we continued to release labour from the basic industries by further use of labour-saving machinery, we were able to invent, produce, and sell a host of new comforts and luxuries (automobiles, radios, motion pictures, airplanes, electrical equipment—to mention only a few) which were hardly thought of in 1836, when it appeared that the work of the world had been completed.

"I am enough of an optimist to believe that industrial history will repeat itself and that the next fifty years will witness further displacement of labour from the older pursuits, and the further development of many new products and new services which will afford employment to those displaced and supply the ever-expanding wants of our people. To believe otherwise would be to accept the view that technical progress has reached an end, and that business henceforth will be static and stationary."

The hon. member for Gregory was very modest, and said that he could not suggest a cure for unemployment. I do not propose to do so either; but I offer that as a contribution to the debate, and I feel that, because the best brains of the world are engaged on this one question of how we can solve the problem, and considering all the talent there is in the world, a way out will be found. From my reading on the subject, I am inclined to the view of a number of prominent men that we must get right down to the root of the disease in this respect. It is all the aftermath of the war. Great credits were created as a result of the war, and there is nothing to show for those credits—they were blown away during the war. America manufactured the munitions of war, and the nations of Europe went into debt in their purchase. America would not sell the munitions of war to the Allies. She was careful to loan the money to Great Britain for the purpose, and Great Britain found the necessary funds for the Allies to enable them to purchase munitions of war. America knew that Great Britain would go to the last ditch before she would default. In my opinion, the world is in pawn to America to-day, and that is one of the troubles of the world.

Mr. POLLOCK: Why is there just as much unemployment in America, which is a creditor country?

Mr. KELSO: I do not profess to be able to give an answer to that question; but an explanation of the position has been given to me. We all went through allegedly good times. We borrowed, and borrowed, and borrowed, never thinking that the end would come. America produced for her local

market, and then produced to a stage where she had a production in excess of local requirements. When the European nations became impoverished she would neither give them credit nor goods unless they could pay; and, when the European nations endeavoured to sell to America, that country raised a tariff wall so high that the unfortunate European nations could not get their goods into that country. It was a dog in the manger policy.

Mr. POLLOCK: Your explanation is not very convincing.

Mr. KELSO: It is a fact. America had produced sufficient machines and had an adequate man power to overproduce; but she suddenly found that her goods were left on her hands, which meant that a large number of men were thrown on the labour market. America is the richest country in the world to-day. After this crisis settles down America can be independent of the world, and need neither export nor import. If, as the hon. member for Fassifern has suggested, Australia had had sufficient sense not to borrow money recklessly, as we did during the past fifteen to twenty years, thereby piling up debts at home involving an annual interest payment of £34,000,000, and we were a self-contained nation—as we could be if we had no external debts—we could laugh at the unemployment on the other side of the world.

Mr. O'KEEFE: Were you not referring to the war a moment ago?

Mr. KELSO: I am referring to the war debt, too. If we were in the ideal position of having no external indebtedness, we could be a self-contained nation. The hon. member for Paddington and myself contended for years that during the good times we should encourage migration to this country, with a view to creating a dependable home market. We should now have a population of 20,000,000 or 20,000,000 instead of a miserable 6,000,000. I am sure that, if we had a considerably increased population, our prices would not be so low to-day.

I do not wish to labour this question. I have given a little contribution to the discussion in all good faith in the same way as the hon. member for Gregory has done. I have not introduced party politics into my speech. I am giving the House the benefit of the suggestions I have made. The duty is upon us to feed the people who are out of work. I realise that the Bill can be only a palliative; but I hope that better times will shortly come, that the people will again be in permanent employment, and that this scheme will decay from disuse.

Mr. BEDFORD (*Warrego*) [8.30]: We have had quite a lot of talk to-night from the other side as to the position in Queensland in comparison with that of the other States. The Government have had to recognise that since they got upon the Treasury benches there has been an increase of 100 per cent. in the unemployment in this State. They seek to show that that was due to maladministration on the part of the Labour Government. The answer to that is that, with all their clumsiness and stupidity, it was utterly impossible for them absolutely to destroy the ratio. That ratio of unemployment was low by reason of the excellent Government that this State had for fifteen years. The unemployment in the other States was really owing to the fact that Tory

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Governments had been in power there before Labour Governments had succeeded them. In New South Wales the Labour Government were left with deficits amounting to nearly £15,000,000. There were tremendously high deficits running into millions in Victoria, and also in South Australia, all of which now have Labour Governments. In this State we left some £5,000,000 in the till for the stupid in the new Government to deal with. One of the worst things that has happened during this debate has been the cheap statement about washerwomen being comrades of this party. Considering the poignancy of trouble in many thousands of the humblest of homes—a trouble that is extended to even the prosperous classes—there should be no such thing as a class distinction which can sneer at washerwomen being the comrades of this party. Certainly we are the natural champions of these women.

Dr. KERWIN: What did you ever do for them?

Mr. BEDFORD: We did a great deal for them. We did not destroy the awards under which their husbands worked, and by this means send them to the wash-tub. What have the present Government done for apprentices? What have they done with the ten thousand jobs, and the 2,000 pence they provided for that work?

The class war continues, no matter how much anyone may deprecate it. We had the statement made by an Archbishop in Melbourne—I am referring to Archbishop Head—who said that economic freedom was sadly lacking in Australia to-day by reason of trade union regulations, arbitration court awards, and high protective tariffs. Presumably this Archbishop desires to people his heaven with importers. The mere fact of being a high protectionist would apparently keep me out, but the fact remains that his attempt to keep the class war going by pretending to destroy it is only another proof that a man can be an Archbishop and an ass at the same time. This has occurred in Victoria. We are told here by the Secretary for Labour and Industry that 33s. a week based on three days' work a week under this dole is a good replacement of the dole. I agree that anything is better than the dole.

Mr. HYNES: A very small percentage of the unemployed are getting that.

Mr. BEDFORD: Probably a very small percentage, but in other States under Labour this is happening, according to this statement which appeared in the "Telegraph" to-day—  
"Melbourne, 30th September.

"On a test vote the State Parliament by a majority of two last night rejected the proposal of the Legislative Council to reduce the wages of unemployment relief workers. The Government desires the basic wage to be paid.

"The decision indicates the Ministry's intention to resist the Council on the issue. The Council will meet this afternoon and as its members intend to remain firm there should be further developments in the war between the two Houses."

The PREMIER: Mr. Lang is putting the unemployed on relief work for two weeks, and then putting them off for three.

Mr. BEDFORD: Whether it be the aim of this form of alleged relief of unemployment or not, it is a fact that it seeks to

reduce general wages by this means. That cannot be gainsaid. Whether or not it is part of the Government's general scheme to destroy the Arbitration Court altogether and interfere with awards or whittle down the powers of the Industrial Court and leave it only to deal with wages and hours, whereas at the same time the worker is robbed of the better conditions that the old Arbitration Court gave him, I do not know; but in any case it has that effect with the 33s. per week, which I admit is better than the dole, because if there is anything bad in payment, it is the payment of something to somebody for nothing. The dole position in England has made the position of that country practically hopeless. When we consider that they did not have the courage earlier to change their adverse trade balance of £264,000,000 a year—either to reduce it or to alter it—and at the same time they are spending £100,000,000 a year on doles, one sees that not only will the country be monetarily bankrupt, but that it must also be bankrupt of men.

I know hundreds of men here who have been out of work for six to nine months, and they are still good men. The trouble with the dole system is that it encourages the loafer—the fellow who would never work—but, after being two or three years out of work, you will find even some of the good men accepting the half loaf that is alleged to be better than no bread, accepting all the conditions that go with it, and gradually accepting the degradation of manhood which would be the greatest loss this country could face. It would be all right if the doctrine of absolute despair were possible of acceptance in a country of this sort; but it is not. We know very well that the Government would, if they could, get money in the old, respectable, wasteful style by borrowing abroad; but I hope never to see another pound borrowed outside Australia. If the Government could see £100,000,000, or credit for that amount, coming here to-morrow, and knew that in twenty years they would be respectable enough to pay £120,000,000 back and still owe the money, they would grab it with both hands; but, when there is a proposition that the country should cash in on some of its own reserves of credit and confidence, all their old superstitions in favour of the private banking system—which is the worst tyranny under which we suffer—immediately come to the top; and they say it is absolutely impossible that that should be done because it is repudiation. Borrowing money that you cannot pay back is repudiation of the worst kind. Going into debt when there is no possible hope of getting out of it is just as bad as borrowing money with no intention of repaying it.

The PREMIER: The printing of notes with nothing behind it is just as bad.

Mr. BEDFORD: But the printing of notes with the credit and confidence of the people behind it is all right. How did this business of the Bank of England start? Everybody knows that the Government of the time—a Hanoverian King—wanted to use English money and Englishmen for the purpose of protecting his job in the German States. He decided that it was necessary to have £1,200,000 to carry on a war. In comparison with the £900,000,000 which we spent on the last war, the sum which this Hanoverian required seems very small; but in those times they did not give the soldiers 6s. a day. In

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point of fact, they did not give them clothing; and the average soldier went to fight in foreign countries without boots; and, if he went at all, he also went without brains. The £1,200,000 desired for this war was the cause of a charter—only a six years' charter—being given to certain friends of the Government of the time to form the Bank of England. They issued a prospectus for £1,500,000, and the response was £72,000. They then got the Government to issue £1,200,000 worth of notes; and then they lent the Government their own £1,200,000 worth of notes, for which they charged them 8 per cent. interest per annum, and also £4,000 a year for keeping the books. God knows how anybody can call that sort of thing honest money credit manufacture or confidence, or anything but a confidence trick. Whilst saying that it was necessary that gold should always be held to the full amount of its commitments, we have seen the history of the Bank of England. The whole gold reserve of the bank has been as low as 2½ per cent. of the note issue and the country was not a penny the worse.

There have been continual questions coming from the other side: "What would you do?" We cannot do anything while the Government are there; but we can do this with them—we can ask them to get the recalcitrant Senate to work in conjunction with the elected Labour Government in the Federal sphere. We can ask them to withdraw their insensate objection to such a State enterprise as printing State notes. We can ask them to help the Federal Government to put the Commonwealth Bank back where it was before the Bruce-Page Government altered it and made it the friend of the private banks, instead of an active and aggressive competitor. Then, having given it control of the currency, we could do exactly what was done in the country by Denison Miller when he raised £315,000,000 for war purposes and also paid £60,000,000 of war debt. If he could raise £315,000,000 for war purposes, we can raise £100,000,000 for peace purposes. Every merchant, every shopkeeper, everybody—the million living on the wages of the man who is the productive labourer—they all admit that, if there is one thing necessary to give business its impetus again, it is a reconstruction of the purchasing power of the community; and everybody who knows anything knows that wages and purchasing power are Siamese twins. You cannot injure one without injuring the other. They cannot be separated, and low wages must mean a loss of prosperity for everybody in the country, and the position to-day is that much worse. The Government in their attempt, for instance, to equalise the downfall of prices on the other side, have offered all pastoral finance firms and banks which reduce the rate of interest on pastoral property to 6 per cent. extended leases at lower rents. What has happened? The Government generally has had its leg pulled by Goldsbrough, Mort, and Co. Goldsbrough, Mort, and Co., having on the one hand a finance department financing its own stations, and on the other side of the corridor the ownership of stations, was perfectly prepared to reduce interest to itself in exchange of a lower rental and an extension of leases. And who is paying for that? Only the State. On the other hand labour, which produces every penny of wealth, is given something which cannot keep body and soul together—

£1 13s. a week at the best. That is offered to people who are in no sense giving to pastoral properties any reduction of interest, because it is only their own properties they are giving relief to at the expense of the State, from whom they are receiving more than the interest reduction, so that when the question of equalisation of sacrifice comes along we see how the worker generally—the real producer—gets it in the neck on every occasion. Here you are paying these men a rate of wages which is slowly but surely degrading the basic wage until it will be down to a starvation level. The Federal Labour Government, which hon. members opposite vilify so much, came into power with somewhere about £20,000,000 of deficits in the aggregate to struggle against. Even Mr. Lang, who has been referred to as a mad elephant or as a camel in a tent—a camel is a most dangerous animal to get into a tent, as it has a habit of standing up at an awkward moment—even this man has done immeasurably better for the people in New South Wales after having succeeded to a legacy of debt of £15,000,000 than the Government here which succeeded to a nest-egg of £5,000,000 left them by the Labour Government.

Let me take the position with regard to the industry which mostly concerns my own electorate. In this matter the Minister, with a glibness that comes from very little knowledge of anything, has a habit of saying that the cost of living has gone down because bread is .025 per cent. cheaper than it was. A percentage of .025 is not a thing which is passed on in the shops, because it is not represented as any known coin. When I asked him the other day, that seeing the wage for married men at Augathella was 50s. a week, and that the price of the 2-lb. loaf was 8d., would he instruct the Price Fixing Commissioner to function there. I received the impudent reply, that if the price of the 2-lb. loaf was 8d., then the people at Augathella probably were satisfied with the price of bread existing there. It is only necessary that we should return to anything like a level consideration of affairs: it is not necessary that we should sit so long in the Gethsemane that Governments in Australia have put us into. If the Tories of Australia will withdraw their objection to the one way there is of stimulating industry, by doing good work and not chipping grass off footpaths, which grows up again immediately the next rain falls, by not giving men work which is an insult to their intelligence, and is therefore badly done, by not taking men away from their natural callings—and, of course, there is a loss of dignity which results in less work by men being transferred from a specialised calling to an unspecialised one—if they would only agree to see facts as they are, and, if it were possible for the national bank, without borrowing anything, to raise £315,000,000 for war, they should reinstate it in the position in which the Fisher Government put it, in which case it could easily raise £100,000,000 for the purposes of peace. We could have all the necessary railway connections in Australia made—not necessarily to-day, but in the future—we could have the whole of the Riverina basin locked. We could have the uniformising of the railway gauge, which every five years it is left will mean £5,000,000 added to the cost of construction. One of the stories we hear to-day as to the reason

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why confidence is not restored is because the tariff is too high. We would expect such a silly statement from an archbishop, and we got it. What are the facts? Mr. Bruce, during his six and a-half years of mismanagement, imported £900,000,000 worth of goods, and was enabled to borrow money abroad by reason of the fact that it was necessary to borrow money to ease the goods in. It was perhaps a coincidence that Pater-on, Laing, and Bruce only made £23,000 a year before the Bruce Government took the tariff off, but for the next six years they made £75,000 a year; but, so soon as the Labour Government got in, naturally their profits went back to something like pre-war figures. The facts are that since this tariff has been put on—and I would like to see an embargo on motor cars for two years—the aspect of things has changed. If the tariff had not been put on, we would have been in absolute ruin. When the Labour Government came into power, owing to tremendous borrowing, there was a big interest bill to be met in London, and there was, in addition, £30,000,000 of floating loans.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: So there is to-day.

MR. BEDFORD: There are not. They are down to £5,000,000—I have the Commonwealth figures. If the Treasurer does know anything—and generally he says, "If I could tell you all I knew, I would curdle your blood." (Laughter.) I do not mind having my blood curdled—

MR. BUTLER interjected.

MR. BEDFORD: You are an ass, and the foal of an ass.

THE TREASURER: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member for Warrego in order in characterising hon. members as asses?

MR. BEDFORD: I withdraw the ass. I will have nothing to do with his ass, or his ox, with his man servant, his maid servant, or anything that is his. (Laughter.)

The position is that there is for the eight months of this year a favourable trade balance of £41,000,000, and it seems unlikely that money will have to be sent to pay interest, or at all events that much of it will have to be sent, and, because of the rise in metals and wool as against the exchange, the position, I think, is definitely better. In fact, an economist of the name of Winterbottom—I have only a certain amount of consideration for the name—because an economist is generally a person who only talks when you are in trouble, and then tells you that you are in trouble, which you know well enough, and is not able to tell you how to get out of it—this Professor Winterbottom—one can be sure that a man of that name would be cool, calm, and collected—gives the great explanation as to the reason why America is now in the condition in which it finds itself when it has so much of the gold of the world, that the Volstead Act has withdrawn from the Federal Government's revenue 1,000,000,000 dollars a year. Professor Winterbottom, believing—as he tells us in this article which I read the other day—that prohibition will shortly be wiped out in America, certainly after the next presidential election—that America has definitely turned the corner towards recovery. A

gentleman of that name for very good reason should have great notice taken of him, because those of my friends who have been fortunate enough to read Shelley will know that—

"If Winterbottom comes,

Can spring be far behind."

(Laughter.)

Part of the bad business in this Bill is the fact that it is not intended to put the money into Government work. Some of it, I believe, is to be provided as a gift or a loan to private enterprise. We have seen how Burenda—a holding in country not struck by drought, belonging to a wealthy company—was permitted to get an extension of lease with that alacrity which we hoped would represent the administration of the Government most in the worst cases of pastoral selections.

There is no attempt to lessen the outside bad influences on the pastoralists. There is no attempt to reduce ocean freights. The railways must carry the wool for next to nothing. Ocean freights must stay up. There is no attempt to interfere with the ridiculous scheme belonging to the days when wool was sold before the days of weigh-bridges. There is no attempt to interfere with the system of giving 113 lb. for 112 lb. There is no attempt to do away with the system of giving great quantities of wool as samples. There is no attempt to provide that the wool sold in Australia shall be paid for in Australia, instead of allowing British banking interests to get a rake-off of 3 per cent. on the total crop. Although we sell the wool in Australia it is paid for in London. There is a continual agitation for a lower tariff by the stupidest Country Party that ever was, by the stupidest fogleman ever behind it. I do not know his name, but if he is a member of the Journalists' Association the Journalists' Association ought to be prosecuted. This man is continually asking that the tariff should be pulled down, thereby putting a number of other Australians out of employment. He is asking that this should be done so that Japan will not be annoyed. He believes that Japan might one day buy 600,000 bales of wool a year. All these alleged great statesmen who roar about the producing interests never consider the Australian market which has been consuming 600,000 bales per annum for some time past and saying nothing about it. We wish to see the local market increased by population increase, but we have shut down on immigration of the sort proposed by Mr. Elphinstone, who said that we should bring in 500,000 immigrants in a year so as to destroy the "artificial conditions" of industry. Were we not wise in doing so in the circumstances? The only way in which we can attract an additional population from abroad—a population that is worth while—is by keeping duties on secondary industries so that we shall have high-priced labour which the men may secure when they come here. This country has definitely gone out of the job of being the wool and water jock for Great Britain, and I do not think it will ever go back to that.

Part of this fund is to be used as loans or grants for ringbarking and similar work in the bush. Particular care should be taken to see that the loans or grants go only to

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men who at the moment are unable to pay. Are the men who are now earning £1 13s. per week as their maximum to be used to develop rich pastoral estates in the back country at the expense of their own misery? If proper credits were provided and the basic wage paid, there would be no objection to assisting private enterprise with loans with a view to developing primary industries from one end of Australia to the other. But in the circumstances there is a grave doubt that little better than a starvation form of wages is going to be used to benefit people who are well able to help themselves.

My opposition to this Bill is to a certain extent modified by the fact—considering the peculiar ways of the Government, their thought, or want of thought in emergency—that this has become necessary to supplement what has been done before. To attempt to say that it has anything to do with, or is consistent with, or is analogous to The Unemployed Workers Insurance Act introduced by the late Labour Government is just about as stupid a story as any of the other stories we have heard from that side to-day.

Mr. TOZER (*Gympie*) [9.1]: I first of all desire to congratulate the hon. members for Gregory and Nundah for their reasonable and moderate speeches.

Mr. POLLOCK: There must have been something wrong with mine.

Mr. TOZER: There was not; the hon. member was most sensible. He did not allow himself to be carried away with any ideas of propaganda. He spoke from his heart, and in a reasoned way.

At 9.2 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (*Mr. Roberts, East Toowoomba*) relieved Mr. Speaker in the chair.

Mr. TOZER: This Bill is not a party measure at all, but one which is a matter for consideration by Parliament without any regard to party. It is a matter which appeals to everyone of us; and there is no hon. member on either side who really has not the welfare of the people at heart, and who is not out to do the best that can be done for those of our people who are, unfortunately, unemployed.

The hon. member for Gregory gave us certain reasons which he believed contributed to the position confronting us to-day, not only in Queensland but throughout Australia and the whole world. I will go a little further than that. I admit that the introduction of machinery has played a very material part in the unemployment question; but there are other reasons contributing to the position. Take, for instance, the borrowing policy that existed for fourteen years during the regime of the late Labour Government. The sum of £56,000,000 was borrowed, and the interest to be paid on that sum is a factor to be considered in the shortage of money that now exists, and which prevents people from being kept in employment. The unemployed of to-day were mostly employed on works carried out under that Government's loan policy. When loan money was plentiful, it was spent at the rate of £4,000,000 a year. When the expenditure of that money ceased, unemployment naturally increased. I will remember that work under the sewerage scheme in Brisbane was com-

menced about the time when most of the mining companies in Gympie were ceasing operations. All those miners drifted down to Brisbane and obtained employment on the sewerage work; but anyone who thought of the position at the time realised that difficulty would occur when the sewerage work was completed and those men were thrown out of employment. Naturally when the work was finished those men helped to swell the large number of men already unemployed. Other contributing factors to the unemployed position are the lack of loan money and the payment of interest that must be made. The displacement of males by females in industry has also accentuated the unemployment position, while in a larger sphere the fact that the population of the world is increasing and labour-saving machinery is rapidly increasing also makes the position much more difficult. Further, the presence of harassing restrictions and pinpricking methods in industry, which hon. members opposite may attempt to justify, inevitably result in unemployment. Again, drought conditions which have existed in certain portions of Queensland for some time add to the difficulties of unemployment, not to speak also of the effect of the serious decline in the prices of our primary products. It is not reasonable for any hon. member opposite to accuse the Government of bringing about the state of affairs which exists in Queensland to-day. We are no more responsible for it than are hon. members opposite. Nor are we any more responsible for the fact that wages have come down. It is just as though a flood came down the Brisbane River. What hon. member opposite would think of stopping a flood?

Mr. BRUCE: Nonsense!

Mr. TOZER. Hon. members may talk in that strain, but I would urge members of the Opposition to view the matter differently. I urge them to bring forward any suggestion that will help in the present difficult time through which we are passing. May I draw this analogy? If an hon. member opposite and I fell down a shaft and we were not killed, it would be madness for us to start scrapping at the bottom of the shaft. On the other hand, it would be wisdom for us to consider the best way of getting out of the hole. We are in a hole at the present time; and any suggestion that will extricate us from the position must react to the benefit of the workers of Queensland. I urge all hon. members opposite to do more than talk. Let them consider with us the question of putting more people on the land, and in that way create reproductive work.

Hon. members opposite are talking all the time about a starvation wage. Presumably industry cannot afford to pay any more. It is a criminal offence on the part of the directors of a company to go on employing men when they cannot possibly see their way to pay them. Under those circumstances the only thing to do is to shorten hands, which is happening repeatedly. These people are not to blame because they have to shorten hands. If hon. members opposite were employers of labour, they would understand that, when you are getting into debt, you have either to raise money or you have to economise. You have to let the men go. On several occasions we have had to let men go, and we were just as sorry to let them go as the men were to go; but we could not help ourselves. In

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many instances people are doing their best to encourage production. Hon. members opposite say that the relief given under this measure is only a starvation wage. We do not say for one moment that the wage paid to intermittent relief workers is a fair wage; but we do say that it will ease the position of these men, and we are not in a position to pay more. We have not got the money, and we cannot borrow it. The only way we can raise the money is by means of this unemployment relief tax. So far as I can see, it is the best scheme so far devised in Australia. The other States have had no scheme; and now they are adopting schemes similar to ours. When the Labour Government were in power, they had unemployment the same as we have it to-day. They had more money than we have; why did they not bring forward a scheme which would give the men the basic wage? The maximum amount paid to the intermittent relief worker is £2 4s. a week. These men only work three days a week, and they have the rest of the week in which to do any work they like; and they can earn an extra £1 without it being taken into consideration, so that they can earn up to £3 4s. per week. It is the best scheme so far devised; and, if hon. members opposite can devise a better, now is the time to do it. They should give us the benefit of their wisdom.

The hon. member for Gregory said the Bill was not rightly named. It is called "The Income (Unemployment Relief) Tax Act of 1930." You could not have a more descriptive name, because the tax is taken from income for the relief of unemployment, and there is not the slightest doubt about its being a tax. It is a reasonable tax, and the majority of the people do not object to paying it. Of course you always get some people who will object to anything. In the mining industry at the present time we have no particular log of wages at all. We pay a man what we consider a reasonable amount, and in one mine they are paying £4 5s. a week. That is a reasonable wage under present conditions. In another they are paying £3 18s., and they are giving the men who are working in the shaft an extra amount per week. That is a reasonable proposition. I know of a number of employers who have never reduced wages at all, who are carrying on and are paying the money out of their own pocket. They are going back to a certain extent; but they have not reached the stage at which they are forced to reduce their employees' wages, and they are doing their best to help them. There are other employers who have been carrying on for twelve months who have never asked their employees to pay the tax. They have paid their own tax and that of the employees too.

Hon. members opposite complain that we are making the washerwoman pay the tax. I do not know whether any hon. members opposite make their washerwoman pay it. I do not think there is one hon. member on this side who does that. We pay the amount ourselves.

I fail to see the force of the arguments used by hon. members opposite in opposition to this Bill. I understand that those hon. members are in favour of helping the workers. This Bill will help the workers; therefore hon. members cannot honestly object to it. They say, "You do not go far enough; you

should pay the basic wage." Where is the basic wage to come from? It is all very fine to say we should pay the basic wage; but, when we have not got the money, how can we do it? If we paid the basic wage to a certain few, we should be making a safe place for, say, 25 per cent. of the workers and the other 75 per cent. would be kept out of work. Is it not better to do away with the basic wage at a time like this when we are in such a desperate financial position? Hon. members opposite assure us that they are going to come over here after the next election. If they do come over to this side, can they do any better?

Mr. O'KEEFE: Yes.

Mr. TOZER: They will not do better, but will do much worse. The Labour Party may do good work when things are booming and there is plenty of money about; but, when we are up against things, they cannot do anything. Certain schemes have been suggested, which are not sound or practicable. Their attitude reminds me of the fable of the cat and the fox. The fox explained to the cat what wonderful tricks he had if the dogs were to come along, and how he would evade them. The cat said, "I know of only one safe trick." When the dogs came, the fox tried all his tricks and was killed; but the cat simply went up a tree—the only trick it knew, and the safe thing to do. We are taking a safe course. We do not want to see the whole structure collapse; but we desire to protect the workers as far as we possibly can. Not being able to give everyone the full basic wage at the present time, we give the best wage we can. We are doing a certain amount of good by giving work outside of the relief work. We should try to find a remedy for the present position. It is no good for one hon. member after another to get up and say, "We do not know what to do." Why do hon. members opposite not suggest something, as good might come out of the suggestion?

We first want to encourage primary production. We can get primary production going and then get our secondary industries operating. If we can find new goldfields or discover oil in Queensland, a great deal of our trouble would disappear. One or two goldfields would absorb practically the whole of the unemployed in Queensland; and it is quite on the cards that that may happen. We are trying to bring about that result in several places. Only to-night I have had a man here in connection with a show. People are actively engaged in trying to find new goldfields, prospectors are going out, and we are doing everything we can to help them.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: You are not doing it.

Mr. TOZER: I tell the hon. member that I am doing it; and I can prove it to him. We are trying to help the Government, and I am not the only one. Many are trying to do the same thing; and we think there is a reasonable prospect of success, which would mean benefit not only for the Government and the Opposition but also for the workers of Queensland. We have as much sympathy for the workers of Queensland as anybody else; but we get a certain amount of abuse, and we are told that we are cutting down wages. We are not cutting down wages any more than anybody else. Other Governments have had to do the same thing, and we hope that the time will soon come when

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things will alter and a reasonable rate of wages can be paid. I do not like to see anybody out of work. I believe that Queensland has resources, and that the time will come—perhaps not straight away—when, if we can encourage capital to come here and prospectors to go out, we shall be able to do something to improve the position. I hope that it will be soon, because it will be for the benefit of the workers of Queensland.

Mr. FOLEY (*Leichhardt*) [9.23]: It is rather amusing to listen to the appeals from the Government benches to hon. members on this side of the Chamber for some plan for solving the unemployed problem. It would appear to an onlooker that the parliamentary system had just about outlived its usefulness, because we hear the hon. member for Gympie mouthing a lot of phrases and finishing up by hoping that something will happen in the shape of the discovery of a new goldfield or an oil find, without offering any semblance of any definite plan to minimise this difficulty. A similar remark applies to the hon. member for Nundah, who is on the directorate of one of the banking institutions of this State. If the knowledge of capitalist political economy which he has displayed to-night is the sum total of his knowledge, it is a bad lookout for the financial institutions of Queensland and for Queensland generally if all the other directors are of the same calibre and have the same outlook. He also, like Micawber, hoped that something would turn up. Throughout the debate it has been evident that the Government have no semblance of a scheme other than what they have put forward.

At 9.25 p.m.,

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Mr. FOLEY: We have objected, and rightly so, to the methods adopted by the Government in dealing with the problem of unemployment. The scheme, after all, is only a palliative. After it has been in operation for a period of twelve months or so it should give some indication as to whether it is coping with the problem. We now find that, as a result of this scheme and other administrative action of the Government, there has been a decline in our national income to such an extent that it is now found necessary to double the rate of this tax; and even then it is anticipated that the amount of revenue will not be increased. That position has arisen because of the decline in our national income. Surely it suggests that the methods adopted by the Government are wrong, that other methods are required, and that sooner or later the Government will find themselves up against a dead end and unable to move any further. The problem is growing apace, much to the detriment of the working people of Queensland. About a week ago the Commonwealth Statistician pointed out in his statistics that the annual excess of births over deaths amounted to 71,000. That means that, if no cure is found for the problem of unemployment, the outlook for the additional 71,000 boys and girls will be a very poor one indeed.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Are you sure of the figure 71,000?

Mr. FOLEY: That is the figure for Australia. The figure for Queensland would be in proportion to our population.

[*Mr. Tozer.*

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The figure for New South Wales alone is over 100,000.

Mr. FOLEY: Probably the excess of 71,000 was in respect of Queensland, and not of Australia. If it is in respect of Queensland, then the problem is more acute than I imagined. The Government are faced with the problem of providing a place in industry for these additional boys and girls; and, if the problem is not solved by the Government, then probably it will be solved in a crude manner at a later date.

Hon. members opposite have asked if we have any plan to offer. We have our political programme, and I advise hon. members opposite to read it. There they will find a cure for the unemployment problem. Unless a new goldfield is discovered or oil is obtained in payable quantities, unless the financiers of the world are prepared to agree to a rearrangement which will provide a better position than exists to-day, the objective of the Labour Party will be brought into operation in my lifetime. It is the only method that can be adopted. Hon. members opposite realise that their plans for dealing with the problem have been ineffective up to date. Unemployment is increasing, and the national income is steadily declining.

No attempt is being made to solve this knotty problem; and the Government, by extending the unemployment relief scheme, are slavishly following the methods adopted in other States. I find on studying problems existing in other parts of the world, especially such a highly industrialised country as the United States of America, that those problems far outweigh our problems in Australia. The political economists in the United States and other countries advise that the time has arrived when some definite plan should be evolved to prevent chaos and disorder in industry. The present position is simply due to defects in the present form of society. The Government have made no attempt to find any other method to deal with unemployment than the one proposed in this Bill. The Bruce-Page Government appointed a very expensive Commission to inquire into unemployment and the stability of business. The powers of the Commission were certainly limited. This Government, instead of spending somewhere in the vicinity of £25,000 in an attempt to slander individual members of this party, could have spent that money in investigating some plan to overcome our present troubles. There are political economists and numerous specialists in industry in Queensland, and these, together with representatives of labour, could evolve a better plan than the one which the Government propose. Such a commission would probably recommend unorthodox methods. My observation of events in the civilised world tell me that the present parliamentary methods are proving themselves obsolete.

Mr. MAHER: That is ridiculous.

Mr. FOLEY: That is evident in Great Britain, the United States, and in Germany. Apparently something is wrong. If it is not the parliamentary system that is at fault, then it must be the representatives in Parliament. That to a certain extent is the cause of our present trouble.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: If your fingers are sore, you don't cut your head off; you deal with the sore.

Mr. FOLEY: A scheme that would be suggested by a body such as I have in mind would naturally be a temporary one; but it would be far better than the one the Government have adopted.

Another solution of our trouble would be the abolition of individualism. We have a paradox shown to us in a country containing 180,000,000 people, which at the present time is drawing the best specialists, the best artisans, and the best brains of America and England and finding employment for them. They are being taken from those countries in shiploads to Russia to carry on a big reconstruction plan.

Mr. MAHER: It is slave labour there.

Mr. FOLEY: I am not here to argue about the forms of labour there; but I am arguing that Russia is the only country in the world that is carrying out a reconstruction plan, and where, compared with the capitalistic world, no unemployment exists.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Would you like the conditions existing there to obtain in Queensland? Of course you wouldn't.

Mr. FOLEY: No other capitalistic country in the world has adopted such a huge reconstruction plan, and one involving such a great amount of technical and engineering skill. If that country can carry out a plan of that nature, then there is something fundamentally wrong with the position in capitalist countries, which cannot do anything to solve their unemployment problems. This is not the time to argue as to whether the form of society they have laid down is correct or not, as to whether the methods adopted are correct or not, or as to whether the amount of remuneration paid to labour is sufficient or not; I am not arguing on those points. My argument is that, under their system, they are apparently able to undertake a big reconstruction plan for a country much larger than ours, and faced with infinitely greater problems. By all accounts they are carrying out that plan successfully.

I have had the pleasure of reading a very fine book dealing with the Russian position. From that I gleaned the interesting information that the plan contemplates the annual supply of 22½ billion kilowatt hours of electricity, 180,000,000 tons of coal, and 60,000,000 barrels of crude petroleum oils produced from new bores. The locking of the rivers Dnioper and Don—a work that was considered an impossibility under the old regime on account of the huge capital required—is now being carried out to make these lengthy waterways trafficable and to exploit the trade of the hinterland. The Russians have revolutionised agricultural production. In addition to all these things, they have to face an increased population of 3,500,000 yearly. These people have to be absorbed in the new industries that have been created. My point is that, if it is possible for these people so to organise their country that success seems assured, then surely there must be something wrong with our present social order if we cannot do likewise. If something is not done shortly, then there is no other alternative for the people not only in this but in other countries but to take a hand themselves and endeavour to do something in the right direction. From the Minister and every other hon. member who has spoken on the Government side, we have the startling admission that the Government

are devoid of any plan. They frankly admit this is a palliative, quite apart altogether from the methods that are being adopted to raise the money. In the country of which I have spoken the workers are not taxed to carry out their plan. They may have a lower standard than the European standard; but there has been an improvement in their conditions to the extent of 35 per cent. compared with pre-war days, and that despite the fact that an industrialisation policy is being pursued in a nation of 180,000,000 people. As I pointed out earlier, when the present Administration go to the country at the next elections, let them be open and tell the people that they have fallen down on the job; that they have found it impossible to solve the unemployment problem. Let them tell the people that, instead of telling them, as they did at the last election, that 10,000 people were going to be found permanent employment by means of raising new loans.

Mr. EDWARDS: Labour put them on the ration system.

Mr. FOLEY: Labour at least will introduce some system that is better than the present system. If this question is not dealt with by a Government in Queensland, it will be dealt with by some Government in Australia. Australia will have to follow the rest of the world. At the International Finance Conference it is possible that some system of finance will be arranged which will produce a gradual charge for the better; but any man who studies the methods of production to-day must realise that, although you may do all these things, it will only be a matter of a few years before we shall be up against it again. England's trouble to-day is that she has lost 33 per cent. of her export trade. It was not the monetary system that collapsed, but the economic system. The collapse of the monetary system followed the collapse of the economic system. Owing to the introduction of science and labour-saving methods in order to cut down production costs to meet the competition of the various capitalistic countries, we have reached a point at which the markets have reached saturation point. That is the fundamental reason for the present crisis, although there are quite a number of other things which have assisted in bringing about the present crisis. Where are the new markets? Mr. Ford was compelled to go to Europe and manufacture in Europe cars that previously were exported from America. The same thing has been done in regard to other industries. The only hope left is the modernisation of India and China. That is too far off to hope that the difficulty will be patched up in time to prevent a crisis. No matter how Great Britain may bridge the gap, even if they wipe out their war indebtedness, it will only be a matter of time when, as the result of increased productivity in the industrial world, they will again reach the point where the markets of the world are saturated and the owners of wealth-producing agencies cease operations; and then we shall get back to conditions similar to those existing at present.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: What do you suggest?

Mr. FOLEY: The job is yours at the present time. Labour has a programme which embodies what I consider a solution of our present trouble. Whether the Labour movement will be so organised as to be able to

*Mr. Foley.]*

put its programme into operation is something for the future. The onus is on the Government at the present time; and, if they cannot devise something better than the present scheme, which has proved itself unworkable, as can be seen from the drift in the State's income, there is very little hope for Queensland.

Mr. BRUCE (*Kenncdy*) [9.45]: There is something in what the hon. member for Leichhardt says, because business executives and leaders of finance in America are warning their colleagues that something must be done in regard to the question of unemployment. They recognise that they will be hastening the clash of the classes if they do not do something to alleviate the unemployment which now exists. No real effort is being made to provide people with sufficient food and shelter on a decent scale; but the policy being adopted throughout the world is to give doles to the workers to keep them quiet.

That practice is being followed by the present Government in Queensland. No effort is being made to give the workers anything like decent clothing, food, and shelter.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: That is not true.

Mr. BRUCE: While the wages paid during the past eighteen months or two years may have kept the people in bare food, they have been drawing on the small savings made by them during the Labour administration. They have exhausted those savings, their clothes and boots are wearing out, and the starvation point is approaching. The Government have endeavoured to keep the workers on the bare starvation line. It is only necessary to converse with any of the men who are employed on the intermittent relief work to learn the true position.

The hon. member for Gympie asked whether the Labour Party could do any better if they were returned to power after the next election. One of the members of our party replied that we could; and personally I believe we could, but it would be very difficult. The £5,000,000 which the Labour Party left in the Treasury has disappeared, and the revenue which has been obtained by the Government through their taxation policy is also spent. The Treasurer is budgeting for a deficit of £1,800,000, so obviously it will be very difficult, if the Labour Party get back, to improve the situation; nevertheless, I believe we can do so, and I shall endeavour to point out in what direction we can improve the situation.

Let us contrast what Government members said in May, 1929, with what they have been saying during the past two years. They promised that not only would the rate of wages be maintained, but that, with wise and careful government, wages would be increased. They said they would leave all matters with regard to wages, hours, and other conditions of industry to the Industrial Court, and would not interfere with arbitration in any shape or form. The hon. members who made those promises in 1929 have turned a complete somersault since then. They have stated definitely in this House since then that they cannot keep their promises. Some hon. members have said they cannot keep them; others have said that they will not keep them. What was said to the electors in 1929 has been repeatedly contradicted by hon. members opposite. Secretary for Labour and Industry inter-

jected to the hon. member for Gregory, who was saying that certain men should not be expected to do a certain amount of work, that gangers were given instructions to use their own discretion in these matters. Yet we had in the press the statement of the Secretary for Labour and Industry that men who were unable to do labourers' work through not being accustomed to it, or who, because they were not getting the necessary food, could not do the work, were malingerers on the job.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is not true.

Mr. BRUCE: It is absolutely true, and it was published in the local press. If the Minister contradicts me for the next half hour, he will not alter the fact. The hon. member for Bulimba, in an attempt at cheap sarcasm, referred to the washerwomen of Queensland as the comrades of the Labour Party. I am proud of the association of the Labour Party with washerwomen or any other class of persons who have to toil for a living and who are insufficiently paid. The washerwomen of Queensland are as decent as the hon. member for Bulimba, and some of them are more intelligent.

The TREASURER: She never said anything of the kind.

Mr. BRUCE: She did. These things should not be said; and the only woman in the House should not indulge in cheap sarcasm at the expense of women who are unable to protect themselves. (Government interruption.) The same hon. member made the statement in the press that, if people were thrifty, a man, his wife, and one child could live on 14s. 6d. a week, and that the children of the working people were brought up too easily.

The TREASURER: That is not true.

Mr. BRUCE: It is true. It was reported in the press. A lady member of Parliament has to stand up to what she says just as any other hon. member; and, if the hon. member for Bulimba is going to take advantage of her position in this House in a statement of this kind, I am not going to let it pass.

The TREASURER: She never made statements of that kind.

Mr. BRUCE: The hon. gentleman was not here.

The TREASURER: I was.

Mr. BRUCE: Then the hon. gentleman was blind, deaf, and dumb, or else he is telling an untruth.

The TREASURER: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member for Kenncdy in order in suggesting that I am telling an untruth?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order, and must withdraw.

Mr. BRUCE: I withdraw, Mr. Speaker. The Secretary for Labour and Industry said that the administration of this fund is costing about 4 per cent. As a matter of fact, his department has very little to do with it. Seventy-five per cent. of the time of the police is occupied in administering this work, and the Commissioner for Main Roads has been responsible for much of the work; and, if the wages paid in these departments were taken into consideration, we would find that the cost was very much more than the amount stated by the Minister. The Police

[*Mr. Foley.*

Department is doing excellent work so far as it has come under my notice; and, had it not been for its suggestions to the Minister, the department would have been hopeless in its administration.

Early in the life of this Parliament the Government introduced legislation enabling leaseholders to convert their land to the freehold tenure; and now it is proposed to exploit the misfortunes of a certain section of the people with a view to improving the freehold properties so converted. It is proposed to carry out this work at the expense of the unemployed and the taxpayers. This is not a proper expenditure of the money, nor is it a proper utilisation of the services of the men concerned.

The Minister has referred to the North Coast deviation. That work had been in operation for some time before the Labour Government left office, and the workers were in receipt of the basic wage of £4 5s. per week; but immediately the present Government assumed office approximately 1,000 men on that work were dismissed and were re-engaged as relief workers under this scheme. In addition, 3,000 men were dismissed from the Railway Department. They automatically became relief workers in receipt of relief rates of pay. Seventy-five per cent. of the men now engaged on relief work are men who have been dismissed by the present Government from positions carrying award rates of pay. Those men have been compelled to accept relief work at relief rates of pay. The people were directly taxed to provide the necessary wages fund, thereby relieving the Government of that burden. Many local authority employees have been dismissed, to be re-employed as relief workers. Instead of the scheme being a genuine relief scheme, it is, in the hands of the Government, an instrument whereby men may be relieved of award rates of pay, to be compelled to undertake relief work at relief rates of pay. Our greatest objection to the scheme is the fact that the tax is imposed upon those least able to bear it.

The tax commences with people who earn 6s. 8d. or any part thereof, and is carried on at a flat rate to the higher incomes irrespective of what the incomes may be. The increasing of the unemployment relief tax has reduced the necessity for expenditure from general revenue, yet the Government have spent the money left in the Treasury by the Labour Government, and the Treasurer anticipates budgeting for a deficit of £1,800,000. The effect of the Government's policy has been to secure the dismissal of many men in the Government departments receiving the basic wage, and to re-engage them on unemployment relief work, thus making the basic wage £1 10s. per week. The proposal to improve private property under this Bill will create new wealth for property owners, and bring about the tenant farmer system which exists in the old country. We have details of the Government's proposals in this direction in a paper that was laid on the table of this House in reply to a question on the 8th instant. It is stated in this proposal—

“At a small expense in each case, suitable unemployed persons can be placed on the land with Government assistance by agreement with persons who hold in their own right more land than they can profitably use.”

Here we have an admission that landholders possess more land than they can profitably

use. They should be made to give up for the benefit of the unemployed all land in excess of the area they can profitably use. The proposal proceeds—

“Already a number of agreements of this kind have been made and a number of men have been placed on the land at a minimum of expense. It is proposed to extend this principle considerably, and such settlers could well be financed out of money allocated to the State by the Federal Government. It is the cheapest and most profitable form of settlement at the present time. If more capital were available, the owner of the land could be loaned a sum not exceeding £100 for the purpose of building a shack, providing implements, animals, poultry, fencing materials, and everything necessary for giving a reasonable start to any worthwhile applicant. At the present time funds are so limited that it is not possible to do all these things, and consequently the assistance must be confined to persons who either have a few pounds of their own or are lucky enough to strike agreements with their prospective landlords sufficiently liberal to tide them over the first twelve months of settlement. Even so, the department has received quite a number of offers of land, a number of agreements have been made, and a number of persons have been settled. The proper utilisation of available lands of this type by such a system of settlement would not only increase the wealth of the State, but would help to stabilise economic conditions in districts which at present are somewhat sparsely populated.”

This proposal enables the taxpayers' money to be used to employ men at a slave wage to improve private holdings, and thus create capital values for individuals possessing more land than they can profitably use. No such proposal has ever been made before. It will create an impoverished tenant farmer system at the expense of the State and the unemployed workers. From time to time the Government have asked the question, “How are we to raise the funds?” We have frequently protested against assessments being made on a flat rate, and have contended that a much more equitable basis should be enforced. When the Government reduced the salaries and wages of public servants, they did so on a percentage basis, not on a flat rate. As the percentage basis was a logical method in the case of public servants, so it is in respect of the taxation necessary under this measure. On numerous occasions hon. members opposite have spoken about equality of sacrifice; and the Treasurer has frequently stated that we must all make sacrifices to meet the present position. Under the measure now under discussion a man receiving £2 per week will pay 1s. into the Unemployment Relief Fund. A proposal which has been put before me provides for these payments—

£2 or over per week	...	...	1s.
£4 or over per week	...	...	2s.
£5 or over per week	...	...	3s.
£6 or over per week	...	...	4s.
£8 or over per week	...	...	6s.
£10 or over per week	...	...	10s.
£12 or over per week	...	...	14s.
£16 or over per week	...	...	20s.
£18 or over per week	...	...	30s.
£20 or over per week	...	...	40s.

Mr. Bruce.]

If that proposal were accepted, it would provide more than the necessary capital required not only to pay the present unemployed relief rates, but to pay the basic wage of £4 5s. per week; and, if the basic wage were paid, it would make for the resuscitation of business, seeing that the spending capacity of the people would be greater. I believe that scheme was placed before the Government, but it could hardly be expected that the Government would adopt a graduated scale which did not suit their friends; and, as the higher salaries would be affected under a graduated scale, the Government would not consider the matter. The flat rate has been accepted by the Government, and, despite what they claim to have done for the unemployed, they do not state the fact that they will not touch those who are best able to pay. Under the scheme now under discussion a man receiving £104 will pay £2 12s. per annum. Can anyone seriously contend that the sacrifice which that man is called upon to make is comparable with the payment of £25 by a man receiving £1,000, or £250 by the person in receipt of £10,000 per annum? To the man with an income of £1,000 per annum a tax of £25 is not, to use a colloquialism, a button off his waistcoat; yet we have the lower-paid worker having to pay something for his own upkeep and the upkeep of his dependants. These men are paid half the rate of wages fixed by the Industrial Court when giving decisions for food and clothing; yet they have to pay for electric light and other things. There is no reduction in rates, no reduction in insurance, and other things, and they have to care for their new-born children, and to provide for the care of the mother after the child has been born.

This is definitely a slavery system. When the hon. member for Leichhardt was speaking, hon. members opposite interjected about conditions in Russia. Conditions in Queensland to-day are worse than the conditions in Russia; and the Government are doing nothing to help the position by way of taxing those who are able to pay. Amongst the unemployed to-day are men who previously were in sheltered jobs—a class of man who never before has been unemployed. There are engineers, clerks of all kinds, and accountants on the unemployed list; and it may surprise hon. members to know that there are two medical officers on the unemployed list. Many of these men have thought out schemes whereby their labour could be utilised profitably; and they have made proposals to the Secretary for Labour and Industry. I have been told by these men that there is more than a suspicion that some of their propositions have been handed to private enterprise to exploit. The Secretary for Labour and Industry stressed the difference between the position of Queensland and that of South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales. First of all, I would point out that there was £5,000,000 in the Treasury in Queensland when the Labour Party went out of power while in the other States there were overdrafts. In Victoria not only did the Legislative Council move for a reduction in the rates of pay to unemployed workers, but I was down in Victoria when the Legislative Assembly carried resolutions that the workers be paid the basic wage; but, when the Legislative Assembly sent up a taxing Bill to the Council to raise the necessary money to pay that wage, the Legislative Council turned it down.

[*Mr. Bruce.*

Every one of the States mentioned by the Secretary for Labour and Industry is handicapped by Legislative Councils, and, unfortunately, these Tory Legislative Councils refuse to support the proposals carried by the elective representatives of the people in the Legislative Assembly. The proposals of the Labour Legislative Assemblies of South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales have been counteracted by Tory Legislative Councils. Fortunately in Queensland we are not hampered by a Legislative Council, and for fifteen years the Labour Government were able to maintain a high standard of living and high rates of pay. The Government opposite are not hampered by a Legislative Council; and, if they wished, they could do much more than is proposed in this Bill on behalf of unemployed workers. We have a Commonwealth Labour Government elected by the people with a Senate, the members of which do all they possibly can to counteract any effort by the Labour Government to alleviate the condition of the unemployed.

The TREASURER: At present the Senate is saving Australia.

Mr. BRUCE: I cannot understand what the hon. gentleman means by that statement. He perhaps refers to the fact that the Senate prevented the Commonwealth Government from adopting a fiduciary note issue. Surely the Treasurer has not read the papers during the last week or so, because Great Britain has adopted a fiduciary note issue, having been forced to do so by economic necessities; and the effect of that has been to improve the trade of Australia tremendously. The Chambers of Commerce in Australia are congratulating themselves because Great Britain has adopted a fiduciary note issue, while the Commonwealth Senate prevented the introduction of a fiduciary note issue which would have been the salvation of Australia twelve months ago. It appears that the Federal Treasurer, Mr. Theodore, was about two years ahead of the time. He put his finger on the spring which would have released credits to Australia two years before the British economists discovered that it was a way of salvation. The Bank of England found it was not possible to maintain a gold standard, and adopted a fiduciary note issue. It is no wonder that we have a deficit of £1,800,000; no wonder that all our available cash has disappeared, and that business is worse than it was before; no wonder that there are more unemployed in Queensland than ever before, when the Treasurer says the Senate is saving Australia. The people who attacked the Commonwealth Labour Government for suggesting a fiduciary note issue have turned a complete volte face, and are now applauding the British Government for having adopted a fiduciary note issue.

The Government opposite have not been hampered by a Legislative Council. The comparisons made by the Secretary for Labour and Industry prove definitely that the state of things in Victoria is due to the fact that the Legislative Council there refused to support the Taxation Bill sent up from the Assembly providing for the payment of the basic wage to the unemployed workers. The same difficulty has been experienced in South Australia and New South Wales. In addition to that, as mentioned by the hon. member for Warrego, those Governments got into power after a long run of Tory Governments had left large deficits. They

are reaping the difficulties that we shall probably have to meet twelve months hence. As I have said, we shall be coming in when the money available three years ago has disappeared through the mad-hatter policy of the Government; but I feel sure that, by a proper form of graduated tax, the Labour Party will be able to do much better than the Government opposite, to give something approximating the basic wage, to give a spending power to the people by which the primary producer will have a market for his commodities, and be able to employ men on his farm.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Don't forget that "Hansard" records this speech.

MR. BRUCE: The hon. gentleman can see the writing on the wall. I agree with him that we shall be on the other side next year, and he may be here telling me about the speech I made to-night; but I am expressing my opinion that the time has arrived when Governments have to adopt more drastic policies. Whether they be Nationalist or Labour, they cannot continue on the lines of the past. People cannot be allowed to work under slavery conditions or starve. Unless something on these lines is done, there will be more serious problems to face. Once upon a time navvies were out of employment from time to time, but nobody worried about them. To-day a different class of people are unemployed, and their friends and relations are agitated about the unemployment question. It may not be in Queensland or Australia; but, if something is not done, the workers will not stand a minority living on the fat of the land and doing practically no work while thousands of others are starving or are put on a dole cutting grass or doing other jobs which are unproductive and an insult to their intelligence, and then go home to see their wives and families with insufficient food and clothing, unable to pay insurance, secure medical service, or live under decent conditions. The position in Queensland to-day is an absolute scandal to any man who has any appreciation of British standards of justice for human beings. The graduated tax which has been suggested will affect every member of this House; and surely no member will object to paying his quota. Surely, too, that remark applies to every other man whose income may be large.

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

MR. BULCOCK (*Barcoo*) [10.25]: It is unfortunate that we should be compelled to approach this question under two severe handicaps. The measure is one of far-reaching importance involving the economic and financial position of the State. During the last session and this session we have sought to obtain from the Minister information concerning the operations of this law, but we have been unsuccessful in spite of his promises. This year questions have been asked in order to be better able to understand the ramifications of the law; but we have been side-tracked by the Minister, who has stated that the report of the department will contain the information. That report is not available.

I propose to address myself more particularly to the phases of vocational training and land settlement, which everybody be-

lieves offers a practical solution of the problem. It is proposed to give certain instruction at the Technical College—quite a laudable intention—but we should consider the nature of the training that will be given to the boys. We have no agricultural training facilities in the State apart from our Agricultural College at Gatton, despite the fact that we have experiment farms scattered throughout Queensland. There are certain fundamentals of agriculture which could be imparted as well at a technical college as at an experiment farm or an agricultural college. The boys who are placed at Riverview and kindred institutions should enter those institutions armed with a knowledge of the fundamental principles underlying the practice of agriculture. It will be quite possible, because many of our boys have scholarship standards. Many of them have junior and higher standards, while some, through their knowledge of elementary science, could readily assimilate the application of those principles to agriculture. Why not extend the Minister's scheme of training boys to those with these attainments? Agriculture has been described as the oldest of arts and the newest of sciences. It is intensely scientific to-day. It is through misunderstanding the facts of agriculture that people have not appreciated the scientific basis on which it is founded. The twelve weeks' training proposed under the scheme is totally inadequate. There is no guarantee that, when the boys have finished their training, they will be properly trained. Only a limited number of boys are being trained, and they could receive a much more efficient training in home surroundings by a short course in agriculture at our technical college. A course in agriculture can be taken at the Sydney technical college, and that course not only caters for the prospective boy who desires to go to the agricultural college, but is also available to a person with a backyard garden who desires to acquire a knowledge of the principles of agriculture. Production on the land is one branch of a solution of our problems, and we should not neglect to arm our boys with a knowledge of those fundamental principles which are so essential. Any graduate of an agricultural college could act as an instructor. In this manner boys could be equipped with a rudimentary scientific training which they could not acquire at Riverview and such institutions. The Department of Agriculture could draw up a simple syllabus for these boys. Nothing but good would come from training boys primarily along these lines.

It is not very often that I find myself in agreement with the Minister; but on this occasion I am in whole-hearted agreement with him in discouraging the idea that a man can become 60 per cent. self-supporting by being settled on a 5-acre block. It is an uneconomic proposition, and the sponsors of the idea have no idea of the hardships they would inflict on the unfortunate people settled on 5-acre blocks. Such a scheme is a snare and a delusion. Even assuming that innumerable 5-acre blocks suitable for tobacco culture were available, the scheme is bound to fail, because the cultivation of tobacco connotes the erection of a drying plant on the block. Tobacco leaf bruises so readily that it could not be transported.

The Premier and Minister are at variance on fundamental points of the proposition.

*Mr. Bulcock.]*

On several occasions the Premier told the hon. member for Queenton that agricultural lands are being put to their fullest possible use. The Secretary for Labour and Industry suggests that it is possible to find agricultural lands in the State that are not being put to their fullest possible use. Probably the hon. gentleman is more correct than the Premier. I believe there are lands in the State on which desirable unemployed people could be settled. We have the tragic story of soldier settlement. Quite apart from the type of men who went on to a block and walked off after the £620 grant had expired, we know there were men who went on to soldier settlement blocks and made an honest endeavour to make good, but they had not the fundamental qualifications to make good. They had not the physique, or their early environment had been wrong. There are a hundred and one reasons why honourable good fellows failed in land settlement. We cannot afford to reproduce that state of affairs. We cannot afford, for the individual's sake or for the credit of the State, to put persons on blocks where they are foredoomed to failure. There is a type of individual who could not make a living off a block even though it was a block of A grade land. On the other hand, there are individuals who will make a living off land. I have in mind one man, an optometrist by profession and a graduate of a Scottish University. Although it was admitted that his optical degree was equal in merit to the certificate granted by our own Optometrists' Board, he was refused registration and could not practise because there was no reciprocity between Queensland and Scotland. In despair he went on to a small block of land and is doing very well. That shows the difficulty of making a selection—almost an insuperable difficulty.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I know an engineer who is the most successful pineapple grower in the metropolitan area.

MR. BULCOCK: That is so; and, on the other hand, you might have a man who spent all the years of his life on a farm and yet could not run a farm.

I appreciate the nature of these difficulties; and that brings me to a consideration of this question: We must have land, and we must have good land; but, unfortunately, there is a tendency to disparage land that is just a little inferior to the best land. I think we should have a soil survey of the land resources of the State. That is a work that should be undertaken by the Department of Agriculture or a kindred department, so that we would know at the outset just where we stand. There must be no delusion on the question of what it is going to cost to settle a man on the land. Any person who believes that, if we provide up to £100 for implements, tools, a shack, and that sort of thing, we are going to establish a settler on the land at that cost knows very little about the economic conditions which prevail at the present time. You cannot establish a man on the land at a cost of £100, nor at double or treble that figure. He would have to be a very good man who could become self-supporting at a cost of less than from £300 to £400. What is the use of arguing, as certain people are prone to do to-day, and what is the use of raising hopes in the minds of people who are in a desperate and forlorn position that we can solve their

problem and at the same time solve our own problem by putting these people on small blocks of land? We cannot do it, and it is unfair on the part of those people who say we can to insist that it can be done. I respect the gentleman who is leading this agitation, but he has, I am afraid, no practical knowledge of the problems associated with it. I can show him some costs relating to the bringing into profit of a small block of land which would indicate how futile the arguments are, and how wrong it is to raise hopes in the bosoms of people who honestly desire to get on the land, and who honestly believe that the solution of the problem lies in the settlement of 5-acre blocks. There is no solution in that direction. We have more problems to consider than just placing individuals on the land.

The Minister told us this afternoon that most of the good lands of the State have been alienated. That is unfortunately true, and they are still being alienated. Some two years ago we on this side, recognising that a situation would arise when it would be necessary for the State to have speedy access to the best lands of the State, earnestly opposed the further alienation of our lands. Our arguments were put on one side. It was pointed out that we were arguing a policy that was not in the best interests of the State. Now the situation has arisen. The Minister himself says, "Our Government, and more particularly past Governments, have alienated the best of the agricultural lands of the State." That is true. If one requires a small block of land, one finds that it has a freehold title. There is practically no leasehold land in close proximity to the markets that can be cultivated to-day. How easily we could have settled the major portion of this problem, associated with land settlement, if the land had not been alienated! With the co-operation of the Lands Department and the Department of Agriculture, we could have put people on small blocks at practically no cost. But if we repossessed ourselves of our lands now, we would put a staggering burden on the individual who goes on to that land. Therefore we fail in that direction. We have the example of Mount Abundance to show the difficulties selectors encounter. We cannot use the reserves of the State for the purpose of individual land settlement. We cannot expend big sums of money for the purchase of land, therefore it is obvious that we cannot embark on a big system of land reformation in the State. The alternative the Minister offers us of share-farming is an alternative as old as the hills. Even without the assistance of the department there is nothing to prevent individuals from engaging in share-farming. Share-farming is practised in all the States of the Commonwealth, particularly in the dairying and wheat-growing industries. I admit that many men in the wheat industry got their initial start in share-farming; but it is doubtful whether share-farming will succeed at the present time with our limited market.

MR. POLLOCK: The proposal is more tenant-farming than share-farming.

MR. BULCOCK: I do not want to introduce any political passion, because I think the question is too big for that. But whether it is share-farming or tenant-farming, this fact does emerge—that, owing to the policy of the Government and of past Governments, we are unable at this

[Mr. Bulcock.]

critical juncture in the affairs of the State to solve the problem in the way in which it should be solved. The conditions I have pointed out strengthen the claim of this side that the public estate should not be further alienated. Next time similar difficulties arise there will be still less land available for settlement. In time to come, when insufficient land is available, we shall not be able to find a solution of the difficulties that may confront us by settling people on the land.

Our principal difficulty to-day is the finding of markets. The small crops which are being grown by settlers, for instance, are not finding a ready market. We sent a man to Canada to place a small order for 5-inch pines in that country. At one time strawberries were regarded as enabling a grower to make a satisfactory income, but for the last two years strawberry growing has been quite unprofitable. The placing of more men on blocks of land to grow these products is only going to help to impoverish the settlers already engaged in growing them. We cannot sacrifice our present land settlement by promoting further settlement which will cause the impoverishment of settlers already on the land. We cannot exploit new avenues of agriculture, therefore we have to content ourselves with the existing avenues of production. The want of knowledge on the part of those who are advocating this small settlement is outrunning their judgment. They have raised hopes in the minds of people for which there is no justification, and the setting apart of small blocks for settlement will not solve the difficulties confronting us.

Some time ago we established a Bureau of Economics and Statistics. One would have thought that by this time the Bureau would have made some contribution to the solution of the problems confronting us. We appointed Professor Bridgen at a considerable salary; and we were told that he would show us the way out of our economic morass. Has he done so? Is the expenditure on the Bureau justifiable?

The Industrial Court lightly sets his opinion on one side, and we find no result from his visits to Melbourne to engage in the counsels of those responsible for the well-being of Australia. He and his officers offer us nothing but the palliatives to which we were accustomed before their appointment; and it is a question whether, in view of the contributions he has made to the well-being of the State, it is worth while continuing the expenditure. I think the Minister would be generous enough to admit the fact, if any of the proposals he has made had come from the bureau; but he sets Professor Bridgen on one side, and we simply go on increasing taxation. This Bill is designed to produce the same amount with a 6d. tax as was produced last year with a 3d. tax, and that fact in itself shows that the position of the State has become infinitely worse during the last twelve months. There could be no better mirror of the prosperity of the State than this measure, and no more damning commentary on the administration of the Government.

We country members have had occasion to complain that we are dissatisfied with the amounts spent in country areas. The Minister said that £270,000 was spent in the metropolitan area and about £400,000 in the country, which includes large towns such as Toowoomba, Rockhampton, and Towns-

ville. The smaller communities which were taxed did not get their share. I venture to say that the contributions from my electorate are much greater than the amount spent there.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: That is so.

Mr. BULCOCK: That is really what we are cavilling at. The pastoral areas should receive their share, particularly when there is real poverty and distress there. If we do not get rain soon, conditions in some of them will be too dreadful for contemplation. The people in the west bitterly complain that "tramp rations" are distributed on only one day in the week, which means that the men must so time their arrival at the respective towns as to be there on the day when rations are issued. This has caused men to travel collectively where they previously travelled in twos and threes. Whilst there may be some justification for the distribution of rations on one day in the week in railway towns, there is no justification for it in places removed from the railway line. Most of these men are law-abiding citizens who are not anxious to kill their own mutton on the track. I endeavoured to point out to the Minister's private secretary that in the far-flung stretches of the west the men could not double-bank on the rations. A hardship is being inflicted, and the men should not be compelled to camp on the track for two or three days waiting for the day of issue to get rations. They should be able to get rations on any day of the week. Desperate men have been compelled to kill sheep in a stud paddock in order to obtain a feed of mutton. This can be avoided by the distribution of rations on any day of the week. One of the dangers of the system is the aggregation of big bodies of men in small towns.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: We are watching it closely, and that is not operating.

Mr. BULCOCK: The system is apt to cause men to linger in small towns when there is no reason to do so. The Minister should review the question of the issue of rations, and if no alteration can be made as far as towns with railway communication are concerned, the old system should be introduced in isolated towns, and rations issued on any day of the week. No hardship should be inflicted in such cases where the department could not be imposed on.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sundgate*) [11.2], in reply: I appreciate the latter portion of the remarks of the hon. member for Barcoo relating to travellers' rations. Under the old system of issuing rations the expenditure on travellers' rations increased from, say, £6,000 to £12,000 in a month or two. Instances of abuse had been proved, and in one case a recipient secured thirteen issues of rations, valued at £5 3s., in the one week. That was why some action had to be taken. We are closely watching the position, and at an early date will see if some system cannot be evolved to meet the hon. member's complaint.

No alternative to the proposals of the Government have been put forward in the debate except one mentioned by the hon. member for Leichhardt, who suggested the

*Hon. H. E. Sizer.]*

adoption of the conscript system obtaining in Russia.

Mr. FOLEY: I never spoke about adopting the Russian system.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The hon. member said that the alternative was a more comprehensive system than ours, and he argued that there was no unemployment under the system in operation in Russia. It is also a fact that the men and women of that country have been conscripted and forced to work under all sorts of conditions. That is the only alternative put forward from the other side; but I refuse to believe that the people of Queensland would be prepared to accept a system that destroyed individuality and social life.

Mr. FOLEY: I merely quoted the Russian plan. I do not expect you to adopt it.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: That is what the hon. member advocated.

Mr. FOLEY: I did not.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: That is foreign to our ideals, and I regret that the hon. member should advocate it.

Mr. FOLEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. By interjection I have denied that I advocated any such scheme. I ask that the Minister accept my denial.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. gentleman must accept the denial of the hon. member for Leichhardt.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I must, but—(Opposition dissent.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Let me make this point: I realise the magnitude of the job; and I was hoping that some concrete suggestions might be forthcoming from the Opposition. The hon. member for Leichhardt is not the originator of the Russian system; many deputations have described it to me. But, when the hon. member urges that to get to the root cause of unemployment we must reorganise society, and advocates the Russian system of reorganisation, under which there is no unemployment, the inference is that, if we followed the same system, we would have no unemployment. That may be correct, but I cannot believe that the conscription of labour would appeal to the people of this country.

Mr. FOLEY: No one suggested it.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I realise the difficulties that will be created if the Russian Five-year Plan is successful; but I am not satisfied that that is the best alternative to the proposals we are putting forward. I have no desire to misinterpret the hon. member in any way.

Question—"That the Bill be now read a second time" (Mr. Sizer's motion)—put and passed.

#### COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Roberts, East Toowoomba, in the chair.)

Clause 1—"Short title and construction of Act"—agreed to.

[Hon. H. E. Sizer.

#### Clause 2—"Amendments of Principal Acts—Income (Unemployment Relief) Tax"—

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, Sandgate) [11.10]: I beg to move the following amendment:—

"On page 3, after line 15, insert the following proviso:—

(d) Provided that if it is proved to the satisfaction of the Director of Labour that the total amount of the taxable income (including income from employment and income other than income from employment) for the income year ending on the thirtieth day of June, one thousand nine hundred and thirty-two, of any employee did not exceed in the whole the sum of one hundred and four pounds, such employee shall be entitled to a refund of the tax overpaid calculated as if the tax payable was at the rate specified in paragraph (a) of subsection one of this section and not at the rate specified in paragraph (b) of the said subsection."

The amendment is to meet the situation that I spoke of when the resolution was before the Committee of Ways and Means. Some anomalies may take place, and this will give the Government power to adjust such anomalies, if they do occur.

Mr. FOLEY: That is twelve months after.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: There is no other practical way of doing it. We cannot tell till the end of the year what a person's income has been during the year, and at the end of the year we will adjust the tax.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (Mackay) [11.12]: It is quite clear that the object of the Minister is to exempt from the new taxation any income that is not in excess of £104 a year. Yesterday we endeavoured to get an exemption of £104, but were defeated. While the amendment makes the position clear so far as the annual income is concerned, it is going to be of no advantage to the casual worker. The logical thing to do is to provide that any worker who does not earn more than £2 in any one week shall pay a tax of 3d. in the £1 instead of 6d. in the £1. Suppose a man is paid fortnightly and he is an intermittent worker and rationed. In that case his income is not above £4 for the fortnight, and he should pay a tax of 3d. in the £1. Obviously, if you carry it over a year, and a man has had a number of different employers, it will require the keeping of a lengthy record for that casual worker to be in a position to claim a refund. It is all right in the case of the man who pays on an annual return. The logical thing would be to frame an amendment providing for a lower rate of tax on any income which does not exceed £2 in any one week; otherwise the benefit is going to be of no practical value.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, Sandgate) [11.15]: I am quite aware of the position raised by the Leader of the Opposition. It is because of that anomaly that we decided in the first instance to adopt the flat rate, which is the logical way to overcome the difficulty. The administration will not be harsh. It is only in isolated cases that this will apply. If we do not start to assess

on the weekly payments, we shall never collect the tax at all. Although a man might be taxed at the higher rate when he earns an extraordinarily large amount in one week, if his total income for the year does not exceed £104, a refund will be made, as provided by the amendment. This is the only practical way to deal with the position.

Amendment (*Mr. Sizer*) agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 8, both inclusive, agreed to.

Clause 9—“*New section 27—Constitution of Fund; Payments to Fund; Grants and Loans; etc.*”—

*Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (Mackay)* [11.19]: Subclause (2) (4) is another example of the powers being taken by the Minister. It gives the Minister arbitrary powers in dealing with the fund. Subclause (5) is in the same category with regard to arbitrary powers. I beg to move the following amendment—

“On page 19, lines 70 to 52, both inclusive, omit the following words—

Such sums by way of loan which the Minister shall approve of being made to any company, corporation, firm, partnership, or private individual:

Provided that in the case of an application to the Minister for any loan by any company, corporation, firm, partnership, or private individual for the purpose of creating employment and the concomitant relief of unemployment as aforesaid, the Minister shall obtain the consent of the Governor in Council in regard thereto, and any such loan shall be subject to such terms, provisions, conditions, or stipulations as to security to be given in respect thereto, and the nature of such security or as to the method of repayment, interest, and time, and any other matter or thing relating thereto, including the power of and remedies for enforcement of repayment, as shall be prescribed by the Governor in Council, by Order in Council published in the ‘Gazette,’ either generally or in any particular case.”

The object of the amendment is to remove from the clause the objectionable features to which I referred in my second reading speech. It seems an unconscionable thing that funds raised by taxation on meagre incomes should be granted by way of loans to people to enable them to finance their business. I have already quoted the grotesque result that people in casual employment are called upon to contribute to a fund which, in effect, augments the funds of the Agricultural Bank. Under this clause the Minister can lend money to a company possessing a franchise under the measure known as the Tolls Bill, and in countless different directions this money can be used to take the place of loan funds. To what extent is it to be used, and how is it to be controlled? Obviously everyone cannot get an advance. If the Minister is going to lend money to one man for fencing, why

not lend it to another to put a veranda on his house, if he has a growing family and men are out of work? Taxation levied on the general public should be used for the improvement of the public estate only, and the provision in the principal Act in that respect was sound; but the Minister proposes to lend money at a low rate of interest to individuals who will put the resulting increment into their own pockets. The clause also provides a very useful means of conferring favours.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (*Hon. H. E. Sizer, Sandgate*) [11.24]: I cannot accept the amendment. The clause is a vital one, and nobody regrets the necessity for it more than I do. The land alienated from the Crown, to which the hon. member for Barcoo has referred, was alienated in past years. We are not responsible for that.

I have changed my views considerably regarding country land tenures. The fact remains that land is already alienated. If the clause does not stand, then the Government will be charged with failing to encourage productive work. I resent the suggestion about political patronage. There is no foundation for it. Every scheme will be submitted to departmental officers for investigation and report; and no scheme will be submitted to the Government that does not carry the recommendation of those officers.

*Mr. WIENHOLT (Fassifern)* [11.27]: I objected to the inclusion of this provision in the Act last year. It is open to very grave difficulty and considerable objection. Has the Minister power to use this fund for such work as ringbarking on any lease held by a private person or company?

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Not without this clause.

*Mr. WIENHOLT*: I am absolutely in favour of the Government using this money for such purposes as ringbarking upon a crown lease held by a tenant, because they can charge interest, and, if necessary, a fair amount by way of redemption, on the amount expended. A number of cattle-owners would ringbark their country, but they cannot get the necessary advance from the banks. This is essentially contract work. I believe in contract work. In this case it will enable the relief worker to earn more than he otherwise could do. I see no objection at all to that, for I see very big possibilities of the Government doing excellent work with this fund on sound business lines. In every way such a proposal seems to be highly sound and desirable. Other work such as falling scrub and sowing grasses can be done also by relief workers under contract, with an adjustment in the rent to meet the cost, the three parties—the Crown, the tenant, and the relief workers—gaining by the work. Something similar could be done in the case of an agricultural farm. I do not want to tie the hands of the Minister, as I am naturally willing to give him the fullest power; but I want a clear distinction drawn between granting money for purposes such as I have enumerated and giving a definite grant or loan from relief funds to a third party, the owner of the freehold land.

Question—“That the words proposed to be omitted from clause 9 (*Mr. Smith's*

*Mr. Wienholt.*”]

amendment) stand part of the clause"—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 30.

Mr. Annand	Dr. Kerwin
" Barnes, G. P.	Mrs. Longman
" Barnes, W. H.	Mr. Macgroarty
" Blackley	" Maher
" Boyd	" Maxwell
" Butler	" Moore
" Clayton	" Morgan
" Costello	" Peterson
" Daniel	" Russell, H. M.
" Deacon	" Sizer
" Edwards	" Tedman
" Fry	" Tozer
" Grinstone	
" Hill	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Kenny	" Kelso
" Kerr	" Russell, W. A.

NOES, 23.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Mullan
" Bedford	" Pease
" Brassington	" Pollock
" Bruce	" Smith
" Dash	" Wellington
" Dunlop	" Wienholt
" Foley	" Wilson
" Hanlon	" Winstanley
" Hanson	
" Hynes	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Jones, A.	" Bulcock
" Jones, A. J.	" O'Keefe
" Kirwan	

AYES.

PAIDS.

NOES.

Mr. Plunkett	Mr. Collins
" Brand	" Stopford
" Nimmo	" Dow
" Walker, J. E.	" Cooper

Resolved in the affirmative.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*) [11.39]: In order to refute the suggestion that there is any patronage associated with this scheme, and to prove that our sole object is to get the greatest value for the money expended, I beg to move the following amendment:—

"On page 10, after line 52, insert the following new subclause:—

'(3A) In respect of loans which may be made to any company, corporation, firm, partnership, or private individual, as referred to in the last preceding subsection, the following provisions shall apply, namely:—

'(i.) Any application for such loan shall be forwarded to the Minister, in the first instance.

'(ii.) Such application shall thereupon be forwarded by the Minister to the Manager of the Agricultural Bank, or the Land Administration Board, or to any other Governmental authority, as to the Minister may seem fit and proper in respect of the application concerned.

'(iii.) The Manager of the bank, or Land Administration Board, or other Governmental authority receiving from the Minister any such application shall cause inquiries to be made in respect thereof, and shall furnish to the Minister a report and recommendation thereon.

'(iv.) The Minister shall consider such report and recommendation and may recommend such recommendation for approval by the Governor in Council, or may refuse such recommendation or may refer such recommendation back to

the Manager of the said bank, or Land Administration Board, or other Governmental authority for further inquiry and consideration.

'(v.) The provisions of the proviso to paragraph (b) of the last preceding subsection requiring final approval by the Governor in Council of any such application for any such loan shall apply in every case.'

That provides a safeguard against any suggestion of political patronage. All proposals will be technically reported upon and then the matter will come back to the Minister, and it can be approved of only by the Governor in Council. That means that the Minister himself cannot grant any loan. That should satisfy the Committee that there is no ulterior motive behind this proposal.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) [11.42]: The amendment may be some slight improvement on the ground that responsible public officers have the responsibility of investigating and making a report on any application that may be made. But the Minister is to be the final arbiter and authority as to whether any loan shall be granted or not. There is no doubt about the power of the Minister to reject an application. He may not send it on to the department or the Governor in Council at all, and therefore it is dead. We know that the Governor in Council to all intents and purposes in this case is the Minister. These minutes are dealt with formally unless they involve policy, and they are passed solemnly again by the Executive Council. This amendment is only a safeguard to the extent that a public officer may make a report on any proposal, but it in no way limits the power of the Minister.

Amendment (*Mr. Sizer*) agreed to.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) [11.45]: I beg to move the following amendment:—

"On page 11, lines 3 to 8, both inclusive, omit the following subclause:—

'(5.) Without in any wise limiting the operation of the previous subsections of this section it is hereby declared that such fund may be utilised in the direction of alleviating unemployment and creating employment in any manner which the Governor in Council may, from time to time, direct and determine.'

This subclause is really the whole Bill. It gives the Governor in Council power to do anything at all which is allegedly in the nature of relief employment. This is another example of what has been aptly described as "The New Despotism"—legislation without parliamentary authority.

Mr. HYNES (*Townsville*) [11.46]: This power has been designed by the Minister in order to give him dictatorial powers. A rumour is current that it is the intention of the Government to subsidise farmers who employ youths to the extent of 5s. in the £1.

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

Mr. HYNES: The Minister admitted that one-third of the fund is going to come

[*Hon. H. E. Sizer.*]

from people receiving less than £104 per annum.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I did not admit that at all. I said that a general exemption of £104 would account for one-third of the fund—possibly more.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*) [11.48]: If we had not this general power, we could not go on with the vocational training scheme. The power will only be used in conjunction with the provisions of the other Act, where it is necessary to relieve unemployment. Every scheme cannot be foreseen.

The "New Despotism" referred to by the hon. member is in reality very old—it existed long before this Government came into power. Whatever may be said about the provision, we have to remember that we are in the midst of a crisis; and we have not gone nearly so far as the Imperial Parliament, which in an Act of three clauses to deal with the whole financial reconstruction, delegated practically all its power to the Executive. This is a general clause to enable us to meet a situation which may arise. We do not want an insufficiency of power in an emergency.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) [11.51]: The special pleading of the Minister is not very convincing. We can only judge the future by the past, and we remember that on the 30th June last an Order in Council was issued not only continuing the principal Act—which the Government said would not be necessary after their allegedly fine handling of the situation—but also actually amending sections of the Act in a way sometimes quite foreign to the Act itself. That last fact is recognised by the parliamentary draftsman and the Government, because they have included in the Bill a clause validating their action.

Question—"That the words proposed to be omitted from clause 9 (*Mr. Smith's amendment*) stand part of the clause"—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 31.

Mr. Annand	Mr. Macgroarty
" Barnes, G. P.	" Maher
" Barnes, W. H.	" Maxwell
" Blackley	" Moore
" Boyd	" Morgan
" Butler	" Peterson
" Daniel	" Russell, H. M.
" Deacon	" Russell, W. A.
" Edwards	" Sizer
" Fry	" Tedman
" Grimstone	" Tozer
" Hill	" Wienholt
" Kelso	
" Kenny	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Kerr	" Clayton
Dr. Kerwin	" Costello
Mrs. Longman	

NOES, 22.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Mullan
" Bedford	" O'Keefe
" Bruce	" Pease
" Bulcock	" Pollock
" Dash	" Smith
" Dunlop	" Wellington
" Foley	" Wilson
" Hanlon	" Winstanley
" Hynes	
" Jones, A.	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Jones, A. J.	" Brassington
" Kirwan	" Hanson

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Plunkett	Mr. Collins
" Brand	" Stopford
" Nimmo	" Dow
" Walker, J. E.	" Cooper

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 9, as amended, agreed to.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) [11.59]: I beg to move the following amendment:—

"On page 11, after line 26, insert the following new clause to follow clause 9:—

'The following new section (section 28A) is inserted after section 28 of the principal Act:—

The rate of wages paid or payable to an employee in respect of any work performed by him under or in pursuance of this Act or under any Order in Council thereunder shall not be less than the rate prescribed for such work or class of work in accordance with the provisions of any award or industrial agreement under the provisions of "The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts, 1929 to 1930."'"

The amendment regularises and places in the Industrial Court the right to make awards for this class of employment. Section 63 of the Industrial Arbitration Act makes deliberate provision for such awards. It is a laudable ambition to carry on useful work by improving the public estate from this fund, and everything possible should be done to make this work sound and valuable. One such method is to make the work subject to an award of the court. The workers would not then feel the same sense of injustice as at the present time, and the work would be carried on more efficiently and economically.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*) [12.3]: I cannot accept the amendment. It has been argued before, and there is no need to reiterate the argument. We have only a given amount of money, and we must provide for every person eligible to go on the fund. The responsibility must be with the people who have the funds to meet an emergency as it arises. It would not be fair for the court to place relief work in the same category as industry.

Question—"That the new clause (*Mr. Smith's amendment*) be inserted to follow clause 9"—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 22.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Mullan
" Bedford	" O'Keefe
" Brassington	" Pease
" Bruce	" Pollock
" Bulcock	" Smith
" Dash	" Wellington
" Hanlon	" Wilson
" Hanson	" Winstanley
" Hynes	
" Jones, A.	<i>Tellers:</i>
" Jones, A. J.	" Dunlop
" Kirwan	" Foley

Hon. H. E. Sizer.]

## NOES, 31.

Mr. Annand	Mrs. Longman
„ Barnes, G. P.	Mr. Macgroarty
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Maher
„ Blackley	„ Maxwell
„ Boyd	„ Moore
„ Butler	„ Morgan
„ Clayton	„ Peterson
„ Costello	„ Russell, H. M.
„ Daniel	„ Russell, W. A.
„ Deacon	„ Sizer
„ Edwards	„ Tedman
„ Fry	„ Tozer
„ Grimstone	
„ Hill	<i>Tellers:</i>
„ Kelso	„ Kenny
„ Kerr	„ Wienholt
Dr. Kerwin	

## PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Collins	Mr. Plunkett
„ Stopford	„ Brand
„ Bow	„ Nimmo
„ Cooper	„ Walker, J. E.

Resolved in the negative.

Clause 10—“*Amendment of section 7—Income from unemployment subject to Tax*”—agreed to.

Clause 11—“*Amendment of s. 36—Duration of Act and savings*”—agreed to.

Clause 12—“*Ratification of Orders in Council and regulations*”—

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) [12.9]: This is the clause which legalises the Order in Council to which I referred earlier in the evening. Probably it is necessary to legalise it inasmuch as sections of the Order in Council of the 23rd June last may otherwise be illegal. I rise to call attention to the method being adopted by the Government of passing Orders in Council amending legislation without the consent and authority of Parliament, and then, in the guise of a clause of this nature, legalising what might otherwise be ultra vires.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*) [12.10]: This clause gives the Committee an opportunity to approve or otherwise of the Orders in Council and regulations to which the Leader of the Opposition refers. It is not a new principle. When the hon. member was a member of the Government he did it regularly. The role of a Simon Pure is a remarkable one for the Leader of the Opposition to assume.

Clause 12 agreed to.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments.

## THIRD READING.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*) [12.11]: I beg to move—

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

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at 12.12 a.m.

[*Mr. Smith.*