

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 28 OCTOBER 1931

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WEDNESDAY, 28 OCTOBER, 1931.

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

QUESTIONS.

PROBABLE APPOINTMENT TO TRANSPORT BOARD.

Mr. DUNLOP (*Rockhampton*) asked the
Secretary for Railways—

“Is there any truth in the strong
rumour that, when the transport board
is appointed after the necessary Bill goes
through Parliament, a highly paid rail-
way official at present occupying a very
responsible position in Brisbane, and who
I understand is due to retire next year
on account of the age limit, is likely to
be one of those appointed to this board?
If so, is this fair to other highly paid
and very competent railway officials,

Mr. Maxwell.]

who have had to retire although quite capable of carrying out their duties for some time to come?"

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

"When the Transport Bill is presented to Parliament, the hon. member will have an opportunity of acquainting himself with the details of the proposal."

CHIEF ATTENDANT AT MENTAL HOSPITAL,
WILLOWBURN.

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

"Is the chief attendant at the Mental Hospital, Willowburn, over the age limit, and is it a fact that he is being retained at a considerably reduced salary and gets reappointed to such position something like every six months?"

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

"The chief attendant of the Willowburn Mental Hospital is over sixty-five years of age, and is being continued in his employment under the provisions of sections 24 and 25 of 'The Public Service Acts, 1922 to 1924.'"

REPORT IN RE LEAD POISONING AT MOUNT ISA.

Mr. MULLAN (*Flinders*): I desire to ask the Secretary for Mines whether he has an answer to the following question, which I addressed to him on 21st October:—

"Has any report or information of any kind reached his department in reference to lead poisoning or plumbism at Mount Isa? If so, will he state how many men have been affected by this disease since the commencement of operations there?"

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

"The department has been kept fully informed regarding leading or plumbism occurring at Mount Isa. Conditions resulting in men being affected by lead have had to be met and dealt with in all new works dealing with lead ore or lead products, and the likelihood of such conditions arising at Mount Isa has been fully recognised. Regulations now in force provide that a detailed record of any cases of plumbism occurring must be furnished to the department each month, with full information as to the particular occupation of the man or men affected, and other necessary particulars as to the nature of each case. The chief cause of the cases of plumbism has been the escape of dust in sintering and smelting while getting these processes into normal operation in the new plant. The number of cases of plumbism treated at Mount Isa from 1st July to 17th October was sixty-eight, of which seventeen were recurrent. Fifty-one men, therefore, were affected in the period stated. None were serious cases."

COST OF ROYAL COMMISSIONS APPOINTED BY
MOORE GOVERNMENT.

Mr. HYNES (*Townsville*): I desire to ask the Premier whether he has an answer to the following questions, which I addressed to him on 23rd September:—

1. What is the number of Royal Commissions which have been appointed during the regime of the present Government?

2. What expenditure has been incurred in connection with the activities of each commission?

3. What has been the aggregate cost of all the Royal Commissions referred to in (1)?"

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

"1 to 3. In view of the numerous questions relative to the appointment of Royal Commissions and the cost thereof, I table for the information of hon. members details of the expenditure incurred under this heading during recent years—

Period during which Commission mainly conducted inquiries.	Description of Commission.	Expenditure
		£ s. d.
<i>Appointed by previous Government.</i>		
1927-28 and 1928-29	Land Settlement ..	2,437 5 8
	Beef Cattle Industry ..	1,584 6 2
	Local Authorities ..	3,308 18 6
	Brisbane Water Supply ..	1,459 3 7
	Mining Industry ..	4,269 4 3
	Total	£ 13,058 13 2
<i>Appointed by present Government.</i>		
1929-30 and 1930-31	Racing ..	1,636 4 10
	Rabbit and Dingo Pests and Stock Routes ..	1,650 3 3
	Hospitals ..	957 11 9
	*Mungana and Chillagoe Affairs ..	5,526 15 0
	*Development of North Queensland ..	168 15 0
	*Death of Thomas Flynn ..	45 11 6
	Total	£ 9,985 1 4

* Additional expenditure in connection with these three commissions since 30th June last totals £2,403 9s. 1d.

MINISTERS' EXPENSES, 1919-1931.

Mr. DUNLOP (*Rockhampton*) I desire to ask the Premier whether he has an answer to the following question, which I addressed to him on 19th August last:—

"What was the total amount of expenses paid to each Cabinet Minister during the last ten years as far as the last Government was concerned, and what amount of expenses was paid to each Minister of the present Government up to the 30th June last?"

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

"I table the information required."

MINISTERS' EXPENSES, 1919-1920.

Minister.	Department.	Ministers' Allowance at £2s. per day, and expenses for which no details are available.	Private Secretaries' Allowance.	Hotel Expenses, including Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Railway Fares—Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Incidentals.	Car Hire.		Total.
							Country.	Brisbane.	
Hon. T. J. Ryan	Premier's	£ s. d. †162 11 4	£ s. d. 23 15 0	£ s. d. 239 18 1	£ s. d. 11 5 0	£ s. d. 206 2 8	£ s. d. 131 17 0	£ s. d. 152 1 3	£ s. d. 927 10 4
Hon. E. G. Theodore	Premier's	51 0 0	10 10 0	78 4 4	33 8 0	151 3 1	265 3 0	109 17 6	699 5 11
Ditto	Treasury .. ..	..	..	80 0 0	..	14 14 7	..	..	94 14 7
Hon. W. Lennon	Agriculture	4 4 0	..	..	..	..	..	9 15 0	794 0 6
Hon. W. Gillies	Agriculture	203 6 6	30 19 0	148 6 10	(a) 7 14 0	60 10 3	91 8 9	234 13 0	13 19 0
Ditto	Premier's .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	13 5 0	776 18 4
Hon. A. J. Jones	Mines	†567 13 8	..	19 2 10	..	53 15 8	67 16 0	100 16 4	13 5 0
Hon. J. Mullan	Justice	90 6 0	9 15 0	111 7 0	(b) 102 9 10	38 18 9	49 1 0	12 7 0	790 3 4
Hon. J. A. Fitzhelly	Premier's .. ..	..	..	(c) 90 10 7	24 1 3	37 14 3	27 15 0	..	809 4 6
Ditto	Railways	11 11 0	4 16 3	33 7 0	..	49 7 1	24 1 0	..	414 4 7
Ditto	Treasury	8 8 0	..	19 13 11	..	..	..	..	180 7 1
Hon. J. Larcombe	Railways	50 2 9	4 10 0	24 0 6	..	10 8 8	17 1 0	..	123 2 4
Ditto	Works	31 10 0	12 0 0	23 0 8	1 2 11	9 7 3	10 17 0	10 14 9	28 1 11
Hon. W. McCormack	Home	†329 1 2	..	..	..	..	..	..	331 5 4
Hon. J. Huxham	Public Instruction	†165 16 10	..	..	..	..	26 11 0	..	106 2 11
Hon. J. H. Coyne	Lands	205 16 0	58 18 0	464 5 2	(b) 196 15 4	92 9 0	78 3 0	393 12 6	98 12 7
Ditto	Premier's	31 10 0	3 15 0	..	..	23 0 9	..	..	204 15 6
		£1,912 17 3	£158 18 3	£1,331 16 11	£376 16 4	£747 12 0	£789 13 9	£1,037 2 4	£6,354 16 10

MINISTERIAL EXPENSES OVERSEAS.

Minister.	Department.	Fares and Advances.							Total.
Hon. E. G. Theodore	New York and London ..	1,813 16 8	..	..	..	..	..	..	(e) 1,813 16 8
*Hon. J. Huxham	New Zealand	(d) 414 0 7	..	..	..	..	..	..	414 0 7
		£2,227 17 3							£2,227 17 3

* Accompanied by Private Secretary.

(a) Steamer fares.

(b) Includes Steamer fares.

(c) Includes allowance to Private Secretary, no details available.

(d) Details not available.

(e) Further expenditure in 1920-21 (for details of expenses, see 1920-21).

† In some vouchers details of expenditure had not been furnished.

‡ Details not available, vouchers have been destroyed.

MINISTERS' EXPENSES, 1920-1921.

Minister.	Department.	Ministers' Allowance at £22s. per day, and expenses for which no details are available,	Private Secretaries' Allowance.	Hotel Expenses, including Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Railway Fares—Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Incidentals.	Car Hire.		Total.
							Country.	Brisbane.	
Hon. E. G. Theodore ..	Premier's	£ 97 10 0	£ 24 15 0	£ 110 11 1	(c) 202 19 0	(a) 372 9 0	£ 202 0 11	£ 444 14 6	£ 1,454 19 6
Hon. W. Gillies	Agriculture	315 0 0	24 14 9	278 13 5	(b) 29 5 0	89 19 1	132 0 0	576 12 9	1,446 5 0
Ditto	Premier's .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	75 13 1	75 13 1
									1,521 18 1
Hon. J. A. Fihelly	Treasury .. ..	..	2 5 0	315 15 3	33 1 5	..	..	671 16 6	1,022 18 2
Ditto	Premier's	147 16 0	34 2 6	214 12 0	69 5 11	..	449 17 2	242 7 0	1,158 0 7
									2,180 18 9
Hon. A. J. Jones	Mines	†490 18 4	18 3 6	61 1 1	60 18 2	39 7 7	121 10 0	185 4 0	977 2 8
Hon. J. Mullan	Justice	176 8 0	19 17 6	143 1 4	(c) 255 12 9	87 0 3	68 1 6	69 0 0	819 1 4
Hon. J. Larcombe	Railways	265 13 0	49 13 9	192 13 6	..	80 14 3	192 12 0	..	781 6 6
Hon. W. McCormack	Home	233 2 0	17 8 9	(d) 139 17 2	..	..	(c) 165 8 0	320 11 0	876 6 11
Hon. W. Forgan Smith	Works	128 2 0	34 2 6	(e) 162 3 11	..	..	..	..	324 8 5
Hon. J. Huxham	Public Instruction	231 0 0	22 8 9	..	(f) 23 10 0	44 17 10	212 9 7	261 0 6	795 6 8
Hon. J. H. Coyne	Lands	186 18 0	66 3 0	277 19 1	189 16 6	172 7 4	250 12 6	201 11 9	1,345 8 2
		£2,272 7 4	£313 15 0	£1,896 7 10	£864 8 9	£886 15 4	£1,794 11 8	£3,048 11 1	£11,076 17 0

MINISTERIAL EXPENSES OVERSEAS.

		Travelling Allowances.	Hotels.	Steamer Fares.	Railway Fares.	Incidentals.		Paid.
*Hon. E. G. Theodore ..	New York and London ..	(g) 1,007 15 0	..	749 17 7	1,100 10 10	219 16 10	965 11 0	£4,043 11 3
							Less paid in 1919-20	1,813 16 8
								£2,229 14 7

* Accompanied by Under Secretary, Private Secretary, and Attendant. † In some vouchers details of expenditure had not been furnished.

(a) Aeroplane flight. (b) Steamer fares. (c) Includes steamer fares. (d) Includes incidentals. (e) Includes incidentals, car hire, etc., details not available.
 (f) Steamer and coach fares. (g) Includes allowances to Under Secretary, Private Secretary, and Attendant.

MINISTERS' EXPENSES, 1921-1922.

Minister.	Department.	Ministers' Allowance at £2 2s. per day and expenses for which no details are available.	Private Secretaries' Allowance.	Hotel Expenses, including Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Railway Fares—Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Incidentals.	Car Hire.		Total.
							Country.	Brisbane.	
Hon. E. G. Theodore	Premier's	£ s. d. 130 0 0	£ s. d. 48 15 0	£ s. d. 229 3 5	£ s. d. 63 17 6	£ s. d. 43 16 10	£ s. d. 349 16 3	£ s. d. 673 18 6	£ s. d. 1,495 10 8
Hon. W. Gillies	Agriculture	226 16 0	21 15 9	291 10 9	(a) 27 10 0	2 1 6	71 1 3	777 18 8	1,460 9 3
Hon. J. A. Pihelly	Treasury .. ..	.. ..	6 15 0	301 17 7	1 15 3	.. ..	21 15 0	574 0 0	908 4 4
Hon. A. J. Jones	Mines	†374 4 5	8 6 9	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	56 7 6	351 11 6	790 10 2
Hon. J. Mullan	Justice	186 18 0	14 5 0	154 14 8	(a) 151 8 4	130 14 1	232 8 6	103 19 6	974 8 1
Hon. J. Larcombe	Railways	191 2 0	34 2 6	147 6 10	(a) 36 5 0	39 3 6	143 12 0	49 0 4	640 12 2
Hon. W. McCormack	Home	154 16 0	17 12 6	(c) 167 1 0	17 12 2	.. ..	(a) 198 18 6	524 1 6	1,110 1 8
Hon. W. Forgan Smith	Works	117 12 0	19 2 6	91 1 3	1 10 8	38 3 4	76 6 5	51 6 0	395 2 2
Hon. J. Huxham	Public Instruction	182 14 0	25 2 6	87 13 2	(b) 72 0 0	49 12 4	116 16 0	234 5 0	768 3 0
Hon. J. H. Coyne	Lands	136 10 0	43 2 6	86 6 5	119 10 2	261 11 5	117 15 6	101 10 6	866 6 6
		£1,730 12 5	£239 0 0	£1,556 15 1	£491 9 1	£565 3 0	£1,384 16 11	£3,441 11 6	£9,409 8 0

(a) Includes steamer fares.

(b) Steamer fares.

(c) Includes incidentals.

† In some vouchers details of expenditure had not been furnished.

MINISTERS' EXPENSES, 1922-1923.

Minister.	Department.	Ministers' Allowance at £2 2s. per day and expenses for which no details are available.	Private Secretaries' Allowance.	Hotel Expenses, including Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Railway Fares—Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Incidentals.	Car Hire.		Total.
							Country.	Brisbane.	
Hon. E. G. Theodore	Premier's	£ s. d. 50 0 0	£ s. d. 56 15 0	£ s. d. 257 10 7	(a) £ s. d. 255 0 0	£ s. d. 188 0 2	£ s. d. 123 3 6	£ s. d. 600 0 0	£ s. d. 1,530 9 3
Ditto	Treasury .. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	13 7 9	.. ..	6 0 0	19 7 9
									1,549 17 0
Hon. W. Gillies	Agriculture	308 14 0	43 7 6	331 6 1	(a) 117 15 0	107 0 1	149 16 11	733 19 0	1,791 18 7
Hon. A. J. Jones	Mines	†868 6 9	25 7 2	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	452 19 6	1,346 13 5
Hon. J. Mullan	Justice	205 16 0	27 0 0	162 5 8	(a) 110 2 6	66 18 6	170 9 0	137 13 0	880 4 8
Hon. J. Larcombe	Railways	172 4 0	39 15 0	161 5 1	.. ..	36 15 7	178 11 6	11 12 0	600 3 2
Hon. W. McCormack	Home	249 18 0	42 7 6	(b) 309 5 9	29 7 3	.. ..	(a) 200 15 3	279 6 0	1,110 19 9
Hon. J. Stopford	Home (Assistant Minister)	228 18 0	37 19 0	(b) 206 19 8	68 2 9	.. ..	144 2 0	151 2 0	837 3 5
Hon. W. Forgan Smith	Works	228 18 0	38 5 0	253 11 0	(a) 31 17 0	64 2 4	137 2 2	26 8 6	780 4 0
Hon. J. Huxham	Public Instruction	113 8 0	6 15 0	21 6 0	11 5 10	60 18 9	73 9 9	353 19 0	641 2 4
Hon. J. H. Coyne	Lands	197 8 0	66 15 0	156 5 11	(a) 137 7 6	349 15 11	190 7 8	113 16 6	1,211 16 6
		£2,623 10 9	£384 6 2	£1,859 15 9	£760 17 10	£886 19 1	£1,367 17 9	£2,866 15 6	£10,750 2 10

(a) Includes steamer fares.

(b) Includes incidentals.

† In some vouchers details of expenditure had not been furnished.

MINISTERS' EXPENSES, 1923-1924.

Minister.	Department.	Ministers' Allowance at £2 s. per day.	Private Secretaries' Allowance.	Hotel Expenses, including Private Secretaries' and Guests.		Railway Fares—Private Secretaries' and Guests.		Incidentals.	Car Hire.		Total.
				£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		Country.	Brisbane.	
Hon. E. G. Theodore ..	Premier's	£ 67 7 0	£ 7 10 0	(a) 125 4 11	£ 32 4 0	(b) 622 13 6	£ 854 19 5	
Hon. W. N. Gillies ..	Premier's	48 6 0	..	56 8 10	..	30 0 0	26 19 6	(b) 243 8 6	405 2 10		
Ditto	Agriculture	65 2 0	4 8 0	88 14 3	0 7 6	5 19 5	53 9 0	645 18 6	363 13 8		
										1,269 1 6	
Hon. W. McCormack ..	Lands	105 0 0	23 7 0	96 7 6	(c) 119 1 4	48 9 8	77 1 11	329 17 6	799 4 11		
Ditto	Home	10 10 0	..	0 12 0	..	..	..	27 17 6	33 19 6
Ditto	Treasury	18 18 0	..	11 12 0	..	2 15 10	..	..	33 5 10
										871 10 3	
Hon. A. J. Jones ..	Mines	174 6 0	1 7 6	(a) 481 17 1	..	..	214 13 9	223 8 6	1,095 12 10
Hon. J. Mullan ..	Justice	144 18 0	6 7 6	130 18 4	77 19 2	73 11 7	83 17 0	186 10 0	704 1 7		
Hon. J. Larcombe ..	Railways	105 0 0	20 5 0	90 9 8	(d) 2 17 6	12 17 8	76 13 10	33 17 0	342 0 8		
Hon. J. Huxham ..	Public Instruction ..	178 10 0	20 6 3	113 2 0	..	168 3 4	79 18 6	305 8 0	865 8 1		
Hon. W. Forgan Smith ..	Works	123 18 0	(e) 24 19 8	127 14 7	..	71 15 8	5 0 0	68 13 6	422 1 5		
Hon. J. Stopford ..	Home	172 4 0	24 7 6	(a) 206 16 2	62 11 11	..	(c) 185 1 0	293 13 0	944 13 7		
Ditto	Mines .. ..	..	9 7 6	(a) 27 1 3	..	70 0 0	6 2 0	19 19 0	132 9 9	
										1,077 3 4	
Hon. F. T. Brennan ..	Home (Assistant Minister)	168 0 0	24 15 0	(a) 447 4 6	44 0 4	..	(c) 190 5 0	250 8 0	1,124 12 10		
		£1,381 19 0	£167 0 11	£2,004 3 1	£306 17 9	£483 13 2	£1,031 5 6	£3,251 12 6	£8,626 11 11		

MINISTERIAL EXPENSES OVERSEAS.

		Passage Money.	Expenses.					
Hon. E. G. Theodore ..	New York and London ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	(f) 2,956 18 5
*Hon. A. J. Jones ..	British Empire Exhibition	382 0 0	1,060 0 0	..	..	..	..	£1,442 0 0

* Accompanied by Private Secretary.

(a) Includes incidentals, details not available.

(b) Includes car hire on account of visitors.

(c) Includes steamer fares.

(d) Steamer fares.

(e) Includes £4 7s. 2d. overtime allowance.

(f) For further expenditure and details of total expenditure, see 1924-25.

MINISTERS' EXPENSES, 1924-1925.

Minister.	Department.	Ministers' Allowance at £2 2s. per day.	Private Secretaries' Allowance.	Hotel Expenses, including Private Secretaries' and Guests.		Railway Fares—Private Secretaries' and Guests.		Incidentals.	Car Hire.		Total.
				£	s.	d.	£		s.	d.		£	s.	d.	Country.	Brisbane.
Hon. E. G. Theodore ..	Premier's	£ 66 0 0	£ 37 17 1	£ 216 6 7	..	(a) 201 12 7	..	£ 201 12 7	..	£ 474 3 6	£ 995 19 9
Hon. W. N. Gillies ..	Premier's	74 12 0	..	124 5 3	..	(a) 228 1 9	..	228 1 9	..	368 12 0	795 11 0
Ditto	Agriculture	132 6 0	13 15 6	131 15 5	93 13 10	56 7 7	46 18 0	484 15 0	..	959 11 4	1,755 2 4
Hon. W. McCormack ..	Lands	178 10 0	30 0 0	201 16 10	(b) 7 10 0	90 18 4	60 15 0	488 7 6	..	1,057 17 3	1,110 13 11
Ditto	Treasury .. ..	..	..	27 18 6	(b) 14 0 0	7 16 3	3 1 6	..	..	52 16 3	1,020 6 6
Hon. A. J. Jones	Mines	119 14 0	17 12 6	67 11 6	(c) 38 12 0	(a) 495 10 6	..	281 6 0	..	1,020 6 6	1,020 6 6
Hon. J. Mullan	Justice	144 18 0	7 17 6	122 2 0	57 8 1	112 13 3	91 17 0	214 1 6	..	750 17 4	750 17 4
Hon. J. Larcombe	Railways	131 5 0	22 13 9	77 9 1	..	68 8 1	96 17 3	76 5 0	..	472 18 2	472 18 2
Hon. J. Stopford	Home	136 10 0	42 0 0	114 11 4	(e) 57 16 0	310 0 3	103 2 0	434 11 0	..	1,198 10 7	1,198 10 7
Ditto	Mines	52 10 0	..	33 10 8	..	(a) 92 14 7	..	16 10 0	..	195 5 3	195 5 3
Hon. W. Forgan Smith ..	Works	96 12 0	16 2 6	106 15 11	15 11 3	41 9 5	74 10 10	35 5 6	..	386 7 5	386 7 5
Ditto	Agriculture	88 4 0	14 12 6	82 19 4	(c) 26 9 10	21 11 8	47 12 0	32 11 6	..	314 0 10	314 0 10
Hon. M. Kirwan	Home (Assistant Minister)	75 12 0	4 2 6	42 0 6	18 7 2	32 17 0	30 2 6	101 9 0	..	304 10 3	304 10 3
Ditto	Works	56 14 0	7 10 0	27 4 0	5 13 4	3 18 11	11 17 6	11 16 0	..	124 13 9	124 13 9
Hon. J. Huxham	Public Instruction ..	33 12 0	..	15 16 0	..	100 15 2	30 12 0	13 8 6	..	194 3 8	194 3 8
Hon. F. T. Brennan	Home (Assistant Minister)	..	1 2 6	10 3 6	..	2 12 6	58 13 0	91 1 0	..	163 12 6	163 12 6
Ditto	Public Instruction ..	158 11 0	(d) 86 4 10	195 2 4	..	270 6 7	157 6 6	304 16 5	..	1,172 7 8	1,172 7 8
Hon. T. Wilson	Public Instruction ..	65 2 0	..	59 2 0	..	70 13 9	52 1 0	68 13 0	..	315 11 9	315 11 9
Hon. T. Dunstan	State Enterprises ..	35 14 0	..	..	..	2 6 0	..	8 2 0	..	46 2 0	46 2 0
		£1,646 6 0	£301 11 2	£1,656 10 9	£335 1 6	£2,210 14 2	£865 6 1	£3,505 14 5	£10,521 4 1		
MINISTERIAL EXPENSES OVERSEAS.											
		Allowances.	Hotels.	Steamer Fares.	Railway Fares.	Incidentals, Car Hire, &c.					Paid.
*Hon. E. G. Theodore ..	Great Britain and America	(e) 953 12 0	651 12 3	1,379 9 4	23 10 2	326 3 0	..	Less	paid in 1923-24	3,334 6 9	2,956 18 5
										£377 8 4	

(a) Includes country car hire, details not available.

* Accompanied by the Under Secretary and Private Secretary.

(b) Steamer fares.

(c) Includes steamer fares.

(e) Includes allowances to Under Secretary, Private Secretary, and Attendant.

(d) Includes £62 12s. 4d. overtime, &c.

Questions.

[28 OCTOBER.]

Questions.

1603

MINISTERS' EXPENSES, 1925-1926.

Minister.	Department.	Ministers' Allowance at £2 2s. per day.	Private Secretaries' Allowance.	Hotel Expenses, including Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Railway Fares—Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Incidentals.	Car Hire.		Total.
							Country.	Brisbane.	
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Hon. W. N. Gillies	Premier's	98 14 0	6 15 0	59 4 9	..	20 7 2	27 13 2	493 7 6	706 1 7
Hon. W. McCormack	Premier's	160 16 0	24 3 9	201 12 0	49 2 6	67 0 11	63 6 6	332 8 6	907 10 2
Ditto	Lands .. ..	..	..	..	..	38 18 3	1 10 0	200 13 6	241 1 9
									1,148 11 11
Hon. W. Forgan Smith	Agriculture	224 14 0	52 6 3	306 11 8	77 8 0	59 8 0	161 15 2	282 15 3	1,164 18 4
Hon. A. J. Jones	Mines	239 8 0	36 7 6	349 3 3	11 5 0	204 18 2	352 3 0	388 19 0	1,532 3 11
Hon. J. Mullan	Justice	201 12 0	33 2 6	238 12 8	..	222 15 8	179 10 0	180 7 6	1,056 0 4
Hon. J. Larcombe	Railways	206 17 0	46 2 6	48 12 0	..	60 17 7	114 9 3	31 2 0	508 0 4
Hon. J. Stopford	Home	161 14 0	56 7 0	333 0 0	64 2 8	111 9 3	163 19 7	413 7 0	1,303 19 6
Hon. M. J. Kirwan	Works	126 0 0	12 7 6	81 17 7	30 1 10	15 10 2	46 11 0	67 4 1	379 12 2
Hon. T. Wilson	Public Instruction	111 6 0	13 10 0	118 8 5	..	134 7 5	119 8 0	341 6 0	838 5 10
Hon. T. Dunstan	Lands	184 16 0	24 15 0	97 6 11	79 19 4	97 7 6	63 9 6	6 16 6	554 10 9
Ditto	Assistant Minister	45 3 0	..	72 14 6	46 17 4	10 5 0	14 16 0	10 10 9	200 6 7
									754 17 4
Hon. D. A. Gledson.. ..	Assistant Minister	48 6 0	3 15 0	50 9 11	8 5 4	7 16 0	26 0 0	..	144 12 3
		£1,818 6 0	£309 12 0	£1,957 13 8	£367 2 0	£1,051 1 1	£1,334 11 2	£2,748 16 7	£9,587 3 6

MINISTERS' EXPENSES, 1926-1927.

Minister.	Department.	Ministers' Allowance at £2 s. per day.	Private Secretaries' Allowance.	Hotel Expenses, including Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Railway Fares—Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Incidentals.	Car Hire.		Total.
							Country.	Brisbane.	
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Hon. W. McCormack ..	Premier's	29 8 0	11 5 0	20 19 2	..	11 16 1	20 0 0	100 13 0	194 1 3
Ditto	Treasury .. ..	..	..	4 1 0	..	6 0 8	..	..	10 1 8
									(a) 204 2 11
Hon. W. Forgan Smith ..	Agriculture	29 8 0	5 5 0	60 12 11	53 3 9	6 16 4	21 10 10	89 12 6	266 9 4
Ditto	Premier's	73 10 0	12 7 6	106 10 11	..	26 17 10	35 0 0	..	254 6 3
									520 15 7
Hon. A. J. Jones	Mines	119 14 0	12 7 6	166 16 9	30 1 10	36 19 4	64 16 9	109 4 8	540 0 10
Ditto	Premier's .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2 5 0	2 5 0
									542 5 10
Hon. J. Mullan	Justice	79 16 0	5 5 0	42 7 6	..	24 2 1	39 5 6	213 4 11	404 1 0
Ditto	Treasury	21 0 0	..	23 14 7	..	..	..	..	44 14 7
									448 15 7
Hon. J. Larcombe	Railways	71 8 0	15 15 0	74 11 7	..	9 12 4	36 17 0	21 19 6	230 3 5
Hon. J. Stopford	Home	105 0 0	15 12 6	152 8 2	94 13 3	49 2 10	53 14 0	331 1 6	801 12 3
Hon. M. J. Kirwan	Works	54 12 0	2 12 6	20 19 7	5 0 6	3 13 7	5 13 6	96 15 3	189 6 11
Hon. T. Wilson	Public Instruction	105 0 0	18 15 0	113 4 0	..	169 7 9	99 16 0	270 5 0	776 7 9
Hon. T. Dunstan	Lands	170 2 0	23 5 0	57 19 0	126 5 4	90 13 9	65 9 6	103 5 6	637 0 1
Hon. D. A. Gledson	Labour and Industry	29 8 0	..	..	..	..	..	..	29 8 0
Ditto	State Trade	21 0 0	..	42 12 7	26 19 3	1 0 0	10 16 0	2 0 6	104 8 4
									133 16 4
		£909 6 0	£122 10 0	£886 17 9	£336 3 11	£436 2 7	£452 19 1	£1,340 7 4	£4,484 6 8
MINISTERIAL EXPENSES OVERSEAS.									
Hon. W. McCormack ..	England and America ..	106 16 0	..	650 0 0	(b) 489 0 0	20 6 11	Paid in 1926-27. 1,266 2 11	Paid in 1927-28. ..	Totals. 1,266 2 11
Further Payments made in 1927-28	Chief Secretary's .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	384 18 3	..
	Treasury .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	150 0 0	..
									534 18 3
									£1,801 1 2

* Accompanied by an attendant.

(a) Includes £60 1s. 1d. incurred travelling with the Empire Parliamentary Delegation.

(b) Steamer fares.

Questions.

[28 OCTOBER.]

Questions.

1605

MINISTERS' EXPENSES, 1927-1928.

Minister.	Department.	Ministers' Allowance, at £2 2s. per day.	Private Secretaries' Allowance.	Hotel Expenses, including Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Railway Fares—Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Incidentals.	Car Hire.		Total.
							Country.	Brisbane.	
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Hon. W. McCormack ..	Premier's	132 6 0	24 0 0	118 17 6	30 16 11	49 0 2	52 19 0	127 1 0	535 0 7
Ditto	Treasury .. ..	..	..	29 13 9	..	16 17 1	45 7 6	..	91 18 4
									626 18 11
Hon. W. Forgan Smith ..	Agriculture	106 1 0	18 3 3	92 15 4	28 9 10	15 6 7	50 9 7	61 10 10	372 16 5
Ditto	Premier's	31 10 0	5 12 6	32 10 0	9 9 3	..	15 10 0	1 14 0	96 5 9
									469 2 2
Hon. A. J. Jones	Mines	168 0 0	12 7 6	206 10 8	6 2 11	39 17 5	91 11 3	305 7 0	829 16 9
Ditto	Premier's .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	31 8 6	31 8 6
Ditto	Home .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1 5 0	1 5 0
									862 10 3
Hon. J. Mullan	Justice	121 16 0	11 12 6	70 6 9	4 14 4	96 9 11	50 1 0	203 12 6	558 13 0
Hon. J. Larcombe	Railways	160 13 0	30 11 3	234 6 0	..	31 10 8	105 9 9	0 6 0	(b) 562 16 8
Hon. J. Stopford	Home	161 14 0	46 2 6	239 4 7	(a) 164 19 5	76 12 0	109 13 6	411 15 9	1,210 1 9
Hon. M. J. Kirwan	Works	98 14 0	12 7 6	70 11 3	43 14 10	12 12 9	78 3 0	38 12 3	354 18 7
Ditto	Home .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1 10 0	1 10 0
									356 8 7
Hon. T. Wilson	Public Instruction ..	102 18 0	13 10 0	227 15 6	26 4 10	72 14 10	72 10 0	154 12 0	670 5 2
Hon. T. Dunstan	Lands	155 8 0	10 2 6	72 2 5	48 6 8	24 2 6	43 8 6	76 2 0	429 12 7
Hon. D. A. Gledson	Labour and State Enterprises	155 8 0	3 0 0	60 0 2	27 6 0	3 19 7	60 12 0	24 16 6	335 2 3
		£1,394 8 0	£187 9 6	£1,454 16 11	£390 5 0	£439 3 6	£775 15 1	£1,439 13 4	£6,081 11 4

MINISTERIAL EXPENSES OVERSEAS.

*Hon. W. Forgan Smith ..	New Zealand	98 14 0	17 12 6	260 11 8	(c) 136 12 4	28 19 9	70 10 0	..	£613 0 3
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* Accompanied by Private Secretary.

(a) Includes steamer fares.

(b) Includes £49 3s. 6d. paid by Main Roads Commission.

(c) Includes £133 15s. steamer fares.

(1) MINISTERS' EXPENSES, 1928-1929.

Minister.	Department.	Ministers' Allowance, at £2 2s. per day.	Private Secretaries' Allowance.	Hotel Expenses, including Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Railway Fares— Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Incidentals.	Car Hire.		Total.
							Country.	Brisbane.	
Hon. W. McCormack	Premier's	£ s. d. 33 12 0	£ s. d. 26 5 0	£ s. d. 314 18 3	£ s. d. 157 8 6	£ s. d. 55 7 5	(a) £ s. d. 53 0 6	£ s. d. 104 19 0	£ s. d. 745 10 8
Ditto	Treasury .. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	5 12 8	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	5 12 8
Hon. W. Forgan Smith	Agriculture	205 16 0	52 17 6	357 12 4	93 5 7	43 3 7	158 11 3	40 14 6	751 3 4
Hon. A. J. Jones	Mines	138 12 0	1 17 6	132 17 10	.. .. .	(b) 98 2 11	56 1 0	576 13 0	952 0 9
Hon. J. Mullan	Justice	224 14 0	61 2 6	222 11 0	43 6 9	70 14 9	180 15 1	196 5 3	1,004 4 3
Hon. J. Larcombe	Railways	122 17 0	40 17 6	(c) 351 13 10	.. .. .	14 5 8	126 18 6	9 4 6	999 0 4
Hon. J. Stopford	Home	284 11 0	59 8 9	216 1 11	162 1 6	104 19 1	134 8 5	185 14 0	665 17 0
Hon. M. J. Kirwan	Works	74 11 0	9 11 3	49 14 10	30 10 5	26 11 11	23 8 0	63 17 2	1,147 4 8
Hon. T. Wilson	Public Instruction	92 8 0	19 2 6	159 2 9	.. .. .	83 14 6	50 12 6	121 19 6	278 4 7
Hon. T. Dunstan	Lands	123 18 0	8 5 6	5 11 6	(d) 27 10 0	21 15 0	39 12 0	70 13 6	526 19 9
Hon. D. A. Gledson	Labour and Industry	10 10 0	1 17 6	4 10 0	8 18 2	0 10 0	.. .. .	0 14 0	297 5 9
Ditto	State Trade .. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	17 2 0	.. .. .	26 19 8
		£1,311 9 0	£281 5 0	£1,820 6 11	£523 0 11	£519 5 7	£840 9 3	£1,370 14 5	£6,666 11 1

(a) Includes aeroplane £12.

(b) Includes £62 3s. 11d. for which no details have been furnished.

(c) Includes £99 18s. luncheons, &c., at the opening of Mount Isa Railway, performed by the Attorney-General on behalf of the Minister for Railways. (d) Special rail motor, £27 10s.

(2) MINISTERS' EXPENSES, 1928-1929.

Minister.	Department.	Ministers' Allowance, at £2 2s. per day.	Private Secretaries' Allowance.	Hotel Expenses, including Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Railway Fares— Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Incidentals.	Car Hire.		Total.
							Country.	Brisbane.	
Hon. A. E. Moore	Premier's	Nil	£ s. d. 3 0 0	£ s. d. 20 1 0	£ s. d. 1 11 7	£ s. d. 4 18 9	£ s. d. 1 1 0	£ s. d. 1 10 0	£ s. d. 32 2 4
Hon. R. M. King	Works and Public Instruction	Nil	1 10 0	16 17 8	.. .. .	6 11 0	6 10 0	.. .. .	31 8 8
Hon. W. H. Barnes	Treasury	Nil	.. .. .	19 15 6	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	19 15 6
Hon. J. C. Peterson	Home	Nil	.. .. .	15 5 0	5 2 9	0 19 0	11 10 0	2 7 6	35 4 3
Hon. N. F. Macgroarty	Justice	Nil	1 2 6	4 12 6	.. .. .	1 17 6	2 10 0	1 8 0	11 10 6
Hon. W. A. Deacon	Lands	Nil	3 15 0	6 14 11	.. .. .	1 17 2	4 0 0	4 8 0	20 15 1
Hon. H. F. Walker	Agriculture	Nil	4 10 0	36 12 10	2 10 6	12 17 6	3 8 6	0 3 0	60 2 4
Hon. G. Morgan	Railways	Nil	2 3 1	8 15 3	.. .. .	10 0 6	1 0 0	.. .. .	21 18 10
Hon. H. E. Sizer	Labour and Industry	Nil	0 7 6	1 4 0	5 7 10	0 18 2	0 8 3	5 7 0	13 12 9
Ditto	State Trade .. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .	14 16 3	.. .. .	14 16 3
Hon. E. A. Atherton	Mines	Nil	5 0 0	46 19 0	.. .. .	17 5 6	26 15 6	8 10 6	28 9 0
		.. .. .	£21 8 1	£176 17 8	£14 12 8	£57 5 1	£71 19 6	£23 14 0	£365 17 0

Questions.

[28 OCTOBER.]

Questions

1607

MINISTERS' EXPENSES, 1929-1930.

Minister.	Department.	Ministers' Allowance at £2 2s. per day.	Private Secretaries' Allowance.	Hotel Expenses, including Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Railway Fares—Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Incidentals.	Car Hire.		Total.
							Country.	Brisbane.	
Hon. A. E. Moore	Premier's	Nil	£ s. d. 3 7 6	£ s. d. 36 1 2	(e) £ s. d. 17 14 9	£ s. d. 6 6 7	£ s. d. 10 4 4	£ s. d. 3 16 0	£ s. d. 77 10 4
Hon. R. M. King	Works and Public Instruction	Nil	6 2 0	91 4 3	..	4 6 3	3 13 6	(a) 83 4 2	188 10 2
Hon. W. H. Barnes	Treasury	Nil	14 5 0	173 15 8	137 16 11	24 9 6	20 13 3	18 14 0	389 14 4
Hon. J. C. Peterson	Home	Nil	1 2 6	96 17 0	56 10 10	74 6 0	22 16 0	89 3 9	340 16 1
Hon. N. F. Macgroarty	Justice	Nil	11 12 6	82 1 6	68 10 10	9 3 11	19 9 9	(b) 53 5 0	244 3 6
Hon. W. A. Deacon	Lands	Nil	9 15 0	(c) 51 1 4	23 6 2	..	86 9 9	59 5 3	229 17 6
Hon. H. F. Walker	Agriculture	Nil	23 5 0	200 19 9	191 14 8	37 19 5	84 13 5	1 16 6	540 18 9
Hon. G. Morgan	Railways and Main Roads	Nil	31 15 10	252 12 4	29 19 6	100 19 11	73 10 9	3 7 0	492 5 4
Hon. H. E. Sizer	Labour and Industry	Nil	1 2 6	26 1 1	9 13 0	8 13 3	2 0 0	52 6 9	99 16 7
Hon. E. A. Atherton	Mines	Nil	32 10 0	142 18 5	142 18 10	220 15 7	103 6 9	(d) 115 10 1	757 19 8
..		..	£134 17 10	£1,153 12 6	£678 5 6	£487 0 5	£426 17 6	£480 8 6	£3,361 2 3

(a) Includes mileage allowance for Minister's own car.

(b) Includes £29 paid to Private Secretary for use of private car.

(c) Includes incidentals.

(d) Includes £86 18s. 4d. petrol allowance for Minister's own car.

(e) Includes £8 17s. 6d. rail motor.

MINISTERS' EXPENSES, 1930-1931.

Minister.	Department.	Ministers' Allowance at £2 2s. per day.	Private Secretaries' Allowance.	Hotel Expenses, including Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Railway Fares—Private Secretaries' and Guests.	Incidentals.	Car Hire.		Total.
							Country.	Brisbane.	
Hon. A. E. Moore	Premier's	Nil	£ s. d. 4 2 6	£ s. d. 119 13 3	£ s. d. 8 15 8	£ s. d. 10 16 1	£ s. d. 9 17 11	£ s. d. 19 15 1	£ s. d. 173 0 6
Hon. R. M. King	Works and Public Instruction	Nil	1 17 6	7 0 6	..	35 8 2	10 1 6	(a) 65 14 0	120 1 8
Hon. W. H. Barnes	Treasury	Nil	32 5 0	277 0 8	194 0 10	61 12 0	(d) 43 8 6	..	608 7 0
Hon. J. C. Peterson	Home	Nil	..	190 7 10	..	(c) 97 8 8	86 5 6	136 6 0	500 8 0
Hon. N. F. Macgroarty	Justice	Nil	..	11 9 4	..	3 1 10	2 4 6	(b) 97 0 10	113 16 6
Hon. W. A. Deacon	Lands	Nil	15 15 0	68 3 2	33 0 2	8 15 8	82 18 6	85 17 0	294 9 6
Hon. H. F. Walker	Agriculture	Nil	34 0 0	63 12 4	43 17 3	10 5 11	36 0 3	..	187 15 9
Hon. G. Morgan	Railways	Nil	35 13 2	212 18 2	..	88 10 5	53 5 0	9 13 6	400 6 3
Hon. H. E. Sizer	Labour and Industry	Nil	2 3 4	11 10 6	6 8 9	72 6 3	15 0 9	33 4 3	140 13 10
Hon. E. A. Atherton	Mines	Nil	18 15 0	120 12 11	54 13 0	98 12 2	54 10 9	150 3 7	497 7 5
..		..	£144 11 6	£1,082 8 8	£340 15 8	£477 3 2	£393 13 2	£597 14 3	£3,036 6 5

(a) Includes £57 10s. mileage allowance for Minister's private car.

(b) Includes £52 17s. 4d. allowance to Private Secretary for use of private car.

(c) Includes £13 for which no details have been furnished.

(d) Includes steamer fares.

"Answers to questions of this kind involve a considerable amount of work and expense."

PAPER.

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Proclamation and an Order in Council under "The Apiaries Act of 1931."

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.

APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 2.

The PREMIER (Hon. A. E. Moore, *Aubigny*) [2.38]: I beg to move—

"That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as would otherwise prevent the receiving of resolutions from the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means on the same day as they shall have passed in those Committees, and the passing of an Appropriation Bill through all its stages in one day."

This is the usual motion that is moved when it is proposed to pass an Appropriation Bill.

Question put and passed.

RAILWAY (CAPITAL INDEBTEDNESS) REDUCTION 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 authorise the reduction of the capital indebtedness of the Queensland railway account, and for other purposes."

Question put and passed.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

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

Question stated—

"That £16,206 be granted for 'Department of Public Works—Chief Office.'"

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Wynnum*) [2.39]: I desire the permission of the Committee temporarily to withdraw the question before the Committee, the object being to enable the Committee to proceed with Appropriation Bill, No. 2.

Motion, by leave, temporarily withdrawn.

VOTE ON ACCOUNT—£2,600,000.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Wynnum*) [2.41]: I beg to move—

"That there be granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1931-32, a further sum not exceeding £2,600,000 towards defraying the expenses of the various departments and services of the State."

It is estimated that this amount will be sufficient to meet requirements until the end of December next. Owing to economies in administration, the appropriation required on account of consolidated revenue is 20 per cent. less than the amount provided in

the Appropriation Act, No. 2, last year, which was £2,000,000.

The amount required on account of trust and special funds shows a 10 per cent. reduction on the amount required last year. The expenditure in connection with these funds is being curtailed in conformity with the policy of retrenchment to which the financial depression has compelled all Governments to submit. The appropriation from the loan fund is £100,000 in excess of the sum appropriated by Appropriation Act of 1930, No. 2.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) [2.42]: The Treasurer, following his usual method, has given the Committee very scanty information. It is obvious that this resolution, in conjunction with others, will be the final appropriation for the present Parliament, assuming that Parliament terminates before the close of the present financial year in the ordinary course of events.

Between now and the end of the period for which Supply is granted there are a number of problems on which the Government should be called upon to give us some information. Neither in his Financial Statement nor when moving the present resolution has the Treasurer given us any information as to the future intentions of the Government. Blandly the hon. gentleman informed the Committee that this resolution and the grant in aid referred to in the resolution will last for a particular period. Beyond that he has little or no information for us on the general financial position of Queensland. These are days when the march of events proceeds very rapidly. If there is one thing apparent in all the speeches made by the Treasurer this session and in his Financial Statement, it is that he is helpless and hopeless as regards the future; but, like Micawber, is waiting in the hope that something may turn up. On frequent occasions he has said that ere the end of the financial year the position will adjust itself, or that the exchange position will adjust itself; but in countless different directions he has indicated that there is no coherent policy on the part of the Government to meet the existing situation.

We commenced this year with a special emergency session, during which two Bills were passed embodying the Premiers' plan. It was recognised in those Bills, and it has been recognised generally throughout Australia, that, during a period of abnormally low price levels the interest burden could not be carried if the States were to remain solvent. That is the basic idea behind the Premiers' plan, so far as it is a plan—that the interest burden and the depreciated value of money, which depreciated values and real wealth, were too great for the various States to bear. That was the genesis of the Premiers' plan. That plan was introduced in the form of two measures, one being known as the Financial Emergency Act and the other as the Debt Conversion Agreement Act. The Debt Conversion Agreement Act provides for the conversion of all the internal indebtedness by a reduction of the interest rate by 22½ per cent. That was satisfactory so far as it went, and an overwhelming majority of the bondholders in Australia, recognising the position, converted their holdings. I understand that the Treasurer intends later to introduce a Bill to bring into line the holders of

Mr. Smith.]

bonds and inscribed stock who have not voluntarily converted their holdings. That has been described by some people, including the hon. member for Fassifern, as an act of repudiation; but the whole of the policy has been one of general repudiation. That term cannot be applied to interest without also applying it to other conditions where the same methods have been adopted.

What the Government have done in reference to the reduction of interest has only relieved the Treasurer by the amount that the Government are involved. In other words, the saving to the State Treasurer is all that was accomplished by that Bill. It did not deal to any large extent with the general question of interest.

It is quite true that provision is made whereby a mortgagor can apply to a tribunal, and on good cause shown can secure a reduction in his interest rate, but that provision is so circumscribed that only about 5 per cent. of the population of Queensland who are affected by such conditions are likely to participate in any benefits therefrom. I take the view that interest is not only crushing Governments during the present depression. The charge which gives rise to the necessity for reducing governmental expenditure applies generally to ordinary industry. A perusal of the mercantile gazettes discloses the large number of businesses which have been compelled recently to mortgage their assets. Bills of mortgage have even been given over the goodwill of business concerns, indicating the difficult times through which many businesses are passing. These people are not getting any real relief so far as interest is concerned, and their position is more acute because many of their clients, through no fault of their own, are unable to meet their indebtedness to them. The thing gathers like a snowball, and affects the whole of the community.

MR. MAHER: You want to tax them further, and make their lot harder.

MR. W. FORGAN SMITH: The hon. member has evidently just awakened; obviously he has been asleep for a considerable period. He says that I want to tax people further, but is apparently oblivious of the fact that his own Treasurer has imposed additional taxation to the extent of £1,500,000 per annum.

MR. MAHER: That was your substitute for the Premiers' plan.

MR. W. FORGAN SMITH: My substitute for the Premiers' plan did not involve any charge on the bondholder that is not now made. Instead of a conversion loan under which the bondholder was expected to agree to the variation of a contract reducing the amount payable to him, my contention was that these bonds should become taxable just the same as any other form of security. By that method the State would have obtained the amount of relief required without having to repudiate a contract. There is obviously a great difference between the proposal I made and that which was accepted by the present Government; and, although the hon. member for Rosewood may seek to misrepresent the position, he cannot get away from the facts. If the bondholder receives less under the hon. member's policy, then there is no difference in the net return to him, whether

the reduction is made by way of a special tax or by means of a compulsory conversion at a reduced rate. It is the net return to the investor which counts. My proposal involved a difference of method, and had the merit that it did not interfere with the terms of the contract.

The point I was making was that in regard to the general interest charge upon industry the method which had been adopted in this State has not given the people the general relief to which they were entitled. Consider, for example, the number of people who have borrowed money on businesses and on grazing properties. Very few, if any, of them are entitled to any relief under the Mortgagors' Relief Act, whereas their incomes have been seriously decreased where they have invested in Government securities. I take the view that industry and agriculture were just as much in need of relief by way of reduction in interest as the various Governments of Australia. So far as the Government have neglected to do these things, they have failed to give the relief which is required. People who have mortgaged their homes are in the same position. Although salaries and wages have been reduced, there has been no reduction in interest, which is the most important part of the Premiers' plan. Very few people in comparison with those who are indebted are getting any advantage from the legislation passed by the Government.

THE PREMIER: Why do they not apply for relief?

MR. W. FORGAN SMITH: For very good reasons. In many cases the terms of their indebtedness is such that they are deliberately excluded from the Act; and in many cases because people hesitate to have their business dragged through the court and made common property.

THE PREMIER: The applications are heard in camera.

MR. W. FORGAN SMITH: Not necessarily; they may be held in camera at the discretion of the magistrate; but there is the possibility of legal expenses being involved and the possibility of the relief that is granted being less than the cost of obtaining that relief.

The Premier also knows that there is a large number of settlers—cane farmers and graziers particularly—who cannot obtain any advantage whatsoever from the legislation that he has passed because of the method of financing in those industries. The money is at call, and there is no fixed period at all, therefore it is not subject to the conditions that apply generally to relief.

THE PREMIER: It was done at the request of the Commonwealth Government.

MR. W. FORGAN SMITH: The Premier may excuse himself by hiding behind the Federal Government, but the hon. gentleman is just as much a party to the plan as the Federal Government, and he must take his share of the responsibility. They are all parties to it, and equally to blame or equally responsible, whatever term the Premier cares to have. It is futile for the hon. gentleman to say that the Commonwealth Government have done so and so. He is as much concerned in that line of policy as any member of the Commonwealth

[Mr. Smith.]

Government; but I am not concerned with that. I am dealing with the general problem of interest; and my main contention is that, while the Debt Conversion Agreement Act relieves the State Budget to a considerable extent, it has not given the general relief from the burden of interest that industry, trade, and commerce generally require in Australia.

On the general question of interest, the Premier raised a very interesting point on Friday, when he said that negotiations in reference to our external debt had been carried on for some time by the Agent-General. I do not know altogether how the Agent-General of Queensland appears in this matter, because the control of the external debt as well as the control of the internal debt is subject to the financial agreement; and negotiations for the funding of the external debt or any alteration in the terms and conditions under which that debt is held would be a matter for negotiation through the Loan Council and their officers in London or New York, as the case may be.

I would like the Premier or the Treasurer, whichever cares to do it, to give the Committee more information on this matter, because it is obviously vital to the welfare of Queensland and Australia. It is vital to Queensland from the point of view that the whole Budget and financial policy of the Treasurer is based on the hope that something will turn up in the meantime to relieve him of some of his difficulties. If the measures taken are likely to result in success either in the form of conversion of the external debt at a lower rate of interest than is at present the case, or in the direction of retaining the interest in Australia and placing it to the credit of a trust account, subject to investment or otherwise, saving the various Governments the large amount they pay in exchange, then it would be a good thing; but I think the public and Parliament are entitled to some information on the matter.

The PREMIER: It cuts both ways.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: That is not the point. The Premier indicated on Friday that there was a move on foot, in which Sir Edward Macartney was particularly engaged, to retain the money in Australia and pay it into a trust account, subject to the control of the people to whom the interest is due, and by that means save the loss the Governments incur in transmitting the money overseas.

The PREMIER: If that was done, it would immediately make the exchange normal.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: Not immediately, but it might have that effect in time. The conditions in relation to exchange are such that, if we can regard the present position as being stable, the exchange rate should be reduced now. There are two reasons why the exchange rate is being maintained as high as it is at present, one reason being that producers who export get the advantage of an increase on the low price level. That is of advantage to them, and, through them, to the Commonwealth and the State.

Another reason why apparently those who control those things are reluctant to take any action is that they fear that the conditions now obtaining may not of them-

selves be stable, and that violent fluctuations may take place in the near future, which may give rise to other things being required. Those are obviously the two reasons why exchange has not been dealt with; but surely the Premier cannot contemplate with equanimity the existing exchange rate becoming a permanent feature of the relations between this and other countries. It may be, as the hon. gentleman says, a temporary advantage to producers; but, when we consider the question from the point of view of the whole of the Commonwealth, a stabilised exchange must be better for all concerned. Some people may get an advantage, but I am dealing with it from the national point of view. In any case, any information in that direction will be valuable and interesting to the Committee; and, if something is done along those lines, a benefit will accrue. I defer any further remarks on the matter until I have heard the Treasurer on the subject.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, Wynnum) [3.2]: The Leader of the Opposition made one extraordinary remark—that was, that we had increased taxation by £1,500,000. How on earth did he come to that conclusion? The figures are dead against him. We have not increased taxation by £1,500,000; and I am amazed that the Leader of the Opposition is apparently pursuing, to some extent, the same argument used yesterday by the hon. member for Herbert. As a matter of fact, who are the parties who have increased taxation?

Mr. PEASE: You are.

The TREASURER: No. May I repeat the information I gave yesterday? Is it not a fact that in 1915, when hon. members opposite took possession of the Treasury benches, the income tax receipts were £954,000, and there was no land tax? Those are facts from which hon. members opposite cannot possibly get away. As soon as hon. members opposite got into office, they started piling on taxation. They had in view the carrying out of their policy in regard to the socialisation of industry. If we turn again to that little red book, we shall find that their object was to go in for State stations, State fisheries, and other State enterprises. They had quite a number of similar things that they thought were going to add to the benefit of the community; and they piled on taxation galore.

Mr. PEASE: Tell us what you did.

The TREASURER: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition generally puts his foot into it if he speaks; and he really is a genuine asset to this side. Let me give the receipts from taxation in the following years:—

	£
1927-28 (Labour Government) ...	4,978,083
1928-29 (Labour Government) ...	4,671,652
1930-31 (Moore Government) ...	4,272,566

The hon. member for Herbert will use any argument at all. He thinks the public outside are silly; but they are quite capable of judging the man who makes such utterances and of judging the figures themselves. I will give him a little advice, and tell him that the public are keenly alive to what the Labour Party failed to do, the taxation they imposed on the people, and the general position to-day, for which hon. members opposite are entirely responsible.

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May I raise another point? Does the Deputy Leader of the Opposition forget that he told us that, if there was one thing we ought to do, it was to start immediately and spend every penny we had?

Mr. PEASE: I did not say so.

The TREASURER: I could turn up the remarks of the hon. member to that effect, which appear in "Hansard" again and again. He has repeatedly said, "Gentlemen, go ahead! Don't look to the future at all! Be Micawberlike—wait for something to turn up!"

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He also said that a Government should not pay interest.

The TREASURER: That is so. He is a great financier. If the Labour Party is returned to power at any time—it will be a long time in coming—the hon. member will be the chief financier of the party. If that does happen, then I advise him to go to school for a little to obtain some instruction on finance. That will do him good.

Mr. PEASE: Your kind of financing will not do me any good.

The TREASURER: If the hon. member will adopt the cautious manner in which I have financed, he will do well for himself and for his party.

The Leader of the Opposition sought information concerning our external indebtedness; but I would remind him that that is controlled by the Commonwealth Government through the Loan Council.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: I was referring to the statement made by the Premier to the effect that the Agent-General was negotiating in certain directions.

The TREASURER: The Agent-General is continuing certain negotiations that were opened some time ago. It will be of distinct advantage to Australia if we can relieve the present financial strain, and will materially assist in balancing the Budget. The Premier was also quite right when he said that there was another side to the picture. For instance, butter producers are able to obtain a higher price overseas as a result of the present exchange position. The same probably applies to the sale of copper and wool.

There is no doubt that the exchange position has been a very serious handicap in financing in Australia. If the rate remains as at present, then the annual cost of remitting money from Australia will be about £13,000,000.

Mr. POLLOCK: The present rate of exchange does not mean that there is a loss all the time. We gain in another way.

The TREASURER: I admit that; but the present rate of exchange makes it extremely difficult for Governments to finance. It will be necessary for Queensland to find nearly £1,100,000 for the remittance of money overseas this year—a tremendous sum. It is an inexorable obligation, and it will continue to be a real financial difficulty for some years to come.

I have been asked to give some information concerning the attitude of the Government with respect to bondholders who failed to convert under the recent conversion plan. I received a telegram from the Commonwealth Treasurer, who is also Chairman of

the Loan Council, inquiring if the Queensland Government would fall into line with a suggestion he had made—a suggestion that had been previously made at Loan Council meetings—that a certain sum of money should be provided to meet the case of necessitous bondholders. The Queensland Government immediately fell in with the suggestion, and it is proposed to provide £2,000,000 to meet necessitous cases.

Mr. DUNLOP (*Rockhampton*) [3.11]: I have risen principally to discuss the position of harbour boards, and particularly the position of the Rockhampton harbour board. I have debated this question at considerable length on previous occasions. Every member representing Central Queensland should be in his place to-day to back me up in what I am about to say. Quite a lot of noise is made to the effect that the Rockhampton harbour board is indebted to the Government to the extent of £500,000.

The failure of the board to meet its obligations to the Government has been ascribed to bad management; but I want to point out that the Government of the day were as much responsible for the position of the board to-day as the board itself. During the whole of the period when the river and harbour improvement schemes were being carried out, the board was composed of level-headed business men. I challenge contradiction on the part of the Treasurer to my statement that the past Government were as much responsible for the capital expended by the board as the board itself. Naturally, the present Treasurer must take the board to task for its failure to meet its Treasury commitments. When the board propounded its river and harbour improvement schemes, the late Government sent experts to Rockhampton to report upon them. The reports were so favourable that the Government of the day agreed to advance loan money to carry out the works designed. That was the policy which was consistently and persistently carried out. The board arrived at a stage in its river improvement scheme when a further £20,000 was necessary to complete a stone wall, which would have the effect of considerably improving the depth of the river. The Treasury refused to advance the necessary money, with the result that the loan money previously expended has been practically thrown away.

I have argued before, and I do so again, that Brisbane has lived on the taxpayers of Queensland too long. We cannot get up in this Chamber too often in order to let the people know that it is nearly time that Brisbane recognised that it is not Queensland. The Brisbane river has had almost half a million of money spent upon it out of consolidated revenue. During the fourteen years of Labour administration all the best dredges in the State were concentrated in the Brisbane river, and ports in Central and Northern Queensland could not obtain the use of a dredge without paying for its hire. This question has evoked considerable discussion in Rockhampton, and very important articles have been written in the local press. As a representative of Central Queensland, I refute the allegation that the position of the Rockhampton harbour board is due to bad management. If Rockhampton secured its rightful trade, the board would be in a better position to meet its obligations to the Government. I give every

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credit to Gladstone for possessing a good harbour, but Rockhampton possesses two ports in Port Alma and Broadmount, in addition to access by the Fitzroy river. Speaking personally, it is no use Rockhampton having, as it were, three strings to its bow; but, as a port, I believe that Port Alma stands out on its own. It is equal to any port in Queensland, and shipping can enter it as safely as any other port in Queensland, including the Gladstone harbour. The hon. member for Port Curtis knows that shipping can enter and berth at the wharf at Port Alma at any hour of the day without the slightest trouble. The Rockhampton "Morning Bulletin," in its issues of 1st and 19th March last, published articles, one of which was headed—

"HARBOUR FINANCE.

"HOW BRISBANE DID IT.

"Cheques against Overdraft."

The Treasurer has been furnished with these articles, and I know that he has enjoyed reading them. Rockhampton will not have its fair name besmirched by any Cabinet Minister or parliamentarian whilst a Central Queensland remains in this Chamber. I shall read the following brief summary of the article published on 1st March:—

"1. The State, as a whole, purchased costly dredging plant with which to develop the port of Brisbane.

"2. The State, as a whole, paid interest and redemption on the capital cost of the whole plant for 365 days of the year.

"3. The Brisbane Harbour Trust paid 6 per cent. to the Government on such plant as it used, and only while it actually was in use.

"4. The cheque used to pay the 6 per cent. for hire of plant was drawn against the overdraft of the Brisbane Harbour Trust. Without the backing of the taxpayers of Queensland it had no backing whatever.

"5. The same sort of cheque was used to pay interest, redemption, debits on working costs, and for land bought. Without the same backing it was equally valueless.

"6. As the accounts of the State had to be balanced yearly, the taxpayers of Queensland were raided to give value to the otherwise valueless cheques of the Brisbane Harbour Trust.

"7. The process amounted really to capitalising interest, redemption, hire of plant, and other shortages each year, and making every taxpayer in Queensland, already loaded with his own local authority taxation, help to pay interest on them."

The article goes on to show that out of ninety-nine dredges and tugs twenty-three were working and seventy-six were laid up.

I know the Treasurer enjoys wholesome titbits on harbour matters; and I refer the hon. gentleman to a very interesting article which appeared in the Rockhampton "Morning Bulletin" of 5th March, 1930, setting forth in detail the whole position. There is no necessity for me to read that article, as it is self-explanatory, and I know the Treasurer will read it. I want to get to

the article of the 19th March, 1930, which has a heading in large type to this effect—

"OUR PORTS SUFFER.

"DISHONESTLY TAXED TO MAINTAIN BRISBANE RIVER.

"'Morning Bulletin' Disclosures."

The "Morning Bulletin" is particularly fortunate in having a most capable mariner on its staff. That gentleman knows harbour matters as well as all the experts in Brisbane, and he has rendered yeoman service to the paper on which he now serves.

Just listen to this extract from the article to which I have referred—

"As the outcome of a series of special articles in the 'Morning Bulletin,' dealing with harbour finance, notably the comparison between the treatment received by the port of Brisbane and the port of Rockhampton, the chairman of the Harbour Board (Mr. J. A. Elwing) moved a comprehensive motion at a meeting of the board yesterday in which the chief points in the articles were stressed and a request that an investigation be made into the financial position of the capital port. The motion was carried unanimously, and it was evident from the remarks of members that such a course of action was long overdue. The board placed on record its appreciation of the 'Morning Bulletin' in taking the initiative and exposing the methods being adopted to boost the port of Brisbane at the expense of the rest of the State."

I have already termed Brisbane the octopus of the State. We shall never be satisfied until we sever its tentacles and secure the management of our own affairs. The resolution that was moved by the chairman at that meeting was to the following effect:—

"That, in view of the disclosures with respect to Brisbane harbour finance that appeared recently in the 'Morning Bulletin,' which disclosures point to the fact that—

1. Interest on the overdraft of the Brisbane harbour account was, until such overdraft was transferred to loan fund, paid from the consolidated revenue.

2. The purchase price and maintenance cost of dredging plant used to develop the Brisbane River and harbour were a charge against consolidated revenue, with the exception of a purely nominal hiring charge that operated only on such unit of such plants as were actually in use.

3. The whole of such dredging plant, its auxiliaries and accessories, has virtually become the exclusive property of the authorities charged with the development of the Brisbane River and harbour; and

4. The salaries and wages of the professional staff engaged in supervising the work of developing the Brisbane River and harbour were, and still are, subsidised as required from consolidated revenue.

"This board is of the opinion that, in justice to those harbour boards which have endeavoured to develop their ports on revenue derived from a restricted territory, as well as in the interests of

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undiscriminating and impartial government, the fullest investigation into the disclosures is imperative.

"That copies of this motion, together with the full series of articles above referred to, be forwarded to every Queensland harbour board, with the request that they support the request for such investigation, and obtain the support of their district members of Parliament thereto.

"That Central members of Parliament be urged to give their active support to the request for such investigation."

Any Central Queenslander in this Chamber should have the courage to get up and defend the Rockhampton harbour board; and I am sorry that our worthy Home Secretary is not in his place at the present time, as I have no doubt he would be in a position to do so very ably. I know that the hon. member for Port Curtis—perhaps quite unintentionally—has interjected from time to time in regard to the board's financial position. No doubt he has very closely read those articles; and I can safely say that at the present time the Rockhampton members are on more friendly terms with the object of co-operating in order to get their fair share for the respective ports.

The only argument against Port Alma is that it is not suitable for residential purposes owing to the salt pans; but the depth of water is there, and the largest ships can come in at any time. I hope members of the present Government will stop their stupid assertions about the Rockhampton harbour board. The indebtedness of £500,000 is there; and I thrust the onus of that indebtedness on the Governments of all time, and strongly object to members of the present Government trying to besmirch the good name of a capable body like the Rockhampton harbour board. In Rockhampton the administrative staff can work in a fowl house or a shed, whereas in Brisbane they must have the most up-to-date and handsome buildings. I endorse the able remarks of the hon. member for Keppel last night, and, irrespective of the foundering of any barque—my barque has never foundered yet. I have always safely steered my ship into harbour no matter how rough the weather—I hope the Treasurer will give the Committee a satisfactory explanation as to whether he believes in favouritism to one port, seeing that the metropolis is to a large extent living on Central and North Queensland.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Wynnum*) [3.29]: The hon. member who has just resumed his seat said something about making stupid remarks. The hon. member ought to practise what he has been laying down.

Before dealing with Rockhampton or any other port, I wish to state that the Government have to do justice to all ports. The Government do not know Brisbane in the matter of port expenditure any more than they know Rockhampton or any other port. Their duty is the common one of taking the broadest possible view of the interests of all Queensland.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The TREASURER: That is the standard the Government have set. May I tell the hon. member for Rockhampton that it

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would please the Government and relieve them of a very great deal of financial responsibility if the Rockhampton shipping trade was to increase. It would be a source of great pleasure to us to know that Rockhampton was improving its position in that respect. The Government do not view with any special favour the falling-off of a port; they want to see all the ports prosper, realising that, if all the ports have a greater amount of shipping, it will be in the interests of Queensland as a whole.

I will show how unfair the hon. member has been. He has been reading "Morning Bulletin" articles, some of which have been written on false premises. What is the position? Is it creditable to Rockhampton that since 1918, with the exception of £1,000 which was received this year, they have not paid off 1d. of their indebtedness?

Mr. DUNLOP: Why?

The TREASURER: Those are the facts. We have a "dead horse" so far as Rockhampton is concerned. It is perfectly true that this year we have received £1,000, and I shall explain how we received that. A ship came to Port Alma wharf, and there was some damage done to the wharf. The harbour board sued the owners of the ship and got a verdict; and, when we noticed they had got a verdict, we said, "Now is our time to get in and get a bite out of it." We got £1,000; and that is the first payment to the Treasury since 1918. I should think the hon. member would be ashamed to get up and refer to a position like that.

Mr. DUNLOP: I am quite proud of my remarks.

The TREASURER: I congratulate the hon. member on the pride which he is showing in connection with the matter I am now dealing with. I do not think any other hon. member would like to be congratulated along similar lines. The hon. member for Rockhampton has stated that the port of Brisbane has received certain things, and that, in addition, Brisbane has not paid its own expenses. Let me show that that is absolutely untrue. First of all, I will deal with the plant. Let us go back to 1893. All dredge plant purchased since the year 1893 has either been paid for out of the Brisbane Harbour Fund or a charge has been made against that fund for plant purchased since that year and used on the Brisbane River. These are the facts:—

Plant paid for by Brisbane Harbour Fund and included as indebtedness—

	£
Dredge "Remora"	46,425
Dredge "Platypus II."	100,317
Barges "Dugong" and "Seal"	59,291
Total	£206,033

Plant on which a hire charge has always been made when such plant was working in Brisbane is—

Dredges "Hercules," "Samson" and "Casuarina."

I want to draw the hon. member's attention to this, for he has apparently overlooked it. Plant, etc., to the value of £33,058, the original cost of which was charged to the loan fund account of the State, was handed over to the Rockhampton harbour board on the constitution of that board.

Mr. DUNLOP: We do not dispute that.

The TREASURER: I am very glad of that. We need not discuss that any further, as the hon. member does not dispute it.

Certain plant other than the abovementioned dredges and barges has been used in Brisbane since 1893, and has been treated as endowment, in the same way as plant handed over to Rockhampton and Townsville upon the constitution of harbour boards at those ports. It has been said that the expenditure in connection with Brisbane has not been charged to the port. That is not correct. It has been argued on the floor of this Chamber that, whilst Rockhampton has to pay the salaries of certain people, the salaries are not charged to the port of Brisbane. That is entirely wrong.

Mr. DUNLOP: The State has been paying a lot of it.

The TREASURER: The hon. member is entirely wrong. The charges are debited to the port of Brisbane. The Treasury has always treated the finances of the port of Brisbane as though dealing with a harbour board. The cost of administration is borne by the Brisbane Harbour Fund, and not by the taxpayers of the whole State. For example, the amount so borne during the last three financial years has been—

	£
1928-29	6,814
1929-30	6,938
1930-31	5,331

The Treasury has always dealt in the same way with the expenditure connected with Brisbane; in other words, it has been charged to the Harbour Fund. The expenditure on the port of Brisbane since 1st January, 1893, has been met either from the revenue of the port or from amounts advanced by the Treasury by way of loan, in the same way as loans to harbour boards.

If a loan is made to the port of Brisbane, then that port is responsible for the payment of interest and redemption. The hon. member for Rockhampton endeavoured to bolster up a case by quoting articles from the Rockhampton "Bulletin." He has evidently guarded those articles more carefully than he guarded his ice cream on another occasion. He now suggests something that he considers we should follow. I am amazed at his tactics.

Mr. MULLAN (*Flinders*) [3.37]: The Treasurer has lately adopted a plan of indignantly denying charges that have never been made, the object being to cover up the real accusations. He cannot always get away with it. No doubt he is very anxious to hide the deficit of approximately £1,250,000 shown last year.

Mr. EDWARDS: What about your legal expenses?

Mr. MULLAN: I did not receive one penny for legal expenses while I was Attorney-General. If I had only enjoyed the technical qualification—that was all that was necessary—I might have earned some money; but let me get back to the subject.

Mr. CLAYTON: I should think so. What about your travelling expenses?

Mr. MULLAN: The travelling expenses that I received were well deserved. The Treasurer will have amassed the huge deficit of £4,000,000 odd during his three years of office.

I have risen particularly to deal with a question mentioned by me during the debate on the Financial Statement, when I pointed out that during this financial year and the last financial year the Treasurer had illegally transferred £200,000 from repayments of loans to consolidated revenue. The hon. gentleman replied to the effect that his action was in accordance with the terms of the Commonwealth and State Financial Agreement Ratification Act. I then pointed out that only £29,000 of the £100,000 with respect to this year had been properly applied, and that the balance had been illegally applied. The Treasurer dismissed my statement with a wave of his hand, saying that the argument was unsound. I then contended that, under the Act referred to, the Treasurer had authority to pay into a sinking fund only 5s. per cent. per annum in respect of money advanced to local authorities, etc., now amounting to £11,750,000.

The section is so clear that I cannot understand how, except for the purposes of expediency, it could have been misread. It says this—

"Provided that, when loan moneys have been advanced by a State to a public or local authority or body constituted by the State or under the laws of the State and the authority or body repays such moneys out of its revenue, the State may, out of moneys so repaid, make its sinking fund contributions in respect of the loan moneys so advanced."

I want to lay special emphasis on the words "in respect of the loan moneys so advanced." Only "in respect of loan moneys so advanced" was the Treasurer justified in transferring moneys from the repayment of loans to the consolidated revenue to meet the sinking fund obligations? As I stated, £11,787,526 was the whole of the money that was so advanced. As we must pay 5s. per cent. per annum to the sinking fund to meet this indebtedness, only £29,463 could have been withdrawn legally by the Treasurer. Notwithstanding the statement made by the Treasurer to the contrary, in the course of my speech on the Financial Statement, I contended that he illegally transferred £70,000 odd from loan fund to the consolidated revenue. That was a most improper and irregular thing. It was really a misappropriation of funds, because it was not done in accordance with the terms of the Commonwealth and States Financial Agreement Ratification Act, and should not have been so transferred. When the Treasurer loftily waved his hands and dismissed my argument, I asked the hon. gentleman if he would take it up with the Auditor-General and the Crown Law Office to ascertain what was the position. The hon. gentleman certainly gave me no indication that he would take any action in that direction. However, since then the Auditor-General's report has come to hand. In commenting on the transfer of this £100,000 during the last financial year and £100,000 in the previous year from the repayments of loans towards sinking fund obligations, the Auditor-General says, *inter alia*—

"I am of opinion that the Treasury's interpretation of the Act is questionable."

He goes on, however, to say—

"If, however, the principle laid down by the Act of meeting loans at maturity

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by the establishment of a sinking fund created by loan advances repaid is admitted to be sound, the Treasurer's interpretation may be considered not unreasonable."

In the first place the Auditor-General regards the interpretation of the Treasurer as questionable, but later says that his action may not be considered unreasonable under the circumstances. I know that the Treasurer is in a difficult position, and is ready to grab any money he can lay his hands upon. Personally, I disagree with his action in this connection. It is not a fair proposition. I disagree with the interpretation of the Treasurer. Of course, from the point of view of expediency, I know how anxious he was to scoop that little fund.

THE TREASURER: I know how anxious you were.

Mr. MULLAN: I have been Acting Treasurer on many occasions for as long as six months at a time, so that I am not altogether ignorant of the duties and obligations of the Treasurer, although I cannot claim to have had the long experience of the present Treasurer. But one of the most important duties of the Treasurer is to see that in dealing with funds he acts within the law. When I spoke previously on this matter, I asked the hon. gentleman to confer with the Auditor-General's Department and the Crown Law Office before he committed himself on the matter. Since then the Auditor-General's report has come to hand, and it confirms to some extent the suspicions which I held. Surely the matter is of sufficient importance for the Treasurer to submit the matter to the Crown Law Office for advice. As I told the hon. gentleman previously, I was not merely acting on my own opinion when I spoke on the matter. I had secured legal opinion, which was to the effect that the Treasurer's interpretation of the financial agreement was incorrect. Now that the Auditor-General says that the Treasurer's interpretation is questionable, surely the hon. gentleman might conceive it to be his duty to secure legal advice from the Crown Law Office. Indeed, the matter is of sufficient importance to warrant the Treasurer securing eminent legal advice upon it.

Mr. POLLOCK: Not another job for McGill, I hope!

Mr. MULLAN: I do not care who gets it, so long as the best man gets it. Of course, the Treasurer may have already secured that advice. If he has, then at least he should have replied to me previously. The matter might well be cleared up by the Treasurer.

THE TREASURER: You are very jealous of the Treasurer.

Mr. MULLAN: I am jealous of the reputation of Queensland. In financial, as in all other matters, we ought to act within the law. The watchdog of our finances—the Auditor-General—says that the Treasurer's interpretation is questionable. Under these circumstances the Treasurer should refer the matter to counsel for advice. I have great confidence in the ability of the Treasury officials to carry out the routine work of their department, and, from my experience, they have done that work exceedingly well. They cannot, however, be expected to be expert on intricate legal points of this kind.

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When the Treasurer sat on this side he always held up his hands in horror at what he regarded as illegal procedure. I hope the Treasurer will clear this matter up.

The Treasurer has—I will not say burgled, because it would be out of order—but he has appropriated £22,000 odd from the treasury notes fund. This credit balance has been there for a long time. Of course the Treasury Notes Act has been more or less obsolete since the Commonwealth took over the note issue; still, Queensland has an obligation to pay those notes when presented, and a few have been presented year after year. It is possible, although quite improbable, that in due time most of those notes will be presented for payment. I have no doubt that they will be paid; and there is a legal obligation on the Treasurer to keep that money in the Treasury. As everyone knows, at the time of the bank crash in 1893, an Act was passed providing for the note issue; and amongst other things it was provided that—

"The amount of coin held by the Treasury shall never be less than one-fourth of the total amount of notes in circulation."

I do not suppose the Treasurer has any coin in the Treasury, although there used to be a little gold there. The Treasurer is supposed at no time to have less gold than the value of one-fourth of the amount of treasury notes still in circulation. My point is that the Treasurer ought to regard this money as sacred. Technically it is not a trust fund the same as other trust funds.

THE TREASURER: Is there any truth in the statement that you are reading for the bar?

Mr. MULLAN: I do not suppose it would interest the hon. gentleman very much whether I was or not; but, judging by some specimens of members of the bar on the other side, I would have great hopes of succeeding. I think the Treasurer should give some guarantee to the public in regard to that £22,000 odd. Of course he will say that consolidated revenue will meet it. In the State Advances Reserve Fund, the Real Property Act Assurance Fund, and the Savings Bank Stock Account Approval Bill the Treasurer is making no provision for the amount of money appropriated except that the consolidated revenue will meet the amount. I can assure the hon. gentleman that, if he went to the real property office, he would get evidence from Mr. Bradfield that some day there will be a tremendously big claim made against the Treasury in regard to that assurance fund. As with life assurance, obligations are entered into in one generation, and not discharged until one or two generations later. I hope the Treasurer will go into the matter of the treasury note issue and examine his conscience as to whether he is doing right in making no provision to meet the amount except from the good old consolidated revenue. It is a trust fund put there for a specific purpose, and that purpose should not be lightly disregarded by Parliament. Somebody wants to know whether it is a fact that the Treasurer is commencing to study finance in his old age. If he studied it long enough, he would probably develop a surplus; but his knowledge at present is not great, considering the abnormal deficit he has brought down after two and a-half years in office.

I would now like to make a brief reference to a statement made by the Attorney-General yesterday regarding the expenses of a past Attorney-General—the late T. J. Ryan. It is regrettable that the name of that distinguished gentleman should be bandied about this Chamber at a time when he is not able to defend himself. It is the most disgraceful thing that I have known to transpire in this Chamber.

Mr. MAHER: There was no attack on him.

Mr. MULLAN: I hope that, for the sake of the honour and dignity of this Parliament, it will never take place again. If the late Hon. T. J. Ryan were here to defend himself—

Mr. BLACKLEY: He would admit that he received the money.

Mr. MULLAN: He would show that at that time Labour was fighting as never before to protect the Acts of Parliament which it had passed. Every Act of Parliament passed by the Labour Party was fought in the courts of the country by our opponents. They could not beat us in the country with the electors, and they thought they would defeat us in the courts; so every important Act of Parliament passed by our Government in those days was appealed against and fought out in the courts, and the late Mr. Ryan was our champion who defended our case. I have here a document—the Premier will remember it—which I quoted in this Chamber on a memorable occasion. This is a clipping from it, giving the objects of the Employers' Federation—

“Testing the legality of any Act, proclamation, regulation, or order of the Federal or State Parliaments, or of any rule or by-law of any corporation in every case of common application.”

From the date of the Labour Government coming into power their object was to spend their money, not in elections, but in testing the legality of our legislation. The result of that was that the late Mr. Ryan had to go to court to defend the Insurance Act.

Mr. MAXWELL: Where did you get that from?

Mr. MULLAN: The hon. member was chairman of the Employers' Federation at the time. I am sorry I have not more time to deal with this matter. We had to defend State insurance and workers' compensation. We were endeavouring to defend Acts of Parliament which would not have been a success but for the fact that we established, not only in this Parliament but in the courts, right from the Supreme Court of the State to the highest court in the Empire, that our Acts were sound. We saved millions of pounds to the workers of this country by preserving inviolate workers' compensation. Not only that, but we did similar work in connection with State fire insurance. Because the Labour Party passed that Act, and because we were challenged in the courts and sustained the challenge and won the day, we saved the people of this country £200,000 per annum, which in fifteen years represents £3,000,000. Hon. members opposite talk about State enterprises. We saved the taxpayers of this country £3,000,000 by the establishment of a State fire insurance office. (Government interruption.) We reduced fire premiums from 25 per cent. to 33 per cent., representing, upon the authority of the

Insurance Commissioner, a saving in the aggregate to the people of the State—because we not only reduced our own rates but we forced the private companies to do the same—of £200,000 a year, or, as I have said, £3,000,000 in fifteen years.

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*) [4.5]: While we are engaged on the job of voting £2,600,000 for the services of this State, it is perhaps not an inopportune time to inquire how some of this money is being spent, and to get as far as we possibly can on behalf of the public information with respect to some items of expenditure which the Government appear to be rather diffident about giving.

Mr. TOZER: Interest on the money you have borrowed—interest on £56,000,000!

Mr. POLLOCK: Yesterday a question was asked in the House which sought to ascertain how much the State had paid in legal fees to certain barristers and solicitors during the term that the present Government have been in power. Mr. McGill's legal fees were put down at £1,907 for that period. That is for the period from 21st May, 1929, to 26th October, 1931.

Dr. KERWIN interjected.

Mr. POLLOCK: The hon. member for Merthyr interjects; it is refreshing to hear his voice in this Chamber. We could hear it for weeks before the last election when he was promising what he would do for the apprentices of this State if he were returned to Parliament; but we could write on an ordinary visiting card what he has done in that connection since that time.

Dr. KERWIN: The Labour Government did not do very much when they were in office.

Mr. POLLOCK: If the hon. member had done one one-hundredth part of what he had promised to do, we would now have a real apprenticeship system in Queensland, and the boys and girls would be given the chance that he promised the electors of Merthyr. I do not propose to get off the track. I want to point out that, although the expenses claimed by Mr. McGill in respect of the period from 21st May, 1929, to 26th October, 1931, are set down at £1,907, the public are under the impression that the fees in connection with the Mungana case are included in the amount, because that case ended before 26th October, 1931.

The PREMIER: They are not included. I have stated that definitely.

Mr. POLLOCK: The hon. gentleman did; but the newspapers did not publish that fact.

The PREMIER: I have stated that time after time.

Mr. POLLOCK: The amount of £584 drawn by the Attorney-General for the period from 21st May, 1929, to 26th October, 1931, does not include the little cut that he got out of the Mungana case.

The PREMIER: That is quite right.

Mr. POLLOCK: Strangely enough, the papers did not publish that either. Quite a number of people are under the impression that, because the Mungana case was finalised prior to 26th October, 1931, those amounts, and the amount of £1,872 paid to Messrs. Fitzgerald and Walsh, together

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with other amounts paid to other persons, comprise the total expenditure in connection with the Mungana case. I want to say here and now that the real bills for the Mungana case have yet to come to hand.

The PREMIER: An amount of £15,000 has been placed on the Estimates for that purpose.

Mr. POLLOCK: We have yet to receive the bill of costs for preparing the interrogatories in connection with the Mungana case. We have yet to receive the bill of costs of Messrs. McGill, Macgroarty, and Fitzgerald and Walsh, and other barristers who appeared for the prosecution in the case, as well as the bill of costs from counsel who appeared for Messrs. Theodore, McCormack, Goddard, and Reid. We have also to receive the bill for all other costs in connection with the Mungana case apart from the preparation of interrogatories, including the fees of barristers, solicitors, and others whilst appearing in the court. Whether it will be possible to get those particulars before we go to the country is a matter I am unable to determine. There is this to be remembered, that £5,000 was placed on the Estimates last year for the purpose of meeting these expenses, and that £15,000 has been placed on the Estimates for the ensuing year. If these sums are insufficient, then I presume that, if the bills are paid before the end of the financial year, they will be regarded by the Treasurer as unforeseen expenditure, and will be paid accordingly. We do not really know, and there is no certainty that we are likely to know, although it is some months since the case was concluded, what the total costs have been. We do not know just when those bills will come to hand, or when the public will be made aware of the costs in connection with this political feud. We do not know just exactly what the amounts will be.

At 4.10 p.m.,

Mr. GRIMSTONE (*Stanley*), one of the panel of Temporary Chairmen, relieved Mr. Roberts in the chair.

Mr. TOZER: You are trying to make a little political capital.

Mr. POLLOCK: It is not a question of making political capital. The question is that the Government have engaged in a political feud against political opponents.

Mr. MAXWELL: That is not true.

Mr. POLLOCK: They did that for the purpose of making political propaganda. The Premier listened to rumours, came into this Chamber, and ran the State into a huge expenditure. For what purpose? What could the State get out of it?

Mr. KIRWAN: The Government should now attend to the butter interests. They should clean up their own dirty doorstep.

Mr. POLLOCK: The State could not get anything out of the Mungana case.

The PREMIER: Why not?

Mr. POLLOCK: Any layman was able to tell the Premier before he amended the Crown Remedies Act that there was no chance of the State succeeding in the Mungana case. Laymen could tell the Government that.

The PREMIER: How could you tell that?

Mr. POLLOCK: We knew that the Government were not concerned so much with

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the success of the prosecution of the charges as in an endeavour to bring down a political opponent.

The PREMIER: What right have you to say what a jury would do?

Mr. POLLOCK: We knew when the Premier amended the Crown Remedies Act, as his Attorney-General told us, that he could not hope to succeed in a criminal prosecution, and a criminal prosecution was what we wanted.

The PREMIER: Oh, no it wasn't! You were concerned with a lot more than that, or you ought to have been.

Mr. POLLOCK: That was all the Government were concerned with.

The PREMIER: You ought to have been concerned with a lot more than that. You ought to have been concerned with the honour of this Parliament.

Mr. POLLOCK: If the Premier is so much concerned with the honour of this Parliament when it affects some of his political supporters and friends, instead of some of the friends of the Opposition, he might take that high, honourable stand now, and appoint a royal commission to investigate the butter business.

The PREMIER: If you make any charges, as I did, I will do so.

Mr. POLLOCK: The Premier never made a charge in connection with the Mungana case; he was never game to do so.

The PREMIER: I did, in this Chamber.

Mr. POLLOCK: The Premier never made a charge.

The PREMIER: I did. Look up "Hansard"!

Mr. POLLOCK: The Deputy Leader of the party, the present Secretary for Public Instruction, went closest to making a charge, but it had a very heavy veil over it.

The PREMIER: It did not. It was a definite charge.

Mr. POLLOCK: There is this to be remembered, that quite a lot of other people are making charges against people who are political friends of the Government.

The PREMIER: Well, make a charge, and I will appoint a royal commission straight away.

Mr. POLLOCK: There is no need to make a charge, for I cannot prove a charge. I admit that.

The PREMIER: You prefer to indulge in innuendoes.

Mr. POLLOCK: Was the gathering of 400 dairy farmers at Kingaroy the result of innuendoes?

The PREMIER: No; but that is not what you are saying.

Mr. POLLOCK: I say that those men are concerned with these charges. If the Premier is as much concerned with the honour of Parliament and the honour of his political friends, as he professes to be with the honour of his political opponents, now is the time for him to appoint a royal commission to investigate the charges made against them.

The PREMIER: What has that got to do with Parliament?

Mr. POLLOCK: I do not know; but it may later on have something to do with Parliament.

The PREMIER: Make your charge, and I will appoint a royal commission.

Mr. POLLOCK: Make a charge! The Premier would be very glad to get me into a position of making a charge so that he could appoint a royal commission to disprove it.

The PREMIER: I would not.

Mr. POLLOCK: He would appoint a royal commission to whitewash his friends, and then expel me from Parliament for having made a charge that I could not prove. I am not such a fool as to do that. I am not nearly such a fool.

The PREMIER: I am talking about the honour of Parliament.

Mr. POLLOCK: Then the Attorney-General had the nerve to compare the costs of this political feud—because it was nothing else—with the costs of the cases that the late T. J. Ryan defended. I do not say prosecuted, but, advisedly, defended on behalf of the State to save its citizens and taxpayers from having to pay out millions of pounds. I will prove that. Let me remind the Committee of some of the cases that T. J. Ryan appeared in, and compare his costs with those of the present Attorney-General in a case that should never have been undertaken.

Mr. BUTLER: He endeavoured to rob a widow.

Mr. POLLOCK: That just shows how far, right from the beginning, the loyalty of hon. members opposite goes. One of the most important cases T. J. Ryan defended was known as the Mooraberrie cattle case. What was the genesis of that case?

Mr. BUTLER: Robbing a widow.

Mr. KIRWAN: The court did not say so.

Mr. POLLOCK: The Sugar Acquisition Act was passed in 1914. In 1915 T. J. Ryan made an arrangement to supply meat to the Imperial Government and the people of Queensland—

The PREMIER: No; the Imperial Government.

Mr. POLLOCK: With meat at a reasonable price at a time when meat was soaring in value.

The PREMIER: He did not.

Mr. POLLOCK: The Government of the day issued a proclamation under the Sugar Acquisition Act taking charge of, or actually acquiring, the whole of the meat supplies in Queensland to some extent for the use of the Imperial Government, and to some extent for the use of the people of Queensland.

Mr. BUTLER: The Denham Government did that in 1914.

Mr. POLLOCK: It was no use the Labour Government trying to put a Bill through Parliament to do it, because the Legislative Council would not have passed it. The only way the Imperial Government in a time of war could have received this meat at a reasonable price was by the acquisition of the meat under the Sugar Acquisition Act. That was done.

Mr. BUTLER: It was done by Mr. Denham in 1914.

Mr. POLLOCK: The Sugar Acquisition Act was certainly passed in 1914, but the late Hon. T. J. Ryan acquired the whole of the meat under that Act. In case the hon. member does not know, may I ask him why it was that Mrs. Duncan and another launched an action against Theodore and Ryan, who were acting on behalf of the State of Queensland? It was because they were the men responsible for it. The pastoralists financed Mrs. Duncan, the owner of Mooraberrie. She is a very nice woman—a constituent of mine—and she has a couple of daughters who run the place very well. Mrs. Duncan is a hard-working woman, but that is not the point. The pastoralists financed this lady—it may be because she was a widow—I do not know—in order to have this proclamation upset. The Supreme Court of Queensland, the Full Court of Queensland, and the High Court of Australia upset the proclamation. If I have the history of the case correctly, the matter had to be taken to the Privy Council, and the Privy Council decided in favour of the Queensland Government. It is estimated that, if that case had been lost, then, because of other claims which would have come in for damages both for trespass and for other purposes, against the Government of Queensland, the cost to this State would have been in the vicinity of £3,000,000. The costs of the late Mr. Ryan in that case were not paid by the Queensland Government. They were paid by the losers of the case—the pastoralists of the State. How, therefore, can one compare those expenses with the fees of an Attorney-General in a case in which the State is paying the whole of the costs, including the costs of the defence, in what was merely a political feud?

The great "Eastern" case is another case in which the late Mr. Ryan saved this State a sum of £60,000. What would it matter if the outlay had been £10,000 in that case? He won the case; his law was sound, and he was worth the money to the taxpayers of Queensland. Can we say the same of the present Attorney-General in the cases he has prosecuted? I venture to say that there is no comparison either between the cases or between the men.

That is really all I intend to deal with at this stage. At the second reading stage I propose to have something to say about the Government's method of expending this money; but for the present I content myself with replying to the Attorney-General's statement that these expenses were the expenses paid to barristers and solicitors for this year. I will add this: Considering everything that was said by the Premier and by the Deputy Leader of the Government against Mr. Theodore and Mr. McCormack before the Mungana case, nothing that they could have said would have made that case any worse in the eyes of the public than giving to political friends of the Government—to the president of the Nationalist Party and to officers of the Nationalist Party—money to prosecute the Mungana case. Imagine a Nationalist Government, in the first place, briefing to the tune of thousands of pounds the president of their own political party!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The ablest barrister at the bar.

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Mr. POLLOCK: That in itself is an immoral proceeding, if the Premier proposes to take a high moral stand.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Do you doubt Mr. McGill's ability as a barrister?

Mr. POLLOCK: It is a peculiar thing that, so far as we have been able to understand, practically six-sevenths of the money expended in legal expenses has gone to friends of the Government. If that is maintaining the dignity of Parliament and raising the standard of politics, if that is the sort of thing that Nationalist government means, if that is the high standard of honour that the Premier stands for, then I beg to be excused from differing with him.

Mr. BUTLER (*Port Curtis*) [4.24]: The hon. member for Rockhampton raised a very interesting point. He was good enough to eulogise Gladstone as a very fine port. That is perfectly obvious. The hon. member also remarked that Port Alma was also a good port. The unfortunate part is that it is not a port at all. It is a wharf built on a mud flat 39 miles from the city of Rockhampton.

The hon. member for Rockhampton made a very grave charge when he said that Brisbane was living on Central Queensland. When you examine the figures, you can only come to the conclusion that, to a certain extent, Rockhampton has been living on the rest of Queensland. The capital debt of the Rockhampton harbour board to the Treasury is £504,533, the interest which has not been paid amounts to £129,330, making the total indebtedness of the Rockhampton board to the Treasury £633,863. No interest has been paid, or attempted to be paid, since January, 1923, with the exception of the £1,000 which the Treasurer mentioned he got as a bit of a windfall when the wharf on the mudflat got in the road of a big steamer and got knocked about. As a result of that, the Rockhampton harbour board got a few thousand pounds, and the Treasurer very wisely thought he should get his cut, and he got £1,000 out of it. No redemption has been paid since 1913, and the board has not the slightest chance of ever paying any redemption. The interest and redemption amount to £58,000 per annum, and the total gross income, as disclosed by the last two balance-sheets, is between £25,000 and £28,000 per annum. It is, therefore, very obvious that there is not the slightest hope, not only of the board ever paying redemption, but of ever paying one penny of interest. At the same time Gladstone has not paid the whole of its indebtedness to the Treasury, but has gone very near to it. The cold fact at the present time is that Gladstone is behind in its payments to the amount of £2,414, with another payment due to the Treasury in December. The board usually pays half-yearly instalments of interest and redemption in June and December, so there is another payment due on 31st December, which will materially reduce the small amount outstanding. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that, if the Government in their wisdom did what I have been pressing them to do ever since I have been in this Chamber, and extended to Gladstone the long haulage rate on wool, which at present ceases at the nearest port, Gladstone would meet the whole of its interest and redemption, which would be a

long way better business for the Treasurer than going on receiving nothing from Rockhampton as at present.

I go further than that, and say that the Rockhampton position as a port is absolutely hopeless. Even the hon. member for Rockhampton knows perfectly well in his heart of hearts that the people of Rockhampton cannot get away from the economic position. It would pay Queensland handsomely to close Port Alma altogether and induce the deep sea shipping for Central Queensland to come to Gladstone. If that were done, Gladstone would not only meet its interest and redemption, but would be only too pleased to shoulder the interest and redemption in respect of Port Alma. That would be a far better proposition for the State than to carry on as at present, with Rockhampton not likely to pay anything and Gladstone struggling to pay its share. I am perfectly certain that every member of the Committee will agree that it is high time that Rockhampton dropped Port Alma as a port, and allowed the deep sea shipping for Central Queensland to go to its natural port, which is Gladstone.

Professor Bridgen was appointed a little while ago to go into the whole of this question, and I understand that his report is now in the hands of the Premier. I have no doubt that, when the Premier goes into the report, he will undoubtedly come to the conclusion that what I have suggested is the best thing to do in the interests of Queensland as a whole.

Mr. DUNLOP: Have you seen the report?

Mr. BUTLER: No.

The hon. member for Gregory insinuated that the Premier was not going to appoint a royal commission to inquire into the trouble that has occurred in the dairying industry.

Mr. POLLOCK: I never said anything of the sort. I said that the honour of Parliament demanded that it should be done.

Mr. BUTLER: The hon. member implied that the Premier was not game to appoint a commission—that was the innuendo he threw out.

Mr. POLLOCK: That is the construction you put on it.

Mr. BUTLER: The hon. member backfired, as he occasionally does. I certainly stand behind the dairymen of Queensland, and I feel that this matter has to be inquired into; but, before the Government appoint a royal commission, the dairymen—who have a great deal of power in their own hands—can deal with the matter.

Mr. POLLOCK: If you thought that any of us were involved in it, you would be advocating a commission.

Mr. BUTLER: The dairymen have power to find out pretty accurately which managers and directors of the various co-operative butter companies are concerned in this business. There is not the slightest reason why special meetings of the shareholders and suppliers of the companies should not be called, at which the officials of the companies could be asked whether they had received any secret commissions. If they said "No," they could be asked whether they were prepared to produce a certificate from the Commissioner of Taxes to that effect. I know that, if anyone applies for a certificate stating that he has not received any secret commissions, he

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can obtain it from the Commissioner. Before a royal commission is appointed, every dairy company should first take such action as I have suggested.

Mr. POLLOCK: We shall have to appoint a commission ourselves next year.

Mr. BUTLER: Action should be taken straight away by the dairymen. If sufficient information cannot be obtained in that way, then it will be the duty of the Government to appoint a commission to inquire into the whole thing. I stand behind the dairy farmers, and this matter must be cleaned up. It has gone too far to be left where it is.

Mr. KIRWAN (*Brisbane*) [4.34]: When speaking on a previous occasion, I made a statement to the effect that the associated banks of Australia were attempting to dictate the policy of the Commonwealth and the States with regard to what they should do on the question of the reduction of salaries of public servants, invalid and old-age pensions, and so on; and I put the thing in a nutshell by stating that the banks were attempting to dictate the policy of the Governments. The Premier repudiated that suggestion, and said that it was not correct, and that no attempt of that kind had been made. Having a recollection of reading a summary of the recommendations of the conference published in the "Daily Mail" just about that time, and in order that there should be no doubt on the matter, as somebody might say that the press did not give a correct summary of what transpired at that conference, I looked up the report of the Premier's Conference. The conference was held on 7th, 9th, and 10th February; and I find on page 76 of the report the following remarks by Mr. Scullin—

"As the Treasurer, Mr. Theodore, proposes to make to the conference a report of his conversations with the Commonwealth Bank Board, and as these were, in their nature, confidential, I think that it should be heard and considered in camera.

"Members of the Conference: Hear, hear!

"The conference having heard Mr. Theodore proceeded to consider the questions raised by the statement made to them and by the resolution contained in the following letter addressed to him by Sir Robert Gibson, the chairman of the board, dated the 12th February:—

"Dear Mr. Theodore,—With reference to your discussion with the directors of the Bank Board on the subject of the rehabilitation of the financial and industrial position of Australia, when it was agreed that some concerted effort must be made to cope with the situation, and so avoid, if possible, the ultimate disaster which will otherwise eventually face the country, I am requested by my board to convey to you a resolution of the board as set forth hereunder—

Subject to adequate and equitable reductions in all wages, salaries, and allowances, pensions, social benefits of all kinds, interest and other factors which affect the cost of living, the Commonwealth Bank Board will actively co-operate with the trading banks, and the Governments of Australia, in sustaining industry and restoring employment.

"My board realises that this resolution in itself can be taken as only a comprehensive objective which it is desirable to aim for, and necessitates practical co-operation and effort in its attainment."

"This necessitates some definite movement and the creation of constructive plans for accomplishment. I am requested to state my board desires me, as chairman, to co-operate with you in every possible way to this end, and join with you in calling together a conference of the trading banks, when general measures might be adopted for the purpose of giving effect to the terms of the resolution, and the creation of a sub-committee to be approved, representing the Government, the Commonwealth Bank, and the trading banks, to watch developments and advise upon methods to be adopted which will further help the attainment of the return to prosperity of the country."

There can be no denying the fact, as the Premier did on a previous occasion in this Chamber, that that letter definitely lays down a certain policy which must be carried out by the respective Governments before the banks will do anything to rehabilitate trade and industry in Australia. Surely the Premier does not wish to give the impression to this Committee and to the country that the banks did not lay down definite terms! There can be no denying the fact; there is the definite statement.

After the conference had discussed that letter from Sir Robert Gibson, it approved of certain resolutions. I presume that those resolutions were then forwarded to Sir Robert Gibson or the banks concerned as an indication of what the conference was prepared to do to induce the banks to co-operate in this very necessary work.

The following letter signed by C. H. Tranter—I understand that he represented the associated trading banks—and dated Melbourne, 24th February, 1931, was addressed to the Treasurer of the Commonwealth:—

"The banks have given full consideration to the proposals placed before them by the Prime Minister and the Treasurer. They are prepared to support the objects set out, viz:—

- (a) Re absorption in industry of workers at present unemployed.
- (b) Maintenance of national solvency.
- (c) Restoration of budget equilibrium.
- (d) An equitable spread of the loss of national income over all sections of the community.

"The banks regret, however, that they cannot agree with all the methods suggested by the Treasurer, as, in their opinion, these are not on sound banking or economic lines. The carrying out of the ideas therein would, in the opinion of the banks, not alleviate the position, but would rather increase the difficulties by which the country is beset.

"The banks are quite willing to co-operate with the Government, provided that what is done is on lines that will be of lasting benefit to Australia.

"The first essential is restoration of confidence, and this can only commence by the Governments placing their finances

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in order by a definite and determined effort to balance their budgets over a given period. The incomes of the Governments cannot be increased sufficiently to meet the present expenditure, which, therefore, must be reduced.

"The banks consider that the suggestions by the committee of experts are on the proper lines, and should be generally followed.

"With regard to the proposals for the three-year plan, the conference agrees that the Government, the Commonwealth Bank, and the trading banks must cooperate to rehabilitate industry, provided the required finance is on sound lines, and so long as the present monetary system is not impaired. If the steps suggested above are taken, the banks believe that some action might be possible by the Government, the Commonwealth Bank, trading banks, and savings banks to effect some reduction in the rates of interest."

It will be noticed that the most important question—the reduction of interest—was left, like Mahomet's coffin, in mid air. The banks do not state definitely in that letter what they are prepared to do. They do not outline their share of the work of tackling the position confronting industry in Australia. They do not indicate what they are prepared to do to relieve unemployment throughout the Commonwealth; but they state that, if the Government will reduce pensions, salaries, and wages, and make the general cuts that they lay down, they will be prepared to consider the question of a reduction of interest. It is a piece of impertinence on their part. Why should they ask the old-age pensioner or the invalid pensioner to contribute towards the common sacrifice when they are not willing to make any contribution themselves? Who has done better in Australia during the past decade than the banks? They have participated in the general prosperity of Australia to a larger extent than any other section of the community. I remember reading a definition of "banker" given by a very clever American; and I am sure that there are thousands of business people and thousands of farmers throughout the Commonwealth who will say that the definition is absolutely correct. It was to the effect that a banker is a gentleman who lends you an umbrella when the sun is shining, but demands its return immediately it starts to rain.

Mr. BLACKLEY: They lend the money to enable you to buy an umbrella to protect you from the rain.

Mr. KIRWAN: I am quite prepared to allow that definition to go out to the people, and, if you, Mr. Grimstone, should refer it to some of the farmers in your district, they will tell you how true it is. I believe I am expressing the opinion of the business community in saying that the banks have treated their customers much worse than any other section of the trading community.

Mr. MAXWELL: How do you know?

Mr. KIRWAN: I am merely voicing opinions that business men have expressed to me. I am perfectly certain that, had any of the leading firms in the State and this city treated their customers who have traded with them for ten or fifteen years in the same manner as the banks have treated

their customers, their businesses would not be in the prosperous condition they are in to-day. When the unfortunate woolgrowers had their backs to the wall during the drought, in many instances the banks would not advance them so much as to buy tucker, let alone clothes. When the position in Australia became such as it is to-day, in many instances the banks, instead of assisting their unfortunate clients who had been compelled to seek assistance from them, called up their advances. The pastoral members in this Chamber have given many instances showing that, when the special legislation arising out of the Premiers' Conference was passed by the various Parliaments in Australia, the people benefiting in the final analysis would not be the pastoralists but the banks. The letter which I quoted from proceeds—

"The overseas floating debts of the various Governments must ultimately be funded, but this cannot be accomplished before there is an effective effort towards Budget stability.

"The banks draw attention to the effect of the proposal for a special tax on Government securities, which would undoubtedly add to the difficulty of Governments in converting maturing loans or in funding floating debts, or raising of any new loans required.

"Interest on the Government's overseas obligation will be continued to be provided through the Exchange Pool as long as it is within the power of the banks to do so."

At 4.46 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. KIRWAN: I do not wish to charge those who attended the Premiers' Conference with any other motives but good faith, no matter what their politics may be, because I believe they thought they were doing the right thing; but it is questionable whether the benefits which they desired to accrue from their actions have so far resulted. The Premier has stated that, if the plan which was evolved at a conference with Sir Otto Niemeyer, one of the directors of the Bank of England, had been put into operation immediately, the position would not have been as it is to-day. I doubt that very much.

Mr. MAXWELL: Mr. Scullin said so.

Mr. KIRWAN: No doubt Mr. Scullin and the Premiers of the various States believed that because a gentleman of the reputation and standing of Sir Otto Niemeyer was sent to Australia on a special mission, everybody should take his advice without question. I would point out to the hon. member for Toowoong that Sir Otto Niemeyer went to Brazil to consult with the Government there. He advised certain things to be done, amongst them being a loan of £8,000,000 to place the Bank of Brazil—probably an institution similar to our Commonwealth Bank—on a sound basis. The money was raised in London immediately, and the Brazilian Government started out to put his plan into operation. Yet we read the other day that Brazil had defaulted in her interest payments. The wonderful scheme which Sir Otto Niemeyer suggested should be carried out by the Brazilian Government had not borne good results. I hope that the plan being carried out by

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the various Premiers of Australia—which is really a modification of Sir Otto Niemeyer's original plan—will not have the same result.

In view of the great veneration in which this ambassador from the Bank of England was held in Australia, particularly by hon. members opposite—

Mr. MAXWELL: He came at the invitation of Mr. Scullin.

Mr. KIRWAN: I am not going to discuss that! I have something more important to deal with.

Mr. MAXWELL: You won't discuss it.

Mr. KIRWAN: I say definitely that it is not true.

The TREASURER: It is true.

Mr. KIRWAN: My word is as good as the hon. gentleman's.

It is interesting to learn the opinion of the "National Review" regarding this gentleman. In its issue for October, 1930, that journal—which is one of the leading reviews in Great Britain and has a reputation for holding strong ultra-Tory views—said—

"Under the circumstances the British press would be well advised to restrain their curtain lectures to Australia on her extravagance. We have not managed our own affairs so brilliantly as to permit of our preaching to other people on their financial short-comings. The public have not been allowed to know how Sir Otto Ernst Niemeyer's mission and programme of retrenchment have been received by Australia generally, and there seems to be a disposition among the city editors of the London press to denounce anyone who questions the wisdom of his Australian policy. We quite understand that it should arouse perturbation in certain quarters of the Commonwealth. We can only hope that Sir Otto has been a better adviser to Australia than he has been to this country. He belongs to the inner ring of the Treasury and the Bank of England, who have had things all their own way since the war, under successive submissive Governments, with the results that stare us in the face all over the country and cause the greatest misgivings to thinking Englishmen as to our future. The school of which he is an ornament have done absolutely nothing to check the wild and wicked extravagance of one Cabinet after another during the last ten years, and have been, by their short-sighted measures—such as the adoption of the gold standard in 1925—one of the most potent causes of the existence of two million unemployed in this small island. The disastrous effect of their influence at home has likewise been felt in every other country which has followed our foolish currency policy, and is probably responsible for the chaos in China and India, the value of whose money has been halved. It is certainly surprising if a man of Sir Otto's antecedents and record has been really useful in helping the Australians to put their house in order."

Lord Milner, a very prominent personage in British politics, dealing with this gentleman and those of his class, said—

"Treasury officials are exceedingly able men who are almost invariably wrong."

That was the testimony paid to Sir Otto Niemeyer who was sent to Australia to tell the various Government what it was necessary to do to put their house in order.

On more than one occasion hon. members opposite have made a definite declaration that the Government do not stand for the reduction of wages. They invariably shelter themselves behind the statement that "whatever reductions have been brought about have been made by the Industrial Court."

Mr. MAHER: And by world-wide conditions.

Mr. KIRWAN: Perhaps the hon. member who interjects has the same opinion as the Premier, who, on returning from the Premiers' Conference, is reported in the "Daily Mail" of 16th February last as saying—

"It was of no use going to England, however, unless they were prepared to bring their rates of wages and salaries down to the level of other parts of the world, for the lenders were not prepared to give more money to maintain high wages that had not been justified."

It is no use the Government endeavouring to shelter behind the Industrial Court, and stating that the policy of the Government is dictated by the actions of that tribunal. I do not know whether the hon. gentleman desires that the rates of wages and salaries should be reduced to the level of China or India. As the hon. member for Burke reminds me, the Premier has already succeeded by removing the station hands from the protection of the Industrial Court and bringing them down to a level about which he expressed a hope—

The PREMIER: I didn't express any hope.

Mr. KIRWAN: The hon. gentleman seemed to think there was no hope of getting money overseas unless that condition of affairs was brought about. He said definitely that it was no use going to London unless our rates of wages were reduced to the same level—

The PREMIER: I didn't say to the same level. I said so that we could compete in the markets of the world.

Mr. KELSO: You make a statement, and you can't back it up.

Mr. KIRWAN: I made the definite statement, and I quoted the "Daily Mail" in support of that statement. When I support my statements with newspaper extracts, I am sneered at, and told that it is only a newspaper clipping. When I made the statement that the banks had dictated the policy agreed to at the Premier's conference, and had stated that that policy had to be carried out before they would advance money, the Premier said that I was not stating the position correctly. Now I have quoted from the report of the conference, which proves that every statement I made on that occasion was correct. It appears necessary to be surrounded with clippings and cuttings concerning the actions of Government members in order to ram their statements down their throats, and I derive considerable pleasure from doing that.

When the hon. member for Ithaca was speaking some time ago, he read an extract which suggested that the reduction of interest was part of the plan agreed upon at the Premiers' Conference. I do not wish

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to do the Premier an injustice; but, if my memory serves me aright, the hon. gentleman challenged that statement, and said it was not part of the Premiers' plan.

The PREMIER: There was an agreement with the banks. You don't know what you are talking about.

Mr. KIRWAN: In order to put the matter beyond doubt, I shall quote Professor Copland's statement, as published in the Melbourne "Age" of 29th July last. The banks denied that it was part of the plan. They were at the conference, and they ought to know, and the Commonwealth Premier should have told them that, as the invalid pensioners, old-age pensioners, and all the rest of the people were contributing to the national sacrifice, it was up to the banks to contribute their "whack." Dealing with mortgages, Professor Copland said—

"Nobody could contend that the reduction of private interest was not a part of the conference plan. The suggestion was originally made by the conference of economists and under secretaries, and entered early into the discussions by the Premiers afterwards. It was considered by the subcommittee. In the second week of the conference it was discussed again, and in the following week was announced as a part of the Premiers' plan. It was unfortunate that this cry of no interference with private interest should be raised. It had, as it happened, been raised more emphatically in Victoria than anywhere else. He regarded it as quite as serious a breach in the conference scheme as if any Government had declined to cut its expenditure by 20 per cent.. There was no case for the refusal to reduce the interest on private mortgages. Legal difficulties there might be. He would not believe that they could not be overcome."

The PREMIER: Who raised that cry?

Mr. KIRWAN: The banks did.

The PREMIER: They did not.

Mr. KIRWAN: I undertake to say that the manager of at least one prominent bank in Australia said that it was not a part of the plan. The Premier knows perfectly well that the banks said, "You make the cut, and immediately interest will come down." The Premier of Queensland and the Premiers of the other States, with the exception of Mr. Lang, set about making the cut.

The PREMIER: They have done so.

Mr. KIRWAN: And they have been a very long way behind Queensland. The definite statement was made by one bank manager that, if the Arbitration Court reduced wages by anything like a decent cut, the banks would reduce interest. The Commonwealth Arbitration Court made a cut of 10 per cent., but the banks have made no cut in interest. The excuse given by the banks when they were asked to put their part of the plan into operation was that they were paying interest on fixed deposits and the plan could not be put into operation until the period of the fixed deposits was up. They did not raise that issue at the Premiers' Conference. They agreed that, if the Premiers were prepared to carry out the necessary cut in expenditure;

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whether in regard to pensions or anything else: immediately the banks would make the necessary reduction in interest.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*) [5.0]: It is somewhat amusing to hear the speeches which have fallen from hon. members opposite during the debate, but they are quite on a par with previous speeches which we have heard in this Chamber.

I want, first of all, to deal with the statement by the hon. member for Brisbane, more particularly with the coming to Australia of Sir Otto Niemeyer at the invitation of the Federal Government. This has been stressed before in the Chamber—that Sir Otto Niemeyer did not come of his own volition, but came at the invitation of the Federal Government, because the Treasurer found himself in somewhat straitened circumstances, and it was absolutely essential to get the advice of a man of the financial ability and capacity of Sir Otto Niemeyer. Let me quote from "Hansard" for 1930, page 1579, from a speech made by the hon. member for Warwick—

"I want to correct another statement made by the hon. member. He referred to Sir Otto Niemeyer, and my hon. friend on my right indicated that he had come to Australia at the express invitation of someone. Straight out from the shoulder the hon. member said that he had not done so."

The hon. member for Brisbane said the same this afternoon—and he was backed up by his lieutenant, the hon. member for Mundubberra—that Sir Otto Niemeyer did not come out at the invitation of the Federal Government. The hon. member for Warwick continued—

"What are the facts? I prefer to take what Mr. Lyons, the Federal Postmaster-General, said on that matter—

Mr. Lyons said that Mr. Theodore found difficulty in his way as Treasurer, and he had conferred with the British Government, which had consulted the Bank of England. Sir Otto had come to Australia at his own expense, and did not come as a bailiff. He did not tell the Government, or recommend anything that the Government did not know. He approved of the Government's policy to try to pay its way. Sir Otto had certainly expressed opinions in favour of reducing the cost of production, but these were his views, and not the expressed views of the Government. The Government stood for all-round sacrifices and not for wage reductions at the expense of the workers and to the benefit of other interests. When Sir Otto returned to Australia he would investigate the question of reduced interest."

That refutes entirely the statement which was made that Sir Otto Niemeyer was not the invited guest of the Federal Government. The hon. member for Gregory threw across the floor of the Chamber some remark dealing with Mr. Lyons. At any rate, we certainly have an example to-day in the cables which have come across from the motherland, which state distinctly that the people of Britain repose their faith in their loyal statesmen. The people of Britain have endorsed what those Labour men did there—men of the calibre of Mr. Thomas,

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, and Mr. Snowden, who were prepared for the sake of country—not for the sake of party—to throw away anything that savoured of party in order to save their country. Mr. Lyons and Mr. Fenton did the same thing—good, honest Australians—they did it for the honour of their country. Thank God, we have men of that calibre in our community who are prepared to link up with other parties—not like hon. members opposite, who are prepared to grouch and growl, and find fault with the banks and other financial concerns, and say they are not assisting the country. The banks got the savings of the people; and is it not right that those savings should be protected? We have an example of that in regard to the Government Savings Bank in New South Wales, where certain developments took place and the bank closed its doors. The banks have been serving the interests of the people. They have been lending the money for the development of Australia and in assisting the various Governments to get over their troubles.

I want to refer to the statement the hon. member for Brisbane made in connection with the banks dictating the financial policy of the Governments. I cannot do better than quote a statement which was made by Chief Judge Dethridge of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, and it cannot be said that this is a political stunt—

“BANKS AND DEFLATION.

“In reference to the frequent statement that the trading banks have carried out their policy of ‘deflation,’ an extract from a judgment of Chief Judge Dethridge of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, delivered on 22nd January, 1931, is appended—

‘It was submitted’ (by the unions) ‘that the banks, notwithstanding the prosperous run they have had since the War, were dictating the financial policy of enterprise all in the direction of forcing reductions of wages. In order to test this argument the court secured from the Commonwealth Statistician an analysis of banking statistics between the years 1914 and 1930, with a view of determining whether there had been any undue contraction of credits during recent years.’”

“The return facilitates the preparation of a financial table showing the percentage of advances by banks to total deposits and to total assets.”

The hon. member for Brisbane has seen fit to take up the catch-cry uttered by the representatives of the unions in the Federal Arbitration Court. This catch-cry is exploited by the comrades of the hon. member for Brisbane inside and outside this Chamber and at every street corner. They claim that the fight must be “the people versus the banks.”

Mr. PEASE: They will hear a lot more about it.

Mr. MAXWELL: The people are accustomed to listening to reasonable argument, and are more intelligent than the hon. member imagines. The hon. member is prone to get on to the soap box in some seaside resort. I propose to deal with him subsequently. These figures show the per-

centage advances to total deposits, including Government and municipal securities:—

	Per cent.
1914	72.79
1915	70.49
1916	77.54
1917	69.83
1918	73.78
1919	83.66
1920	68.91
1921	80.59
1922	75.60
1923	78.15
1924	82.93
1925	73.80
1926	80.54
1927	67.39
1928	93.13
1929	88.61
1930	99.63

Including Government and municipal securities, the percentage of advances to deposits has increased approximately from 72 per cent to 105 per cent. It will thus be seen that during recent years, particularly the last two years, there has been no undue contraction of credit by the banks. On the contrary, from 1920 to 1930 the percentage has largely increased. That entirely disposes of the ridiculous argument put forward by the hon. member for Brisbane. The hon. member for Gregory worked himself up into a passion in connection with the Mungana case; but I have a vivid recollection of one of the loud-lunged orators on the other side—the hon. member for Herbert—anxiously inquiring why the Government had not appointed a commission immediately they attained office. Do hon. members opposite believe that a royal commission could be conducted without any cost? We have been charged with using our own political supporters to carry out the work.

Mr. POLLOCK: Is that untrue?

Mr. MAXWELL: I do not think it is true. I would not say that it was true. It is really no concern of ours what a man's politics are. The hon. member for Gregory probably fraternises with these gentlemen on the golf links, and would have a better knowledge.

Mr. POLLOCK: And on the racecourse.

Mr. MAXWELL: Yes. If the hon. member for Gregory became involved in a law case, he would obtain what he regarded as the best man for his purpose. That was done by the hon. member for Warrego. We could not blame him, nor can he blame a Government for a similar action, particularly when the Government must protect the rights of the people, the finances of the State, and, above all, it must be borne in mind that the honour of public men was at stake. The hon. member for Gregory has the political impudence to state not only to-day, but on previous occasions, that the Mungana case was conducted as a political feud against Messrs. Theodore and McCormack. The hon. member knows that his contention is nothing more than piffle. How can we place any reliance on statements made by the hon. member for Gregory? The Committee may remember that only a week ago the Treasurer quoted a resolution which was the subject of discussion at the Labour Convention held at Emu Park in 1923.

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When the Treasurer quoted the resolution, and mentioned the names of certain delegates who had opposed it, the hon. member for Gregory interjected that it was not true. That hon. member said—

“It is a division list showing that those who voted for that resolution and are now in this party voted against Parliament fixing wages instead of the matter being left to the Arbitration Court.”

That was not true.

Mr. POLLOCK: You burst the Standing Orders to let the Treasurer say it.

Mr. MAXWELL: This statement made by the hon. member for Gregory was not true, and no one knew it better than he. That kind of bluff might be quite good enough on the racecourse, but it is not good enough for a place like Parliament.

Mr. POLLOCK: I believe you used the statement very effectively on the tram going home at night.

Mr. MAXWELL: I have a duty to do when I am temporarily occupying the chair, and I do not discuss outside of Parliament what I do in that chair; but the hon. member knows perfectly well that I am touching him a bit on the raw.

Mr. POLLOCK: You were “cooked” that afternoon; you were not raw.

Mr. MAXWELL: I will prove to the satisfaction of the Committee how much we can rely on statements made by the hon. member for Gregory. I have in my possession the issue of the “Railway Advocate” of 16th July, 1924.

Mr. MULLAN: You cannot take that as an authority.

Mr. MAXWELL: I intend to quote from the “Railway Advocate” in order that an accurate record of what took place at the convention should appear in “Hansard,” to enlighten the people in regard to the statement made by the hon. member for Gregory that the statement read by the Treasurer was incorrect.

Mr. POLLOCK: Will you prove it by George Rymer and Tim Moroney?

Mr. MAXWELL: I may have seen Mr. Moroney once in my life, but I do not know Mr. Rymer.

Mr. POLLOCK: You would not know him if you saw him?

Mr. MAXWELL: I have never spoken to Mr. Moroney, and I do not know Mr. Rymer. The statement which I will read to the Committee is not my own. What do I care for the insinuations or inferences hurled across the Chamber by the hon. member? The “Railway Advocate” said—

“WHO VOTED TO RAISE YOUR WAGES?”

“A.L.P. CONVENTION DIVISION LIST.

“Resolution.—That the Government restore the basic wage of £4 6s. per week until such time as the Arbitration Act is amended to include a provision that the basic wage should be fixed by the standard arrived at by the Piddington Commission.”

Where is there anything in that resolution about wanting Parliament to fix a wage? That resolution states “the Government restore.” Which Government? The Labour Government of the day, and their supporters.

Mr. POLLOCK: Read the resolution in full.

[Mr. Maxwell.

Mr. MAXWELL: I have done so, and will leave it to the hon. member for Gregory to put whatever construction on it he likes, or to distort it in whatever manner he likes. Let me proceed. The “Advocate” further states—

“Quite a number of our members have asked for information as to how delegates to the last State Labour-in-Politics Convention voted on the wage reduction issue.

“Although the necessary number of convention delegates voted for the publication of the division lists in the A.L.P. official report they were not published.

“We therefore publish hereunder, for the information of members, the official division list supplied by the secretary to the A.L.P., Mr. Lewis McDonald. Such is, after all, the business of the workers of Queensland.

“It will be observed that only two members of Parliamentary Labour Party voted in favour of the resolution, whilst a number of union officials and other more or less prominent men in the Labour movement lined up with the ‘wage-reducers.’

“The publication of the division list at this juncture is opportune in view of the efforts of the Public Service Industrial Committee (old anti-reduction committee) to secure the restoration of the basic wage of £4 5s.:—

“WAGE-REDUCERS.

Crampton (“Daily Standard”).
 Wilson, M.L.A. (Fortitude Valley electorate).
 Gledson, M.L.A., Ipswich (W.I.U. of Aus. Min. Dept.).
 Hay (Bremer electorate).
 Boulton (former president A.M.I.E.U.).
 Dobinson (alderman, South Brisbane).
 Dash, M.L.A. (former A.W.U. district secretary).
 Barry (now Mayor of Brisbane).
 Theodore, M.L.A. (Chillagoe).
 Lamont (now A.W.U. secretary).
 Larcombe, M.L.A. (Keppel electorate).
 Foley, M.L.A. (Leichhardt).
 Mullan, M.L.A. (Flinders).
 Liddle (Waterside Workers’ Federation).
 Webster (Nanango).
 Jones, M.L.A. (Paddington).
 Colborne (Printing Industry Union).
 McLean (Bundaberg).
 Dunstan, M.L.A. (Gympie).
 Sampson (Murrumba).
 Barber, M.L.A. (Toowong).
 Riordan (president A.W.U.).
 Winstanley, M.L.A. (Queenton).
 McCormack, M.L.A. (Cairns).
 Dunn (Townsville W.P.O.).
 Peole (Herbert).
 Hefferan (Ipswich).
 Carter, M.L.A. (Port Curtis).
 MacDonald (Eacham).
 Smith, M.L.A. (Mackay).
 Dunstan (A.W.U., secretary).
 Farrell, M.L.A. (Rockhampton).
 Stopford, M.L.A. (Charters Towers).”

The hon. member for Townsville wants to know from what I am quoting. I am quoting from the Railway "Advocate." A certain resolution was published, which this paper says was a wage increase resolution—

Mr. STOPFORD: Mr. Roberts, I rise to a point of order. I ask that the hon. member be made to read the resolution. I think that is only fair.

Mr. MAXWELL: I have already read it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member has already read the resolution, but, in any case, there is no reason why the hon. member for Toowong should not conduct his speech in his own way.

Mr. STOPFORD: I differ from your ruling.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. STOPFORD: On a point of order, is the Railway "Advocate" to be accepted as a journal without question here?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Mr. Maxwell!

Mr. STOPFORD: Mr. Roberts, I rise to a point of order. I have been obeying your call to order. The hon. member for Toowong has mentioned my name. He may say that he has read some resolution which he alleges is there, but I want the hon. member to read it now.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member has sufficient experience to know that he cannot compel another hon. member who is addressing the chair to deliver a speech in any but his own way.

Mr. STOPFORD: Mr. Roberts—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member will have an opportunity later of denying the statement if he desires to do so. Mr. Maxwell!

Mr. MAXWELL: I was reading—

Mr. MULLAN: Mr. Roberts, I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Toowong has quoted certain things which I regard as untrue, and, more important still, which I regard as personally offensive to me in that he makes a false accusation, which I ask you, Mr. Roberts, to call upon him to withdraw.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I cannot see any point of order. Mr. Maxwell!

Mr. MULLAN: On a point of order, Mr. Roberts, may I be permitted to state that the statement read by the hon. member for Toowong accuses me of having voted for a reduction of wages, which I state is a lie? It is a lie to state that I voted for a reduction of wages, and I ask for a withdrawal of what is offensive to me.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Two or three times within the last few days this question has arisen. I was not in the chair on a previous occasion; but I would point out to the hon. member, who had had sufficient parliamentary experience to tell him so, that the hon. member for Toowong is justified in reading a statement from the press—

Mr. STOPFORD: What a damned lie!

The CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Mr. DUNLOP: They are absolutely correct.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Toowong has not made it as

his own statement, but is quoting a published statement from a registered newspaper.

Mr. STOPFORD: You are unfair to say that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! As I have already told the hon. member for Mount Morgan, the hon. member for Flinders will also have an opportunity to address himself to this question, if not now, then at another stage.

Mr. MULLAN: Then I say deliberately that the statement made is a lie.

Mr. POLLOCK: Hear, hear! It is a lie.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MULLAN: It is an absolute lie.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Mr. Maxwell!

Mr. MAXWELL: I would remind hon. members opposite that what I am stating appears in the Railway "Advocate," which is not a Tory paper. Continuing the extract which I was reading, we find—

"ANTI-WAGE-REDUCERS.

"Messrs. Ryan (A.M.I.E.U.), Gillard (Seamen's Union), Green (Warwick electorate), Evans (Nundah electorate), Cahill (A.W.U. secretary), Kewley (Barcoo), Walbank (Murilla), McPhail (Windsor), Barker (Amalgamated Engineering Union), Bryan (Toombul), Hansen (Buranda), Beatson (A.R.U.), Rymer (A.R.U.), Moroney (A.R.U.), Durkin (Mitchell), Moir (Maree), E. Foley (Toowoomba), Ferricks, M.L.A. (South Brisbane), Bartholomew (Burke), Gough (Carpenters and Joiners' Union), Wright (Bulimba), Lee (Kennedy), Talty (Brisbane), Carney (Fassifern), McLary (Aubigny), Hurst (Ithaca), Kelly (Maranoa), MacGinley (Logan), Burchill (Bowen), Taylor (Returned S. and S. Labour League)."

Mr. COOPER (*Bremer*) [5.24]: Mr. Roberts, I rise to a point of order. I want to know if the hon. member is in order in repeating statements to which objection has been taken by hon. members on this side, and, to back up my point of order, I want to quote Mr. Speaker Taylor, as reported in "Hansard," page 1757, of 20th November, 1929.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would point out to the hon. member that I have already ruled on this question.

Mr. COOPER: I am raising a point of order, and I want to back it up by quoting Mr. Speaker Taylor in 1929. When Mr. Foley, the hon. member for Leichhardt, was speaking, he said—

"The Minister who introduced this measure is reported to have stated during the election campaign that, if he had his way, he would burn the Industrial Arbitration Act.

"The Secretary for Labour and Industry: That is not true.

"Mr. FOLEY: The hon. gentleman is reported to have said that."

The Speaker ruled—

"The hon. member for Leichhardt must accept the Minister's denial."

That is a ruling by Mr. Speaker on exactly all-fours with the question of order before

Mr. Cooper.]

the Committee. The hon. member for Leichhardt said that it was reported that the Secretary for Labour and Industry had said—

Mr. MAXWELL: He did not read it. I am reading it.

Mr. STOPFORD: How do we know you are reading it?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. STOPFORD: You are reading from a paper. Why don't you table it?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Bremer to move that my ruling be disagreed to, otherwise the ruling must stand.

Mr. COOPER: I do not wish to delay the Committee, but, in deference to your wishes, Mr. Roberts, I move—

“That the Chairman's ruling be disagreed to.”

I do not think we need get away from what Mr. Speaker Taylor ruled in 1929. The ruling given is just as likely to swing back and make the debates disorderly, and, for the sake of orderly debate, we might as well stand by the rulings that have been given in this Chamber. (Interruption.) I base my motion on the ruling given by Mr. Speaker Taylor, who has on more than one occasion, stated that he has based his ruling on rulings given by other Speakers. The question is very definite. The hon. member for Leichhardt, Mr. Foley, said—

“The Minister who introduced this measure is reported to have stated during the election campaign that, if he had his way, he would burn the Industrial Arbitration Act.

“The Secretary for Labour and Industry: That is not true.

“Mr. FOLEY: The hon. gentleman is reported to have said that.

“The Secretary for Labour and Industry (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*): I rise to a point of order. The hon. member is putting words into my mouth which I never uttered. He says that I stated that, if I had my way, I would burn the Industrial Arbitration Act. I never made any such statement.

“The SPEAKER: The hon. member for Leichhardt must accept the Minister's denial.”

It will be contended in denial that the hon. member for Leichhardt did not read the particular statement, but that he made the statement. The hon. member for Toowong, Mr. Maxwell, has read a statement which alleged that votes were given by the hon. member for Gregory, the hon. member for Flinders, the hon. member for Mount Morgan, and the hon. member for Queenton in a certain direction. All these hon. members deny that that vote was given in that direction. That being so, it is incumbent upon you, Mr. Roberts, to call upon the hon. member for Toowong to accept the denial of those hon. members. That is a ruling that has been given, not once in this Chamber, but 500 times. It is a ruling that is given in every session of the House of Commons. I turned up the debates for the House of Commons, and I found time after time that an hon. member's denial must be accepted. There is no getting away from the ruling. It is immaterial whether an hon. member

makes a statement by reading somebody else's statement or not; it is still an improper statement if an hon. member objects to it; and, although the hon. member for Toowong has quoted something from the “Railway Advocate,” it makes no difference, it is still an improper statement if an hon. member objects. I am sorry that the hon. member for Toowong took advantage of such an occasion as this to canvass the ruling of a Temporary Chairman of this Committee. I found that ruling in the first volume I took up, and I am confident that you would find in the volumes of “Hansard” on the table many instances in which hon. members have been told that they must accept the denial of an hon. member. The ruling has been given over and over again. The ruling is a sound one, and is founded not only on precedent but on the experience of a number of years, and it is something which should not be idly thrust aside simply because, in the heat of the moment, by a mere slip, a Temporary Chairman of Committees made a mistake. I recognise such a thing as loyalty.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member cannot proceed on those lines. I cannot allow him to question my ruling.

Mr. COOPER: Mr. Roberts,—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order! I regret the position which the hon. member is taking up this afternoon.

Mr. COOPER: That is very unfair.

Mr. STOPFORD: You are just trying to uphold the ruling of the Temporary Chairman on Friday.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not make statements reflecting on the Chair. I am certain he would not do it in his steadier moments.

Mr. STOPFORD: I say that your ruling is wrong.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to withdraw.

Mr. STOPFORD: I will not withdraw until you withdraw.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask the hon. member to withdraw.

Mr. STOPFORD: I withdraw. Now I ask you to withdraw the expression with regard to my “steadier moments.”

The CHAIRMAN: There is a possibility that the hon. member for Mount Morgan and other hon. members may misunderstand my reference to “steadier moments,” I am consequently quite prepared to withdraw it. I would not like to be misunderstood.

Mr. COOPER: I am distinctly sorry that you are connecting up my remarks with yourself, Mr. Roberts. I was stating that there was such a thing as loyalty.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member has exhausted his time.

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*) [5.31]: Speaking on the motion for disagreement with your ruling, Mr. Roberts, I am sorry that we have to disagree with it, but I have a distinct recollection of the motion which was moved at the Emu Park Convention. The resolution was moved by Mr. Bryan and it read—

“That the basic wage of £4 5s. per week be restored until such time as the Piddington Commission's recommendations be given effect to.”

[*Mr. Cooper.*

The Piddington Commission's recommendations were £5 4s. per week. (Government interruption.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. POLLOCK: I am speaking strictly on the point of order. Hon. members opposite on a number of occasions, and the hon. member for Toowong this afternoon, have said that those who voted against that resolution voted for a reduction of wages. A perusal of the whole debate, which I went through the other day very carefully, shows that the present Leader of the Opposition, Mr. McCormack, Mr. Theodore, and a number of other members of the Labour Party who voted against the resolution did so because we would not be a party, and did not intend to be a party, to Parliament fixing rates of wages. The Leader of the Opposition forecast some of the things that this Government would do if returned to power and, if hon. members read that speech, they would be very much surprised.

With regard to the point of order, to say that we voted for a reduction of wages is offensive to every one of us. We say that it does not matter who says it—if it is Mr. Rymer or any other gentleman—then it is a lie. None of us voted to reduce wages. We voted against Parliament fixing wages; therefore it must be offensive to any man to have that continually hurled across the Chamber. The reason why I am voting against your ruling is that, if an offensive statement is made against any individual or body of individuals on either side, the only way out of the difficulty is to accept the denial of the hon. member who is attacked. That is parliamentary procedure as old as the hills. If you do not accept a man's denial, what is his alternative? He must call you a liar. We do not want Parliament to degenerate so. If men are not compelled to accept one another's denials on matters that are offensive to them, then it is obvious that we have to take the law into our own hands and draw the attention of the public to it by insulting those men. We do not want to do that, but to act according to the Standing Orders. We say that every one of us mentioned in that resolution and accused of reducing wages is offended. If our denials are not accepted, and if the Committee upholds your ruling, we shall have to take action to defend ourselves.

Mr. STOPFORD (*Mount Morgan*) [5.35]: Speaking to the point of order, I take the stand that the hon. member for Toowong had a bundle of papers in his hand which you have not seen. You are accepting his word that he is quoting from the "Railway Advocate." Certain members on this side have appealed to you to accept our word that the report is not true, and we resent it. (Interruption.) I have been in this House sixteen years, and when a member has stated what was a lie the ruling of the Speaker or the Chairman has always been that that statement must be withdrawn. The hon. member for Toowong could have a bundle of sanitary paper in his hand, for all you know, Mr. Roberts. The hon. member for Toowong has stated that he was reading the report of a division list in connection with a Labour conference. We deny what he has read, and we practically called him a liar. You compelled us to withdraw that expression, but that did not make the hon. member any more honest. It has been the custom in this Parliament

to insist that a denial of an hon. member be accepted. You say that we shall have the right at some future date to prove that he has misquoted the position. Why has the hon. member for Toowong not that right somewhere else?

Mr. KENNY: The hon. member for Toowong read from a newspaper article.

Mr. STOPFORD: There is a ruling of this Parliament to the effect that, if an offensive letter is quoted, the hon. member must place it on the table.

Mr. BRAND: It already appears in "Hansard."

Mr. STOPFORD: The hon. member who has caused all this trouble was compelled on one occasion to place all his notes on the table. According to your ruling, I could come into this Chamber to-morrow with a bundle of papers in my hand, and say that the hon. member for Toowong was guilty of a serious offence in South Africa, and that I was quoting from a South African paper. I need not accept the hon. member's denial. I would be quite in order so long as I had a bundle of papers in my hand and said that I was quoting from the South African "Advocate." You have not asked the hon. member for Toowong to table the paper for your information. We deny what he has stated. You called me to order. I say that your ruling is wrong, and if you persist with it then you are going to bring about this position—that, if a man levels a charge against me, all I can do is to accuse him of something worse, and that will demand a withdrawal and a discussion in this Chamber.

Mr. BRAND: You are carrying the matter to an absurdity.

Mr. STOPFORD: If the ruling is to stand, then any man can accuse another man of something, and the denial need not be accepted. We shall then arrive at a position which will destroy the decorum of Parliament, and will make your position much more difficult.

Mr. DUNLOP (*Rockhampton*) [5.40]: I intend to support your ruling, Mr. Roberts. I will not swallow the remarks of the hon. member for Gregory or the hon. member for Mount Morgan. I understand that the hon. member for Mount Morgan is likely to be my opponent at the next election. I sincerely hope he will be. This matter has been brought up time and again.

Mr. POLLOCK: You have used it against Lacombe and the hon. member for Mount Morgan for years.

Mr. DUNLOP: I have charged the ex-Secretary for Railways, Mr. Lacombe, with reducing wages, and I will stand or fall on the statement on the hustings. I challenge the hon. member for Mount Morgan, if he is to be my opponent at the next election, to raise the matter on the public platform in Rockhampton.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I cannot permit the hon. member for Rockhampton to continue on those lines. The question before the Committee is—"That my ruling be disagreed to."

Mr. DUNLOP: What the hon. member for Toowong has read out is absolutely correct. Messrs. Moroney and Rymer were not fools. I understand that I am to be

Mr. Dunlop.]

shown no mercy by hon. members opposite. Mr. Bryan moved the resolution, and Mr. Harold Hartley, the late member for Fitzroy, seconded it; and, when the question arose in this Chamber, I copied that resolution from the official record of the Convention. No one has more reason than myself to remember the outcome of that Convention. I will go further. For the sake of argument, I will accept the statement of the Opposition for a moment that the inference to the hon. member for Toowong is not correct, but I would remind hon. members opposite that it was the railway strike in 1925 which ultimately forced the Government against their own wishes to restore the basic wage.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would ask the hon. member to speak to the point of order.

Mr. POLLOCK: You voted against the basic wage and a 44-hour week in this Chamber.

Mr. DUNLOP: I did not do anything of the kind.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. POLLOCK: You did vote against it.

Mr. DUNLOP: I did not. The hon. member for Gregory is endeavouring to get away from the subject. The hon. member for Toowong has successfully placed on record what he set out to do. I can tell the Committee that what the hon. member for Toowong read out is absolutely correct, and I am prepared to say so outside this Chamber. I will challenge any member of the Opposition on this resolution outside this Chamber. I can understand hon. members opposite being sore in connection with the resolution being placed on record here, because it can be readily understood that they will hear more on this subject, not only from myself, but from others who were at the convention. I know all about it. Opposition members are merely endeavouring to camouflage the whole subject.

Mr. POLLOCK: You voted against the basic wage in this Chamber.

Mr. DUNLOP: I have never done so in my life.

Mr. POLLOCK: You also voted against the 44-hour week and statutory holidays.

Mr. DUNLOP: That is absolutely untrue. The hon. member is merely endeavouring to get that statement in "Hansard."

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) [5.44]: It is a matter for regret that this matter has arisen. Orderly conduct of debate is essential for Parliament as a deliberative assembly. I consider your ruling, Mr. Roberts, is one that cannot pass unchallenged, and is one which, if allowed to stand, is likely to promote disorder.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: The object of the parliamentary practice of insisting that a denial must be accepted is to prevent disorder arising, or to curb it immediately it does arise. Obviously, if that practice is departed from, an untruthful statement might be made under cover of quoting from a newspaper, which may be the means of creating every kind of disorder. For example, take the position of the hon. mem-

ber for Toowong. If an hon. member were unscrupulous enough, he might say that a few years ago in connection with certain white lead stolen from the wharves the police were under the necessity of searching the premises of the hon. member. He may make that statement.

Mr. BLACKLEY: It is a criminal statement.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: If the hon. member for Toowong denied that statement, then the hon. member making it would, according to parliamentary practice, be compelled to accept the denial. Under your ruling, Mr. Roberts, all kinds of statements of that kind might be made. You must follow it to its logical conclusion. If it can be argued that a man can make a statement which is untrue in substance simply because it is published in a newspaper, then all kinds of things can be published in the newspapers and all kinds of statements be made here. I have been here for seventeen years, and every Speaker and every Chairman of Committees during that period has ruled that an hon. member's denial of a statement must be accepted. If we had the time to look the matter up, we would probably find that you have ruled to the same effect, not once, but on several occasions.

Mr. POLLOCK: He has.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: It is a ruling that should not be allowed to stand. The statement made by the hon. member for Rockhampton is entirely untrue. He talked against reducing wages when he himself in this Chamber voted in favour of reducing wages and against the 44-hour week.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. STOPFORD: You allowed him a good quarter of an hour on that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. STOPFORD: You let the hon. member for Rockhampton continue for a quarter of an hour and didn't pull him up.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I cannot allow the Leader of the Opposition to proceed on these lines. I would point out to hon. members on my left that, had there not been so much interjection from that side, it would have been easier for me to attend to the hon. member for Rockhampton.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: It is obvious that, from the point of view of preserving order, the denial of an hon. member must be accepted. We on this side desire to assist you to preserve order and maintain decorum here. We desire that all questions be debated in a proper way, and that proper decisions be arrived at; but, if allegations are allowed to be made under cover of a lying newspaper statement, then the denial of the hon. member affected should be accepted. If it is not, it is liable to be provocative of disorder.

Mr. KENNY (*Cook*) [5.50]: To listen to the Leader of the Opposition and other hon. members opposite, one might be led to believe that they were serious in their motion that the Chairman's ruling be disagreed to. It is unfortunate that those hon. members have taken advantage of the first occasion on which the hon. member for Toowong has spoken since he occupied the chair last Friday to try to get you, Mr.

[*Mr. Dunlop.*]

Roberts, to give a ruling conflicting with that given by the hon. member for Toowong,

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The PREMIER (Hon. A. E. Moore, *Aubigny*) [5.51]: The real position is not as stated by hon. members opposite. When an hon. member reads a statement from a published paper it is not the opinion of the hon. member who is speaking.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: If you deny a statement which I attribute to you, is it not incumbent upon me to accept your denial?

The PREMIER: That is so; but it does not alter the fact that an hon. member can read a newspaper extract and leave it at that.

Mr. POLLOCK: The Chairman has ruled that he need not accept a denial.

The PREMIER: An hon. member is perfectly justified in quoting from a newspaper or periodical. Hon. members opposite have quoted the most extraordinary statements from newspapers. The other evening I quoted from a Toowoomba paper a report of the speech of the hon. member for Herbert. The hon. member said it was untrue, but I had not said that it was true—I had merely quoted from the newspaper, and it was for the hon. member to have the statement corrected if he desired. So long as a statement is quoted verbatim, it is not necessary that the hon. member quoting that statement should be compelled to accept the denial of another hon. member. After all, the hon. member who complains of its inaccuracy has an opportunity of correcting it in the press.

Mr. POLLOCK: I will give an illustration. I heard the hon. member for Toowong make a statement one night. A dozen other hon. members heard him make it. I repeated the statement, but the hon. member denied it; and, although we had heard him make it, we were compelled to accept his denial.

Mr. MAXWELL: That is not true.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MAXWELL: You can't prove it.

The PREMIER: If an hon. member makes a statement concerning another hon. member and the statement is denied, then the hon. member making it must accept the denial; but a denial need not be accepted in respect of a comment which may be made in a newspaper article, so long as the hon. member using it quotes the name of the newspaper and the date.

Mr. COOPER: There is an innuendo in the quotation.

The PREMIER: The quotation speaks for itself. I do not know whether the hon. member quoted an innuendo or not. The hon. member for Toowong is perfectly justified in quoting a newspaper so long as he gives the name of the newspaper and the date.

Mr. POLLOCK: He accused us of reducing wages. We say that is offensive, and we ask him to withdraw it.

The PREMIER: The hon. member read the resolution, and read the list of those who voted against that resolution.

Mr. POLLOCK: And he accused me of reducing wages, which, I said was offensive.

Mr. MAXWELL: I did not.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The time allowed for the discussion of the motion to disagree with my ruling has expired. The question now before the Committee is—

“That the Chairman's ruling be disagreed to.”

Question—“That the Chairman's ruling be disagreed to” (*Mr. Cooper's motion*)—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 20.

Mr. Barber	Mr. O'Keefe
“ Bow	“ Pease
“ Brassington	“ Pollock
“ Bruce	“ Smith
“ Dash	“ Stopford
“ Foley	“ Wilson
“ Hanson	“ Winstanley
“ Jones, A. J.	
“ Jones, A.	<i>Tellers:</i>
“ Kirwan	“ Cooper
“ Mullan	“ Hynes

NOES, 34.

Mr. Atherton	Mrs. Longman
“ Barnes, G. P.	Mr. Maher
“ Barnes, W. H.	“ Maxwell
“ Blackley	“ Moore
“ Brand	“ Morgan
“ Butler	“ Nimmo
“ Carter	“ Plunkett
“ Clayton	“ Russell, H. M.
“ Costello	“ Russell, W. A.
“ Daniel	“ Tedman
“ Deacon	“ Tozer
“ Dunlop	“ Walker, J. E.
“ Edwards	“ Warren
“ Fry	“ Wienholt
“ Grimstone	
“ Hill	<i>Tellers:</i>
Dr. Kerwin	“ Kelso
Mr. King	“ Kenny

PAIR.

AYE.	NO.
Mr. Conroy	Mr. Walker, H. F.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. MAXWELL: The others who voted against the resolution were—

“Hartley, M.L.A. (Fitzroy);

“Hynes (A.W.U.);

“Valentine (A.F.U.L.E.)”

Mr. POLLOCK: What is that from?

Mr. MAXWELL: I am reading an extract from the “Railway Advocate.” It is stated here that the resolution that I have already read was put before that convention. I most religiously avoided saying myself that it was a reduction of wages or expressing my own opinion about it. “Hansard” will undoubtedly show that what I state is correct. I am not apologising to hon. members opposite for what I have said this afternoon. A statement was made by the hon. member for Gregory which was wrong, and I knew it was wrong when I sat in the chair on Friday afternoon.

Mr. POLLOCK: What statement was that?

Mr. MAXWELL: A statement dealing with a certain resolution that was passed at the Emu Park Convention, and the hon. member denied it. As far back as 1924 the hon. member for Kurilpa put these names in “Hansard” and no exception was taken to it. I do not know whether it is true or not, and I do not care. I only know it is a report published in the “Railway Advocate” of 10th July, 1924, but I for one am not going to allow hon. members on the other side to sling things across the floor of this Chamber and make the people outside believe that they are true when they

Mr. Maxwell.]

are not. I am perfectly justified in contradicting any statement that may be made which I think is not correct.

It is no wonder that Labour failed during the fourteen years they were in power. Mr. McCormack gave the reason why the Labour Government had failed. He said the reason was that they did uneconomic things, and he was correct when he said that. Hon. members opposite want to tell hon. members on this side how to conduct the business of the country, which they could not do when they were in power!

I quote now from the "Courier" of 27th September, 1929—

"LABOUR'S MISTAKE.

"MR. MCCORMACK'S CONFESSION.

"*Persuaded to do Uneconomic Things.*

"London, September 25.

"One of the mistakes Labour made was to persuade the Government to do uneconomic things," declared Mr. W. McCormack (ex-Premier of Queensland), in the course of an address to the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce.

"Australia must face boldly her present difficulties in order that good may come from evil," said Mr. McCormack. "Her difficulties arose as the result of wartime inflation, when her products were sold for high prices, when wages rose, and when conditions approached the ideal; but now Australia is entering the second period, that of deflation, and the process of going back will not be easy. Organised Labour has to realise that the ideal conditions must be sacrificed. As an example, her purchasing power will be diminished by the fall in wool prices. Australia is definitely protectionist, but her tariffs have been unscientific and must be adjusted in some directions."

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

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*) [7.2]: I wish to refer to the report of the Premiers' Conference, which has been brought up to-day and emphasised by the hon. member for Brisbane and others. I have before me the report of the conference held in Melbourne in August and September last. At that conference four of the Premiers were Labour Premiers and three were Nationalist Premiers; in other words, four votes were held by the Labour Party and three by the Nationalist Party. The representatives at the conference were—

"COMMONWEALTH.

"The Rt. Hon. J. H. Scullin, P.C., M.P., Prime Minister, Minister for External Affairs, and Minister for Industry, chairman of the conference.

"The Hon. E. G. Theodore, M.P., Treasurer.

"NEW SOUTH WALES.

"The Hon. J. T. Lang, M.L.A., Premier and Colonial Treasurer.

"The Hon. J. Lamero, M.L.A., Attorney-General.

"VICTORIA.

"The Hon. E. J. Hogan, M.L.A., Premier, Treasurer, and Minister of Markets.

[*Mr. Maxwell.*

"The Hon. J. P. Jones, M.L.C., Commissioner of Public Works, Minister of Mines, Minister in Charge of Immigration, and a Vice-President of the Board of Land and Works.

"QUEENSLAND.

"The Hon. A. E. Moore, M.L.A., Premier and Chief Secretary.

"The Hon. W. H. Barnes, M.L.A., Treasurer.

"SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

"The Hon. L. L. Hill, M.H.A., Premier, Treasurer, and Minister of Education.

"The Hon. S. R. Whitford, M.L.C., Chief Secretary, Minister of Agriculture, and Commissioner of Forest Lands.

"WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

"The Hon. Sir James Mitchell, K.C.M.G., M.L.A., Premier and Treasurer.

"TASMANIA.

"The Hon. J. C. McPhee, M.H.A., Premier and Treasurer.

"The Hon. C. W. Grant, M.H.A., Honorary Minister."

♦ In order to make it clear to those living in our various electorates who might otherwise be misled by statements made in this Chamber by Labour members as to the outcome of the Premiers' Conference, I wish to point out that at every sitting there was a majority of Labour Premiers. The Labour Party had a majority at every meeting of the conference and could have accepted or rejected any of the proposals that were submitted. The Labour Party dominated the conference, and it was only by the vote of its representatives that the plan was adopted. It has been inferred to-day that the Queensland Government are responsible for the Premiers' plan, the idea being to create the impression that the Queensland Government are responsible for the conditions that prevail to-day. We were informed by the hon. member for Brisbane that the banks dictated their terms; but that has been denied by Mr. Scullin, the Prime Minister and chairman of the Premiers' Conference. The banks are very powerful institutions, and are quite capable of looking after their own affairs, and need no help from me.

The matter of greatest concern to me and to many other hon. members is the reduction in the wages, pensions, and social services adopted at the conference. Although the proposal was contrary to our principles, it was a very bitter pill for us to swallow. However, we had to adopt the proposal, because it was a decision arrived at at a conference at which the Labour Party was in the majority. The representatives of other Governments were free to vote according to their conscience, but they were morally bound to observe the decisions arrived at. Hon. members opposite have endeavoured to create the impression that the Nationalist Governments are responsible for the reduction in pensions. It was a Nationalist Government that gave to the people of Australia the old-age and invalid pensions. When the Labour Government were in power, the old-age and invalid pensions amounted only to 10s. per week; but a Nationalist Government increased the pensions to 12s., 6d., 15s., 17s. 6d., and eventually to £1.

per week. Following the decision of the Premiers' Conference, all pensions have been reduced by 2s. 6d. per week. Whatever might be the outcome of the conference, the Labour Party has no case. Their representatives were entirely responsible for the adoption of the proposals. Had the representatives of the Labour Party not voted as they did, the proposals could not have been adopted. We must abide by the decision of

the conference, at which, as I say, the Labour Party had a majority.

Reference has been made to the reduction in the expenditure in the public service; and hon. members opposite have endeavoured to create the impression that the Queensland public service has been reduced to a greater extent than any other public service. This appears on page 21 of the report of the last Premiers' Conference—

SAVINGS AND REDUCTIONS IN EXPENDITURE.

(1) SALARIES AND WAGES.

The following table will give an approximate idea of the plan adopted by each Government for percentage reductions in respect of the Public Service proper :—

—	Up to £250.	£251-£1,000.	£1,001-£2,000.	Over £2,000.	Average.*
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Commonwealth ..	18	20	22½	25	19·5
New South Wales..	Up to £215—8½ £215-250—8½-15½ Up to £100—6 £101-225—11½ £226-250—11½-14½	15½-20	20-25	25 and upwards	17
Victoria ..		14½-21½	22-25	25-27	17
Queensland	15	15-18	18-20	20	15·2
South Australia† ..	20	20	20	20	20
Western Australia	18	20	22½	22½	19·2
Tasmania..	20	To £800-20 Over £800—22½	£800-1,200—22½ Over £1,200—25	25	20

* Excluding rationing and unemployment relief taxes.

† Reduction not yet fully effective.

I desire to secure the insertion in " Hansard " of those figures from the official report of the proceedings, because they are a most effective answer to the criticism of the Government in this connection. The people and hon. members will see by these figures that the reductions made in Queensland are the lowest of all the States, both in regard to the public servants on the lower salaries and the average reduction.

Then on page 22 there is another very interesting item which reads—

" The following table shows the average percentage reduction for the public service proper and for all services respectively. The figures are exclusive of rationing and exclusive of unemployment relief taxes :—

—	Public Service Proper.	All Services (including Railways).
	Per cent.	Per cent.
Commonwealth ..	19·5	19·2
New South Wales	17	12·8
Victoria ..	17	20·5
Queensland ..	15·2	15·1
South Australia ..	20	20
Western Australia	19·2	19·2
Tasmania ..	20	18·5

It will be seen, therefore, that Queensland has the lowest percentage reductions for the public service proper, and the second lowest percentage reduction of all reductions made, including railways. I have taken my information from the official report of the proceedings. It shows that the Queensland Government, who have been accused so grossly and so unjustly of making big cuts in the public service, have actually made the lowest reductions of any of the States of Australia. How can that be gainsaid or

disproved? No one will attempt to disprove it. That being so, why attempt to build an argument that is not founded on fact? Surely the present time of crisis is not one in which facts are to be set aside in favour of conjecture? This is a very valuable document at this particular time, and I trust that from now on, when the question of reductions is being considered, these facts will be taken into consideration, together with the fact that many of us agreed to them—not because we wanted to do so, but because we had to face the position. We were morally bound by the resolutions adopted at the Premiers' Conference, at which a majority of the representatives were Labour. Whether the scheme formulated at that conference will be a success or not, it does not alter the fact that the reductions that have been made in Queensland are lower than the reductions made elsewhere. If the scheme is not a success, whom are we to blame? Usually the majority must claim the credit or accept the blame attaching to any resolution which is carried. If that is so, then in this case the Labour Party representatives were in the majority.

The hon. member for Brisbane states that the banks have departed from the terms of the agreement. If that is so, on whom should the responsibility devolve of seeing that they adhere to the recommendations made at the Premiers' conference? Surely the Labour Party representatives who were in the majority cannot escape the responsibility in this matter. If no action has been taken against the banks, then one may fairly conclude that there has been no departure by the banks such as is suggested. Personally, I think that interest charges should be reduced before wages are reduced; but, like everyone else, I am bound by the recommendations of the Premiers' conference. When hon. members opposite make insinuations against the Queensland

Government for taking this or that action, they quite forget the fact that similar action—except that in the matter of reductions it was more severe—was taken by the Federal Labour Government and various State Governments in the Commonwealth; therefore, the attitude of hon. members opposite is difficult to understand. Their talk is all moonshine; worse than that, it is misrepresentation. I repeat that it was a bitter pill indeed for us to swallow that invalid, old-age pensions, and particularly war pensions, should be reduced by the Federal Labour Government.

Mr. STOPFORD (*Mount Morgan*) [7.20]: I desire to correct the wrong impression which may be conveyed by the speech delivered by the hon. member for Toowong. That hon. member devoted a large portion of his time to quoting from a bundle of papers which he held in his hand. They may have been authentic, or they may merely have been cuttings from any old paper. His statement was definite, and he read the names of persons from what purported to be a division list on a vote for a reduction of wages which took place at a convention of the Labour Party. As you know yourself, Mr. Roberts, as one who has attended a Labour Convention, an official document is always issued as the result of the convention's deliberations. That must be accepted by all as authentic, just as a similar document dealing with the Employers' Federation would be accepted if we were quoting something against the hon. member for Toowong.

The Labour Party at the convention did not vote for a reduction of wages. Hon. members opposite would not be game to face the resolution which was dealt with at that convention. The resolution was a definite one, asking Parliament to fix a rate of wage above the Arbitration Court award. The facts of the case are these: As was its custom, the Arbitration Court had periodically reduced the basic rate of wage.

Mr. BRAND: On a petition of Ministers.

Mr. STOPFORD: That is not so. (Government dissent.) To show the ignorance of the hon. member for Burrum—

Mr. KIRWAN: It is not ignorance; it is deliberate misrepresentation.

Mr. STOPFORD: I prefer to call it ignorance rather than deliberate misrepresentation. The Arbitration Court decided on a reduction of the basic rate of wage when the Labour Government were ruling; and I think that reduction took place in March, 1923.

Mr. KENNY: Did you not petition to have the reduction made?

Mr. STOPFORD: No. That is deliberate misrepresentation. I am going to prove that the Arbitration Court made a reduction of wages; and the public servants of this State will bear me out when I say that a reduction of wages was given in March, 1923, and the Labour Government of which I was a member met and decided that, as they had budgeted for that year, they would not apply that reduction for that year, showing that, while every other worker in the State got a reduction, the public servants were protected during the currency of that financial year. What the Labour Government did was this:

[*Mr. Fry.*

Seeing that they had budgeted to pay the then ruling rate, they paid that rate, and the next financial year Mr. Theodore, then Premier of Queensland, brought the public servants down to what other men had been receiving for some months.

Mr. BRAND: After the election. They petitioned on 2nd August, 1922.

Mr. STOPFORD: No. I am going to quote from the official document issued by the Emu Park convention, dated 6th March, 1923. This was the resolution that was moved—

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

That standard was £5 4s. per week. Speaking on that resolution, Mr. Theodore, the then Premier, said—

“If the motion were carried, the Convention might as well recommit the previous resolution affirming the principle of arbitration and conciliation and wipe it out.”

He further said—

“The motion had been put forward simply with the intention of destroying arbitration.”

That was Mr. Theodore's argument. (Interruption.) Hon. members on the other side do not like being bowled out. They stated definitely that at the Emu Park convention we voted against an increased basic rate of wage. What we voted against was the Government having the power to fix the basic rate of wage. We voted against taking away from the Arbitration Court the power that we as a party believed it should have, and, if hon. members opposite are going to take up the stand that this Parliament should be the Arbitration Court for the purpose of fixing the basic rate of wage—

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: You did that.

Mr. STOPFORD: No.

The PREMIER: We opposed that when you did it.

Mr. STOPFORD: We never did it.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: You did do it.

Mr. STOPFORD: The basic rate of wage was never fixed by Parliament.

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. STOPFORD: The 44-hour week was fixed by Parliament, which was probably disastrous; but the basic rate of wage was never fixed by Parliament. It was fixed by the Arbitration Court of Queensland, and what we resisted at Emu Park was an attempt to remove from the court the right to fix the basic rate of wage and transfer the power to Parliament. Hon. members know how disastrous that would be. Those who voted against that should be outside the pale. The present Leader of the Opposition spoke at the convention on this question.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: What are you quoting from?

Mr. STOPFORD: I am quoting from what I told you I was quoting from before. I am trying to show the Chairman what a

lot of liars you are, and I think I have succeeded.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I had hoped that, with the intervention of the dinner hour, the Committee would have settled down. I would ask the hon. member for Mount Morgan to withdraw the statement he has made.

Mr. STOPFORD: I will withdraw, Mr. Roberts, but I ask you to stop hon. members from interrupting me.

The present Leader of the Opposition, speaking at the Emu Park Convention, said—

“He stood for the maintenance of the Arbitration Court free from political interference, and which would adjudicate, untrammelled, upon the facts laid down before it in accordance with the provisions under the Act. Parliament was not in a position to fix wages, because wages fluctuated according to the interests that from time to time controlled Parliament and developed outside the State over which Parliament had no control. If the Labour Government were to adopt the practice of fixing wages, it would not be logical to oppose an anti-Labour Government doing likewise, and taking the Labour Party's method as a precedent. Another Government would certainly fix wages against the interests of the workers. In New South Wales the Dooley Government went to the country declaring that it would not accept the decreased wage laid down by the Board of Trade, and it was defeated, with the result that the Fuller Government interpreted the defeat as a mandate to lower wages. If the present Opposition in the Queensland Parliament was given control, one of its first acts would be to alter the Electoral Act, making it impossible for Labour to get control again for another generation, and all the beneficent industrial legislation set up by the Labour Government and won with great toil and sacrifice would be scrapped.”

He must have been a prophet—

“The motion was only an attempt to strike a blow at the arbitration system. The convention must face the facts of life as they existed. The system of arbitration by the Labour Government was a sound and just one, and no one would regret it more than the workers if this structure were destroyed.”

Mr. DUNLOP: What was it that was instrumental in restoring the basic wage throughout Queensland? Was it not the railway strike in 1925?

Mr. STOPFORD: There was a railway strike in 1925, and the hon. member for Rockhampton has stated that he was the only man who stood out. I give him credit for that. He was the last one to go back, and he stated that he would never get back to the railways. I would ask him these questions: Did he vote for the repeal of the basic rate of wages in this House?

Mr. DUNLOP: No.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Yes.

Mr. STOPFORD: Did he not vote for the repeal of the forty-four-hour week; for

the repeal of the statutory holidays; and for the abolition of special overtime rates?

Mr. DUNLOP: No.

Mr. POLLOCK: Oh, yes, he did!

Mr. BRAND: He voted with your side.

Mr. DUNLOP: It is not true; but I am shrewd enough not to rise to a point of order to give you the opportunity of putting one over the Chairman. (Laughter.)

Mr. STOPFORD: This insult has been levelled against certain members on this side. I voted as recorded in the division list read out by the hon. member for Toowong, and I make no apology for that. I do not stand, and never have stood, for the policy of allowing Parliament to usurp the functions of the Arbitration Court.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Then why did you do it when you were in power?

Mr. STOPFORD: We never did it. The hon. member for Toowong quoted the basic rate of wage. I say that the Labour Government never fixed the basic rate of wage; it was fixed by the Arbitration Court.

Mr. NIMMO: You fixed the hours.

Mr. STOPFORD: I admit that we fixed the hours, but we did not interfere with the functions of the Arbitration Court. When hon. members opposite argue that we did wrong in voting at the Emu Park Convention, they argue that, if they had been there, they would have done just the opposite. I take exception to the hon. member for Toowong quoting things in this Chamber without substantiating his statements in any way except by giving his personal word for them.

Mr. NIMMO: He quoted from a well-known paper.

Mr. STOPFORD: I propose to do the same thing. Let me quote from the “Punters' Gazette”—

“A raid was made on a very fashionable yet select quarter of the city last night. In spite of the very splendid precaution taken by the proprietors, the traffic police effected an entrance. Thirty men were arrested and conveyed to the watchhouse. Among those released on bail were James Maxwell, G. Morgan, Arthur Moore, and several others. The keeper of the place, believed to be Walter Henry Barnes, escaped down the fire escape.”

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order! I am more than satisfied that the consideration that I have shown to hon. members is being abused. If a member will not obey my call to order, then I shall have to name him. I am prepared to give him a reasonable chance to conduct himself properly; but if he persists in disobeying the chair, I shall have to take other action. I am not going to allow the hon. member to persist in reading what he calls the “Punters' Gazette.” His remarks are distinctly unparliamentary.

Mr. STOPFORD: I must accept your ruling, Mr. Roberts. The hon. member for Toowong is permitted to quote from a paper without you having any knowledge of that paper. As I said before, he might have had in his hand a bundle of sanitary paper.

Mr. MAXWELL: The division list I quoted was already in “Hansard.”

Mr. STOPFORD: If the Chairman possesses the power of clairvoyancy, and permits

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the hon. member for Toowong to continue on those lines—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I will not permit the hon. member for Mount Morgan to continue on those lines.

Mr. POLLOCK: Why did you allow the hon. member for Toowong to do so?

Mr. STOPFORD: The hon. member for Toowong quoted from a paper and tabled nothing. I rose to a point of order.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That question was settled by the Committee before the dinner adjournment. The hon. member knows that.

Mr. STOPFORD: I realise that the quotation from the "Punters' Gazette" may not have made for decorum in this Parliament, but I quoted the report to draw attention to one fact. If an hon. member is permitted to offend another hon. member, then there is no other redress than to call him a damned liar or something like that. That will not get us anywhere.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. COOPER (*Brcmer*) [7.40]: I would like to remind the hon. member for Toowong that, when he was discussing the paper from which he alleged he was reading, he used this expression—"I do not know whether it is true or not. I do not care whether it is true or not." If that is the opinion of the hon. member expressed in cold blood, then he certainly brought up the matter referred to purely for purposes of propaganda.

During a debate that occurred some little time ago, I made reference to the amount of money borrowed by the State of Queensland, and the Treasurer was good enough to say that my figures were all wrong. I cannot allow that statement to go, for more than one reason. The main reason is that my figures were correct. Hon. members on the Government side have on many occasions made statements in this Chamber and out of it that were not strictly in accordance with fact so far as the loan moneys of this State are concerned; and it is nearly time that a definite review of the whole of the loan transactions of the State was made. During the last election campaign no statement was more frequently made than the one that the Labour Party borrowed and squandered £50,000,000 during their term of office.

Mr. COSTELLO: Quite right, too.

Mr. COOPER: The hon. member for Oxley stated in this Chamber that the late Government borrowed immense sums of money, and spent them with a total disregard for the results. The hon. member for Carnarvon interjected just now, "Quite right, too." In view of that interjection, it is high time that I analysed the figures and gave them to the Committee. As a matter of fact, statements that have been made by the Nationalist Party in reference to Queensland's borrowing have done more to damage the good name of Queensland than anything else. They were supposed to be used as a propaganda to prop up the Nationalist cause; but they have been a battering ram against the credit of the State.

In the course of fifty years changes are inevitable. One of the greatest changes that have taken place in the history of Queensland was that which took place at the

time of the war. The war was supposed to have led to great developments in aviation, and to still greater developments in transport. Those two things have had a considerable effect on the loan expenditure of Queensland.

Amongst other things, the war necessitated the settlement of soldiers. There was an imperative demand that soldiers had to be settled on the land. The change in the method of transport necessitated an immediate change in the construction of the roads in this State. Good roads had to be built at a cost much in excess of what they were built for before. It has been said that the State has erred in the construction of its main roads. That may be so; but, if it did, it erred in company with every other State in Australia; and Australia erred in company with every other country in the world. There is no country in the world that did not go in for a big policy of road construction to meet the changed methods of transport; and the transport of heavier vehicles necessitated a much heavier and more costly road. I mention these matters in order that the Committee may get a good grasp of the figures. The change affected not only Governments but local authorities which were compelled to borrow big sums of money for the making of heavier and better roads to carry the motor transport. Consequently, there was a bigger demand on the State Government not only for roads but a bigger demand on the Government by local authorities for money for the construction of roads. These things were imperative, and could not be overlooked.

Then there was the invasion of certain harmful pests into the State. There were the rabbit and the dingo.

The PREMIER: They did not come after the war.

Mr. COOPER: That is so. They have been here for the last fifty years; but both the rabbit and dingo pests necessitated considerable expenditure in the erection of rabbit-proof and dog-netting fences. Do hon. members opposite object to the expenditure of that money on wire netting? Do they object to the expenditure of the money on soldier settlements?

Mr. COSTELLO: The money borrowed by settlers to purchase wire netting is not lost.

Mr. COOPER: The hon. member for Carnarvon is beginning to see the light. He says that the money is not lost; yet a little while ago he backed up the statement that the whole of the money had been squandered.

The PREMIER: The purchasers of wire netting must pay the charges on it, including interest.

Mr. COOPER: There was also a drought. Loan money had to be advanced to farmers to meet conditions arising out of the drought. There was the menace of the prickly-pear. Loan moneys were expended in driving back that menace. I want to know if hon. members opposite object to that imperative expenditure. Of course they do not. During the time the Labour Party was in power, from 1915-16 to 1928-29 the amount of money borrowed was approximately £50,000,000. The loan indebtedness at 30th June, 1915, as given by the Treasurer in answer to a question, was £62,324,061.

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The hon. gentleman also stated in his reply that an amount of money had been advanced to local authorities, harbour boards, and others. As that money was not actually borrowed for State purposes, but to be lent to others, it is only right that I should deduct from that £62,324,061 the amount that was not spent by Governments prior to 1915—namely, £3,378,932, which means that £58,445,129 was borrowed before the Labour Party came into power. I am compelled to add to that an amount of money that was added to the State indebtedness through the transactions in connection with the Government Savings Bank. If hon. members care to look at the end of Table G of the "tables relating to the Treasurer's Financial Statement," they will find a note to this effect—

"On the transfer of the State Savings Bank business to the Commonwealth Bank in 1920. Queensland Government securities were handed to the latter for the Savings Bank Current Account credit balance and the amounts owing to the State Savings Bank on account of advances to settlers and for workers' dwellings. This transaction added a total of £5,936,916 to the public debt for the financial year 1920-21 without involving any additional borrowing . . ."

In other words, the money came to the State long before 1920-21. All of it did not come to the State between 1915 and 1920. Probably £1,000,000 did; but I am making an allowance of £2,000,000.

Mr. BLACKLEY: Your figures are all astray.

Mr. COOPER: The hon. member who says that my figures are all astray knows as much about them as a cow knows about the differential calculus.

If we add to the amount of £58,445,129 an amount of £4,000,000 in respect of money from the Savings Bank we arrive at a figure of £62,445,129 that was borrowed before the Labour Party came into power.

In answer to a question, the Treasurer told the hon. member for Warwick recently that the indebtedness of the State at 30th June, 1923, was £112,231,189. He stated that approximately £10,000,000 of that amount had been loaned to local authorities, harbour boards, and other bodies, leaving £102,231,189 that had been expended by the Government.

Mr. BLACKLEY: Did not the previous Government lend money to local bodies?

Mr. COOPER: I made an allowance for that, as the hon. member would have learned had he been listening. If I take the £62,445,129 borrowed prior to the advent of the Labour Government and subtract that from £102,231,189, I find that the difference of £39,786,070 represents the borrowings by the Labour Government. What did the Labour Government do with that money? I want hon. members on the Government side to object in a good loud voice to any particular expenditure with which they do not approve when I read out the items. In the matter of cashing war gratuity bonds an amount of £64,335 was spent. For soldier settlements £3,031,196 was spent. Out of that figure of approximately £40,000,000 of loan money there was spent upon the soldiers an amount equal to £3,095,531. The following amounts were expended upon land

settlement and assistance to the agricultural portions of this State—

	£
Land resumption and settlement	740,965
Agricultural Bank	534,832
Sugar mills, etc.	1,456,368
Prickly-pear	400,000
Drought relief to farmers	30,872
Wheat storage	49,742
Wire netting	158,877
	£3,421,656

The amount spent in providing homes for the workers was—

	£
Workers' dwellings	819,804
Workers' homes	787,443
	£1,607,252

That amount was spent by the Government in providing homes for workers, and at the same time enhancing the value of real estate throughout the community. In the items that I have read out the amount spent by the Labour Government from 1915 to 1929 was £8,155,439. That was not spent on any item to which the present Government object. As a matter of fact, they applaud all that expenditure.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Who said that?

Mr. COOPER: I say it, because there has been no objection raised by hon. members on the Government side.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: We do not agree to that.

Mr. COOPER: Does the hon. gentleman not agree to the expenditure of money upon soldier settlements and for wire netting? Does the hon. gentleman object to expenditure in connection with the relief of drought-stricken farmers? It is high time we knew where we stood.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Do you say the money spent at Beerburrrum was for the benefit of Queensland?

Mr. COOPER: It was a necessary expenditure. It may have turned out to be a wrong expenditure; but it was spent in good faith, and on the recommendation of experts. I call as my chief witness the Speaker of this Parliament.

The amount of £8,155,439 which has been spent upon these various items has to be deducted from the approximate figure of £40,000,000 which I previously quoted, which leaves an amount of approximately £32,000,000 spent upon railways, harbours, and other necessary works. Spread over a period of fourteen years, that represents an annual expenditure of £2,285,000 on policy matters during the term of the Labour Government.

Mr. BLACKLEY: How much did you spend on State enterprises?

Mr. COOPER: The State enterprises were included in the £32,000,000. When it is remembered that material, wages, and charges generally were more than doubled by the war and the circumstances surrounding the war, it will be seen that the Labour Government's borrowings, on the basis of values prior to the war, were less than £1,250,000 per annum.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: What are you basing your figures on?

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Mr. COOPER: I am basing my figures on the cost of commodities prior to the war and the cost of commodities after the war. The Premier and the Treasurer cannot laugh off these figures, because they have been taken from the Treasurer's tables; and in a report of the Auditor-General there is a statement as to the doubled cost of material and wages since the war. All my remarks can be proved by official documents.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Who got commission in connection with the Coominya soldier settlement?

Mr. COOPER: The Ipswich Chamber of Commerce was chiefly responsible for the Coominya soldier settlement; and, if the hon. gentleman is making insinuations against the Ipswich Chamber of Commerce, he ought to say so. Mr. Bottomley, the chairman of the National Association, was one of the principal members of the Chamber of Commerce at the time. If the hon. member is making insinuations against these gentlemen, then I am not. I believe they were honest; they were gentlemen of repute; and they were not Labour supporters.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: It was a waste of public money, no matter who recommended it.

Mr. COOPER: It is wonderful to see how the Secretary for Labour and Industry is attempting to get round his innuendoes against the Ipswich Chamber of Commerce.

The greatest indication of a nation's stability is the rate at which it can borrow money. I believe that, if Russia came to Australia to-day to borrow money, she could not get it if she offered 55 per cent., because her security is regarded as of no value. People who invest money are not actuated by any other reason than the possibility of securing a return on the investment. There is nothing stupid about investors. They invest their money where they believe the security is best; and they are prepared to take a lower rate of interest where they know the security is safe. Trust funds are invested generally along those lines.

Let me give some interesting figures regarding the interest rates for the Australian States. The average rates of interest paid by the various States for the year 1915, as given in the Commonwealth "Year Book," were—

	Per cent.
	£ s. d.
Queensland	5 16 2
Tasmania	3 15 2
South Australia	3 14 0
New South Wales	3 14 0
Western Australia	3 12 7
Victoria	3 12 5

It will be seen that, in 1915, when the Labour Government came into power, Queensland was paying the highest average rate of interest of any State in Australia, proving that her security was regarded by investors as the worst of the Australian States. The figures for 1929, as set out in the official "Year Book," are—

	Per cent.
	£ s. d.
South Australia	5 0 11
New South Wales	5 0 1
Victoria	4 19 0
Western Australia	4 16 7
Tasmania	4 16 2
Queensland	4 16 2

Mr. Cooper.

In 1915 Queensland paid the highest average rate of interest because she was regarded as the worst security, and in 1929, after fourteen years of Labour rule, she was paying the lowest rate of interest of the whole of the States, showing that she was regarded as the best security. The Premier no doubt will say that that was due to the fact that the Commonwealth had taken over the whole of the States' debts. I want to remind the Premier that they took over the whole of the States' debts, and not only Queensland's debts. The figures in the Treasurer's tables prove that Queensland could absolutely rest on her laurels at the end of a period of fourteen years of Labour government, disproving the continual statement that Queensland loan money was squandered.

Mr. BLACKLEY: You must admit it.

Mr. COOPER: I do not admit it; and I have proved that it was not squandered. It is possible that an amount of money was spent in the Maryborough electorate upon rolling-stock that could have been much better expended in the Ipswich workshops. We found it necessary in Ipswich to repair engines made in Maryborough after they had been running practically no time, whereas the engines built in the Ipswich workshops to the same specifications ran for years without being repaired. When the hon. member for Maryborough speaks about money being squandered, he condemns a firm in his own electorate, with whom a considerable amount of loan money was spent.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Where did your Government get their locomotives from?

Mr. COOPER: The greater majority of them came from the various engineering firms in the State and the Ipswich workshops; but there was a time when they imported twenty-five locomotives from England. The reason for that was given by the Treasurer of the day at the time. If the hon. gentleman looks up the papers, he will find that they were ordered on the recommendation of the Commissioner for Railways. Walkers Limited were working to their full extent; Evans, Anderson, and Phelan in Brisbane were working to their limit, and the Ipswich workshops were working overtime; and none of them could supply those locomotives.

Mr. BLACKLEY: They never got the chance.

Mr. POLLOCK: Why don't you ask the Treasurer where he got his dredges from?

Mr. COOPER: I will not do that, because I know he got them from Germany.

Those locomotives were ordered at the urgent request of the Commissioner for Railways; and, that being so, no blame attaches to the Labour Government. I think I have shown that this continual talk of the Nationalist Party as to the squandering of loan money has been put up, not for the sake of doing any good for Queensland, but for propaganda. It cannot be used in future without hon. members admitting that money was squandered on returned soldiers; that money was squandered on the Agricultural Bank; and upon assistance to agriculturists and pastoralists.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And upon State enterprises.

Mr. COOPER: Mr. Roberts, I would draw your attention to the conduct of the Secretary

for Railways, who has been mocking me. (Laughter.) I ask you to call him to order.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. COOPER: I must protest against the unseemly conduct of the Secretary for Railways. A man occupying such a high position as that of Secretary for Railways should not lower the dignity of the Chamber by such behaviour, even if he does lower his own dignity. A man who will do that will stoop to anything, and I am forced to believe all the little stories I have heard regarding the hon. gentleman from various sources.

The CHAIRMAN: Order.

Mr. FOLEY (*Leichhardt*) [8.5]: I have listened to a good deal of the discussion which has taken place to-day. From time to time I have been hoping that, as the debate progressed, particularly on those occasions when the Treasurer rose to make a few remarks to the Committee, there would be some indication given to hon. members on this side as to what we could expect in the way of something in the nature of rehabilitation of the conditions existing throughout the State.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS conversing in loud tones—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order! I would appeal to hon. members to restrain their conversation.

Mr. FOLEY: I must confess that I am disappointed that there has been nothing forthcoming to show that an endeavour is being made, not only by the Treasurer, but by other hon. members opposite, to improve things; but they are endeavouring to raise smoke screens in order to cover their intentions for the future. The primary producer, the worker, the business man, and others are looking to the Government for a lead in the matter of placing the State upon a better basis with a view to rehabilitating things generally. No proposal has been submitted during this debate by either the Treasurer or the Premier. There has been a general tendency to drift ever since the present Government came into power. Whether they are responsible for the whole of the drift or not is open to debate. The following figures showing the falling-off in revenue during 1930-31 are not very pleasant reading:—

	£
Income taxation	193,950
Stamp and succession duty	114,722
Rent of selections	36,828
Timber royalties	82,050
Railway revenue	929,231
	£1,356,781

Those figures are bad enough; but the outlook for the ensuing financial year is much worse, as indicated by the following anticipations of the Treasurer:—

	£
Income tax	1,950,000
Land tax	480,000
Licenses	144,600
Stamp duty	925,000
Totalisator and betting tax	100,000
Land revenue	1,075,000
Mining receipts	39,100
Railways	6,300,000
Other receipts	1,719,650
	£12,733,350

There is a falling-off, compared with the last financial year, of £1,243,067. There is no indication of any move on the part of the Government to arrest the drift that they admit is taking place.

Quite a lot has been said about the Premier's Conference, and about the attempt that was made to check the drift in affairs generally. The Governments of Australia undertook to effect economies to the extent of 22½ per cent., but the details were left to each individual Government to carry out. Some of the States have attempted to carry out the plan, whilst at the same time endeavouring to maintain the purchasing power of the lower-paid wage earners. They have endeavoured to give effect to the plan without seriously interfering with the earning capacity of the wage earners. Despite those efforts, the opposite has been the result. They have endeavoured to carry out the plan by commencing at the bottom instead of at the top. Some attempt should be made to improve the export trade of our State. The chairman of the Land Administration Board refers very pertinently to the huge oversea commitments that have to be met by this State. There are only three methods which can be adopted to meet the oversea commitments. One is by raising a loan overseas, another by the export of gold, and the third by the export of primary products. The report points out that the first two methods are quite out of the question, as the State is not in a position to comply with either. The Government might have been able to raise a loan overseas had they got on the job early after their return to power; but, unfortunately, they missed the bus. The only possible method which can be adopted at the present time is by increasing the export trade, and thus endeavouring to establish bigger credits for Queensland in London.

The report goes on further to point out some rather interesting figures. It shows that the direct overseas exports for 1930-31 were—

	£	£
Wool	6,675,042	
Meat	2,411,480	
Other pastoral products	698,239	
Total pastoral	9,724,761	
Butter, cheese, and milk	3,540,200	
Sugar	1,786,982	
Other agricultural and dairying	303,679	
Total agricultural and dairying	5,632,861	
Total minerals (not including specie)	124,828	
Specie (gold, silver, bronze, &c.)	1,036,013	
All other exports (including manufactured articles, &c.)	237,950	
Total exports overseas	£16,756,413	

The chairman of the Land Administration Board raises the point that the pastoral industry is the most important of our primary industries, its total products being valued at £9,724,761 as compared with butter, cheese, and milk, the next best items, £3,540,200. Seeing that the pastoral industry is in a rather precarious condition, the better method in the direction of assisting it would have been in the direction of enabling the individual selector and pastoral lessee to increase his productivity. The Premier should have directed his efforts in the direction of securing a reduction of interest instead of following methods adopted in other States. Instead, the Premier issued a proclamation to the interest

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masters, inviting them to agree to a reduction of 1 per cent. in the interest rates conditional upon certain concessions being given by the Government in the form of reduced rents and extension of leases. What has been the result? The desired result in the mind of the Premier would have been secured had there been a general response from the banking and financial institutions. According to the annual report of the Department of Public Lands, 900 lessees of sheep holdings have been granted a reduction of 25 per cent. in their rents. This concession works out at £26,000 per annum. If the selectors individually received that concession, everything would have been all right. On top of that concession an extension of lease for ten years has been granted to sixty-nine pastoral holders, but, instead of the concession being granted direct to the individual lessee, it has been given to the financial institutions. In other words, it is a quid pro quo in return for a slight reduction in interest rates. As the report points out, there was not a complete response from the financial institutions to the Government invitation to them to reduce the interest rates. The report has this to say—

“As this report goes to press, notification has been received that all the trading banks and those wool firms who would not undertake to reduce the interest rate on clients' overdrafts to 6 per cent. have now agreed to make an average reduction of 1 per cent. all round in interest rates. This reduction in some cases will take effect as from the 1st July last, in other cases from the 1st October instant.”

The point I want to emphasise is that, had the Premier adopted the same attitude as some of the other States, this reduction of interest could have been made mandatory upon the whole of the financial and banking institutions of this State, with a direct benefit to pastoral lessees and grazing selectors. It would have enabled them to make purchases of stock where it was possible to do so, or to make further improvements to their holdings. Why all this delay? Was it necessary to make this gesture to the banking institutions to allow them to drift on and on, until we find the statement in the report I have mentioned—that those institutions who refused to agree to the arrangement offered by the Premier have agreed to make a reduction all round from the 1st October? That seems to be the only worth while move that has been made by the present Government.

In every other direction the Government have taken action to reduce the purchasing power of the lowest-wage earners in the State. They were not asked if they would agree to certain action. Take, for example, the case of the pastoral workers. They were not asked by the Premier if they would agree to being withdrawn from the Industrial Court so that a general reduction in their wages could take place. On the one hand, concessions were given to certain interests; on the other hand, it was made mandatory upon a certain helpless section in the community.

I have waited for a long time to see if any scheme of a constructive nature would be formulated by the Government. So far there has been no scheme put into operation whereby the resources of this State would

be handled in a systematic manner for the benefit of the State. It has been left to Professor Brigden to give some lead in the matter. Whether that gentleman had discussed the particular plan with the Premier beforehand and was feeling the public pulse on the question, I do not know. Most hon. members received invitations to be present at two lectures to be delivered by Professor Brigden. One of these lectures was delivered last Tuesday night, and the other is to be delivered to-morrow night. That lecture will include such matters as these—

“The idea of planning; its revolutionary implications. The tariff as a typical problem. Suggestions for controlling investment and credit, and for rationing the use of natural resources. Delegation of control to specialist bodies. The alternative of reduced control. Possibilities of control through informed public opinion.”

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Why don't you attend?

Mr. FOLEY: In answer to that question I would remind the Secretary for Railways that the learned professor is merely copying the overseas professors. Anyone who keeps in touch with the periodicals in our own library will find that the general trend of opinion held by political economists and captains of industry in America and overseas countries is that the capitalist system is in a chaotic state. We find them now copying the planning system that has been adopted by the country that is abused by the press of the world. I do not claim that they are copying it in detail; but they recommend that the planning system as adopted by Russia should be applied to the various industrial countries that are in such a chaotic condition to-day. Whether he has been inspired by the Government or not, I do not know; but Professor Brigden is following the lead of the captains of industries overseas, and is now lecturing to those interested on the question of controlling investment and credit and the question of rationing the use of national resources and so on, which is really the method that will have to be adopted by many of the overseas countries, particularly America and England, if they wish to save the capitalistic system. There does not appear to be a constructive idea from the Premier, the Treasurer, or any other member of the Cabinet along those lines.

What is to be got from the Financial Statement? It is a question of waiting in the hope that something may turn up. If the position overseas becomes worse, it will be reflected here and the drift will be greater than the Treasurer anticipates. It is about time some definite statement was made by the Premier or the Treasurer as to the intentions of the Government with regard to the rehabilitation of Queensland. Are we to expect a continued reduction in the purchasing power of the great masses of the workers of this State? From whatever angle you examine the business position of Queensland to-day, you can see a gradual drift taking place, and no attempt is being made to check that drift. The only real attempt to bring about a cost in reduction is a reduction in the wages of the great mass of the workers of this State. Certain workers have been withdrawn from the protection of the Industrial Court, which means a direct reduction in their wages. In the

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pastoral industry white men are working for less than the amount aborigines are paid. They are forced to accept these wages rather than hump their swags. The Premier should give some indication to the people of this State as to whether he cannot offer something better than has been adopted in the past, in order to give some measure of hope to the people of this State who have been carrying on under severe difficulties for a long time past.

The PREMIER (Hon. A. E. Moore, *Aubigny*) [3.28]: We have been treated to a lecture by the hon. member for Leichhardt on our want of a constructive policy. What constructive policy did the hon. member put forward? First of all, he quoted from the report of the Land Administration Board to show the exports from Queensland; and he asked why we did not do something to encourage exports; and said that we should bring forward a Bill to compel the banks to reduce the rate of interest. The hon. member must know that the Commonwealth Government were negotiating with the banks and the banks had been carrying all the States of Australia and the Commonwealth, with the exception of Queensland, for the last two years out of the savings of the people and out of the credits of the people. How could the Government go to those banks while they were keeping the Governments of Australia going rather than give the money to industries to enable them to expand and employ the people of this State and compel them to reduce interest? The hon. member wants to turn round now and bite the hands that have been helping the Government all the time. The first Government to take any action towards the reduction of interest in Australia was the Queensland Government.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: There was not another Government in Australia which attempted to get any reduction in interest until the Queensland Government had done it.

Mr. POLLOCK: And the Queensland Opposition suggested it to you.

The PREMIER: I say quite distinctly that the Queensland Government wanted the co-operation of all hon. members because they realised that industries which could provide an exportable surplus should be assisted. Later on, when the Premiers' Conference took place and a plan was evolved, it was laid down definitely that there should be a reduction of interest in the various phases of industry in Australia.

Mr. POLLOCK: The Leader of the Opposition and I raised that question in this House before you ever thought of it, and you jeered at it.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Gregory only raises questions when he is in opposition. When he was behind the Government he subserviently voted with the Government in everything they did, and did not care twopence about what it was for. When he gets into opposition he raises all sorts of wonderful schemes which should be undertaken by the Government, when conditions are quite different from what they were when his party was in power.

Mr. POLLOCK: The unemployment question did not exist then.

The PREMIER: The unemployment question was existing when the Labour Government went out of office, and the hon. member was continually making excuses, and saying it could not be cured. After he has been in opposition for a time, he suggests all sorts of schemes which ought to be introduced.

Mr. POLLOCK: You have not got an unemployment relief scheme yet.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Leichhardt suggested that we should compel the banks and financial institutions to reduce interest arbitrarily by Act of Parliament. He did not say to what extent—to any extent apparently—but it did not matter as long as they reduced interest arbitrarily. But he has to remember that the Loan Council and the Federal Government made certain arrangements to use the services of the Commonwealth Bank; and, after all, the Commonwealth Bank is just as much interested as the Governments in the welfare of the people of Australia and the prosperity of the country. They came to a definite agreement with the banks that they should reduce their interest, and they were not going to allow it to be done by breaking contracts with the banks.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: It is only a question of degree, after all. You have already done it arbitrarily.

The PREMIER: I will answer the hon. member directly. It is all very fine for him to talk when he is only in the irresponsible position of Leader of the Opposition, and has not the responsibility of the Government. Labour Premiers in the other States have had to find out that the position is very different when they have the responsibility of office. This definite arrangement was made, and during the conferences that we have had it has been pointed out time and again that it was not the fault of the banks. We have to be grateful to the banks, as Mr. Theodore himself said, for the assistance they have given to the different Governments to help them through a very trying time. It seems rather extraordinary that the Opposition should come forward to-day, seeing the Queensland Government were the first to take steps to give relief to these people who were so hard hit, and criticise us and ask why we did not do something else. All they can say is what we ought to do, and what they would do if they were in power.

The hon. member for Leichhardt quoted figures to show that £16,756,000 of exportable products have been sent overseas. When the Leader of the Opposition was speaking, the great thing he enlarged upon was the mission of Sir Edward Macartney to Australia and the question of trying to arrange about the exchange. The Queensland Government first attempted to negotiate from their own point of view.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: And a good thing to do. We want to get information, that is all.

The PREMIER: We come to the charge of the Opposition that we had taken our business from the Bank of England, quite regardless of the fact that under the financial agreement, to which they were a party when in office, we had to do our business through the Commonwealth Bank.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: You allowed it to expire. Sir Edward Macartney's letters show that.

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The PREMIER: The hon. member knows that there was an agreement made with the Bank of England in 1915 in regard to the flotation of loans, and there was a later agreement in 1926, which terminated when the financial agreement was consummated.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: How do you explain those letters of Sir Edward Macartney?

The PREMIER: If the hon. member will take the trouble to read the letters of Sir Edward Macartney, he will see that they refer to loans and the payment of interest. It is specifically stated in one letter that, as the financial agreement had been made, it applied to all the States, and naturally they had to do their business with the Commonwealth Bank. We were not able to continue the agreement with the Bank of England because they would not accept our overdraft business. Naturally they told us to get our overdrafts where we placed our business. Any business man would say the same thing. If we were going to get loans through the Commonwealth Bank, then we should do our ordinary overdraft business with them.

The hon. member for Leichhardt pointed out what a tremendous thing it would be for Australia if we could make payment for our interest by creating a trust fund in Australia and an overdraft overseas which could be drawn upon to pay interest. If that were done it would mean that there would be a reduction of interest; but, if the Government had to pay £30,000,000 in exchange, there would not be a payment, but there would be default. The Federal Government and the Commonwealth Bank looked upon it from the point of view that there are greater benefits to be received at the present time from having the exchange as it is. The indirect benefits to the people of Australia, and to the primary producers in particular, are so valuable that it is preferable that the Government should face the present difficulty of obtaining the necessary funds to meet oversea commitments.

Mr. KIRWAN: Is that really so?

The PREMIER: The benefit to the primary producers and to the people is much greater.

Mr. HANLON: It cannot be greater.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Leichhardt stated that last year the value of the primary products exported from Queensland amounted to £16,750,000. I am not going to say that the rate of exchange over the whole year was at a premium of 30 per cent; but let us assume that the exportable surplus in primary products will be £16,000,000 for the coming year. Thirty per cent on that sum is nearly £5,000,000, which will be received by the primary producers and the people of Queensland; and against that the Government have to find £1,990,000 to meet exchange charges in connection with our oversea commitments.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: As the exchange position between trading countries becomes adjusted and stabilised, so price levels become adjusted and stabilised.

The PREMIER: Eventually. I am not endeavouring to minimise the difficulty of finding £1,990,000 to meet exchange charges; but I do wish to point out that, on the present basis of exchange, Queensland receives

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five times as much as it is necessary for the Government to find to meet exchange charges in connection with oversea commitments.

Mr. HANLON: Why not follow that argument to its logical conclusion and make £100 of Australian money equal to £1 of English money? Then we should all be wealthy.

The PREMIER: We do not fix the exchange rate. To a great extent, the exchange rate is governed by the supply and demand. I admit that it is limited to a certain extent, because, if the Commonwealth Bank were to provide all the exchange in connection with oversea commitments, the rate of exchange would be 34 or 35 per cent. It is better to ration the exchange so as to relieve Governments of the necessity of paying too highly when purchasing exchange for their requirements.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: When considering trade and commerce there are other debits against the £4,500,000.

The PREMIER: There are. We must take as a basis the amount of exportable products, and in our case it is £16,000,000. We receive the benefit of 30 per cent. upon that sum, which is a rather large amount of money. The people and the Government are directly and indirectly benefited by the receipt of that additional sum. That amount of money is expended in Queensland, and is an extra amount available to the primary producers.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: It is all governed by the volume of trade between countries.

The PREMIER: To a great extent.

The hon. member for Gregory has again raked up the Mungana case.

Mr. POLLOCK: I did nothing of the sort.

The PREMIER: In my opinion, he did.

Mr. POLLOCK: I referred to the expense involved, if that is what you call raking it up.

The PREMIER: The hon. member found fault with the Government for appointing the royal commission and for going on with the Mungana case because he said that it was purely a political vendetta.

Mr. POLLOCK: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: If he does not call that raking it up, then I do not know what it is. He criticised the Government for having paid for legal advice, and for having incurred expenditure in connection with the royal commission and the Mungana case.

Mr. POLLOCK: I complained that you had not given us the full information.

The PREMIER: The hon. member also indulged in innuendo by suggesting that there was something that the Government had to clean up, and that our supporters were not all that they might be. How does he know that the people referred to are all our supporters? Are they all our supporters because they have evaded income tax in connection with returns of income associated with the butter industry? They are just as likely to be the supporters of the hon. member's party. I do not inquire whether the directors or managers of butter factories are of the same political opinions as the party to which I belong. These people did

nothing criminal. They omitted to furnish income tax returns showing the whole of their income. Why should the Government suddenly step in and hamper the Commissioner of Taxes when he is doing his duty?

The Government were compelled to go ahead with the royal commission on Mungana. We had made definite charges, and I want to refer to those definite charges. They are set out in "Hansard" for 1927, at page 552. The present Secretary for Public Instruction, who then sat in opposition, made a very full statement on the subject and made definite charges. This is his charge:—

"1. That the circumstances connected with the purchase by the Government of the Mungana Mines for £40,000 furnish grave reasons for suspicion that the present Premier (then Home Secretary) and perhaps other members of the Government (present or past) wrongfully used their public positions for the purpose of the acquirement of private gain, the relevant facts of this case being as follows:—"

He then set out the facts in detail. Surely that is definite enough?

Mr. POLLOCK: Similar charges are now being made against butter factory managers—that they have used their positions for private gain.

The PREMIER: They are private individuals, and they have nothing at all to do with the Government. In the Mungana case the persons concerned were members of a Government who had misused their positions. They were the trustees of public funds. That is a totally different matter. We were pressed to have an inquiry into the Mungana business, not only by our own people, but by the supporters of hon. members opposite.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: You were not.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Gregory said this afternoon that the Government went on with the Mungana case because they were out on a political vendetta.

The hon. member in making that statement should remember the resolution that was passed at the Southport Labour Convention requesting the Labour Government to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into Mungana.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: You are off your balance now. It was never mentioned at Southport.

The PREMIER: The Mungana matter was brought up at the Southport Labour Convention on 18th February, 1926, by Mr. Rymer and Mr. Moroney.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: They were not at that convention.

The PREMIER: They were.

Mr. POLLOCK: They were expelled before the convention started.

The PREMIER: Whom are we to believe—the Leader of the Opposition, who said that they did not hold a convention at all, or the hon. member for Gregory, who said that Messrs. Rymer and Moroney were expelled from that convention?

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: Don't misquote me. I never said that at all. I said the

matter was not raised at the Southport convention.

Mr. POLLOCK: I was the chairman of that convention, and I know that Rymer and Moroney were not at it.

The PREMIER: Except to bring up that question.

Mr. POLLOCK: What are you quoting from?

The PREMIER: Never mind what I am quoting from.

Mr. POLLOCK: You are not quoting from the official report.

The PREMIER: Then at the Townsville Labour Convention held on 15th May, 1928, Mr. Eastaughffe moved—

"That a full inquiry into the Mungana and Chillagoe leases be made by a committee appointed from this convention."

Mr. Jones seconded this motion, and Mr. Roper moved an amendment to delete all words from and including "committee" and insert the words "Royal Commission." Mr. Watson seconded the amendment; therefore, it was not only our people who were demanding the appointment of a commission, but the demand was general.

Mr. POLLOCK: You are all right there, but you are all wrong about Southport.

The PREMIER: There were demands made generally that the whole matter be cleaned up. I cannot help it if the most able man practising at the bar to-day happens to be the president of our organisation. That is not my fault. When a Government is embarking upon a law case of tremendous importance—and it was of tremendous importance, because the honour of this Parliament was involved—the best brains at the bar must be engaged. A definite charge was made which was only proved in part. Mr. McCormack said in this Chamber in 1926 that he held only 368 shares in the Mungana syndicate, whereas the jury found that he held nearly 4,400. There was a definite reason for that. Then Mr. Theodore came to Brisbane after the findings of the Royal Commission, and demanded an opportunity should be given him to go into the witness-box.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: And he never went into the box.

The PREMIER: Naturally, we had to go on with the case because we could not leave it where it stood. It was absolutely essential that we should go on with it. I have no apology to offer for going on with the commission or the civil proceedings, or for obtaining the best legal opinion and engaging the best counsel to conduct the proceedings.

Mr. STOFORD: Why are you shirking a commission in the other matter now?

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Mount Morgan must recognise that, while the Commissioner of Taxes is investigating about twenty-two more cases for prosecution in connection with commissions received by officials of butter factories and not included in their income tax returns, it would be utterly wrong to appoint a Royal Commission and thus interfere with those proceedings.

Mr. HANLON: It is a fair-sized scandal if there are twenty-two more prosecutions to come.

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The PREMIER: It is a scandal in a sort of a way; but there was nothing illegal in the officials accepting the commissions except from the point of view that they did not include the amounts in their income tax returns and thus evaded the payment of income tax. The payment of commission is an ordinary business concern which goes on every day.

Mr. MAHER: But it is wrong.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: You won't go out and tell that to the farmers. You allow them to be fleeced.

The PREMIER: I am prepared to tell the farmers what I am telling this Committee; and I do not need the hon. member for Balonne to explain anything for me. I am quite capable of doing that myself. How have the farmers been fleeced?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He would like it referred to "head centre."

Mr. POLLOCK: We want to know the cost of the Mungana Commission and proceedings.

The PREMIER: I cannot give the cost. The costs of the defence have not yet come in. I do not know when they will come in. I understand that the solicitor in charge of the defence has gone away, and, until he returns, the defence costs will not be put in.

Mr. POLLOCK: Have not Mr. McGill's costs been put in?

The PREMIER: Not so far as I know; indeed I am sure they have not been put in. Hon. members must remember that, after these costs are put in, they have to be taxed. I am not endeavouring to hold them back. I presume that when the counsel and other legal gentlemen who were engaged in the case have their costs ready, they will give them to the Government. I am not endeavouring to hold back anything.

Mr. POLLOCK: I am not saying you are; but I do say that whatever information we may get in this Chamber the newspapers hold back.

The PREMIER: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition had a great deal to say with regard to the conversion loan of 1929. When speaking yesterday, the hon. member said—

"When the Government are dealing with the people who make money out of lending money—the big capitalists—this is the way they deal with them, and not the way they deal with the wage-earners. They said to the holders of this loan, who have been drawing interest for years—

'To holders of maturing loans we offer a cash bonus of £3 per cent. on converting their holdings in the new loan.'

Just imagine these great financial interests, who make their money out of lending big sums of money to Governments, in addition to drawing interest all the years of the previous loan, being told 'If you leave your money in this present loan, we will give you a cash bonus of £3 per cent.'

That is not true. The Auditor-General's report for 1929, at page 17, shows the details of the expenses of the conversion loan of 1929, as follows:—

"QUEENSLAND 5½ PER CENT. LOAN OF
£12,703,734.

"In May last the Commonwealth Government made a conversion offer of its stock of £12,403,734 bearing interest at

5 per cent. with an issue price of £97 per cent.

"The expenses of issue (apart from the discount of £3 per cent.) were—

	£	s.	d.
Underwriting, bank charge, and brokerage	159,291	8	1
Discount on prepayments, advertising, etc.	12,949	14	10
	172,241	2	11
Less credit of £7,259 12s. 2d. for interest earned on cash instalments ...	7,259	12	2

Net costs ... £164,981 10 9'

The corresponding expenses of conversion of the loan in May, 1924, amounted to £330,098 19s. 7d. The hon. member for Herbert included the discount as an addition to the cost of conversion in 1929. The conversion in 1924 was made at £99 10s., carrying 5½ per cent. for five years. The conversion in 1929 was made at £97, carrying 5 per cent., the period not being stated. In the 1924 conversion £5 10s. per annum on each £99 10s. actually received is equivalent to an effective rate of 5.523 per cent. per annum. In the 1929 conversion of the same loan £5 per annum on each £97 is equal to an effective rate of 5.155 per cent. per annum. The 1929 conversion was better than the 1924 conversion to the extent of £165,117 8s. 10d., less expenses of conversion, and 373 per cent. per annum less interest. Yet the hon. member for Herbert comes into this Chamber and starts to talk about the giving of a bonus to the people who are converting their loan holdings!

The hon. member for Herbert also said—

"The Brisbane City Council arranged to pay its overseas interest into a fund in Australia to save this awful cost of exchange. If any person should have initiated that scheme, it should have been the Treasurer."

First of all, that is not true. The Brisbane City Council have not done that, and cannot do it. Furthermore, the Queensland Treasurer did initiate the scheme, and did that ten months ago. That merely goes to show how inaccurate the hon. member's statements are.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition also went on to say that we should have borrowed money overseas to get an overdraft. The resolutions of the Loan Council, which were definitely agreed to by all the States, were to the effect that we should not try to raise any money overseas until the short credit available there had been liquidated. When Mr. Scullin, the Prime Minister, was overseas, he cabled to Mr. Lyons, who was then Federal Treasurer, on 10th November, 1930, as follows:—

"I came to London with the consent of the party. Apart from the Imperial Conference, my most important mission was to restore Australian credit so that we could fund the floating debt and, if possible, raise some new money to relieve our economic position. My efforts would have succeeded had the party's support been maintained. I found in London a desire to assist, and plans were maturing to approach the loan market when budgets were balanced.

"Although there was disappointment in financial circles that our budget is not

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quite balanced, the door was not quite closed, and I still had hopes of success until that appalling resolution was passed last Thursday; but that proposal was disastrous."

The resolution that Mr. Scullin referred to was one passed at a Federal caucus meeting on the 6th November, 1930. That is the one which destroyed the credit of Australia overseas. That is the one which rendered Mr. Scullin's visit hopeless from the point of view of getting credit overseas to meet our loan and interest requirements. It was not anything that this Government did that was responsible for that. It was something that the Federal caucus did at Canberra on 6th November, 1930.

The CHAIRMAN: Order: The hon. member has exhausted the time allowed him under the Standing Orders.

Question—"That the resolution (*Mr. W. H. Barnes's motion*) be agreed to—put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution, and asked leave to sit again.

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

Resolution received, and agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—VOTE ON ACCOUNT, £2,600,000.

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

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Wynnum*) [8.55]: I beg to move—

"(a) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1931-32, a further sum not exceeding £1,600,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland (exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account).

"(b) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1931-32, a further sum not exceeding £800,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

"(c) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1931-32, a further sum not exceeding £200,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account."

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) [8.56]: It will be noticed that from loan fund account the Treasurer is appropriating £200,000 for the services of the present financial year. The position of the loan fund account is of particular interest to this Parliament and the people of Queensland. It is already carrying a very heavy deficit from revenue account, and the available funds in the State, with repayments to loan fund account from various sources, indicate that the State of the loan fund account towards the end of the financial year will cause some anxiety unless it is replenished in some way or other. The Treasurer might inform the Committee as to the present balances in the loan fund account, apart

altogether from the debit carried by that account on behalf of the consolidated revenue, and as to the steps he proposes to take in regard to the future. In the Financial Statement the hon. gentleman indicated that a balance of at least £500,000 is required in this account as a margin of safety. Personally, I think that is putting it rather low. The desirable balance is at least £1,000,000. Assuming that the balance is £500,000, the hon. gentleman indicated in his Financial Statement that towards the end of the financial year he may have to issue treasury bills in connection with the matter. If the Treasurer could give the Committee information along those lines, I should be very pleased.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Wynnum*) [9.0]: The questions asked by the Leader of the Opposition are very proper questions. The hon. member will remember that there is really only one cash account, and at the present moment it is in credit about £1,000,000. That is the position so far as Queensland is concerned. This month we have remitted to London a further £300,000 in order to make provision for certain payments which will be maturing in the old country, but not just immediately. There is an arrangement with the Commonwealth Bank by which the money that is required for the twelve months shall be remitted at the rate of so much per month; and, as the Leader of the Opposition probably knows, any money that is lying at credit in the old country is generally lent on short term loans. That is arranged by the banking authorities there.

The hon. member has asked what is likely to be done in connection with the debits carried over on account of revenue, and with regard to what is going to be done in connection with amounts which are outstanding. If he looks up the Budget, he will see that it is indicated there that a Bill must be brought in this session to deal with that. That is the proper course to follow.

Getting back to the question which the hon. member has put, I might further say that, in addition to the million of money which we have, there is some money really lying at our call, so to speak, in connection with the savings bank investment which we could have received from the savings bank account some two months ago; but I did not think it was wise to take it, as it was a Commonwealth matter, seeing that we did not want it immediately, and would have had to start to pay interest upon it when we did not require it. The amount was probably about £200,000. Then should it be necessary, according to the agreement which was made in May-June, we certainly are entitled to receive about £760,000 from the Loan Council, being portion of our demand for overdraft. I must state for the information of hon. members, that we had to prepare a rough Budget in May-June, I pointed out then—and my Under Secretary quite realised that—how very difficult it was at that time to forecast what our deficit was likely to be. In connection with that rough Budget we forecast a deficit of something like £760,000, and provision has been made for that by the Commonwealth or by the Loan Council.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: Is there not some difficulty in regard to that amount?

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The TREASURER: Not so far as I know.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: The Commonwealth Bank agreed to finance the various Governments' deficits to the extent of about £15,000,000. That £760,000 is part of that £15,000,000. Since then your deficit has crept up to £1,800,000.

The TREASURER: That may be so, but we are clearly entitled to £760,000. I would like to say further that in going through the figures to-day I require to be very careful what I say, because hon. members will realise that there was never a time when the financial position was so difficult to gauge.

Mr. POLLOCK: You have been saying that for over two years.

The TREASURER: The financial position generally is very difficult to gauge; but, after going into the figures to-day, it seems to me that there is a possibility that we may be able to see the financial year out with perhaps a shortage of about £150,000 or £200,000. I may be out in quoting those figures, because so much depends upon what revenue will come from the railways and from income tax. Hon. members will at once realise that the amount forecast for income tax is down about £600,000 compared with last year; but I am still hopeful that, although at present the income tax is coming in very slowly, at least our forecast will be realised, and we may be able to see the year through on the lines I have indicated. I want to emphasise, however—and that comes back to what the hon. member for Gregory says—that it is essential that at the end of June there should be some cash in hand in order to continue the work which is necessary at the commencement of a new financial year. I can only say that the greatest care and attention will be given to see to the financial side of our affairs.

Mr. POLLOCK: Are you still determined to go on with the fiduciary issue of treasury bills to meet the deficit?

The TREASURER: I have not said anything about fiduciary notes or treasury bills.

Mr. POLLOCK: The issue of treasury bills is a fiduciary issue, whether you like it or not.

The TREASURER: One has to admit that to some extent it savours of that form of financing.

Mr. POLLOCK: You have not a shilling's worth of gold behind it.

The TREASURER: The hon. member knows that so far Queensland has not found it necessary to obtain any money by way of treasury bills. We may be placed in that position. Queensland is in a very different position from the other States.

Mr. STOPFORD: That is what Lang says.

The TREASURER: The hon. member is apparently a very close friend of Mr. Lang's, and he has evidently been conferring with him of late. I prefer to leave him to Mr. Lang. Queensland will continue to pursue a course of safety—a course that will be in the best interests of this State.

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Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) [9.8]: I should like some information from the Treasurer as to the loan funds that will be available to Queensland from the Loan Council. I understand that the amount allotted to Queensland is in the vicinity of £188,000.

The TREASURER: That is so.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: I realise that the money has to be allocated in the best possible way, and that you cannot allocate money that is not in your possession. The financial agreement provides for the arbitrary allocation of any funds that may be at the disposal of the Loan Council. It provides that the loan estimates of each State and the Commonwealth shall be presented to the Loan Council, and the Loan Council shall decide upon the amount of money to be borrowed, the rate of interest, etc. If the amount of money available is less than is required by the States and the Commonwealth, then it shall be allocated upon the basis of the expenditure of the various States over the preceding five years. The Queensland Government loaned money to the Loan Council and to the Southern States. During the past two years they did not require, and did not participate in, any of the loan funds that were available. So, at least for two years of the period of office of the present Government they did not participate in any allocation of loan funds; and I should like the Treasurer to indicate whether the right of Queensland to share in future loan funds has been safeguarded by general agreement. The basis of allocation is the expenditure by the respective States over the previous five years; and any State that has not received or utilised the allocation to which it was entitled may be placed at a disadvantage at a later date unless its right has been safeguarded. I should like the Treasurer to intimate whether our interests in that regard have been safeguarded. I know that the amount to be allocated this year is very small indeed. I am anxious to preserve our right under the agreement on the basis of the allocation to which I have referred.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Wynnum*) [9.12]: As the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, the method at present adopted by the Loan Council in allocating loan funds is a very unsatisfactory one. To some extent the State that is most careful of its finances is the State which suffers the most.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: It would be worse if the funds were allocated on a population basis.

The TREASURER: That is one of the matters on which some adjustment should be made by those connected with the Loan Council.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: Have you raised it?

The TREASURER: We have raised the point; but there are certain standing rules for the guidance of the Loan Council which have prevented us making very much progress in that direction. The figure mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition—£188,000—as the amount we received is very near the mark.

Question—"That the resolutions (*Mr. W. H. Barnes's motion*) be agreed to"—put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to certain resolutions, and asked leave to sit again.

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

Resolutions received, and agreed to.

APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 2.

FIRST READING.

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

SECOND READING.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Wynnum*): I beg to move—

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

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH (*Mackay*) [9.16]: There are one or two phases of this Bill not yet touched upon with which it is necessary for me to deal before it goes through. There was a good deal of debate on various financial matters when the resolutions were discussed in Committee; but there are one or two phases of the general financial position to which I shall now draw attention. In the earlier stages of the proceedings the Treasurer pointed out that he intended at a later stage of the session to bring in a Bill to deal with the general deficits. The accumulated deficit as at the end of June last for which no provision has been made is £1,731,186. If the prospective deficit for the present financial year, estimated to amount to £1,871,159, is added to that amount, it means that there is a total deficit in sight for the present Government of £3,602,345. That amount may be exceeded. The Treasurer's estimate has already been shown to be very far out. In May last he estimated a deficit for the current financial year of £780,000. That has since been increased by £1,100,000; and there is no guarantee that even that anticipated deficit will not be exceeded, although I fervently hope that it will not. We would all be delighted to see that deficit considerably reduced; but there are one or two phases of the question that must be determined before we can estimate any reduction in the deficit. For example, it is proposed to reduce the capital indebtedness of the Railway Department by a considerable amount, which means that the amount written-off will have to be carried by the Treasury. The writing-off will not affect the balance in any way, because there is only one source from which all expenditure can be met; and if the accounts are adjusted in the manner suggested by the Secretary for Railways, it will not in any way affect the financial position of the State. I notice that, consequent upon that writing-off, it is proposed to reduce freights and fares. If that is based on the reduced capitalisation, then we are entitled to know to what extent that will affect the general deficit of the Treasury Department. It may be argued, as it has been by the Secretary for Railways, that reduced freights and fares will attract a greater volume of traffic, and that that in turn will compensate for the reduced prices. If it operates in that way, then it will be of advantage to everyone, because we are all desirous of seeing railway fares and

freights reduced so long as that can be done without upsetting the Treasury figures. Parliament is entitled to consider those factors when dealing with a Bill of this kind. We must guard against getting into the position which obtained in New South Wales. There the railway accounts were kept separate from the accounts of the other State departments, and frequently the Treasurer introduced a budget showing a surplus, which a few months later was found in actual fact to be a deficit when the financial position of the Railway Department had been taken into consideration. We must realise that there is only one till from which all expenditure is met, and that no adjustment of accounts can affect the general liability of the State. I shall deal with that proposition when it comes before Parliament in the form of a Bill. If sinking funds are provided to cover the amount by which the capital account has been written-down, then there may be some merit in the proposition. However, I shall deal with the matter later. For the present I raise the question from the point of view of the effect it will have on the Treasurer's estimated deficit. If all factors were taken into consideration when framing the Budget, then the position that I anticipate may not arise.

Another matter which may have some bearing on the position is the super land tax, which is a form of taxation that the Government have imposed on two occasions up to the present. I understand that some members of the Government Party are very averse to that being re-enacted this financial year, because they gave a definite pledge to certain people that the tax would be repealed. If the tax is not re-enacted in the present financial year, then it will affect the budget position considerably, unless, of course, the Treasurer has taken that factor into account when framing his budget. In the last financial year £142,255 was secured from this source. If the tax is not re-enacted in the present year, it will mean that the Budget figures will become so much the worse. We are entitled to some declaration beyond what the Treasurer has given up to the present as to his intentions in reference to the matter.

This afternoon I said that the present Treasurer had imposed taxation amounting in the aggregate to £1,500,000. The Treasurer denied the authenticity of those figures. I propose to give the actual estimated amount for which the Treasurer and the Government are responsible. The Treasurer introduced an amending Income Tax Bill in 1930-31. He estimated that the increased revenue from that source would be £600,000. He also brought within the ambit of taxation at least 10,000 farmers who previously were exempt. He also amended the succession duties, which he estimated would provide an additional £85,000. He increased the stamp duties, which he estimated would produce £42,000. In that financial year alone he imposed taxation under the headings I have quoted amounting in the aggregate to £727,000. The unemployment relief tax which was imposed last year yielded £702,000. The estimated receipts from the same source during the present financial year—and remember it has been increased by 100 per cent.—is £898,000, making a total from that tax alone for the two years of £1,510,000. If you add to that amount the figures I have already quoted, it will be found that £1,500,000 was a very conservative estimate. As a matter

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of fact, taxation imposed by the Treasurer has been in excess of £1,500,000.

The Treasurer may say his estimate has not been realised. That is quite true in regard to income tax. I have already pointed out that, by increasing income tax up to a given percentage, the Treasurer does not of necessity increase the revenue by the same percentage. A method of taxation may be introduced that has the effect of diminishing the amount of income available; and, as a consequence, the aggregate revenue from taxation is decreased. The "Daily Mail" this morning quoted figures indicating that the rate of tax per taxpayer had been reduced under the present Government. That is another loose statement that does not bear examination; and, if used unscrupulously, amounts to what the Secretary for Public Instruction on a previous occasion called dishonest advocacy. It is quite true that the average amount per taxpayer has been reduced; but that is not due to any falling off in the rate of taxation. It is due to a reduction in the aggregate income of the taxpayer. The fact remains that the present Treasurer and the Government during the period they have been in power not only have had record deficits but have imposed increased taxation in excess of £1,500,000.

In addition to that, let me again emphasise that the accumulated deficits of the present Treasurer in a period of three years approximate almost the total accumulated deficits that have been incurred since Queensland became a State. The hon. gentleman makes records in countless different directions; and there can be no doubt at all that the financial policy being pursued at the present time leaves little or no hope to the public that the position has been taken in hand, or that the Government have a policy that deals with the situation generally. It is all very well for the Treasurer to quote certain financial tables. It is all very well for the Premier to quote cablegrams and copies of cablegrams that were filched from the files of the Commonwealth Department.

The PREMIER: What is that?

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: The cablegram, a copy of which the hon. gentleman quoted, was the subject of investigation by the Federal Attorney-General's Department, and is one of the cables that were filched from the Commonwealth file.

Mr. KELSO: You said the Premier filched them.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: I never said anything of the kind. I said he quoted from a cablegram that was filched. I am not in the habit of making statements of that kind. Any statement that I make I am prepared to stand up to in this Chamber. We are not under the necessity of making any false allegations against the Government. We only need to tell the truth. The truth is bad enough in all conscience.

The PREMIER: Your Deputy Leader can never speak the truth.

Mr. PEASE: You are a liar.

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

Mr. PEASE: I withdraw, but I object to being insulted by the Premier.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! If the hon. member persists in continuing his remarks

[*Mr. Smith.*]

when I call him to order, I shall have to name him.

Mr. PEASE: I am not going to be insulted.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I wish to draw your attention to the insulting remark made by the Premier, who accused the Deputy Leader of this party of not being able to speak the truth on any occasion. That is a most insulting reference to any hon. member, and should be withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER: I ask the Premier to withdraw the expression.

The PREMIER: I withdraw.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: I am dealing with the general financial position of the State, which is bad enough in all conscience; but there is no desire on my part to exaggerate the general position. What I am concerned with is the fact that there is no general policy in existence that would restore confidence to the public, or indicate to them that the situation is being grappled with by the respective Governments.

The PREMIER: You oppose the restoration of the Upper House.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: The Premier is surely not old enough to be afflicted with senile decay. An interjection of that kind coming from a responsible Minister occupying such an important position is an indication that he does not understand the real causes of the difficulties I am dealing with. The question of the restoration of an Upper House in this or any other State has little or no bearing on the general question at all. What is required in Queensland is a restoration of confidence which will provide work for people and rehabilitate industry. That is the real problem affecting this country at the present time. Can anyone contemplate with equanimity the huge amount required to provide for relief works and relief in various directions? Can anyone contemplate with equanimity the fact that, through no fault of their own, thousands of our fellow-citizens are being made vagrants at the present time, and are going from place to place in a fruitless search for work? The greatest tragedy of all is the fact that boys are leaving school and are unable to obtain employment, and are, therefore, not being taught habits of industry, are not being given the opportunity of learning a trade, and then, when I am dealing with questions of that kind, I am met with asinine interjections about the Legislative Council, which might be a political haven for supporters of the Government. Those are the difficulties confronting the country, and the schemes introduced either at the Premier's Conference or in this Parliament have done little more than deal with the fringe of the question. The position is getting worse every day. I admit it is very largely an international question; but, being part of the civilised world, we, as a people, have our responsibilities, and can contribute our share to the solution of the problem. We have had the difficulty in the past that, no matter what proposal was put forward, provided it was not in accordance with conservative standards and ideas of public policy, it was immediately condemned. We have not been able to obtain full information to enable us to diagnose the case ultimately and completely. Hon. members

opposite to-night have talked glibly about the results of the election in Great Britain, and that may be cause for their jubilation.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member not to bring up matters of that kind. The second reading of the Bill covers a very wide range, but I do not think the hon. member is justified in wandering all round the universe.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: I object to the implication that I am wandering all round the universe. As the Leader of the Opposition, I have the right to state my case, and anything I can state on the financial position of the country is germane to the Bill. The facts are that Queensland, as a part of the Commonwealth, is affected by the international monetary position, and little or no steps have been taken by the present Government to cope with the situation. Conferences of various kinds have been held, but they have not got to the real cause of the difficulty, and the people of this State are confronted, not only with an unbalanced Budget, but with increasing numbers of people who are unemployed, and with no immediate prospect of being absorbed in industry. The greatest tragedy of all is that our boys and girls who are leaving school, and who are able and anxious to work, are not being given the opportunity to do so. Adults are more able to suffer in that way. There can be no doubt that their position is extremely severe—heartrending in many cases—but the greatest tragedy of all is the spectacle of unemployed boys and girls, who will be the future citizens of this State, who are not being given an opportunity to find employment.

I propose to quote a very interesting pamphlet written by Professor Keynes, entitled, "Economic Consequences of Mr. Churchill." He deals with the time when Mr. Churchill, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, restored the monetary policy which has given rise to considerable difficulty. This distinguished gentleman prophesied what was likely to take place following that action. The Glasgow "Forward" says—

"It was a brilliantly written exposé of the results of Mr. Churchill's acceptance of the report of the Cunliffe Committee on currency.

"These wise financial gentlemen recommended a hurried restoration of the gold standard in this country. The Tory Government obediently accepted the city view just as the present Government is accepting the city view, and here is Mr. Keynes' prophecy of what must follow. He puts his prophecy in the form of an imaginary report from the committee—

"To begin with, there will be great depression in the export industries. This in itself will be helpful, since it will produce an atmosphere favourable to the reduction of wages. The cost of living will fall somewhat. This will be helpful, too, because it will give you a good argument in favour of reducing wages. Nevertheless, the cost of living will not fall sufficiently, and consequently the export industries will not be able to reduce their prices sufficiently until wages have fallen in the sheltered industries. Now, wages will not fall in the sheltered industries

merely because there is unemployment in the unsheltered industries. Therefore, you will have to see to it that there is unemployment in the sheltered industries also. The way to do this will be by credit restriction. By means of the restriction of credit by the Bank of England, you can deliberately intensify unemployment to any required degree until wages do fall. When the process is complete the cost of living will have fallen, too; and we shall then be, with luck, just where we were before we started."

That statement was made by Professor Keynes in 1925. It deals with the return of England to the gold standard under the law enacted by the then Government. The prophecy of that distinguished gentleman has actually come to pass. Goods have fallen in price; money has appreciated in value; unemployment has been created in every country in the world; and it would appear that, unless something very drastic is done, the international situation, which affects us in common with other countries, will be very serious indeed. My own view is that the urgent need of the present day is an international agreement to control credit and currency so that they may be conducted in the interests of trade and commerce as between nations, thus enabling orderly industry to be continued. Violent fluctuation in prices, with all its evils, produces results that are undesirable. A stabilised policy could be secured by international agreement if currency, banking, and credit became the handmaiden of industry rather than the dictator of industry. No one can contemplate the existing situation, either in Australia or elsewhere, and feel that there is nothing seriously and fundamentally wrong with the position.

The Treasurer has referred to the question of interest rates. He knows that it is the policy of some Governments under the Premier's plan to reduce interest rates on industry generally. The Treasurer indicated this afternoon that the amount of saving to Queensland from the conversion loan was not very great. I again point out that the interest burden must be lifted from industry if the existing price levels continue. The burden is too great for industry to bear. The method adopted by the Government has not produced the result that was anticipated. Thousands of people who are affected by these things have obtained no relief at all. The methods adopted by the Government of providing tribunals to which mortgagors may make application is cumbersome, clumsy, and in many directions does not afford the facilities that are required. As I said, when the Bills were before this Chamber, they ought to be automatic and should apply generally. That is the policy I still stand for. I am disappointed that neither the Treasurer nor the Premier has seen fit to indicate that they have a policy which will enable them to cope with the conditions which will obtain during the next six months; nor have they indicated any line of financial activity to restore employment in this country, and enable people to be absorbed in industry generally. All that is done is that the Treasurer states in his Financial Statement that the exchange position may improve, and, because of that, the commitments of the Treasury will become correspondingly

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less. Then the Premier, following him, said that the adverse rate of exchange was rather a good thing, as it meant a bonus on the export trade.

THE PREMIER: I said there were two sides to it.

MR. W. FORGAN SMITH: That is quite true; but no one can contemplate the present position with any degree of equanimity. The Premier cannot have it both ways. The adverse rate of exchange, while having a beneficial effect on some sections, has an adverse effect on the community generally. An unbalanced exchange produces results in trade and commerce that restrict enterprise and investments, and also the volume of employment. Everyone knows that to be the case. A stabilised exchange obviously permits a stabilisation of industry, which is good for the country.

In dealing with the general financial position I want to call attention to the method adopted by the Government in what they call unemployment relief. They have claimed credit for originating a scheme which they say is the best in Australia, although one of their supporters, who takes in a lot of territory, said it was the best scheme existing in the whole world. If hon. members turn to page 115 of the Auditor-General's report dealing with the unemployment relief fund, they will find this stated—

"The expenditure from the fund for the financial year 1930-31 amounted to £664,500 10s. 4d., and for the financial year 1929-30 £35,611 17s. 6d., making the total expenditure since inception £700,112 7s. 10d.

"The credit balance of the fund at 30th June, 1931, was £2,527 16s. 3d.

"Details of the expenditure during the financial year under review are—

	£	s.	d.
Administrative expenses	29,937	0	1
Payments made to constructing authorities	621,995	19	4
Other payments	12,567	10	11"

The total expenditure amounted to £664,500 10s. 4d. The major part of the expenditure is in the direction of the ordinary public works policy, which should have been carried out in the ordinary course of events under award conditions. All that has happened has been that men have been dismissed from ordinary employment, either by the State or private individuals, and have been put to work at less than award rates, designated intermittent relief work rates, to carry on the ordinary public works policy. Take, for example, the Main Roads Commission, which carried out works under this scheme amounting to £124,737. That work is provided for under award conditions. Then the Main Roads Commission carried out road work for local authorities amounting to £58,703, and it also carried out intermittent relief work costing £10,040. Then these amounts were also spent in connection with the scheme—

	£	s.	d.
Commissioner for Railways	136,329	15	6
Department of Public Works	32,542	19	0
Department of Public Lands	30,557	3	10
Brisbane City Council	133,023	9	11

[Mr. Smith.

Those are only the major items contained in the Auditor-General's report on the unemployment relief fund. The work carried out is probably useful and necessary for the development of the State; but the point I am emphasising is that those are not ordinary relief jobs. They are part of the ordinary public works policy of the State, which, under normal conditions, would be paid for at award rates of wages, and would be performed under award conditions. This page in the Auditor-General's report indicates very clearly that advantage is taken of the economic circumstances of the unemployed worker; and he is forced to accept employment at half the measure of the value of his work as determined by an impartial tribunal. It means that, with the loan fund account carrying the accumulated deficits of the present Treasurer, the Government have devised a method whereby everyone in the community, without exception, is taxed to provide funds for public works to be carried on at rates that are less than half the rates prescribed by an impartial tribunal. I am disappointed in the statement made by the Premier and Treasurer, and regret that they have not indicated anything in the nature of a policy that would give the people of this State an idea that they are capable of coping with the present situation.

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. H. E. Sizer, *Sandgate*) [9.49]: The remarks of the Leader of the Opposition during the last few minutes of his speech would indicate that he regrets that the Government have done effective and re-productive work under their relief scheme. Although the hon. gentleman did not say so, he meant to infer that we had no right to do that work unless we paid full award rates. I ask the hon. gentleman to answer this question: If the Government or any other body had carried out relief work and paid award rates of wages, from what source would they have obtained the money to do so? It is obvious that fewer men would have been employed. If the hon. gentleman were the head of the Government to-day, would he pay the Industrial Court award rates?

MR. BRUCE: Give notice of the question!

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Which means that the suggestions made by the Leader of the Opposition were simply eyewash. The hon. gentleman knows as well as anybody that the fall in the national income and the inability to secure loan funds made it necessary to provide work for unemployed persons. The Government have provided more work for the unemployed than any other Government in Australia. To do what the hon. gentleman suggests it would be necessary to collect £5,000,000 by way of relief tax, which would make the tax 2s. 6d. in the £1. The Government have done the best work possible, and they are employing men who normally would be receiving rations. If the Labour Party became the Government, would they revert to the system of giving rations without work being done?

MR. MAHER: There is no answer.

MR. POLLOCK: While you are on questions, will you answer one of mine?

THE SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Certainly, when the hon. member answers my questions.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. gentleman to address his remarks to the chair.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I rose to refute the arguments of the Leader of the Opposition, and he is not prepared to answer my question.

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: You move that I be farther heard, and I will answer you.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Through you, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Leader of the Opposition, do the Labour Party object to our doing reproductive work?

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: Certainly not.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Do the Labour Party object to our paying for that work?

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: We object to your not paying award rates.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: Does the hon. member favour us bringing in a tax of 2s. 6d. in the £1 to enable us to pay award rates?

Mr. W. FORGAN SMITH: I do not accept your figures.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The hon. member is not capable of refuting them. A tax of 3d. in the £1 yielded £702,000; a tax of 6d. in the £1 will probably raise £930,000. It would require £5,000,000 to pay the basic wage; and it is a question of simple arithmetic as to what tax will be necessary to raise that amount. Hon. members opposite cannot do what they say they will do. They are trying to tickle the ears of the relief workers, and are endeavouring to raise a smoke screen. Intermit- tent relief workers are employed fifty-two weeks in the year; and we take every class of labour. The Leader of the Opposition, in his tirade to-night, tried to discount these facts. If they themselves were the Govern- ment to-morrow, they would not increase the rate to the workers. They would have to reduce it, and time will prove the truth of my words.

Mr. DUNLOP (*Rockhampton*) [9.56]: I wish to reply to some of the unfair attacks made upon myself before the dinner ad- journment. I certainly had some respect for the hon. member for Gregory until his attitude last week and to-night; and I wish now to refer to his statement that I voted for the repeal of the Industrial Arbitration Act.

Mr. POLLOCK. I never said anything of the sort.

Mr. DUNLOP: The hon. member said that I voted against the holidays and for the reduction of the basic wage. I say quite honestly that I did vote with the Govern- ment for the repeal of the Industrial Arbi- tration Act as brought in by the late Govern- ment, for the following reasons:—

The SPEAKER: Order! I would ask the hon. member to direct his remarks to the Bill. I cannot allow him to continue on those lines.

Mr. DUNLOP: I was replying to finance matters in connection with the Industrial Arbitration Act.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. mem- ber was not doing anything of the kind. He must connect his remarks with the Bill.

Mr. DUNLOP: "Hansard" will show that I voted with the Opposition on every occasion in connection with awards and the basic wage, holidays for employees, and everything else; and I only supported the Government on the repeal of the Industrial Arbitration Act, as I have said.

The SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. DUNLOP: A lot of talk has taken place with regard to wages, and about what this and the previous Government did in that connection. On 2nd August, 1922, as is shown by the "Queensland Industrial Gazette," the Labour Government petitioned the Arbitration Court in regard to public servants, and I will now read from the report—

"In the matter of a petition by the Chief Secretary, the Treasurer, the Minister for Public Works, the Secre- tary for Agriculture and Stock, the Secretary for Mines, the Secretary for Railways, the Attorney-General, the Secretary for Public Instruction, the Home Secretary, the Secretary for Pub- lic Lands, the Commissioner for Rail- ways, the Commissioner for Trade, the Commissioner of Police, the Corporation of the Treasurer of Queensland, the Corporation of the Secretary for Public Instruction in Queensland, and the State Advancers Corporation for variations of the said awards.

"On 10th July, 1922, the following case was stated in writing, by Mac- naughton, J., for the opinion of the Full Bench under section 19 (1) of "The Industrial Arbitration Act of 1916"—

"The abovementioned petitioners have filed a petition claiming certain variations in the abovementioned awards . . ."

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I shall have to ask the hon. member to resume his seat unless he is going to apply his remarks in a proper way to the Bill before the House, and he is not doing so.

Mr. DUNLOP: As regards the question of finance, we have heard a lot of talk about it from the Opposition. If there is not money available to pay the rate of wages which the Government would like, they are compelled to reduce the wages. The Labour Government had to adopt a reduction in the wages of their employees.

The hon. member for Gregory attacks me in regard to my attitude on financial ques- tions before the House. I know that this is political propoganda which is being indulged in. The hon. member for Gregory is an adept at that, but it will not wash with me. I have criticised the Government on the question of finance; and I am quite satisfied to leave the matter to the will of the people when we face them to get their decision as to what shall be done in connection with these matters. As Mr. Speaker has said I am out of order, I shall conclude my remarks, as I shall have another opportunity on the Estimates to get even with the hon. member for Gregory.

Mr. Dunlop.]

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*) [10.5]: The Secretary for Labour and Industry read out to us an estimate of what he and his pet economist, Professor Brigden, have decided will be the cost of paying award rates in connection with relief work.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: I have never discussed the matter with Professor Brigden.

Mr. POLLOCK: Whoever the Minister has had to assist him to prepare this table is beside the point. I presumed it was the gentleman who was appointed at a cost to the State of over £5,000 a year.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: The Under-Secretary provided those figures.

Mr. POLLOCK: That is beside the point. The point is that, although during last financial year £664,500 10s. 4d. was spent on relief work, £621,000 of that money was provided by the washerwomen and everybody else in the community, who had to be taxed to provide this fund which was spent on these different departments. This fund was made available to the following departments:—

Main Roads Commission;
Main Roads Commission (Local Authorities);
Main Roads Commission (Intermittent Relief);
Commissioner for Railways;
Provisional Forestry Board;
Department of Public Works;
Department of Public Lands;
Department of Agriculture and Stock;
Land Administration Board;
Department of Mines;
Irrigation and Water Supply Commission;
Brisbane City Council;
Brisbane City Council (Intermittent Relief);
Brisbane City Council (Water and Sewerage Department);
Toowoomba City Council.

That proves our statement that the Government have no unemployed relief scheme at all. They have merely dismissed from public works men who were in receipt of award rates of wages, and have engaged the same men at unemployment relief rates. The Auditor-General says in his report—

“The collections since inception (August, 1930) to 30th June, 1931, amount to £702,640 4s. 1d., received as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Treasury Department ...	90,113	4	8
Commissioner of Taxes ...	237,596	4	5
Director of Labour ...	324,930	15	0
	£702,640	4	1

“The expenditure from the fund for the financial year 1930-31 amounted to £664,500 10s. 4d., and for the financial year 1929-30, £35,611 17s. 6d., making the total expenditure since inception £700,112 7s. 10d. The credit balance of the fund at 30th June, 1931, was £2,527 16s. 3d.”

[*Mr. Pollock.*

The Auditor-General points out how the amounts were allocated to the departments referred to.

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY: In doing additional work.

Mr. POLLOCK: That is nonsense. The work was ordinarily carried out from loan fund by the payment of award rates. It is stupid for the Minister to argue that the unemployment relief scheme provided work for unemployed men who had been on rations. These men had been working in Labour's time at award rates.

The PREMIER (Hon. A. E. Moore, *Aubigny*) [10.9]: I desire to reply to the statement of the Leader of the Opposition that the Government have no plan. One would think that the unemployed position was created for the first time after the present Government came into power. The Labour Government had no plan. They complained that the Bruce-Page Government, who were then in power, would not raise a tariff wall sufficiently high, and that, if a Federal Labour Government were returned, the tariff would be made high enough to enable all people to be engaged in secondary industries. The Federal Labour Government were returned to power, and they did raise a high tariff wall; but we have 500,000 unemployed in Australia to-day, or about 230,000 more than when that Government took office.

Mr. POLLOCK: Are you going to blame them for your unemployment problem?

The PREMIER: I am not. When hon. members opposite were in power they blamed the Bruce-Page Government for the unemployment position. The Leader of the Opposition talked about a stabilised exchange encouraging trade, and said that an unbalanced exchange was detrimental to the public. What exactly does this adverse rate of exchange mean? Is it not a burden of 50 per cent. over and above the prohibitive tariff that hon. members opposite have been crying out for all the time? They have frequently said: “If we could only get the tariff high enough to cause industries to start in Australia unemployment would disappear.” That was the plan that hon. members opposite talked about when on this side of the Chamber. Then they come here now and say we have no plan! The plan of the Opposition is the nationalisation of banks and the printing of notes. At the present time Queensland has not had occasion to issue one single Treasury bill. We have carried on and met our obligations, and to-day have a cash balance. More than that, we have been able to reduce our national indebtedness and make our interest payments during the two and a-half years we have been in power. No other Government in Australia can say the same thing. We also have the highest basic wage in Australia, and the lowest cost of living.

There is just one other statement to which I wish to refer, and that is the statement made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—

“The Governments of which hon. members are the lineal descendants left a debt of £63,000,000 to the Labour Government, with only £170,246 to pay it. We were borrowing in most instances to pay the interest on the debt the party

opposite left us. The only way out of it now is to wipe off about half the capital cost, as the Government have done with the railways."

Just what does the hon. member mean by wiping out half the debt? By wiping off half the indebtedness on the railways the Government have merely put the amount wiped off into another fund, and interest must still be paid upon it. The hon. member does not mean that. The only way he can wipe off half of the capital indebtedness of the State is by repudiating it. The total public debt on 30th June, 1915, according to the Auditor-General's report, page 23, was £56,869,046, while the public debt on 30th June, 1929, according to the Auditor-General's report, page 13, was £113,002,049, being an increase of £56,133,003. That was the amount by which the public debt increased during the Labour Government's term of office.

Mr. MULLAN: What about taking off £11,000,000 on account of the Government Savings Bank and the £5,000,000 we left in the loan fund?

The PREMIER: I am quite content to take the figures from the Auditor-General's reports, as that official is more competent to give the facts to the people than the late Attorney-General.

The hon. member for Herbert also pointed out that much of the previous Government's indebtedness was squandered. It is not a question of the amount of loan money spent. It would not matter if £100,000,000 was spent in fourteen years. What does matter is how the money is spent. If it is spent on works which will return interest and redemption to the State, then the more money spent the better. But what was the position in that respect? The interest on the public debt in 1914-15 was £1,975,531, but the receipts from loan works were £1,707,729, so that the interest charge on revenue was only £257,852. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition says that the Labour Government had to borrow £4,000,000 per annum in order to pay interest on the debt that was left by the previous Government. All they had to do was to find £276,852 for interest. The trouble is that they made such a mess of what was left them, and they borrowed so extensively, that we had to find £2,265,000 per annum out of revenue to meet interest payments.

Mr. POLLOCK: You are the only Premier I know of who can turn three big deficits into a surplus.

The PREMIER: I am quite prepared to admit that there have been deficits; but I say also that, if the accounts had been kept properly during the term of office of the Labour Government, there would have been a deficit every year. If they had not taken money out of trust funds and put it into revenue in order to boost it up, and then built up the trust funds from the loan fund, they would have had a deficit every year.

Mr. POLLOCK: That is what your Treasurer is doing.

The PREMIER: The funds which have been taken out of the trust funds by the Treasurer are surplus assets which have accumulated.

Mr. POLLOCK: Do you call the money in the State Advances Corporation Fund surplus assets?

The PREMIER: It represents repayments that have accumulated.

Mr. MULLAN: During our time.

The PREMIER: Yes, and for years before that. What the hon. member has to remember is that the procedure I have mentioned was adopted by the Labour Government when dealing with State enterprises. They were practically putting loan money into revenue each year, and showing a surplus when in reality there was a deficit.

I am prepared to admit that there is no definite method by which the present position can be remedied. The only possible way is by increasing our exports and getting prices overseas that will enable us to meet our obligations. In addition, we can keep down expenses.

Mr. FOLEY: What have you been doing in that direction?

The PREMIER: The hon. member found fault with the action which the Government took in connection with one of the biggest industries in the State—

Mr. FOLEY: It is only a bagatelle.

The PREMIER: It is something which has been appreciated by large sections of the population.

Mr. POLLOCK: What is that?

The PREMIER: Getting a reduction in interest, reducing rents, and providing conditions whereby these people can carry on satisfactorily.

Mr. POLLOCK: If you call that a way out, you are an optimist.

The PREMIER: I do not call it a way out; I say that it is an assistance. No one can say that it is a way out when the price of wool goes down to 5d. or 6d. per lb.

Mr. POLLOCK: You helped eight big pastoralists at the expense of eighty selectors.

The PREMIER: That may be very useful for propaganda, but the actual position is that we have done something which has been of immense value to a large section. I remind the hon. member for Gregory that he brought a deputation to me from Winton. Those men stated that they had communicated with every other selectors' organisation in Queensland, and asked them to support their request; but that every one had refused because they were satisfied with what the Government had done.

Mr. POLLOCK: That is not true.

The PREMIER: It is true.

Mr. POLLOCK: I say emphatically it is not true, and you are manufacturing it.

The PREMIER: Mr. Spooner told me they had communicated with the other selectors' associations and asked them to support the Winton request.

Mr. POLLOCK: Mr. Spooner told us he had sent a request to most of the other grazing associations in North Queensland.

Hon. A. E. Moore.]

The PREMIER: He did not say North Queensland; he said Queensland. All I know is that I have resolutions passed by other associations stating that they did not desire to be associated with the request because they were gratified with the Government's attempt to ease the position.

Mr. POLLOCK: You can find out the extent of their gratification if you send along a candidate at the next election.

The PREMIER: The fact of a candidate standing for a Western seat does not count for very much.

The hon. member talked about the Government having no plan, yet the Opposition have no plan themselves. The Federal Government put their plan into operation, and still the plan has resulted in 250,000 more unemployed in Australia than when they came into power.

Mr. POLLOCK: Tell us about the unemployment relief scheme.

The PREMIER: We are giving extra work, and we are providing the unemployed with assistance in the most economical way. I think the system is better than Mr. Lang's, who gives them two weeks on and two weeks off. I do not think that is much improvement or much of an increase in wages. If the Secretary for Public Works had more money, he would be able to give further work. We are giving relief all over Queensland, and the men getting it are doing useful work. It cannot be 100 per cent. efficient when you have to take everybody who comes along; but it is more efficient than was expected, and the men are giving some return to the people who provide the money.

Mr. BRUCE: You are not paying the basic wage—that is the trouble.

The PREMIER: Queensland has the highest basic wage, and our relief pay is 10 per cent. higher than the basic wage in South Australia. We are faced with a difficult financial position, the same as every other country in the world, and we have to meet that position. We cannot borrow money, and we cannot pay the basic wage on relief work. The Loan Council has tried to borrow money to provide employment, and has failed. The position in Australia was that for years 100,000 men were kept going on loan works; and, when the loan money was stopped, those 100,000 men had to be absorbed in other directions. That is the great difficulty. Naturally the position is difficult.

Mr. FOLEY: What is your policy?

The PREMIER: A policy of plain common sense—a policy of gradually getting the cost of production down so that our goods can compete on the markets of the world, and getting the cost of living reduced so that the lower wages can purchase as much as higher wages did. If the cost of living came down and the people got as much out of their wages as they did when wages were five times as high, there would be no hardship to the community. The whole question is what can be purchased with the amount received. Empire preference and an Empire currency will probably be the solution of our present difficulties.

[Hon. A. E. Moore.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Wynnum*) [10.30]: Before the question is put, I would like to reply to one or two remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition. He spoke about an unbalanced Budget. He must be aware that the Loan Council has practically provided for every State in the Commonwealth having a debit at the end of the financial year. I would remind the hon. member of what his Government did when things were good in Queensland, and when it was not difficult to finance. For eight years they did not balance their Budget; yet all that time they were increasing taxation and putting burdens upon the people which they could not carry, and which we are having to assist the people in carrying to-day.

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

COMMITTEE.

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

Clauses 1 to 4, both inclusive, and preamble agreed to.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill, without amendment.

THIRD READING.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Wynnum*): I beg to move—

"That the Bill be now read a third time."

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at 10.55 p.m.