

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 25 AUGUST 1932

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

THURSDAY, 25 AUGUST, 1932.

Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. G. Pollock, *Gregory*) took the chair at 10.30 a.m.

QUESTIONS.

CONDITIONS IN RE ADVANCES TO TOBACCO GROWERS BY AGRICULTURAL BANK.

Mr. KENNY (*Cook*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

“1. What amount of capital or financial backing is an applicant for a tobacco farm required to have?”

“2. When can the selector of a tobacco farm apply to the Agricultural Bank for financial assistance; what is the maximum amount that may be granted; and over what period is it payable?”

“3. What are the personal residence and improvement conditions to be fulfilled before the granting of a loan?”

“4. What title must the selector possess as a condition of the granting of a loan?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*) replied—

“1. Not less than £300 cash; or backing to that amount.

“2. Applications for advances will be considered after the selector has been in possession for twelve months and when he has proved his bona fides and erected the necessary flue-curing barns and bulk shed. The maximum amount that will be advanced is £400. The term of the advance is seven years, interest only being paid during the first six months, and then interest and redemption over the balance of the term.

“3. The selector must personally reside on and work the property.

“4. The selector must have had issued to him the license to occupy the selection.”

GOVERNMENT SUBSIDY TO ORGANISATIONS UNDERTAKING RELIEF AND SOCIAL SERVICES.

Mr. R. M. KING (*Logan*), for Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*), asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

“In connection with the suggestion made by the Minister for Public Works at a meeting of the Balmoral branch of the R.S.S.I.L.A. that the Government should subsidise the relief and social work carried out by that association, and the press report of 3rd instant that a statement was being prepared of the association's expenditure under those headings during the past three years with a view to asking the Government for a £1 for £1 subsidy, is it expected that such subsidies will be made available to this association and to other bodies undertaking social services of a similar nature; if so, when?”

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. M. P. Hynes, *Townsville*) replied—

“The whole question of Government subsidies to bodies undertaking relief and social services of a similar nature is at present under review.”

REBATE IN RAILWAY FREIGHTS GRANTED TO MOUNT ISA COMPANY.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*) asked the Minister for Transport—

"1. What rebate in rail freights has been granted to the Mount Isa Company?"

"2. At what metal values have the normal price levels been fixed for the purpose of securing a refund of such rebates?"

"3. If the rebates have been fixed on a sliding scale, what are the particulars of the rebates in relation to metal values?"

"4. Is it the opinion of the Government that the present wool and meat prices are normal, subnormal, or abnormal?"

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon. J. Dash, *Mundingburra*) replied—

"1 to 3. I would refer the hon. member to the speech delivered by the Hon. the Premier in the House yesterday.

"4. The present depressed prices of wool, meat, and other primary products are regretted by no one more sincerely than the present Government. The hon. member should know that the whole question of the wool industry is the subject of an inquiry by a committee appointed by the Commonwealth Government."

MOUNT ISA COMPANY'S GUARANTEE TO GOVERNMENT IN RESPECT OF DUCHESS-MOUNT ISA RAILWAY.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*) asked the Minister for Transport—

"1. What amounts have become payable to the Government and in respect of which years under the guarantee clauses of the agreement with the Mount Isa Company in connection with the construction of the Duchess-Mount Isa Railway?"

"2. What payments have been made by the company, and dates of payment, respectively?"

"3. What is the total amount due under the guarantee that has been waived by the present Government?"

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon. J. Dash, *Mundingburra*) replied—

"1 to 3. I would refer the hon. member to the speech delivered by the Hon. the Premier in the House yesterday."

ACTION OF POLICE IN CONNECTION WITH RIOT AT CAIRNS.

Mr. BRAND (*Isis*) asked the Home Secretary—

"Referring to his remarks relative to the action of the police in connection with the recent riot at Cairns, has he formulated any definite rule dealing with members of the police force resorting to violence in the carrying out of their duties, under which he will decide whether or not they are to be classed as basher gangs; if so, what rule?"

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) replied—

"I would ask the hon. gentleman to put the question in an intelligent form."

RATES PAYABLE IN RESPECT OF STATE CHILDREN.

Mr. R. M. KING (*Logan*) asked the Home Secretary—

"What are the rates payable in respect of State children (a) in May, 1932, (b) in August, 1932?"

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. E. M. Hanlon, *Ithaca*) replied—

"(a) In May, 1932—

Southern District.

Up to 2 years and from 12 to 14 years, 9s. per week.

From 2 to 12 years, 8s. 6d. per week.
Central and Northern Districts.

Children of all ages to 14 years, 9s. per week.

"(b) In August, 1932—

Southern District.

Up to 2 years and from 12 to 14 years, 9s. per week.

From 2 to 12 years, 8s. 6d. per week.
Central and Northern District.

Children of all ages to 14 years, 9s. per week.

"Provision is being made in the Estimates, which will be submitted to Parliament in due course, to again increase the rate of payment."

INVESTIGATION OF PRICE FIXING COMMISSIONER INTO PRICES OF WHEAT, FLOUR, AND BREAD.

Mr. R. M. KING (*Logan*) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

"Have the investigations of the Price Fixing Commissioner into the prices of wheat, flour, and bread been completed? If so, will he make a copy of the Commissioner's report available to hon. members?"

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. M. P. Hynes, *Townsville*) replied—

"The investigations have not yet been completed."

HOURS AND PAY OF INTERMITTENT RELIEF WORKERS.

Mr. SIZER (*Sandgate*) asked the Secretary for Labour and Industry—

"1. Is the statement correct that relief workers on loan rotational relief work, previously engaged for twelve weeks at £3 per week, have been or are proposed to be reduced to six or eight weeks at the basic wage rates? Will he make a full statement on the position of rotational relief work policy?"

"2. Does the Government propose to continue providing intermittent relief workers with an extra day per quarter, for the purpose of buying boots and extra clothing?"

The SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND INDUSTRY (Hon. M. P. Hynes, *Townsville*) replied—

"1. The desire of the Government is to distribute the benefits of the loan works amongst the greatest possible number, and with that end in view the rotation period for married relief workers in the metropolitan area has been fixed at eight weeks.

"2. The policy of the Government in this respect will be disclosed in due course. The hon. member, however, is not unaware of the fact that the additional assistance already granted by the present Government to relief workers is very much greater than that provided by the previous Government."

TIMBER RESERVE 700, GYMPIE DISTRICT.

Mr. TOZER (*Gympie*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

"With respect to Timber Reserve 700, Gympie district—

1. What amount of money has been spent on this timber reserve, and from what sources paid?
2. What profits have been made?
3. What is the present annual income and expenditure?
4. What assets have the Forestry Department on this reserve, and the value of same?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*) replied—

"1 to 4. This matter is at present being investigated by a committee consisting of representatives of the Lands, Mines, and Forestry Departments, and the information sought will be available when the committee's report is to hand."

PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION IN RE COMMODITIES CAPABLE OF PRODUCTION IN QUEENSLAND.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowoong*), for Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*), asked the Premier—

"From the fact that 'back to the land' is being impressed in a more keen, determined, and general way than for many years, and because such fits in with settlement and the call to produce, will the Government give consideration to, and cause to be furnished to the various centres of the State, advice as to commodities that could be profitably produced both for home and export consumption?"

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*) replied—

"Yes."

SUGGESTED EXPENDITURE FROM COMMONWEALTH LOAN AT IPSWICH RAILWAY WORKSHOPS.

Mr. NIMMO (*Oxley*) asked the Minister for Transport—

"Seeing that the Queensland Government has raised £940,000, will he have portion of that money expended at the railway workshops, Ipswich, in order to bring back to work those men who were put off when loan funds were not available?"

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (Hon. J. Dash, *Mundingburra*) replied—

"The hon. member evidently does not understand the position. The staff at Ipswich was not reduced because of no loan funds being available, but owing to the slump in traffic rendering additional rolling-stock unnecessary. A similar position exists at the present time. The hon. member can rest assured that no opportunity will be lost to increase the work at Ipswich when the business warrants it."

PAPERS.

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

Report by the Land Administration Board under "The Closer Settlement Acts, 1906 to 1931."

The following papers were laid on the table:—

Regulations under—

"The Land Acts, 1910 to 1931," dated 17th March, 1932.

"The Land Acts Amendment Act of 1931," dated 17th March, 1932.

Orders in Council under "The Grazing Districts Improvement Act of 1930," dated 10th December, 1931; 14th January, 1932; 11th February, 1932; 25th February, 1932; 21st April, 1932; 28th April, 1932; 21st July, 1932.

OPERATION OF NEW STANDING ORDER, No. 240A.

Mr. SPEAKER: In pursuance of new Standing Order, No. 240A, agreed to by the House on 23rd August, the Notices of Motion under the heading "Government Business" are purely formal.

PRICKLY-PEAR LAND AND FORESTRY ADMINISTRATION BILL.

INITIATION.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. P. Pease, *Herbert*): 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 constitute the Land Administration Board to be the Prickly-pear Land Commission for the purposes of the Prickly-pear Land Acts, and to be the Forestry Board for the purposes of the State Forests and National Parks Acts; to amend such Acts and 'The Land Acts Amendment Act of 1931' in certain particulars; and for other purposes."

Question put and passed.

BRANDS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, *Barcoo*): 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 amend 'The Brands Acts, 1915 and 1916,' in certain particulars."

Question put and passed.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE—SECOND ALLOTTED DAY.

Mr. LLEWELYN (*Toowoomba*) [10.45 a.m.]: I desire first of all to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your attainment to the very high office of Speaker of this Assembly, and to express the hope that your health will permit you to carry out your duties. (Hear, hear!) It is usual to offer

Mr. Llewelyn.]

congratulations to the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply; and I extend my congratulations to my colleagues who have introduced the motion before the House, and also to the other new members who have so far contributed to the debate. I would further like to extend my sincere congratulations to the hon. member for Kennedy on his very fine effort yesterday afternoon.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LLEWELYN: I sincerely hope that he and his co-members on that side of the House will stand four-square with the Premier and the Government of Queensland in regard to the sugar industry.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: They always have done.

Mr. MAHER: They have never done anything else.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There must be no interruption.

Mr. LLEWELYN: There are many proposals in the Governor's Speech that are worthy of the commendation of members of the Assembly, but I propose this morning to lay stress on some of the sins of omission and commission of the late Government. During the election campaign and in some of the speeches this session the question of wheat has been mentioned. The late Government deserve the strongest condemnation for their action following upon the completion of the wheat agreement, and for having placed the Wheat Board and the wheat growers in an absolutely false position. It is incumbent upon me to deal with the wheat business from the inception of the agreement entered into in 1929 with the aid of the Moore Government which had just then attained office. This agreement, which received the blessing of the late Government, contained a vital clause guaranteeing the grower a certain amount per bushel for his wheat. Through the statements made by members of the Wheat Board, in Toowoomba, and by the members of the late Cabinet, the wheatgrowers were given to understand that they would receive 4s. per bushel for their wheat for a period of three years. During the 1929-30 season wheat prices fluctuated from 5s. 8d. to 3s. 6d. per bushel, and these favourable prices enabled the growers to receive the guaranteed price of 4s. per bushel during that year; but during the 1930-31 season the anxiety of the growers developed. The agreement provided that the Queensland wheatgrower was to receive 1d. per bushel in advance of wheat prices at Darling Harbour. During the 1930-31 season prices fell to such an alarming extent as to cause the gravest anxiety to all interests. The Wheat Board and the millers were bound by the agreement; but the Commonwealth Bank declined to advance more than 2s. 1d. per bushel, despite the fact that the Moore Government were prepared to guarantee the full amount. Those engaged in wheat production were faced with absolute ruin. Their anxiety can be well understood when it is remembered that, on the basis of the guarantee of 4s. per bushel, they had contracted to purchase headers, tractors, farming machinery, and the necessary fuel required for their operations, the latter item involving a fairly considerable sum of money. Quite a number of farmers on the Darling Downs disposed of their dairy herds with the intention of embarking exclusively upon wheat pro-

duction. Other wheat farmers acquired additional areas of land, all in anticipation of being paid 4s. per bushel for their product. These primary producers had been definitely promised 4s. per bushel for their product, but that promise was not fulfilled.

Mr. EDWARDS: What did they receive eventually?

Mr. LLEWELYN: I shall deal with that aspect in a moment. One can quite understand the agitation that animated the minds of the growers. They held a meeting in Toowoomba, and elected a number of representatives to wait upon the then Premier, the Hon. A. E. Moore, to place the position before him in the hope of securing some redress. This was the first occasion since the inception of the wheat pool that the growers had found it necessary to take independent action in the protection of their interests. The late Premier informed the deputation that the Government were not legally bound to pay 4s. per bushel as the first advance on the wheat crop; but, as the growers had been led to believe that the agreement was binding on the Government, he was exploring an avenue which he hoped would bring about some relief.

It was at this stage that the provisions of the famous Sugar Acquisition Act were extended to flour. It is interesting to note in passing that the Sugar Acquisition Act was passed by the Ryan Labour Government. At that time there were representatives on the Opposition benches, supposed to be representing the interests of the man on the land, who were bitter in their opposition to this Act. Yet this Act was the salvation of the wheatgrowers in their time of necessity.

Mr. MAHER: Then how is it that the wheatgrowers support our representatives?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LLEWELYN: That is one thing I cannot understand. When the Moore Government acquired all stocks of flour and wheat under the Sugar Acquisition Act they fixed the price of flour from £12 10s. to £15 per ton according to the various districts of the State. They then instructed the Commissioner of Prices to fix the price of bread. This price was fixed at 5½d. per 2-lb. loaf. The adjustment in the price of wheat was decided upon at a conference of millers presided over by the ex-Secretary for Agriculture, the hon. member for Cooroora. I have in my possession a copy of the agreement that was arrived at between the millers and the Wheat Board. When the Premier was Leader of the Opposition, he made strenuous endeavours to obtain a copy of this document; but, for reasons best known to the late Government, they would not table it in this House. There are many things of interest in the agreement; but I merely wish to draw the attention of hon. members to one clause which confers on the millers the power to fix their own price for flour. It reads—

“In the event of the arrangements of the Queensland Government proving ineffective for the obtaining of the Queensland market for flour and meal made by the Queensland mills at the prices set out in Schedule A hereto, and in consequence the miller shall deem it necessary to reduce his selling prices below those set out in the said schedule in order to combat the importation of flour from Southern States, then (unless

[Mr. Llewelyn.]

such reduction is on account of a Government regulation) he shall call a conference of all the Queensland millers who are parties to similar agreements, to be presided over by the Minister for Agriculture or his nominee, and shall invite to such conference the chairman and manager of the Wheat Board.

* * *

“Recognising that the point at issue, viz., the fixing of selling price of flour, is entirely the province of the miller whose business necessitates his obtaining the flour trade in order to absorb his quota of the wheat, it is agreed that the voting at such conference shall be confined to the millers, and the decision shall be arrived at by a majority vote of the millers present in person or by proxy, and the miller concerned shall be bound by and shall carry out the decision of such conference.”

It will be seen that this clause gives the millers power to charge just what they think fit for flour. The result of the extension of the provisions of this statute was that the wheatgrowers received 3s. 11d. per bushel for fair average quality wheat. When the proclamation was issued extending the Sugar Acquisition Act to flour, it became necessary to make certain adjustments. The millers held certain stocks of both wheat and flour. This wheat had been purchased at an average price of 2s. 8d. per bushel, yet the flour gristed from this wheat was sold at the increased price. I understand there was an anomaly in the adjustment of the stocks. That anomaly has created considerable confusion. A figure of £9,000 has been mentioned. That there was some grave irregularity—something which should not have happened—is beyond doubt. I understand that reference to this anomaly in the adjustment of stocks by the millers has already been made by the Secretary for Agriculture. An investigation was held by the Audit Office, revealing a shortage paid to the Price Fixing Commissioner of approximately £7,000. My submission is that the £7,000 rightly belongs to the wheatgrowers. That is a serious statement to make, and, because of the gravity of the statement, I desire to say that there were some millers who did not avail themselves of the opportunity to rob and to cheat the wheatgrowers, as has been done.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member for Toowoomba in order in saying that certain people robbed the wheatgrowers?

Mr. SPEAKER: I did not hear the hon. member's statement.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member said that the wheatgrowers had been robbed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. I am sure I can trust the hon. member for Toowoomba to repeat what he said.

Mr. LLEWELYN: I say definitely that a shortage of £7,000 was revealed by the investigation into the adjustment that was made. I contend that that money belongs to the wheatgrowers. Certain millers did not avail themselves of the opportunity of robbing and cheating the wheatgrowers, as was done by others. That is my statement.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member may proceed. He must take the responsibility for his statement.

At 11.2 a.m.,

Mr. MAHER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to draw your attention to the state of the House.

Quorum formed.

Mr. LLEWELYN: The anomalies creating the unsatisfactory position were actually made by the ineptitude of the Wheat Board, which did not protect the wheatgrowers against all possibilities. At the time the agreement was made the Wheat Board did not protect the grower. Moreover, hon. members opposite were not conscious of their responsibility to the man on the land. Yesterday the hon. member for Wynnum chided me for not speaking during the debate on the Appropriation Bill, seeing that I represented a constituency whose interests are largely agricultural. My answer to the hon. gentleman is that, if the hon. members of his party had been alive to their responsibilities, I would not be making certain assertions this morning. If they were as keenly alive to the interests of the people they are supposed to represent as they are to the interests of the city capitalist, then the man on the land would be much better off for their representation. In March last a conference was held in Toowoomba of various wards of the Local Producers' Association, at which the chairman, Mr. P. McNee, of Kingsthorpe, as reported in the Toowoomba "Chronicle," made this startling announcement:—

“Mr. McNee said that the Warwick Farmers' Milling Co., Ltd., had made a net profit of 51½ per cent. on their paid-up capital during the 1930-31 season.”

Mr. McNee contended, and rightly so, that the rake-off was far too great, and that the grower and consumer were not receiving a fair deal. It is interesting to note that in 1926, when bread was sold at 5½d. per 2-lb. loaf, the net amount received by the grower of wheat was 6s. 3½d. per bushel. At the annual meeting of the Wheat Board held three or four weeks ago in Toowoomba the question of the price of bread was raised, and Mr. Flynn, of Clifton, told the chairman, Mr. Hoskin, that, when bread was 5½d. per lb., the wheatgrowers received 6s. 3½d. per bushel for their wheat, yet in Clifton at the present time bread is 5½d. per 2-lb. loaf and the growers are only receiving 3s. 11d. per bushel for their wheat, a difference in favour of the miller of 2s. 4½d. per bushel. Needless to say, the chairman evaded answering the question, merely stating that the price of bread was not the concern of the Wheat Board. I submit that Mr. Hoskin has always evinced sympathy for the miller. Why, I cannot understand, because Mr. Hoskin is a wheat-grower himself; yet he has hitherto shown a disregard for the interests of the growers and a disregard for the interests of the consumer. Bread is the staff of life. When we know that workers on intermittent relief work are being exploited in this way, it does not redound to the credit of any of the parties concerned, and particularly to the credit of those supporting the late Government. It may be that subscription to the Nationalist Party funds is a consideration. I understand that at least one big miller in Brisbane is one of the most generous subscribers to the Nationalist Party. Business and other men in Toowoomba and Brisbane say that this agreement is most lopsided, and they cannot understand how

Mr. Llewelyn.]

it was ever evolved by those concerned. After the agreement was ratified, the fear was expressed that the millers would grist a small quantity of wheat when the price was high and grist a greater quantity when the price was more favourable. This is borne out by the fact that for the season 1929-30 the Wheat Board made claims on the millers for a sum of £40,000. The board has not been able to get this sum, but one milling company was unfortunate and paid £700. In this regard again I would like to say that the same two companies that I previously mentioned—the Defiance Milling Company and Messrs. Gillespie Brothers—are the two firms that in every detail have honourably acquitted their obligations. In view of the particulars that I have pointed out, have I not shown a definite weakness in the agreement, proving that the board was not competent to protect the wheat-growers whose interests it was supposed to represent? It may be that it was anxious to see the end of the compulsory pooling system. In these days of suspicion and intrigue one is warranted in assuming that it may be something even more serious. The "Producers' Review" of November last had this caustic comment—

"It is beyond human apprehension that a body of honest men showing a modicum of intelligence should, in a headlong and irrevocable way, act as the Wheat Board members have done in their agreement with the Queensland millers."

Again, it says—

"Are the wheatgrowers of the State to be treated as nonentities—or as suckling babes devoid of intelligence?"

In the same issue of the "Review," Mr. H. Keefer, who, as most hon. members are aware, was president of the board for some time, wrote—

"Not for one moment should any blame be attached to the millers. They are a body of keen business men, and, if in making the deal which has been made they have done exceedingly well for themselves, that is simply the growers' misfortune."

In the interests of the farmers living in the vicinity of Toowoomba, I would like to ask why it is that part of the 1931-32 crop, which fell short of local requirements by approximately 2,000,000 bushels is still in the sheds, not paid for by the millers, and open to the ravages of mice and weevils, while large importations have been and are being made from New South Wales. The small Queensland-grown crop for the season in question should have been gristed and paid for at the end of May last.

Now I come to an anomaly in the price of flour; and on this point I am looking for information from the Minister concerned. I view it as anomalous that the price of flour in Toowoomba, where we have wheat grown round our doorsteps, and where we have big milling equipment, should be £13 2s. per ton, or £1 10s. more than in Brisbane, 5s. per ton more than is paid in Townsville, and 2s. 6d. per ton more than is paid in Cairns. That is an anomaly that should not be allowed to continue. The Government that I have the honour to support will, I am confident, in this as in all other issues, be guided by the principles of equity and justice. I am sure that they

will see that the wheatgrowers and every other section get a fair deal, and that they will not allow one section, such as the millers, to receive more than their reasonable share. So much for the question of wheat for the present.

Another matter to which I would like to refer is the proposed amendment of the Elections Act. I am glad that this appears in the list of measures in the Governor's Speech. I am glad that we are once more to have the one month's qualification, which I think is a reasonable thing; and I am also glad that we are to have the popular franchise in our local authorities elections. At the last election there were anomalies. The conduct of the election in some respects left very much to be desired. Gangs of intermittent relief workers were sent out from Toowoomba to Millmerran and Chinchilla on the eve of the election; and the facilities for voting at those places were not by any means adequate, with the result that, had the men not been determined, had they not insisted on their right to vote and overcome obstacles in the way, the chances are that they would have been discouraged and gone away without voting. The presiding officer, however, at the close of the day's proceedings allowed them to record their votes by writing the names of the candidates for whom they desired to vote on pieces of paper. That is something that should not be allowed to occur at any election.

Another anomaly in the conduct of the election was that a number of persons had been allowed to believe that their names were on the roll, whereas in fact they did not appear there. Their claims had been put in in good faith and accepted, but their names were not registered, nor were they permitted to vote. We had instances of people living in the same house for ten to twenty years, of whom the husband was on the Toowoomba roll and the wife was on the East Toowoomba roll. This led to a considerable amount of confusion and to a good deal of irritation and unpleasantness.

I am very glad that the Government have decided to adopt preference to unionists as part of their policy. I believe that the adoption of this principle, particularly during the present period of economic pressure, will afford considerable protection to those workers who engage for work under the contract system. There are a considerable number of relief workers who are anxious to secure work of a somewhat more permanent nature, provided that the profits to be derived or the wages to be earned are an improvement upon relief work conditions. I know of one case where a relief worker stated that he wished to give up relief work with a view to embarking upon work on a different basis. He tendered for a job, and remarked that the person who could beat him for it would earn all that he got. However, he was successful in securing the work. He was a married man with a wife, and was entitled to 17s. per week under the relief scheme. He had a son who was married and had a family of two children, they being entitled to 22s. 6d. per week, or a total of 39s. 6d. per week for that home under the relief scheme. That made a total of two men, two women, and two children in a home earning 39s. 6d. per week. He secured a contract, and, although he commenced work long before 8 o'clock in the morning and worked long

[Mr. Llewelyn.]

after 5 o'clock in the evening, he did not make as much as he would have received under the relief scheme.

Mr. MAHER: That was his own lookout.

Mr. LEWELYN: I am condemning the system that permits such a thing, hoping that preference to unionists will cure it. That is one of its many virtues.

Mr. MAHER: How will preference to unionists cure it?

Mr. LEWELYN: It will prevent a worker from working right round the clock. A contractor must observe the awards. The principle of preference to unionists will be imposed for his protection.

These and all other matters will receive the consideration of the Government, who will merit the confidence manifested in them by the electors on 11th June last.

Mr. NICKLIN (*Murrumba*) [11.21 a.m.]: I desire to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, upon your accession to your present high office, and express the hope that you will shortly be restored to your former state of good health. I feel sure that your ability will permit you to occupy your present high position with dignity and with justice to all concerned.

If one can judge from the speeches delivered by hon. members opposite during this debate, one is convinced that Government members have very little of a constructive nature to offer. They have confined their attention to an abuse of the administration of the Moore Government instead of putting forth their best efforts to assist to revitalise and to rehabilitate Queensland. On examining the record of the Labour Government during the fourteen years when they previously occupied the Treasury benches, we find very little of which they might be proud. They occupied the Treasury benches in this State during a time when revenue was particularly buoyant, and when primary products realised boom prices; yet, despite those favourable circumstances, during that time they doubled the public debt of the State by borrowing the huge sum of £56,000,000. During that short period they borrowed as much as was necessary to carry on the affairs of this State since separation from New South Wales in 1859. They were responsible for increasing the interest on the public debt from £1,975,581 to £5,170,948. The losses on the railways were increased from £1,963 in 1914-15 to £1,603,900 in 1928-29; taxation was increased by over 400 per cent., and almost £4,500,000 was lost in carrying out socialistic experiments in connection with State enterprises. This is the record of a party which adopts as its slogan, "Finance is the test of government."

Compare that record with the record of the Moore Government. The Moore Government came into possession of the Treasury benches of this State at its most critical time in history. They were faced with unprecedented drops in revenue amounting to nearly £1,000,000 per annum. During their term of office they had to contend with the adverse exchange rate ruling overseas. Notwithstanding these handicaps, the Moore Government have a record better than any other Government holding office in Australia at the same time as they did. They faced the situation which arose most courageously. They did what no other Government in Australia were able to do, and that is, to keep taxation at a moderate level, and not increase

the public debt. They also assisted unemployment on the basis of a cash payment for work done. They did the correct thing for Queensland, and helped largely towards keeping this State the premier State of the Commonwealth by maintaining public confidence, and increasing the investment of capital.

During the progress of this debate very little has been said by hon. members occupying the Government benches in regard to the primary producers. Notwithstanding that the primary producers produce 71 per cent. of the total wealth of this State, hon. members opposite hardly deem them worthy of mention. The world-wide fall in values of our primary products, combined with the adverse seasonal conditions now ruling throughout Queensland, is giving the primary producers an extremely hard knock. The Government do not fully realise the difficulties with which the primary producers are faced. The hon. members for *Nanango* and *Wide Bay* yesterday gave indications of the conditions operating in numerous districts throughout Queensland; and I fear that the Government are going to be faced with a considerable reduction in the revenue expected from our primary producing industries this year. Notwithstanding this fact, one of the first administrative acts of the Government was to impose further hardships on the man on the land by increasing railway fares and freights. This action has caused a strong condemnation of the Government in the country districts, more especially as the people in the city area have been excluded from this increase. This is not equitable. In one town in my electorate fares have been increased by 20 per cent. Residents in that township now pay 9d. more for a second class single fare than they did previously. Is it a fair thing that the producers who are undoubtedly the backbone of the State should be penalised like this? If the 44-hour week is reintroduced into the railways, the producers will be further penalised by a further increase in fares and freights; yet we have heard Government members in the course of this debate proclaiming that the legislation of the Government will be for the benefit of all classes of the community!

One measure which the Government propose to bring down is a Local Authorities Act Amendment Act, which will provide for adult franchise in local government elections. This is but another example of how legislation will seriously affect the producers. Why should a man who does not contribute towards the cost of local government be entitled to a vote at local government elections? Adult franchise will make it possible for men without any interest in the local government area concerned to get control of the local authority. They will not contribute 1d. to the revenue of that local authority, yet they will be able to dictate its policy. At the present time local authority rates are a burden which many producers are finding it impossible to carry; yet this amending Act will undoubtedly increase the rates levied and add to that burden.

I am very pleased to notice that among the Bills which the Government propose to bring down this session is the Metropolitan Milk Supply Bill. The suppliers of milk to the metropolitan area have been looking for this type of legislation for some considerable time; and I hope that the provisions of

Mr. Nicklin.]

the Bill will enable the milk producers to control its operations. The milk suppliers to the metropolis have been undoubtedly penalised by the distributing interests at the cost of the people in the metropolitan area, and have not been receiving anything like a fair return for their product. I am hoping that one of the provisions of this Bill will enable the distribution of milk in the metropolitan area to be controlled, thus eliminating the present spectacle of half-a-dozen milk carts travelling up and down one street which could be supplied by one distributor. If improved methods of distribution are adopted, and the producers are given control under the Bill, they will receive what they are fully entitled to for their product.

I was also pleased to see reference made in the Governor's Speech to the work of the Main Roads Commission. We all realise the excellent work performed by this commission throughout Queensland. I am glad to see that the Government intend to pursue a vigorous policy of road construction. There is no greater need in Queensland at the present time than a vigorous road construction policy, which will give to the producers facilities for the speedy and cheap transport of their products.

Reference is also made in the speech to the expenditure of a further sum of money on the Pacific highway. This may be desirable; but the full benefit of this highway will not be felt in Queensland until more adequate road provision is made north of the capital of the State. Instead of encouraging people to come into Queensland, the Pacific highway, terminating as it does at Brisbane, is more likely to take people away from this State to the Southern States. If a highway similar to that is constructed north of Brisbane to our North Coast resorts, it will be the means of encouraging tourist traffic to Queensland. Tourists will then enjoy resorts which are second to none in Australia.

That good roads help to develop a district is evident in the rapid progress of the South Coast tourist resorts since the construction of the Pacific highway.

Another example is Redcliffe, with its 5 miles of beautiful beaches, enjoyed by thousands of people at week-ends and on holidays. Just north of Redcliffe there are two other resorts which have been more or less neglected owing to the inadequacy of the road communication. I refer to Deception Bay and Beechmere, both of which are within easy motoring distance of the metropolis. At present work is being proceeded with on the main road to Beechmere; and, when the work is finished, no doubt these resorts will benefit as the result of tourist traffic in the same manner as Redcliffe has done.

Further north we have Caloundra, Maroochydore, Alexandra Headlands, and Mooloolabah, resorts which are second to none in Queensland. Close by is Buderim Mountain, an object of beauty, where the seaside air and the tropical scenery can be fully enjoyed. Behind this district again we have the Blackall Range, aptly called the Blue Mountains of Queensland. On that range are the two well-known tourist resorts of Maleny and Montville. The scene from these resorts has been said by those competent to judge as being unsurpassed in Australia. Unfortunately, owing to the

lack of road communication between those districts and the metropolis, as much tourist traffic is not being directed there as there should be. I trust the Government will see that adequate road communication is made to serve these and other centres further north. The tourist traffic has been neglected in the past. Tourists spend a considerable amount of money in the districts which they visit; and tourist traffic should be encouraged by providing decent road access to the resorts with which nature has so abundantly favoured us.

Many industries have been mentioned in this debate; but so far no reference has been made to the fruitgrowing industry, which is of particular importance to Queensland, and should receive every encouragement from the Government of the day. During the regime of the late Government a wise move was made in establishing an entomological station at Nambour. The establishment of that station, which permitted the officers of the department concerned to reside in the district, has considerably enhanced the value of their work. I trust that, when finances permit, the present Government will extend the operations of that station. At present those officers are being considerably handicapped because no land is provided on which they may conduct experiments; and they are compelled to depend on the good will of growers to carry out many experiments. This is not desirable, and I urge the Government to remove the anomaly.

By contributions made by the industry and by assistance given by the late Government, the pineapple-growers of Queensland were able to secure the service of a plant pathologist to deal with diseases in the pineapple industry. Since his appointment that gentleman has accomplished valuable work for the industry. His headquarters are in Brisbane, many miles away from pineapple-growing centres. Growers are of the opinion that the plant pathologist should be attached to the entomological station at Nambour, where he would be in the midst of the pineapple industry, and would be able to do even more valuable work than he is doing at present.

I would also like to draw attention to the deplorable state of the Queensland citrus industry at the present time largely owing to the very low prices operating this year. There are many factors which have contributed towards bringing that industry into its present state. First we have had a bad season this year, and, secondly, very severe competition from the Southern citrus growers. It is not desirable that we should prevent the importation of citrus fruit from the South, because a considerable amount of our citrus fruit goes to the Southern States; but much of this fruit coming from the South, and from New South Wales in particular, is from areas that have been heavily subsidised by the Governments of the States concerned; and it is only a fair thing that the citrus industry in this State should receive a little encouragement and assistance from the Government to enable it to meet this competition. In Queensland there is a great necessity for the rehabilitation of the citrus orchards and the elimination of a number of unsuitable varieties which are at present being grown. Our competitors in the Southern States are concentrating on the growing of two varieties of oranges and one variety of mandarin.

[Mr. Nicklin.

We in Queensland should do something in that direction, and concentrate on the growing of three or four varieties of oranges and two or three varieties of mandarins, and so assist the development of the packing-shed system. One way in which the Government can assist is by providing an expert who will be able to instruct the growers of this State, and assist them in the working over of their unsuitable and unprofitable trees.

We had the pleasure of listening to the hon. member for Kennedy yesterday in a very able exposition of the sugar industry. I feel that this Assembly has benefited considerably by the advent of that hon. member, and the sugar industry is to be congratulated on having such an able advocate in this Chamber. The sugar industry must not be made a political issue. Both parties should combine towards seeing that the sugar industry is maintained for Queensland; and, speaking on behalf of the fruitgrowers, a considerable number of whom reside in my constituency, I can say that they are right behind the sugar-growers in their fight to maintain the stability of their industry. They realise how much the sugar industry has assisted them. Just recently the pineapple industry in this State has been assisted by a grant of £20,000 by the Sugar Industry Concession Committee to allow them to can the winter crop and export it oversea. If it had not been for this assistance, thousands of cases of pineapples would have been rotting on the fields at the present time, or have been marketed at a price which would not have paid the cost of transport to market.

I trust that the Government will continue and extend the operations of the Beerwah Forestry Station. In that area large areas of hitherto useless land are being converted into a forest by the growing of exotic pines. This land is of no value whatsoever except for reforestation purposes, and I would like to congratulate the Forestry officers in charge of that station. They have done wonderfully well since they have been there. They have had to contend with many difficulties, one being the unsuitable labour which they have had to use. Men on relief work have been sent to that station, and, unfortunately, they were not suitable for the work they had to do. However, the work of the officers has been an eye-opener, and the work of that station should be extended so that in the future we shall have 20,000 acres or thereabouts of pine forests on land which hitherto was useless.

At 11.39 a.m.,

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Hanson, *Buranda*), relieved Mr. Speaker in the chair.

Mr. NICKLIN: That is the class of land on which reforestation should be carried out instead of tying up rich lands which are of value for dairying and fruitgrowing purposes.

I also note that reference is made in the Governor's Speech to the effort which is being made to establish tobacco-growing at Beerburrun. I sincerely trust that that experiment will be a success. I know that it is a sincere endeavour on the part of the Secretary for Agriculture to attempt to relieve the present unemployment by putting men on the land; and it is to be sincerely hoped that he will not meet with the difficulties which the previous Government had

to cope with there, but that that settlement will get every opportunity.

A matter to which immediate attention must be given is road access. Large numbers of children are going to be taken to that district, and they will be more or less cut off from ambulance and medical attendance unless road access is provided. At the present time the road to Caboolture, the nearest centre to Beerburrun, is trafficable in dry weather; but after a few inches of rain it is absolutely impassable. It is not fair that numbers of women and children should be isolated from the outside world; and I hope that, in conjunction with any scheme to establish tobacco-growing in that district, provision will be made for decent road access between those two centres.

In conclusion, I endorse the remarks of the hon. member for Kennedy in which he appealed for the co-operation of all hon. members in assisting to restore Queensland once again to a proper state of prosperity. We in this Chamber are all Queenslanders, if not by birth, then by adoption; and it should be our endeavour to do everything possible to make and keep Queensland the premier State of the Commonwealth.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. KEOGH (*Merthyr*) [11.44 a.m.]: First of all, I desire to congratulate the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply on the very eloquent speeches with which they initiated this debate. During its progress I have heard many remarks by hon. members opposite that the promises of the Premier have not been fulfilled. Hon. members who make such remarks apparently do not realise that it is impossible even for a Labour Party to put its promises into effect within five minutes of getting into power. But amongst the things that have been done by the Labour Party since they came into the House we must commend them for the action they have taken to relieve the distress throughout the State of Queensland. Undoubtedly, while much remains to be done, a great deal has already been done to relieve the difficult conditions caused to such a considerable extent by hon. members on the other side of the House when they were in office. I remember, and a good many of us have good reason to remember, the promises made in 1929 by the ex-Premier, Mr. Moore, and other hon. members who were trying to reach the Treasury benches. They promised amongst other things that they would not interfere with the conditions or the wages of the workers. When they got into power, the very first thing they did was to show that they were obsessed with the idea that the only remedy for the state of things in Queensland was to attack the workers and take from them everything that had been given to them by the Labour Government during the previous fourteen years. The legislation they reviewed was the legislation that had been passed in the interests of the workers of this State. Every worker realises that full well; and evidently he bore it in mind when the opportunity came to return this Government to power. The first thing the late Government did was to reduce the workers to the depths of starvation. They took them away from the Industrial Court, they reduced their wages, they took from them every condition it was possible to take from them. Then, when

Mr. Keogh.]

they became alarmed at the resulting condition of the State, they introduced the system of the unemployment relief tax to try to get back to the position they had destroyed. I think the hon. member for Sandgate at that time must have been reading books about Russia, and decided to create what is known as the "Subsistence Army." I understand that in Russia the workers are provided with clothing and food, and that they must perform work in return; but here in Queensland the late Government compelled the workers to work for less than they could eat and made no provision for clothing. They reduced the workers to a state of penury—a condition that should not be tolerated in this State. I candidly confess surprise at some of the speeches delivered by hon. members opposite. I expected to hear something much above the ordinary; but I have been compelled to listen only to criticism of the present Government for their administration during the few months they have been in office. The policy of the late Government brought about not only a state of desolation for the workers, but it also reduced business activity to stagnation. Throughout the city of Brisbane and many other towns in Queensland business places have been closed. Walk down the streets of Brisbane to-day, and we see shop after shop with closed doors as a result of the policy of the late Government. Employees were thrown upon the unemployment market, and, instead of unemployment being relieved, it was thereby accentuated. The late Government were responsible for increasing the number of unemployed by three to one in comparison with the number of unemployed when they took office. Not only were Government employees dismissed, but public works of a developmental and permanent nature were carried out by relief labour under the guise of endeavouring to help the unemployed. During the last year the Moore Government were in power they expended a sum of £353,000 in carrying out developmental and permanent works after the permanent employees had been dismissed from permanent employment. In instituting the relief tax, or, in other words, in creating Mr. Sizer's subsistence army, they encouraged the local authorities to dismiss their permanent employees and to have the work carried out under relief conditions. The policy of the late Government at all times tended to increase unemployment, and thereby to bring about a state of deflation and poor business activity. Many shops have been closed in the city of Brisbane and in other towns because of the deflation policy that was pursued. The late Government were imbued with the idea that all would be right if they could get back on the worker. They failed to realise that, by interfering with the purchasing power of the masses, they were injuring the prospects of business people, who to a very large extent depend on the workers for the creation of their profits. Hon. members opposite, who stand for the representation of those whose aim it is to make profits, compelled business people to go down the hill, and they have gone well down the hill, too, because of their policy. So far down the hill were business people compelled to go that the Labour Government have been returned to power. The late Secretary for Labour and Industry also utilised the relief workers to carry out private work—work that could very well be carried out by those concerned and paid for at the basic wage

[Mr. Keogh.

rate. I refer to the work carried out on the Hamilton golf links.

Mr. SIZER: That was done by the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. KEOGH: Those gentlemen who require a little recreation before breakfast could very well subscribe the necessary money required to provide grounds for their personal recreation.

Mr. SIZER: It was not done by the department.

Mr. KEOGH: The late Secretary for Labour and Industry, who instituted the system of a relief tax, decided to improve these grounds so that the gentlemen concerned might have a little bit of exercise before breakfast thereon.

Mr. SIZER: That is untrue.

Mr. KEOGH: I have no objection to men doing relief work or to the hon. member for Sandgate creating his subsistence army; but I do object to men being put on to work at public expense when no return is shown to the public for that work.

Mr. MAXWELL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Sandgate has already denied the statement made by the hon. member for Merthyr, and it is customary for an hon. member to accept the denial of another hon. member.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member for Merthyr must accept the denial of the hon. member for Sandgate.

Mr. KEOGH: As the hon. member for Sandgate denies that he put relief workers to do work on the Hamilton golf course, I accept his denial.

Mr. SIZER: Get your own Minister to make inquiries.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. KEOGH: If the fact is as the hon. member for Sandgate states, then I accept his denial; but the hon. member for Sandgate cannot deny that men were put on work at the Hamilton golf links at relief rates of wages. I do not care whether those men were put on that work by the hon. member for Sandgate, as Secretary for Labour and Industry in the late Administration, or by the Brisbane City Council.

Mr. SIZER: You should consult your own Minister about the facts.

Mr. KEOGH: The hon. member cannot deny that the men were working on the golf links at relief rates of pay.

I want to point out again that a feeling of insecurity was created throughout Queensland, not only among the workers but with the business people also, owing to the administration of the late Government in pursuing their policy of deflation which meant reducing wages, dismissing permanent employees, and then re-engaging them at relief rates of pay to do the same class of work. This deflation policy caused stagnation and desolation, and on 11th June last the people gave a straightforward verdict on that policy. The Opposition cannot deny that during the period they occupied the Treasury benches unemployment in this State was increased from 7.1 per cent., in 1929, to 13.2 per cent. in the first quarter of 1932. These figures glaringly confront hon. members opposite, and glaringly confronted the people on 11th June last; and the people,

by their votes, attempted to remedy that position by electing a Labour Government.

Mr. RUSSELL: You will have to eat your own words yet.

Mr. KEOGH: Professor Giblin said that for the year 1930-31 unemployment had increased in Queensland by 40 per cent., which percentage was greater than that of any other State in the Commonwealth. We have heard a lot about the position of other States of the Commonwealth; but the figures of Professor Giblin disprove the contention that the position in Queensland was better than other States. The cause of this fact was the policy pursued by the late Government. We know, and I know thoroughly well, that the policy of any Government can either intensify unemployment or allay its evils; but the late Government did nothing to mitigate its evils. On the other hand, they adopted a policy that intensified its evils, and permitted them to trade on unemployment. Not only did they do that, but they assisted their friends also to trade on unemployment by permitting them to get their work done cheaply, such as at the Hamilton golf links.

Mr. SIZER: Which I deny.

Mr. KEOGH: The hon. member for Wynnum in his remarks yesterday referred to the "Reds" on this side of the House. I happen to be one of those sitting on the Government benches. I was elected after a contest in one of the strongest Tory electorates in the State, with a mandate to try to do something for my fellow men, to relieve the desolation caused by the late Government, and thus try to get work and wages for those workers who had neither. If I am a "Red" in attempting to do this for the workers, then I am pleased to be called a "Red." I am sorry that the hon. member for Wynnum is not in his customary seat, because I desired to twit him on some of his remarks.

The late Government made many promises on the election platform; and one of those promises was that those statutes which had been placed on the statute-book by the Labour Government would be upheld. In spite of this promise, they attacked the children of this State, and attacked them severely, too, in the matter of scholarships. They evidently were not satisfied with attacking the workers, because they proceeded to attack the workers' children by reducing the number of scholarships and depriving the workers of the opportunity of sending their children to whatever school they desired. If any worker has a boy or girl capable of attaining a scholarship, then he should have the right to send that boy or girl to any school within the State that he desires without any interference on the part of the Government. That is the liberty of the subject, and we should not use any coercion on any subject of the State as to what school his children should be sent to. I hope that in the near future the Government will repair the damage done by their predecessors in office and give to the youngsters of this State their full rights.

The Apprenticeship Act also came in for attack by the Moore Government. Not only did they deprive apprentices of the opportunity of employment in Government service, but they also amended the Apprenticeship Act so that any employer, when he was going down hill as a result of the deflation

policy of the National Government, could stand down his apprentices for six months or get rid of them altogether if he so desired.

Mr. SIZER: That is not correct.

Mr. KEOGH: The unfortunate apprentices had no alternative but to look for other jobs, or, if they could not get them, await the advent of a more humane Government.

Not satisfied with reducing the number of scholarships, the Moore Government extended their line of attack to the primary schools, and created hardships, particularly on the children of the unemployed. By depriving the school children of the free issue of school requisites the Nationalist Government merely lived up to their record. With no regard for the dignity of the State, the Moore Government deprived the children of something which had been given them by a Labour Government—something to which they were justly entitled.

The allowance paid to State children was another matter that exercised the destructive efforts of the previous Government. I notice that hon. members opposite are particularly active in asking when the present Government will restore the 1s. per week deducted from the allowance to State children. Of course, these hon. members are endeavouring to make political capital. The least they could do would be to give the Government time to correct the wrong which was done by the party of which hon. members opposite are members.

So far as charitable institutions are concerned, the record of the Moore Government, as will be seen from the following figures, is particularly unenviable:—

	1928-29.	1931-32.	Reduction.
	£	£	
Charitable Institutions and Grants ..	77,057	48,637	37 % or £28,420
Hospitals for Insane ..	86,810	69,051	20 % or £17,759
Hospitals and Ambulances	314,352	277,206	£37,146

Mr. PETERSON: We shall see whether your Government will increase the amount.

Mr. KEOGH: My remarks no doubt hurt the hon. member for Fitzroy, who, by the way, ran away from the Normanby electorate in order to retain a seat in this Parliament.

Mr. PETERSON: That is not so.

Mr. KEOGH: But the reductions to which I refer were made when he was Home Secretary. The one cry of the Moore Government was "Balance the Budget"! To try to do that they had to reduce the allowance to children who had lost their breadwinners and the amounts voted for charitable institutions. All they succeeded in doing was to create a larger deficit than had ever before been experienced in Queensland. When all this was going on, hon. members opposite were providing jobs for some of their friends, and putting thousands of pounds into the pockets of some of their friends. It may hurt hon. members to hear this; but so long as I am a member here I shall remind them of their actions, particularly when I recall that the

Mr. Keogh.]

effect of their policy was to create unemployment, destitution, and general depression in business.

In one solitary regard the Moore Government fulfilled a promise made by them. They inquired into the Mungana affair, the merits or demerits of which I do not propose to discuss. Whilst giving credit to the Moore Government for redeeming that promise, I think they were actuated mainly with a desire to provide jobs for some of their friends. We know that Mr. A. D. McGill, chairman of the Nationalist Party, was paid thousands of pounds for his services in that matter, and that the treasurer of the Nationalist Party, a Mr. Hancock, also benefited. Further, a firm of solicitors, Messrs. Fitzgerald and Walsh, were also paid thousands of pounds. The name Walsh is familiar; I fancy that a gentleman of that name was associated with a delegation that was sent from this State to prevent a Labour Government getting loan money overseas. I do not know whether this man has any connection with him or not; but, if he has not, then I am satisfied. I notice also that there was an ex-judge brought up from New South Wales to sit as chairman of that royal commission. Probably they thought they would get a little more from him. His decision was contrary altogether to the decision of the jury that sat on the civil case, which goes to show that he was brought here for some purpose. While all this was going on, I want to remind hon. members on the other side, that children in this State were starving. The gentlemen that I have already mentioned are the president and treasurer of the Nationalist organisation of this State, and the others are very closely connected with the National organisation. They were supplied with thousands of pounds, notwithstanding the fact that our Treasurer at the time—the hon. member for Wynnum—was continually complaining that there was no money in the Treasury to help the unemployed or the farmers in the State. I want hon. members to realise that, while this was going on, they were still paying a fully qualified Crown law staff with public money. If it was necessary to go outside the Crown Law Office for legal help, then there was no necessity to keep the Crown law staff. If the Crown law staff were worth their pay, they were entitled to be put on this case, just as the present Government are doing to-day in putting Crown law officers in charge of the commission into the dairying industry. I am prepared to say without fear of contradiction that the Crown Prosecutor, Mr. Sheehy, who is inquiring into the secret commissions paid in the dairying industry, will not take second place to Mr. A. D. McGill. He is prepared and able to carry out any investigations in this State while he is paid by the Government. The late Government have a good deal to answer for. Already they have been answered and adjudged guilty of throwing public money away to their friends who constitute the Nationalist organisation of this State. I notice also that in connection with the Racing Commission appointed by the late Government the costs amounted to £1,536. I notice also that the amount paid to Mr. A. D. McGill was £878. That is to say, more than half of the total cost of that commission was paid to the chairman of the Nationalist Party of this State. There must be something radically wrong when

[*Mr. Keogh.*

the party will provide crumbs in this way for their political friends. The late Government also remitted to the big pastoralists of this State—I suppose the leading paper supporting the other side, the "Courier," was in it—over £140,000 in super land tax. These things were going on at the same time that the ex-Treasurer was telling the people that there was no money in the Treasury to do anything for the workers or for the primary producers. Yet this money was handed to these friends of the Nationalist Party.

I want to point out to the hon. member for Wynnum, who is now present, that I am one of the "Reds" to whom the hon. member referred yesterday. Hon. members on this side are far more loyal to the King and the country than ever the ex-Treasurer has been. When the fighting was going on, the ex-Treasurer and his family remained at home to rake in the profits of industry while I, among others, went over to do the fighting. If that is "Red," then I am "Red." I wear a blue tie because I do not like to wound hon. members opposite, although I know they were wounded on 11th June last.

I wish to congratulate the Government on their promise to introduce a Development of Unproductive Lands Bill. That is a matter in which I am very keenly interested. We have miles and miles of railway extending into the country, and adjacent to those railways thousands of acres of fertile land which have been left lying idle and have not even been cleared. I do hope that, when this Bill comes before the House, it will be found to be very drastic. I do not wish to see land tied up when people want to use it. We know that on the other side of the world Governments have found it necessary to take land away from people who were merely holding it and not using it and give it to those who wished to use it for pastoral and farming purposes; and I hope that the Bill foreshadowed in the Speech will be drastic enough to provide that the fertile lands of this State will be cultivated in the interests of the people of this State. Not only will it enable food to be produced for the people, but it will also help the railways to pay their way.

I would also like to congratulate the Secretary for Public Lands on the manner in which he is handling the land policy and making Crown lands available. The late Secretary for Public Lands had the idea that it was right to allow private companies to come in and make profits out of the lands of the State, and to create in this country a system of landlordism which has been the curse of older countries. The late Government were prepared to give Crown lands to private companies—not in order that those companies might use them, but in order that they might hand them over to tenant farmers, thus creating the system that has been the curse of other countries. The late Government's system would have created a system of landlordism by allowing private syndicates and companies to take up the lands, only to hand them over to the people of this State to use in order that those syndicates and companies might make a profit in the process. I am very pleased indeed to see that the Secretary for Public Lands has reversed that policy and is holding the lands of this State for the people of the State, encouraging them to take up the lands of their own State, to

which they are justly entitled, direct from the State itself.

I also congratulate the Secretary for Agriculture upon trying to solve the unemployment problem by establishing tobacco-growers on the Beerburum lands, amongst others. The tobacco farmers of this State will do very well, provided they are suitable and take up the land which is at their disposal. Notwithstanding what hon. members on the other side have said, I think that this venture of the Secretary for Agriculture will be a success. At any rate, I hope so, and I look forward to its being another milestone on the road of the Labour Party to prosperity in Queensland.

I am glad to see that the City of Brisbane Act is to be amended. I was a member of the City Council, and I remember what happened three years ago as a result of the policy of the late Government to deprive the people of the city of Brisbane of their right to vote and hand it over to bricks and mortar. I know that at that time three or four votes were recorded in the Merthyr area on behalf of owners, one of whom was living in Vancouver, another one of whom was in Honolulu, and another in Scotland. Nevertheless their votes were duly recorded. Such was the policy of hon. members opposite, who believed in giving votes to land and bricks and mortar rather than to residents. I will give hon. members an instance of how it operated in the Valley and Merthyr electorates. Previously there were 21,000 electors in those areas for the State and Federal elections, but the great majority of them were deprived of their votes, and only 4,000 were allowed to go to the poll. In Coorparoo the numbers on the roll were reduced to 2,500 or 3,000, and only about 2,000 voted. The result was that throughout Brisbane many persons were deprived of their right to vote. That is a scandalous state of affairs, because members of the community who reach the age of twenty-one years, whether they live in boarding-houses or have homes of their own, all contribute directly or indirectly to the rates. Those who do not pay the rates directly but live in boarding-houses or rented houses are paying something to enable other people to pay their rates, so they are entitled to their say in local authority matters just as much as the ratepayers themselves. A number of aliens in the city of Brisbane who were not allowed by law to exercise the franchise in connection with State or Federal elections were permitted to vote at the last Brisbane municipal election. In my area, a Chinaman voted for me—truly Chinaman's luck. Aborigines, Syrians, and others were permitted to vote at the municipal elections owing to the opportunities extended to brick and mortar, whilst natural-born citizens were deprived of the right to a say in their own country. I am very pleased that a Bill is to be introduced to return that right to the people so that they can have a say in their own country.

I sincerely hope that there will also be a redistribution of electoral seats. I shall have something more to say about that matter later on.

I am also very pleased that an Electric Light and Power Act Amendment Bill is to be introduced. I congratulate the Secretary for Public Works on deciding to bring this measure forward. The City Electric Light Company has been able to make huge

profits by heavily burdening the ratepayers of this city for very many years. I hope that the Minister will look into the 1916 and 1927 Orders in Council relating to franchises granted to this company in South Brisbane. These Orders in Council deprived the local authority of the right to supply the necessary electric energy to the people in the area, a right to which the local authority was justly entitled. The City Electric Light Company allowed the trams to remain in the streets of Brisbane for one day until they were able to force the local authority to grant it a satisfactory franchise. When the necessary Bills were being passed in the interests of the company referred to, the solicitors for the South Brisbane City Council received a retainer on behalf of the City Electric Light Company to watch their interests. That speaks for itself.

I am also very pleased to know that an Elections Acts Amendment Bill is to be introduced. Prior to the last redistribution the late Government realised that they had so far committed themselves, and had so far got into disfavour with the public through their legislation, that they attempted to thwart the will of the people by altering the electoral boundaries, hoping thereby to retain control of the Treasury benches. Prior to the last elections the late member for Merthyr, a member of the Nationalist Party, traversed that electorate in company with the chairman of the last Redistribution Commission, who was a public servant. He took that public servant under his wing, and traversed the area. When the hon. member for Bulimba was speaking the other day and made reference to the last redistribution, the hon. member for Cook charged him with offering an insult to the public service. The greatest insult to the public service was the action of the chairman of the last Redistribution Commission in allowing himself to be made a political tool by hon. members opposite.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: Rubbish!

MR. KENNY: Why take advantage of your place in this House to make a charge like that?

MR. KEOGH: Hon. members opposite utilised the services of a member of the Criminal Investigation Branch to canvass the Merthyr electorate in the interests of the Nationalist candidate. They utilised the services of the Criminal Investigation Branch to make a false report upon the allegation that school children were starving. The hon. member for Oxley attacked me the other day without any reason whatever for having dealt with this matter from the public platform. I did make the statement from the public platform that children were starving. I have in my possession a circular sent out by the head teacher of the New Farm State school asking the parents of New Farm to send extra lunch to school with their children for those children whose parents were not in a position to supply them with food. I have that circular in my possession, and I throw that statement back in the teeth of the hon. member for Oxley. I did use that circular on the public platform. I read it from every platform on which I stood. The statement is true; and neither the hon. member for Oxley nor the hon. member for Logan can deny it. The hon. member for Logan did make strenuous attempts to deny it during the election campaign.

Mr. Keogh.]

When the hon. member for Oxley was speaking the other day, he also referred to the fact that there were a number of new members on this side of the Chamber, and he warned the Premier that he would experience trouble through a number of members getting out of control. The Premier has this pleasure: He knows that he and the Deputy Leader of the Government were elected unanimously to their positions by the members of this party. He also knows that during his term of office he will have the unanimous support of hon. members on this side. He also knows that he has not only the confidence of the members on this side but also the confidence of the people of Queensland.

Mr. WILLIAMS (*Port Curtis*) [12.24 p.m.]: Before addressing myself to the question proper, I would like, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to offer you my congratulations on your elevation to the position you hold as Chairman of Committees. At the same time I desire to congratulate Mr. Speaker, who happens to be absent at the moment, on his elevation to the high and honourable position to which he has been elected by this House. I am quite sure that Mr. Speaker and yourself will both discharge the high honours attaching to your offices with credit and distinction to the State, to this House, and also to the party to which you belong—the great Australian Labour Party. As one of the new fry which has been caught in the meshes of the political net for the first time, I must admit I have not had any previous opportunity of judging your ability or fitness for the high position you hold; but, from what I have seen of you since Parliament has been opened, I am sure that you are eminently fitted for the position you have been elected to. I do not intend to give you any trouble at any time, and you will not be called upon to name me more than once during each session. I am sure that it would be deplored if I were to attempt to take that honour from the hon. member for Cook, who appears to be well in the running for it.

At 12.25 p.m.,

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Mr. WILLIAMS: It is not my intention to make a lengthy address. It has been said that brevity is the soul of wit. At the same time, we have to bear in mind that time is the essence of contract just as much as brevity is the soul of wit. When all is said and done, we have come here to do the work of the State, and not waste our time in idle speech. As the representative of the Port Curtis electorate, one of the most important districts in the State, I have come into this Chamber with a definite promise to the people of my electorate and to myself that I will do something for them—that I will work and not talk—because in the past we have had members of Parliament who have worked and talked, while we have had others who have talked without working at all. I want to be in the category of those who talk less and work more. If I am not able to achieve my objective by doing that, I shall not be of any use to the people of Port Curtis, to my party, or to the people of Queensland, and I will get out and make room for somebody who will.

It must have been of considerable relief to the people of this State on 11th June when the reign of the Moore Government

[*Mr. Keogh.*

terminated, and when the people were able to send that Government with its record of broken promises, together with its record of having attempted to bring the workers of this State down to the coolie level, into the cool shades of opposition. The late Government will be known as the Government of the three D's—depression, desolation, and destruction. That title will cling to the members of the late Government for a long period to come. They were the greatest band of pessimists that has ever come forward in the political life of Queensland.

His Excellency, in that very fine Speech which he delivered at the opening of Parliament, announced that the Government intended to grapple still further with the all-important question of unemployment. It is the bugbear of all nations of the world to-day. Hon. members opposite may laugh, smile, or snigger when any reference is made on this side of the House to what the present Government have done and what they intend doing in regard to unemployment. The Premier and his Cabinet, particularly the Secretary for Labour and Industry, will, at the close of their term of office, be able to walk down the streets of the city and the lanes of the country holding up their heads with justifiable pride, and be able truly to repeat that old saying, "Something attempted, something done." We are justifiably proud of what we have done already to relieve the evils of unemployment and of what we intend doing. I am a member of the Agricultural Committee of the Government Party, and I represent a district which is nine-tenths agricultural in its pursuits. Recognising as I do that the basis of all wealth lies in primary production, I am very pleased that it is the intention of the Government to carry out a sound policy of land development and of increasing production from the land, so far as it is possible, by making new areas available for selection. The land in my district, particularly the scrub areas around Many Peaks, Monto, and Watalgan, are highly suited for closer settlement purposes. They are not suited for the purpose for which they are now retained, namely, reforestation. Only a few days ago I returned from an inspection of one of these areas. The people of Port Curtis are hoping to secure a visit from the Secretary for Public Lands with the object of inspecting these reserves and having them opened for settlement.

I am pleased that the Government intend pursuing a policy of active forestry development as well as a timber trade revival. In my own district, particularly around Many Peaks and centres along the Boyne Valley line, the timber industry is practically stagnant. There are teamsters and timber-getters who have not harnessed a horse or yoked a team of bullocks for many years, and who are feeling the pinch in common with the storekeepers and others who stick to these men through thick and thin. The forestry business in the various parts of the State needs some inquiry; and before my term expires I trust that some all-round improvement will be effected in that connection.

The tobacco industry is one which concerns my electorate—an electorate which is practically an agricultural area. It is pleasing that the Government intend to foster the tobacco industry. Leaving Beerburrum out of the question for the moment, there are other

areas in the State that could well be opened up for tobacco-growing. In my own district there are many areas suitable for tobacco-growing, and I hope the Government will make some of that land available.

It is pleasing also to note that the Government are making something worth while of the former stock experiment station at Yeerongpilly. The newly designated Animal Health Station will be an asset to the State.

Like the hon. member for Kennedy, I recognise that primary production is the basis of all wealth; and I am pleased to see the activity that is going to be displayed, and the optimistic note throughout the Governor's Speech with regard to agricultural matters generally.

In the matter of education, I am glad the Government will maintain and extend that fine system, and I speak as an ex-teacher and a parent. Sir Matthew Nathan, when opening a school in the Central-Western district on one occasion, made a remark which is particularly pertinent. He said that a nation was only as powerful as its people were educated. We cannot bestow too many bouquets on the late Government for their interference with the fine educational system left to them by the previous Labour Governments. I may say that in my own electorate educational matters will get my whole-hearted support and sympathy. Gladstone is without a high school or a rural school, but I trust that something will be done to provide a high school for that important centre.

I would like to see the port of Gladstone receive greater recognition than it has in the past. Just why, for instance, Brisbane and Rockhampton get the long haulage rates when those rates are denied to the port of Gladstone is beyond the comprehension of the people of Gladstone. There has always been trouble; but whether it has been due to a lack of political representation or to political influence elsewhere I am not prepared to say. I do urge however, that Gladstone be put on the same basis as the other ports of the State.

I should like the Secretary for Public Lands to visit my electorate, particularly in the Upper Burnett area, to inquire into the water facilities which during the last few years have been very unsatisfactory to the settler. The hon. gentleman might also inspect scrub areas that are not suitable for retention as reforestation blocks, but are highly suited in every way for closer settlement blocks. The plight of certain soldier settlers in my area, at Ubobo, might also receive the hon. gentleman's consideration. We know that he is a most sympathetic Minister; and I am hopeful that he may be able to improve the lot of some of those people whose difficulties have been accentuated by drought conditions.

I am pleased that the Government intend to bring in the following measures:—

- A Mortgagors and Debtors Relief Bill;
- A Contract of Sale and Hire Purchase Agreement Bill;
- A Bureau of Industry Bill;
- A Consolidating Income Tax Bill;
- An Elections Acts Amendment Bill;
- An Arbitration Bill;
- A State Transport Bill;
- A Dairy Produce Act Amendment Bill;
- A Brands Acts Amendment Bill;

- A Metropolitan Milk Supply Bill;
- A Local Authorities Acts Amendment Bill;
- A City of Brisbane Acts Amendment Bill;
- A Hospitals Acts Amendment Bill;
- A Gas Act Amendment Bill;
- An Electric Light and Power Act Amendment Bill;
- A Building Advances Validation Bill;
- A Notification of Births Bill;
- A Land Acts Amendment Bill;
- A Grazing Districts Improvement Act Amendment Bill;
- A Development of Unproductive Lands Bill.

These measures will go a very long way towards rehabilitating Queensland. I should like to compliment the Premier on the activities of the Government to-day. They have instituted a building improvement scheme which will provide practical benefits; they have also restored the scholarship and apprenticeship rights and privileges, and have appointed a royal commission to inquire into the scandals in connection with secret commissions paid in butter factories. In addition, they have instituted a winter relief scheme for farmers, and have made advances to local authorities to enable them to carry on very necessary works of service to the community, with a view to providing work for unemployed. In addition to that, they have improved the conditions relating to single unemployed men who previously had to tramp from centre to centre before getting relief. I should like at this stage to congratulate the Premier, not only on my own behalf but on behalf of the people of my district, many of whom were former supporters of the Nationalist Government. Very many sugar-growers in my district have asked me to express their appreciation of the Premier's stand in regard to the sugar agreement, and have also told me to convey their good will to the Premier. It is quite evident that the people have nothing to be ashamed of in returning a Labour Government to power. I feel sure that in due time the Government will fulfil all their promises to the people made prior to the election on 11th June. May I express the hope that the Premier will see fit to extend the royal commission at present inquiring into the dairying industry so as to include other co-operative concerns. I refer more particularly to the sugar industry. I feel sure that the hon. member for Isis will also have a similar request, because I received from sugar-growers bordering on his area and my area a request that this be done. I hope the Premier will see his way clear to extend the commission so that it can inquire into sugar matters generally. I was also pleased to see that Mr. Scullin so fittingly replied to the hon. member for Aubigny, the Leader of the Opposition, in regard to his remarks in connection with the sugar agreement. The hon. member for Aubigny stated that Mr. Scullin had not ratified the sugar agreement. Mr. Scullin, in his reply, said—

“The agreement which I signed on behalf of the Commonwealth Government was a renewal, with some modifications, of an agreement which had been in force for many years, and at no time was it considered necessary to have it

Mr. Williams.]

ratified by legislation. If ratification by the Commonwealth Parliament were necessary, it would also require ratification by the Queensland Parliament."

He concluded by asking—

"If Mr. Moore really believes what he says, why did he not have the agreement ratified by his own Government?"

Amongst other things the Government might very well consider are the following:—

1. The raising of the minimum for tax-paying purposes to £250.

2. The giving of more opportunity to young men to go on the land, with preference to landless men and boys as far as possible (all things being equal).

3. Market town freight concessions to railway employees, and in some instances the restoration of what is known as the "emergency passes" (especially in the case of sickness).

Even if that privilege were abused in the past by many, it would assist the railway employees, who in many cases have to live long distances from town and cities.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you, Mr. Speaker, and hon. members for the patient hearing they have given me; and I would like to join with other hon. members in expressing the hope that you, sir, will be speedily restored to good health, and will be long spared to hold your high office.

Mr. FUNNELL (*Brisbane*) [12.43 p.m.]: In speaking on the Address in Reply so ably moved by the hon. member for Kelvin Grove and seconded by the hon. member for Bulimba, I should like first to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your elevation to the high position of Speaker of this Assembly. With other hon. members, I trust that you will soon regain your health, and I promise you all the assistance I can possibly give you in making the discharge of your duties easier. I also congratulate the Premier on becoming the occupant of that office in this great State, and members of the Government who have so capably settled down to their tasks as administrative heads of the departments.

With all due respect to our present Governor, Sir Leslie Wilson, I want to take this opportunity of expressing my belief that in times such as those we are experiencing in Queensland—trying times—the late Government would have been wise to appoint a local Governor. By this means a considerable amount of expense would have been saved to the State. I have in mind a man who I believe would ably fill that position from every viewpoint to the satisfaction of the Government and the people of this State. That is our present Acting Governor, the Chief Justice of Queensland, Sir James Blair. I believe that had that policy been pursued we would have had nothing to regret, and this high office would have been filled as efficiently as by our present Governor. It is also the policy of the Labour Party that such positions should be filled by Australians. Had the late Government not made that appointment hurriedly, but waited until after the election, it would have been fair to all interests in this State. Seeing that the elections were to be held in the very near future it would have been sounder policy to leave the appointment to the incoming Government, whether Labour or anti-Labour

[*Mr. Williams.*

During the term of the late Government we had many projects for financing of the State. Shortly after the Moore Government came into power, there was the much talked of Niemeyer Plan, which was adopted by that Government. When it was found that it was of no material assistance to the Government and that some other scheme had to take its place, another much-talked-of scheme, the so-called Premiers' Plan, was adopted. We have heard a lot during the last few years to the effect that the Premiers' Plan was the only means of enabling the State again to balance its Budget. After three years of administration by the Moore Government the Budget was still unbalanced, and so the Premiers' Plan from that viewpoint had failed in this State. The Premiers' Plan was nothing more or less than a poverty policy of deflation, and, notwithstanding the operation of that plan in this State, the deficit of the late Government for the last financial year reached the record figure of £2,750,000.

Mr. SZER: No.

Mr. FUNNELL: That is the greatest deficit ever achieved in the history of Queensland since this State enjoyed responsible government. In addition, the Moore Government accumulated a deficit of nearly £4,000,000 during their term of office of three years. The people were informed during the election campaign that the Premiers' Plan had reached only the halfway mark, and that it was necessary to continue the plan still further. We were also told that by the continued operation of that plan streams of capital would flow into this State. If that was to be the logical result of the operation of the plan, then I can only conclude that the streams must have been dammed up somewhere, because no streams of fresh capital entered Queensland during the operation of the plan. A Premiers' Conference was held after the last election in Queensland, and that conference decided that a modification of the plan was essential. The Premier of Queensland moved an amendment at the conference, which was practically the resolution that was subsequently carried unanimously. This is the resolution that was adopted—

"That this conference affirms its adherence to the Premiers' Plan, and undertakes to meet interest obligations and to continue progressively to reduce budget deficits. That this conference of Premiers affirms its determination to meet all interest obligations, to continue progressively to reduce budget deficits, and to conduct public policy with a view to reviving industry so as to restore normal employment to those of our citizens who have neither work nor wages."

The latter part of the resolution embodies the policy of the Labour Government. We hold that the Budget cannot be balanced in this State unless family budgets are balanced first. The Labour Party placed their views fairly and squarely before the electors of Queensland on the 11th June last, and the electors, after their experience of an anti-Labour Government for three years, decided to return a Labour Government to power. I am perfectly satisfied that the electors of Queensland regretted the votes recorded against the Labour Party in 1929, when they returned an anti-Labour Government. I am also satisfied that the programme submitted

to the people by the Labour Party during the election campaign—one that will be carried out during the next three years—will be the means of inducing the electors to grant the Labour Party a further term of office.

One of the first acts of the Moore-Barnes Government on taking office in 1929 was deliberately to attack the conditions of the industrial working men and women. They moved the machinery at their disposal to take away from these workers all their hard-fought for and won conditions, which they had gained through the many years' term of the previous Labour Government. Not only did the Moore-Barnes Government inaugurate a campaign of wage-slashing and increasing of hours, but they actually withdrew from the rural workers, the pastoral workers, and metalliferous mining workers the protection of the Industrial Court. As a matter of fact 50 per cent. of the industrial working men and women in this State were industrially outlawed. This action was not fair, and was tantamount to a crime. The industrial working men and women are justly entitled to the right to approach the Industrial Court and place their claims before it during the term of office of an anti-Labour Government, just as they possessed that right prior to 1929 during the term of the previous Labour Government. The policy of the Australian Labour Party gives access to the Industrial Court to all workers. This policy has brought about industrial rest and peace in our various industries. Notwithstanding the views placed before Parliament by quite a number of hon. members opposite, the members of the Moore-Barnes Ministry during their term of office adopted a distinctly anti-working-class attitude. The ex-Secretary for Public Works, the hon. member for Logan, at one time held the view that all industrial awards and agreements should be cancelled.

Mr. R. M. KING: I never said anything of the kind.

Mr. FUNNELL: Later, the ex-Attorney-General, Mr. Macgroarty, expressed the view that all Arbitration Court awards and agreements should be ringbarked. The only interpretation that I can place on that phrase is that arbitration court awards and agreements should be abolished altogether, because if ringbarking means anything it means killing. Had the ex-Attorney-General been able to persuade the majority of the members of his party at that time, he would have been successful in getting away with his views. We have also the views of the ex-Premier, who, in addressing the electors from the public platform in Toowoomba, demanded to know who were going to enjoy the 44-hour week which would be restored if Labour were returned to power. He asked, "Is it the parasites in industry?" I have yet to learn that working men and women are parasites. I have never known in Australian history such an insulting term to be used by the leader of any political party. The workers of Queensland showed their resentment at that term by the expression of their feelings at the ballot-box on 11th June last, when they voted the Moore-Barnes Government out of office. I am perfectly satisfied that hon. members opposite will not have the opportunity of sitting on the Government benches of this State for many years to come. That is the opinion I have formed from the views personally expressed

to me by hundreds of industrial working men and women who were deceived by the Moore-Barnes Government during the election campaign in 1929. At all times during their term of office the Moore-Barnes Government failed to show any sympathy to the workers of this State whose conditions were attacked and whose standards of living were lowered. Had that Government been more generous in its treatment of the working men and women of this State, the present position would not be as bad as it is to-day.

The farming community also suffered as the result of the actions of the previous Government. The primary producers found that the prices obtainable on the local markets for their products were particularly low, and in some cases there was no market at all. That was due to the general reduction in the purchasing power of the community. It is well known that the best market for the farming community is the local market. Unfortunately for themselves, the farmers found that, with the advent of the Moore Government, there was a restricted market for their products. Had the Government considered the best interests of all sections, they would have maintained a purchasing power in the community. After all, most workers spend to the full extent of their earnings. They have to do so, because the wages fixed by the industrial tribunal merely enable them to buy the bare necessities of life. With the reduction in wage levels introduced by the previous Government, many workers were unable to buy some products of the farmers which are regarded to some extent as luxuries. Is it any wonder, then, that the farming community, dependent upon reasonable prices for their products, found their position particularly bad as the result of the restricted purchasing power in the local market?

Labour Governments have always stood for a fair deal to all sections of the community. If the same fair deal had been given by the Moore Government, I am satisfied they would have received a more patient and attentive hearing during the recent election campaign. By way of police protection to the members of the last Government at various political meetings which they addressed, considerable expense was incurred to the State. At a later stage I shall take the opportunity of asking questions on that matter. It is beyond me how hon. members opposite, when they were the Government, justified the provision of police protection during the election campaign. Such expenditure was unwarranted, particularly during times of depression. The Labour Party did not make the present position, but inherited it from the Moore Government. I am sure that the majority of the electors also realised that when they voted out that Government. Much has been said by members of the Opposition in reference to the assistance given to the unemployed in this State. When the previous Labour Government went out of office in May, 1929, the total number of unemployed in the State was 11,500. After three years of the administration of the Moore-Barnes Government the total number of unemployed in this State had increased to 40,000. That is proof positive that a Labour Government is the only Government which endeavours to relieve the unemployed position. Had Labour been returned again in 1929, the task of grappling with 11,500 unemployed would

Mr. Funnell.]

have been a simple one; but to-day we have the gigantic task of endeavouring to place in employment something like 40,000 unemployed male and female workers in the State. When the Labour Government took office, the overdraft in the unemployment relief fund was £108,500 and, with 14,000 married men on relief work, it can be readily realised what a task faces the present Government.

What made matters worse was the fact that nothing had been done in regard to granting assistance to single men, who were forced to walk from station to station before getting rations. I know from information received that a great injustice was done by the Moore-Barnes Government to single men. I know one instance where two brothers who were receiving rations were compelled to walk to the Beenleigh police station in order to be in a position to get further rations. One unfortunate boy fell by the wayside. Through being compelled to walk some distance barefooted the stones cut his feet and caused the blood to run. The elder brother carried him on his back the remainder of the way to the police station in order that both might receive rations. The Labour Party do not stand for that sort of thing. The Labour Party at all times hold the view that, when employment cannot be given, at least rations shall be supplied in order that the unemployed worker may live. That is the policy of the present Government; and, on taking office, arrangements along those lines were made by the Secretary for Labour and Industry, so that to-day single men in this State can get rations without leaving the city, instead of having to walk one week to Ipswich, the following week to Beenleigh, and the third week to Caboolture. That is the most humane policy for any Government to adopt.

Mr. MORGAN: The Nationalist Government did that.

Mr. FUNNELL: The total figures of the registered unemployed throughout the State show that 50 per cent. of the unemployed are in the metropolitan area. In addition to that, 7,000 married men and approximately 4,000 single men in Brisbane will benefit by the humanitarian policy initiated by the Labour Government. The task of the Government is a gigantic one; but it is one which the Government thoroughly understand, and are grappling with, and endeavour to solve the position within the next three years. The policy of the Labour Party is not one for this week or this year, but will extend over three years; and it is on that policy that the electors of Queensland put Labour back in power. I am satisfied that the progress made during the last two months prove that in three years the electors will find that the Government's policy in that direction is entirely carried out.

I also give my entire support to the foresight of the Secretary for Labour and Industry in arranging with the Brisbane City Council for the granting of loans totalling £51,000 as a subsidy to the local authority's scheme for electricity and water supply extensions. I understand that £21,000 of the total sum is to be spent in the electricity department, £20,000 in the water supply department, and £10,000 on the reconditioning and covering in the Lang Park sewer, Paddington. The first two works, in addition to giving employment, will give water and

light to our citizens who at present have neither, whilst the other works are of a useful character not only from a reproductive but also from a health point of view, and will be of great benefit to the areas affected.

I want to refer also to the assistance given to the City Council by the Government to enable it to continue its operations under the intermittent relief scheme. This will mean the employment of 7,000 married men and 4,000 single men. The Government have made a grant of £30,000 and a loan of £30,000 to the council for this purpose. We know that the responsibility for unemployment in this State does not rest on the shoulders of the Government alone. The responsibility largely is on the private employers throughout the State, the local authorities, and then the Government. The benefits which the unemployed will receive from these schemes are not confined to the workers, because the business community will reap equal advantage. Quite a number of business firms and industries have so felt the effects of the depression that they have been compelled to reduce the numbers of their employees, simply because the purchasing power of the workers was reduced and the amount of goods purchased previously under a Labour Government was not maintained under the anti-Labour government. I venture to say that during the next three years a great improvement will take place throughout our industries, and that the Government's policy will be the means of placing in employment those who have no work, and that employment in that direction will mean increased employment in other directions.

I congratulate the Government upon their intention to introduce a Mortgage and Debtors Relief Bill. I am satisfied that a statute on those lines will be a powerful means of reducing the unemployment of female workers in this city and throughout the State. I am satisfied, from inquiries made and information received, that quite a number of clothing manufacturers will be able to employ 50 per cent. and 100 per cent. more employees, when they get relief under that measure. A large number of manufacturers have in bond large supplies of raw material which they are anxious to release for manufacture into clothing for juniors, for which I understand there is a good market. I am satisfied that the passage of the measure will provide employment for hundreds of the unfortunate female workers who are to-day unemployed.

The Government also propose to introduce an Electric Light and Power Act Amendment Bill and a Gas Act Amendment Bill. We are all aware that electric light and gas, together with bread, butter, and meat have remained out of the reach of many in this State during the past three years. We are well aware that wages affecting these industries have been reduced, hours increased, and costs generally scaled down. Why are these most necessary commodities still out of the reach of many poor people?

Before concluding I should like to point out that quite a number of the prominent Nationalist Party officials benefited by the holding of the Mungana and Racing Commissions. I do not wish to discuss the merits or demerits of those matters. Suffice it to say that Mr. McGill, Mr. Hancock, Messrs.

[Mr. Funnell.]

Fitzgerald and Walsh, and quite a number of other Nationalist supporters benefited by the appointment of those Commissions.

It is only fitting that I should express my appreciation of those defeated Labour members who sat in opposition during the past three years for their wonderful fight in protecting the Labour laws that had been passed by the Labour Government during their period of office from 1915 to 1929. I feel it my duty to give credit to those stalwarts of the Labour movement for the wonderful fight they put up during the past three years. I desire also to congratulate the Premier and his Cabinet for the masterly manner in which they are endeavouring to grapple with all the problems of State. I feel perfectly satisfied that the affairs of State will be administered sympathetically, and this will be in direct contrast with the actions of the previous Government.

I am pleased to know that it is the intention of the Government to give earnest and serious consideration to the problem of bringing unproductive land into a state of development. I know of my own personal knowledge of large areas of unproductive land in close proximity to the city of Brisbane. I am satisfied that the policy to be pursued by the Government will be the means of permanently settling some hundreds of persons at present unemployed in the various industries.

I also desire to congratulate the Secretary for Mines upon the progressive policy inaugurated by his department. At the present time there are about 4,000 prospectors scattered throughout the various mining fields of the State. In quite a number of cases they are able to win sufficient to provide a reasonable living; and in some cases much better results can be shown. I am also satisfied that, given a reasonable chance, a continuance of this policy will mean further discoveries in this State. Indications point to the fact that within the next three years the production of gold in Queensland will be a record.

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

MR. GODFREY MORGAN (*Murilla*) [2.24 p.m.]: I desire to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, upon your elevation to the high and important office you occupy. I feel sure that, from your long experience in this Parliament, you will do justice to the position, and discharge your duties to the satisfaction of hon. members on both sides of the House. At the same time, I trust that you will not seek to turn this Assembly into a Sunday School. Parliament is a place where the representatives of the people are supposed to give knocks as well as to take them; and, if we have any manhood in us at all, we should be prepared for such circumstances. We should say what we believe to be right and proper in the interests of the State, no matter on which side of the House we may sit.

The hon. member who has just resumed his seat said that the Moore Government were responsible for certain conditions appertaining to the issue of rations to the single men; and, with tears in his eyes, told how one unfortunate individual who was forced to take to the roads, suffered from sore feet and had to be carried the rest of the journey by his brother. The conditions which the

hon. member complained of were in existence during the whole of the fourteen years' term of office of the preceding Labour Government, only in a much more aggravated form. During their term of office single men had to walk from place to place before they received rations valued at 3s. 10d.; but the Moore Government increased that ration allowance to 6s., and gave the recipient an order for food of that value. Therefore, during the regime of the Moore Government the conditions of the single men in this respect were improved by 60 per cent., as compared with the conditions existing under the preceding Labour Government. In view of this fact the remarks of the hon. member carry very little weight.

The hon. member for Brisbane also referred to the fact that 4,000 men were at present engaged in prospecting, a fact which he ascribed to the progressive policy of the Secretary for Mines. I would remind him that practically every one of those men was so engaged during the Moore Government regime. I hope that their labours will be rewarded by the discovery of new gold-fields, which will assist the State out of its difficulties.

I am very pleased that the Ministry has seen fit to disclose to this House the freight concessions which have been granted to the Mount Isa Company. When the Government decided to give the Mount Isa Company certain concessions, a little paragraph appeared in the press conveying that information. When Parliament assembled, I asked a question in order to elicit the extent of those concessions. I was given an evasive reply. Members of the Opposition, whether Labour or Nationalist, resent evasive replies. In matters of that kind I claim, and have always claimed, that the people should have full information on these matters. Matters of this description have no right to be hidden from the people. If the agreement is one that the Government are proud of, or one which they desire should become known, why should there be any necessity for evasive replies? Why were not the people told exactly the conditions under which the Mount Isa Company received relief? Had the information been supplied in response to my question, a lot of unpleasantness would have been avoided. I was forced to take a certain stand in order to obtain this information. The freight rates on the Mount Isa line are, perhaps, the lowest in existence in any State of Australia or in any country in the world. A Bill was put through this House regarding that line, and the concessions were granted by Act of Parliament. The Mount Isa Company undertook that, if that line were built and it did not pay interest on working expenses, it would reimburse the Government to the extent of £13,000 per annum over a period of ten years, but the maximum amount of guarantee payable was not to exceed £130,000. The railway did not pay working expenses, and therefore did not pay interest on the capital cost. Under the terms of the guarantee the company was called upon in 1930 to pay £13,000 in respect of the first year's working. There was still a loss on the working of the line in 1931, and after the company had waited on me by way of deputation, when, as it gave no reason why the agreement entered into should be broken, it was called upon to pay the guarantee of £13,000. I instructed the Commissioner for Railways to collect the amount before the end of the

Mr. Morgan.]

financial year. The company held off until there was a change of Government, and has succeeded in persuading the present Government to relieve it of its obligations in that respect. At the end of the financial year just concluded there was still a loss. We do not know the extent of that loss, but we can assume that the company will be liable for approximately £13,000. The Government have, therefore, relieved the company of £26,000 so far as those two years are concerned. If for the next seven years the Government continue to relieve the company of their responsibility, an amount of £117,000 will be involved.

It has been stated that the Railway Department's auditor is to inquire into the books of the company; but my contention is that the Auditor-General should have been instructed to ascertain whether any waste or extravagance was associated with the management of the company, and what the directors were receiving by way of emolument. We know that the directors of these mining companies receive thousands of pounds per annum, and there may be wilful waste and extravagance in connection with the company's business. If that were the case here, it would be particularly unreasonable for the Mount Isa Company to approach the Government with a request to be relieved of responsibilities which they undertook, merely in order to reduce the cost of production. I admit that the company is employing a large number of men. At the same time it is well to remember that in the initial stages of its operations here the company had an American brought to Australia to see that every penny was spent in America that could possibly be spent there. American timber to the value of thousands of pounds was used to build homes and other buildings at Mount Isa, whilst at the same time our own timber industry was languishing. That is the company for which the Government are prepared to sacrifice a great deal without any investigation whatsoever! Before any agreement was entered into, the Auditor-General should have been asked to go into the matter thoroughly and report to the Government. The matter should have been brought before Parliament, seeing that Parliament was responsible for entering into the first agreement with the company. If it was considered that the interests of the State demanded that the company should receive concessions, Parliament is the authority which should have decided. The Ministry should have been pleased not to accept the responsibility, but to bring the matter before this Parliament with a report from the Auditor-General. If that had been done and the Auditor-General's report had been found satisfactory, Parliament would have sanctioned the agreement, because no one, if he can help it, wishes to do anything that will close up this mine.

Furthermore, although the Government are going to relieve the company of £117,000, there is no suggestion that, in the event of the company making huge profits, it will refund that money to the Government. All it will refund is the amount involved in the rebates on freights. The Railway Department is carrying from and to Mount Isa at a loss. Whilst the company may be called upon to recoup the Government in respect of those rebates, there is no mention of recoupment in regard to the £130,000 guarantee involved in the construction of the Duchess-

Mount Isa line. The company will go scot-free.

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: Your statement is not correct.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: The Premier's letter to the company, which was read yesterday, does not state that the guarantee will be enforced.

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: There is nothing in it to say that the company has been relieved of its responsibility in regard to the guarantee.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: It is stated definitely in regard to railway rebates that the company will repay; but there is nothing in the agreement to say that no matter what the profits may be the company will repay the guarantee it entered into so far as the interest on the capital cost of the construction of the railway is concerned.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: There is nothing to say that the guarantee has been abolished.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: It says—

"This arrangement is subject to the Chief Railway Auditor making an inspection of your company's account."

It should not be left to the Railway Auditor.

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: Don't you think the Railway Auditor is a competent man?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: That is not the question. It is the Auditor-General's business to look after the whole of the State revenue. The Railway Auditor is an insignificant individual compared with the Auditor-General. The Auditor-General cannot be influenced by politicians. It is his duty to look after the interests of the whole State. The Railway Auditor is in a different position altogether, and everybody realises that. I trust that it is not too late for the Government to decide that the Auditor-General should make an investigation of the books of the company.

At the same time it was announced that the freights and fares which were reduced on 1st May, 1932, would be restored by the Labour Government on certain primary products such as wool, livestock, and high-class merchandise, as these reductions had been made by the Moore Government on the eve of an election. I referred to that matter in a previous speech, and do not wish to refer to it again beyond saying that these reductions were withdrawn with the exception of the reduction in fares in the city of Brisbane. I want to know whether the Commissioner recommended that the freight rates prior to 1st May last be restored; and whether, in his recommendation, he stated that the fares in the city should not be altered. I want to know whether the Commissioner took upon his own shoulders the responsibility of recommending to the Government that the reductions in freight on those commodities be restored and that the lower fares in the city should be continued.

I have been accused of reducing freights without consulting the Commissioner. That is a matter of Government policy. I admit that the Cabinet were responsible for reducing freights. I admit that during the fourteen years the Labour Government were in

[Mr. Morgan.]

power there never was any reduction in freights—the alterations were all increases. But during those fourteen years some freights were increased by over 100 per cent. During those years did the Commissioner recommend those increases, or were they imposed by the Government? Then, with regard to the men who went on strike in the North and were reinstated, I want to know whether the Commissioner recommended that those strikers should be reinstated. Will the Minister answer that?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Did the Commissioner recommend the construction of the horse-boxes?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: Whether the Commissioner recommended it or not, the fact is that the six horse-boxes that were constructed are the most payable trucks we have on the railways to-day. If we could construct one hundred similar trucks and find work for them, the railways would soon be paying. I asked the Commissioner to take out the figures after they had been operating a certain time, and the figures showed that no truck was more payable than the horse-boxes. That is my reply to the statement that it was political action, and that we did not consult the Commissioner. The reduction in freights was decided by the Cabinet. We did what we thought was the right and proper thing; as the expenditure in connection with the railways had been considerably reduced. We received an advantage in regard to the reduction of wages and numerous other matters, and we thought it only right to pass on to those who were paying excessive freights a certain amount of the saving, to which they were entitled. To illustrate to hon. members how the Railway Department carries some goods at a loss, such as sugar-cane, coal, and ore, and how, as a result, numerous other things are conveyed on the railways at what might be termed exorbitant rates in order to recoup that loss, let me quote the following figures for 100 miles, which are on much the same basis as for all distances:—

	Per ton per mile.
	d.
Sugar cane (truck loads)	0.83
Raw sugar (truck loads)	1.69
Agricultural produce (truck loads) to ports	1.46
Agricultural produce (truck loads) to other than ports	2.34
Concentrates (Mount Isa), 606 miles, 30s. 4d. per ton	0.68

The last is an exceptionally low rate. There is nothing equal to it anywhere in Australia. Before the Moore Government made the reduction on the freight for wool, it cost, for 500 miles—and it was practically the same for all distances—4.23d. per ton per mile. After we made the reduction, it was 3.27d. per ton per mile, and the figures are almost the same in regard to live stock, so that wool, live stock, and what we know as high-class merchandise, such as groceries, drapery, and wine and spirits, of which the railways carry a considerable quantity, pay exceptionally high freights owing to the fact that the railways are carrying a considerable amount of freight at a loss. When the Government gave the concession to the Mount Isa Company—and we have no complaint about that—they immediately increased the freight on wool to the extent of £25,788.

That meant that they relieved Mount Isa; when they should have collected that £26,000, and, in order to make up the loss—

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: The concession was only £13,000, and you know it.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: The Government have relieved the company to the extent of £13,000, and have stated that they will give favourable consideration for relief from year to year. I have no doubt that they will relieve the company of that amount, but, taking it at £13,000, the freight on wool is increased immediately to the extent of £26,788.

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: You know your party made statements which damaged Mount Isa.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: Absolutely untrue!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: At any rate, we know what happened in regard to Mount Isa. We had a full debate on that question in the House, and it was admitted that numerous members of the late Labour Party received parcels of shares as free gifts two or three days before the Bill was passed. That statement is contained in "Hansard." It was admitted by a member of the Labour Government. Numerous members of the Labour Party received free gifts of parcels of Mount Isa shares a few days before the construction of the Duchess-Mount Isa line was approved by this Parliament.

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: What about the butter industry?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I ask the hon. member for Murilla to address the Chair.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I was drawn off the track by the interjection of the Minister for Transport. No one has a greater experience of the wool industry, and no one did more in the interests of the wool industry than you did yourself, Mr. Speaker, when you sat in opposition. You drew attention to the high costs of production and to the low prices for the wool offered at auction. Here was an industry that was practically down and out, becoming poorer and poorer, and inevitably rushing to a financial crash; yet the Government decided to increase the railway freight on wool, involving the payment of an additional £26,788. The Railway Department is not going to secure that additional amount. I know that already contracts have been let in the North for the conveyance of 10,000 bales of wool to the Gulf to be conveyed to Brisbane by boat. In my own electorate the growers who remained loyal to the Railway Department during my term of office as Secretary for Railways when they could have transported their wool more cheaply by other means now resent the new impost, and have entered into contracts to have their wool conveyed to Brisbane by other means. It would be quite a different matter if wool was realising a reasonable price to-day.

No doubt there was some justification for the action of the Labour Government in increasing the freight rate on wool during the boom period. I have here the figures showing the freight on greasy wool for 100, 200, 300, and 500 miles; but I propose to refer only to the rate in respect of 500 miles. In the year 1914-15, when the Labour Government were returned to office, the freight

Mr. Morgan.]

on greasy wool for a distance of 500 miles was 93s. 4d. per ton; but the Labour Government increased that amount to 176s. 3d. per ton, or an increase of 88.85 per cent. I admit that during that period wool realised as high as 36d. per lb. in the grease, and that the increased railway freights were justified in view of the proportionate increase in railway costs generally; but wool has now fallen in price to the lowest level experienced in the history of Australia, and it is only reasonable that railway freights should decline in a like proportion. The Railway Department has been relieved of working costs to the extent of from £2,000,000 to £3,000,000, and it is only fair that the wool industry should be permitted to participate in the benefit of this reduction. At one time there were 22,000 men on the permanent staff of the Railway Department; but to-day the number reaches only 15,000.

Mr. WATERS: Did you sack the other 7,000?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: No. The Labour Government sacked 4,000 men before we came into power. I was responsible for placing a few of the railwaymen on railway superannuation; but it cannot be said that these men were sacked.

Mr. GAIR: They were forced to go on the superannuation fund.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: They were very pleased to be able to avail themselves of that scheme. The present Government are not game to deprive the railway employees of the benefit of that scheme. During the period that the Moore Government were in power, the freight on wool was reduced from 176s. per ton to 136s. per ton, or a reduction of 40s. per ton for the conveyance of greasy wool a distance of 500 miles. That reduction was not at all adequate. The industry deserved a greater reduction, which would have been provided had the Moore Government remained in power.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You were the most extravagant Secretary for Railways Queensland ever had.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I was the most economical Minister. During my occupancy of the position of Secretary for Railways I discovered that an agreement had been entered into between the Provisional Forestry Board and the Australian Workers' Union for the supply of railway sleepers. When I assumed control, under that agreement sleepers cost the department £26 5s. or £26 10s. per 100, and I was able to reduce that cost to £12 or £15 per 100.

Mr. FOLEY: You made slaves of the timber-getters.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I also found that the Government Printer was robbing the department in the matter of printing supplies. I called for tenders for the supply of printing; and, as a result, I was able to enter into an agreement with the Government Printer and thereby save an enormous amount of money for the department. I challenge contradiction of my statement that I was the most economical Minister that has ever presided over the Railway Department.

Again, I instituted a policy whereby the Railway Department was to pay for all supplies or concessions, and to be paid for any service that it rendered to any other depart-

ment. I found in connection with the issue of free passes, not in any way pertaining to the railway workers, but to members of Parliament, their wives, and others, that the department was losing revenue amounting approximately to £15,000 per annum. As a result of my representations to the Government, the department is now credited with the value of any free pass which is issued. This arrangement benefited the department by £15,000. With the exception of the passes issued to railway men, the cost of the passes used by persons using the railways is now charged to the department which issues them.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: You issued them, then got them back, and cancelled them.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I am sorry to say that is an absolute lie.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Murilla knows that he is not in order in accusing the Secretary for Mines of lying.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I ask that the Secretary for Mines be made to withdraw that statement. I challenge him to prove it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Will the hon. member withdraw?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: Yes, I withdraw, but I think—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I would point out to the Secretary for Mines that no Minister will be permitted to upset the discipline of debate. I insist that they, like other hon. members, must sit and listen to the speeches and not interrupt.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I would be surprised to hear that I issued six free passes on the railways. Whenever an application was made to me for a free pass, whether it was by a blind person or otherwise, I immediately sent the application to the Premier, and forced him to take the responsibility of issuing the pass. If the Premier, the Home Secretary, or the Secretary for Labour and Industry issued a pass, then the Railway Department was paid by the department which issued the pass. I looked at the matter from a revenue point of view, and forced the department responsible for the issue of the pass to accept the responsibility of the cost.

Mr. FOLEY: What did you save on special trains?

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: I saved an enormous amount. During my three years' administration of the department I saved £4,000,000 as compared with the 1928-29 period. As a result of my administration, during the first year of office of the late Government a saving of £750,000 was effected. In the following year the saving was £1,250,000, and in the third year £200,000.

Mr. LARCOMBE: Yet your deficits were larger.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: During the period when the hon. member for Rockhampton presided over the Railway Department his revenue increased by several millions, whereas the revenue during my period of administration decreased. The hon. member for Rockhampton showed losses on the working of the department during his administration up to £2,000,000 per annum. The Railway Department

[Mr. Morgan.]

showed losses aggregating £20,000,000 in the fourteen years' regime of Labour, which were the most prosperous years in the history of Queensland. When I took over the control of the department, the railway systems the world over, including Canada, which had previously showed profits of millions of pounds, were showing losses.

Mr. LARCOMBE: They did not show profits.

Mr. GODFREY MORGAN: During the last three years the Canadian railways have shown losses of £10,000,000. The losses on the Queensland railways during the past three years were less than during the prosperous periods which Queensland had passed through when Labour was in office. Whilst Victoria and other Southern States showed profits during the period that the hon. member for Rockhampton was Secretary for Railways, these States did not show as good a financial position as the Queensland railways did during my occupancy of office. The position of the Queensland railways improved enormously during the regime of the last Government. The freight on cattle per "K" wagon for a distance of 500 miles was 291s. in 1914-15, which was increased to 490s. 3d. in 1928-29. We reduced that to 409s. For an "N" van of sheep travelling 500 miles the freight had increased from 295s. in 1914-15 to 622s. 6d. in 1928-29. We reduced that freight to 466s. 6d.—a reduction of 156s.

We also made reductions in the freights on store cattle and sheep. I want to make it clear that, although I am no longer in charge of the railways, I am still the champion of the railways, and I shall champion the use of the railways against all other forms of transport. By reducing freights on store cattle and sheep we increased railway traffic considerably. The moment the freights were increased again there was a diminution. I know of one case in my own district where 500 cattle were ready to be moved by rail from Miles to a destination in New South Wales, but the trucks for those cattle were not ordered when the freights were increased. Increasing freights does not mean increasing the revenue; and that is a point that I was continually urging on the Commissioner for Railways. Other forms of transport are encouraged when freights are increased; and it is safe to say that thousands of sheep and cattle would have travelled by rail had increased freights not operated. The revenue would have improved and railway employees would have benefited. After all, the railway employee has as much right to be considered as any other employee.

The concession which has been granted to the Mount Isa Company should not have been a charge on the Railway Department; it should have been a charge on the consolidated revenue. The Labour Government introduced a good system when they provided that, in respect of rebates granted on the conveyance of fodder for starving stock, the loss should be made good to the Railway Department from the consolidated revenue. Similarly with the Mount Isa concession. The users of the railways should not be saddled with the expenditure, nor should the railway employees be asked to bear this burden. During our period the Railway Department was subsidising the Chillagoe smelters to the extent of £40,000 to £50,000 per year by way of reduced railway freights. It may be quite proper to subsidise indus-

tries when they are employing people; but the amount of such subsidy should not be a charge on a particular department but on the State as a whole, so that everybody may contribute.

Question—"That the Address in Reply be adopted"—put and passed.

SUPPLY.

CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEE.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay) [3.6 p.m.]: I beg to move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the Supply to be granted to His Majesty."

Question put and passed.

WAYS AND MEANS.

CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEE.

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay) [3.7 p.m.]: I beg to move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to His Majesty."

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at 3.8 p.m.