

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 21 AUGUST 1941**

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1940-41, which ended on 30 June last. Presumably, the hon. member intended to refer to the current financial year—1941-42—for which year Loan Council approvals were as follow:—(i.) (a) £2,128,000, (b) £2,878,000; (ii.) and (iii.) the total borrowing programme for 1941-42 in respect of semi-governmental and local authorities was determined at £994,000; the allocation of this sum as between the various authorities is now under consideration; (iv.) £3,122,000.”

#### CONVERSION OF AMERICAN LOAN.

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Murrumba) asked the Treasurer—

“Will he supply information as to the prospects of conversion of the first American loan and the approximate terms?”

**The TREASURER** (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) replied—

“This matter is under consideration by the Loan Council, and it is not considered advisable to disclose any details at the present moment. Full particulars can appropriately be given in the Budget Speech.”

### THURSDAY, 21 AUGUST, 1941.

**Mr. SPEAKER** (Hon. E. J. Hanson, Buranda) took the chair at 10.30 a.m.

#### QUESTIONS.

##### FINANCES OF STORY BRIDGE.

**Mr. NIMMO** (Oxley) asked the Premier—

“Will he kindly give the following particulars in regard to the Story Bridge, for 1940-41:—(a) Capital cost; (b) interest on capital cost; (c) gross receipts; (d) net revenue, including working expenses and maintenance?”

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

“(a) The capital cost has not been finalised, as certain claims are under discussion with the contractors, but will probably be about £1,620,000. This includes land resumptions. The estimated capital cost was £1,637,000; (b) interest payment made during 1940-41, £59,550; (c) £24,748; (d) working expenses and general maintenance amounted to £3,962, leaving a net revenue of £20,786.”

##### QUEENSLAND LOANS, 1940-41.

**Mr. NIMMO** (Oxley) asked the Treasurer—

“At the last meeting of the Loan Council, what approval was given to—(a) borrowings, and (b) loan expenditures in 1940-41—(i.) by the State Government, (ii.) by the Brisbane City Council, (iii.) by other authorities, and (iv.) Queensland total?”

**The TREASURER** (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) replied—

“The last Loan Council meeting did not deal with programmes for the financial year

##### LABOUR SHORTAGE IN PRIMARY INDUSTRIES.

**Mr. EDWARDS** (Nanango) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“In view of the extreme shortage of labour in many primary industries, will he kindly advise what action the Government is taking towards meeting this problem?”

**The TREASURER** (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer), for the **SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE AND STOCK** (Hon. F. W. Bulcock, Barcoo), replied—

“Shortage of labour in primary industries being due to enlistments for military service and the diversion of labour to other war activities has received the attention of my Government, and the views of the Government were recently verbally conveyed by the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture and Stock to the Commonwealth Rural Industries Committee which, it is understood, was created to deal with the problem.”

##### FREE HOME TRAVEL FOR DEFENCE FORCES.

**Mr. MACDONALD** (Stanley), for **Mr. CLAYTON** (Wide Bay), asked the Minister for Transport—

“1. Has the Government given consideration to providing free home travel once a month to all members of the Defence Forces whether enlisted for service overseas or in Australia as is the case in Victoria?”

“2. If so, with what result?”

“3. If not, will he give this matter consideration with a view to bringing Queensland into line with the other States?”

**The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT**  
(Hon. J. Lacombe, Rockhampton) replied—

“1, 2, and 3. Yes. The Queensland Government grants free passes once a month to members of the Defence Forces to enable them to visit their homes; also other rail concessions.”

**REGISTRATION FEES ON MOTOR VEHICLES;  
PURCHASE OF GAS-PRODUCER UNITS.**

**Mr. MULLER** (Fassifern) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

“1. What decision, if any, has been reached in regard to (a) quarterly payments of registration fees on motor vehicles, and (b) reduced fees on account of petrol rationing?”

“2. Has consideration been given to the sale of gas-producer units under a system of time payment in order to encourage the use of charcoal in place of petrol? If so, with what result?”

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS**  
(Hon. H. A. Bruce, The Tableland) replied—

“1. These matters are at present under consideration.

“2. The sale of gas-producer units is not a matter for Government action. However, the Government is giving every assistance to makers of gas producers. It has set up technical and other committees to test units and to supply information on producer gas, and has issued several informative bulletins on the subject. It has also undertaken extensive investigation in the production of charcoal and into the organisation of charcoal supplies, and is undertaking experimental operations on vehicles fitted with producer-gas units.”

**SOMERSET DAM WORKS.**

**Mr. MACDONALD** (Stanley) asked the Treasurer—

“1. What was the total expenditure on the Stanley River Dam works to 30 June, 1941?”

“2. When is it expected that these works will be completed?”

**The TREASURER** (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) replied—

“1. £1,367,026.

“2. If work proceeds according to schedule, the dam should be completed in about two years time, although certain of the operating plant may not be obtainable while war conditions continue.”

**PAPER.**

The following paper was laid on the table:—

Regulations under the Weights and Measures Acts, 1924 to 1931.

**SITTING DAYS.**

**The PREMIER** (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay): I move—

“1. That, unless otherwise ordered, the House will meet for the despatch of business at 10 o'clock a.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in each week, and that on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and after 2 o'clock p.m. on Thursdays, Government business shall take precedence of all other business.

“2. That Standing Order No. 17—‘Debate on Address in Reply’—shall be construed as if ‘5.30 o'clock p.m.’ were substituted for ‘10.30 o'clock p.m.’ wherever it occurs in the Standing Order, and ‘11.30 o'clock a.m.’ for ‘4.30 o'clock p.m.’

“3. That Standing Order No. 307—‘Days allotted for Supply’—shall be construed as if ‘25 minutes after 5 o'clock p.m.’ were substituted for ‘10.30 o'clock p.m.’ in paragraph 5, and ‘5 o'clock p.m.’ were substituted for ‘10 o'clock p.m.’ in paragraphs 6 and 7.

“On the last day but one of the days allotted for Supply, the sitting of the Committee and the House shall be continued until the whole of the Estimates for the year, the Supplementary Estimates for the previous year, and the Vote on Account for the ensuing year have been decided, reported to the House, and an Order made for the reception of the Resolutions. All such questions shall be put by Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Committees, as the case may be, without amendment or debate.

“On the last day allotted for Supply, it shall be within the discretion of the Leader of the House to extend the sitting for the purpose of dealing with and bringing to a conclusion all the necessary proceedings for the founding and passing of the Appropriation Bill through all its stages. At 8 o'clock p.m., subject to the following proviso, the question under consideration and every question necessary to bring to a conclusion the proceedings of the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means and the passing through all stages of the Bill shall be put by Mr. Speaker or the Chairman of Committees, as the case may be, without amendment or debate:

“Provided that if, at 8 o'clock p.m., the question for the second reading of the Bill is under consideration the sitting may be further extended to enable the mover of the motion or his deputy to speak in reply.

“4. On the days allotted for Supply, Government business other than Supply may be proceeded with until 11.30 o'clock a.m., at which hour the proceedings on such business shall be interrupted, and the business of Supply proceeded with.

“Business interrupted under this paragraph shall stand as an Order of the Day for the next sitting day.

"5. That, if occasion arises to put into operation Standing Order No. 249, the Standing Order shall be construed as if '11 o'clock a.m.' were substituted for '4 o'clock p.m.' and '5 o'clock p.m.' were substituted for '10 o'clock p.m.' in paragraph 2."

Motion agreed to.

#### CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

##### APPOINTMENT OF MR. V. C. GAIR.

The **PREMIER** (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay): I move—

"That Mr. Vincent Clair Gair be appointed Chairman of Committees of the Whole House."

Motion agreed to.

#### LIBRARY, REFRESHMENT ROOMS, AND PARLIAMENTARY BUILDINGS COMMITTEES.

##### APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.

The **PREMIER** (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay): I move—

"That the Library, Refreshment Rooms, and Parliamentary Buildings Committees for the present session be constituted as follows:—

Library.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Brassington, Mr. Dunstan, Mr. Nimmo, Mr. Clayton, and Mr. Maher.

Refreshment Rooms.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Mann, Mr. Dunstan, Mr. Power, Mr. Dart, Mr. Nimmo, and Mr. Edwards.

Parliamentary Buildings.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Hayes, Mr. Conroy, Mr. Deacon, Mr. Muller, Mr. Massey, and the mover."

Motion agreed to.

#### STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

##### APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.

The **PREMIER** (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay): I move—

"That the Standing Orders Committee for the present session consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Gair, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Dunstan, Mr. Nicklin, Mr. Brand, and the mover, and that the said Committee have leave to sit during any adjournment of the House."

Motion agreed to.

#### PRINTING COMMITTEE.

##### APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.

The **PREMIER** (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay): I move—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the Printing to be executed by Order of the House, and for the purpose of selecting and arranging for printing Returns and Papers presented in pursuance

of motions made by members. That such Committee consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Turner, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Williams, Mr. Nicklin, Mr. Plunkett, and Mr. Walker.

Motion agreed to.

#### SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.

##### TEMPORARY CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY AND WAYS AND MEANS.

##### APPROPRIATION BILL, NO. 1.

The **PREMIER** (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay): I move—

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

Motion agreed to.

#### GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

##### ORDER FOR RETURN.

Mr. **NICKLIN** (Murrumba): I move—

"That there be laid upon the table of the House a return in the usual form showing the number of Government employees at 30 June, 1941 (all departments), paid from Consolidated Revenue, Trust Fund, and Loan Fund, respectively."

Motion agreed to.

#### VOTING AT GENERAL ELECTION.

##### ORDER FOR RETURN; RETURN TABLED.

Mr. **GAIR** (South Brisbane): I move—

"That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing the detailed results of the voting at the various polling-booths throughout the State in the recent general election."

Motion agreed to.

The paper was laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

#### HOSPITAL STATISTICS.

##### ORDER FOR RETURN.

Mr. **NICKLIN** (Murrumba), for Mr. **WALKER** (Cooroora): I move—

"That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing the following information relating to hospitals:—(a) The total number of hospitals under boards and not under boards, respectively, in 1940-41; (b) the amount of precept under the Hospitals Acts for each local authority in 1940-41, and the total of all such precepts; (c) the total Government contribution towards maintenance of (i.) hospitals under boards, (ii.) other hospitals, in 1940-41."

Motion agreed to.

**FEEES PAID BY CROWN TO BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS.**

**ORDER FOR RETURN.**

**Mr. MACDONALD** (Stanley): I move—

“That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing the payments made by the Government to barristers and solicitors in 1940-41, stating the names of recipients and the amount received, respectively.”

Motion agreed to.

**PETROL CONSUMPTION BY MINISTERIAL CARS.**

**ORDER FOR RETURN.**

**Mr. YEATES** (East Toowoomba): I move—

“That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing details of the petrol consumption by ministerial cars in 1940-41, stating the designation of Minister and petrol used, respectively.”

Motion agreed to.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO MEMBERS.**

**Mr. W. POWER, Mr. G. KEYATTA, Mr. J. E. DUGGAN AND Mr. D. J. M. DANIEL.**

**The PREMIER** (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay): I move—

“1. That leave of absence for this session be granted to Mr. William Power, member for the electoral district of Baroona, whilst engaged in military duties with the Defence Department.

“2. That leave of absence for this session be granted to Mr. George Keyatta, member for the electoral district of Townsville, on account of his enlistment with the Australian Imperial Forces.

“3. That leave of absence for this session be granted to Mr. John Edmund Duggan, member for the electoral district of Toowoomba, whilst engaged in military duties.

“4. That leave of absence for this session be granted to Mr. David John Marlais Daniel, member for the electoral district of Keppel, whilst engaged in military duties.”

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Murrumba) (10.55 a.m.): I called “Not formal” to this motion so that I might have the opportunity of congratulating those hon. members who are serving their country in the performance of military duties. The actions of hon. members of this Assembly in military affairs is very commendable, and compares very favourably with those of hon. members in the other Parliaments of Australia. Hon. members who are thus “doing their bit” deserve the highest commendation, and we should not hesitate to express our appreciation of what they are doing, especially at the present time, when unjustified criticism is frequently levelled at public men. For instance, the hon. member for Keppel, one of the hon. members referred to in the motion, has been

accused of drawing two salaries, but I should like to inform the House that the hon. member for Keppel has not been drawing his military pay, that he has been returning it to the Commonwealth Government.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. NICKLIN:** In view of the unwarranted criticism that has been levelled against public men, especially in these times, it is only fitting that I should make these remarks.

Motion agreed to.

**SUPPLY.**

**VOTE ON ACCOUNT—£7,200,000.**

**MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR.**

**Mr. SPEAKER** announced the receipt from His Excellency the Governor of a message recommending that the following provision be made on account of the services for the year ending 30 June, 1942:—

From the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland (exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account) the sum of £4,000,000;

From the Trust and Special Funds the sum of £2,500,000; and

From the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account the sum of £700,000.

**COMMITTEE.**

(Mr. Gair, South Brisbane, in the chair.)

**The PREMIER** (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay) (10.58 a.m.): Mr. Gair, I desire to take this opportunity of congratulating you upon being appointed unanimously by the House to the position of Chairman of Committees. It is a very important office, and one that carries with it a good deal of responsibility. I filled that position for a period, and the experience I gained therein has been of extreme value to me ever since. The law of relevancy applies with greater force in Committee than it does under any other circumstances. Matters of relevancy and points of order have to be decided immediately, and thus the Chairman of Committees must be able to make quick and prompt decisions. That can always be done only if he has a thorough knowledge of the Standing Orders, and becomes thoroughly acquainted with the business before the House before it goes into Committee.

I feel sure that you will uphold the splendid traditions created by former occupants of the office, and that you will carry out your duties with credit to yourself and in keeping with the honour and dignity of Parliament.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Murrumba) (11 a.m.): Mr. Gair, I should like to join with the Premier in congratulating you on being elected to the position of Chairman of Committees of this House. The Premier has said

that the position is a particularly important one and one that calls for a considerable amount of tact and discretion. With the knowledge you have of parliamentary procedure, gained during the term you have been in this House, I feel sure you will occupy that position with credit to yourself. I wish you a successful occupancy of the position.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**The TREASURER** (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) (11.1 a.m.): I move—

“That there be granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1941-1942, a further sum not exceeding £7,200,000 towards defraying the expenses of the various departments and services of the State.”

I, too, offer you my congratulations, Mr. Gair.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I desire to take this opportunity of sincerely thanking the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Treasurer for their congratulations on my appointment to this very high position of Chairman of Committees of the Queensland Parliament. I have a very deep appreciation of the honour that has been conferred on me this morning. I assure you I am very mindful of the importance and responsibility attaching to the position I now have the honour to occupy. It will be my endeavour, always, to discharge my duties efficiently and fairly, in addition to maintaining the prestige and dignity of this House and preserving the rights and principles of this the people's honourable and democratic Parliament.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Murrumba) (11.3 a.m.): We meet again, at the opening of this new Parliament, to consider another Appropriation Bill with the war clouds thick about us; in fact, they are blacker than they were on the last occasion. We might also say that now the war has almost reached our shores. In view of this fact, Mr. Gair, I think our discussions and our considerations should have one aim—that is, directing the whole of this State's resources, material and financial, towards a maximum war effort and towards a maximum co-operation with our national Government.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. NICKLIN:** We know we have got to win this war and we know why. We know that if we do not, very probably, there will not be a deliberative Assembly such as we are sitting in to-day. Consequently, if we are to preserve all our democratic rights and principles, the winning of this war transcends all other questions. The Speech of His Excellency yesterday struck this note, but, unfortunately, in the debate that followed, we found some hon. members opposite applauding very heartily the fact that we have to win the peace. That is essential, Mr. Gair, but at the present time we have got a bigger job on hand, namely, to win the war—we must win the war before we talk about winning the peace. We, of course, must not lose sight of

the problems that will be ours when peace comes, but if we direct too much of our energy and too much of our thoughts and deliberations to the problems of peace, to the detriment of the war effort, we shall not be helpful either to this State or to the Commonwealth. We are not out of the wood yet, and to win this war calls for a maximum effort, and in that effort every one of us will have to play some part. In view of that fact, the Country-National Party will co-operate with the Government in any legislation in furtherance of the war effort. Bills to that end will receive a speedy passage through this Assembly as far as we are concerned. We shall direct our criticism to improving those measures and assisting the Government in putting them into operation. I trust that we shall have the co-operation of hon. members opposite in eliminating from discussion in this Chamber all matters of a petty party-political nature.

When replying to the toast of Parliament at the luncheon at the recent Royal National Exhibition in this city, the Premier struck a good note. He made a particularly fine speech—a speech that was commented on by all who heard it. I should like to quote several remarks he made that I think are appropriate to the present time. He was thus reported—

“Despite what one might hear and read, Australia is making a magnificent war effort, but there are ample opportunities for service. If there be anybody who is not now serving, let him come forward while there is yet time.

“‘On a day like this let us dedicate ourselves to the service of the British Commonwealth of Nations,’ he added. ‘Let us determine—all of us—to give those services and to make such sacrifices as may be necessary to speed the victory.’”

Unfortunately, we find that when we are asked to make sacrifices we do not always appreciate the need for them. I think that is because we are so far removed from the actual conflict. Nevertheless, we have to realise that the plain truth of the matter is that we cannot go on living a normal, peace-time life and at the same time do our best to help win this war. We have to mortgage some of the comforts we have enjoyed in the past, and we cannot insist on retaining the amenities of normal life when they conflict with war needs.

I often wonder—and I wonder the more at the present time, when I consider the financial policy of the Government—whether they fully realise this fact. When we look at the Government's record financially and the indications they have given as to the policy they are to follow in the near future, we see that that policy appears to be to give no relief from taxation but to gather in all the taxes they can, and get all the loan money they can, irrespective of whether this policy is one that is in the best interests of our national war effort. Recently, at the meeting of the Loan Council, we had the rather unedifying spectacle of the majority of the State Premiers, assisted by their Treasurers, scrambling for the maximum amount of loan money

that could be given to their respective States; they did not appear to take into consideration the national war needs. It is on that point that I join issue with the Government.

I also join issue with the Government on a statement attributed to the Premier immediately prior to the last meeting of the Loan Council. The hon. gentleman is reported to have said that the State's spending must be maintained to avert a return to depression conditions. That statement was entirely fallacious. If he is correctly reported, let us follow the argument to its logical conclusion. It would mean that it would only be necessary to continue State spending to maintain prosperity in this State. The argument could also be construed to mean that the whole of the prosperity of the State depends on Government spending. We admit that it is very helpful at times for a Government to inject some financial blood into the lifestream of the State, but to say that the prosperity of the State depends on Government spending is entirely fallacious. It is not a compliment to the producers, the workers, and the manufacturers, who assist so much in building up the prosperity of the State and providing the wherewithal for the war effort.

**The Treasurer:** And the facilities given by the Government.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** From the interjection one would take it that the Government provided all the facilities that the producers, manufacturers, and workers use to produce the national income. Unfortunately, the Government have not given sufficient facilities to these very important sections of the community, and I refer particularly to those engaged in manufacturing or secondary industries. What have the Government done to assist the manufacturers and secondary industries of Queensland? In that respect their record is a particularly sorry one. Nevertheless, hon. members opposite complain that Queensland is not getting a sufficient amount of the Commonwealth expenditure on munitions. Who must accept the responsibility for that? Of course, the Government of Queensland must do so. What encouragement have they given to secondary industry in recent years to provide the facilities that now could have been turning out munitions? The Government gave no encouragement to companies to establish plants in Queensland. Instead, their policy has assisted in chasing very valuable industries from the State and consequently denying the workers of Queensland the wages that such industries would have paid, and, in addition, denying Queensland the full opportunity of sharing in Commonwealth Government expenditure on munitions.

**The Secretary for Labour and Industry:** What items of Government expenditure do you really object to?

**Mr. NICKLIN:** I am objecting to the attitude that the Government have taken up in regard to the encouragement of secondary industry in this State, and to the fact that owing to the system of company taxation in force over a number of years Queensland

has been denied an expansion in secondary industries to which the State's resources entitle it.

Reverting to the statement that the Government must maintain expenditure to avert a return to depression conditions, I would ask the Government have they or do they take into account the large amount of Commonwealth money that has been spent in Queensland—notwithstanding the fact that we have not here the facilities that other States have for secondary industries? Is not that expenditure by the Commonwealth Government a benefit to the State's finances? In the period 1930 to 1939 the Commonwealth Government's expenditure in this State amounted to £341,000, while the estimated Commonwealth Government expenditure in Queensland during 1940-41 has grown to the colossal sum of £12,000,000.

**The Treasurer:** An estimate.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** I was waiting for that interjection. The actual expenditure has not yet been made available, but it is not far short of the estimate. It certainly is an extremely large sum. If the Treasurer knows the exact sum, I invite him to state it.

**The Treasurer:** We will give you some details about it.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** The hon. gentleman must admit that what I say is true. He knows that there has been very considerable Commonwealth expenditure in this State during the last 12 months, and that expenditure undoubtedly has helped to improve the finances of Queensland.

**The Treasurer:** If they spent nearly £12,000,000 last year they are dropping that by about £10,000,000 this year, because they propose to spend only a little over £2,000,000 this year.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** We have the Treasurer's word for that.

**The Treasurer:** And a pretty good one for it.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** We will wait until the final figures are disclosed.

The statement that increased State expenditure is necessary and the maintenance of the same high level of State expenditure is essential to the maintenance of present conditions in this State is absurd, to say the least of it, when we consider the various factors that are operating at the present time.

We have to realise that there is only one pool from which we can draw the moneys that are available to the Government at the present time, and there can be no question that war and defence needs should have first consideration, and that State expenditure that is not essential to the war effort should be curtailed wherever practicable.

**The Minister for Transport:** So it is.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** We will wait for the Minister for Transport to give us details at

a later stage of this debate. It is not apparent to the ordinary man at the present time that State expenditure that is not essential to the war effort is being curtailed to any extent. One has only to take the statement that appeared in the Press recently, as coming from the Secretary for Public Works, to find a reason for doubting that such expenditure is being curtailed. The article to which I refer is headed, "£1,000,000 worth of public buildings," and it goes on to state—

"During the year ended 30 June the total value of all departments of public works jobs, either completed or under construction, was £1,091,895."

On looking over the works enumerated in the article we find that although a number of them are essential for the ordinary civil allocations of this State, there are several of them—and I shall mention two big ones as examples—that do not appear to be essential to State needs. Certainly it is not furthering the war effort to allow large sums of money to go into the construction of these buildings when the materials used in them and the men employed upon them could be much better utilised on defence works.

I refer particularly to the administrative building erected in Anzac Square at a cost of £113,000 and to the new Toowoomba Court House, which cost £25,409. The erection of such buildings could have stood over for the present, and the sums appropriated for their construction diverted to war purposes. Would not the Premier and the Treasurer have received greater commendation if they had returned from the Loan Council meeting and stated that they had forgone £500,000 of their loan requirements for this year so that the Commonwealth Government might buy war munitions to that value?

**The Treasurer:** We did that.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** You got £329,000 less than what you asked for.

**The Treasurer:** That was the Commonwealth cut, not ours.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** There is only one pool from which to draw and we should use that pool to the best advantage. The Government are not doing that by their present policy in the construction of public buildings that are not necessary at the moment. Their programme in relation to other forms of expenditure also shows that they are extravagantly using this pool. One vitally concerns the primary producers of this State. The Commonwealth Government have the responsibility of finding large sums of money to finance the primary industries of Queensland and provide storage accommodation for commodities which cannot be exported. If that Government are handicapped in providing that money, our primary products are detrimentally affected. What advantage accrues to the State or the Commonwealth when the Government of Queensland continue to build palatial structures and engage in unnecessary public works? For the current financial year an estimated amount of £17,000,000 is required to finance our surplus

primary products. Surely we must realise how essential it is for the States to curtail their requests for money from the Loan Council—from Australia's financial pool. The wheat industry requires no less than £10,000,000, the butter industry needs £5,000,000, the meat industry £1,000,000, the sugar industry £500,000, and other industries an additional £500,000. Those vital basic industries must be kept going, otherwise the Treasurer will find himself in greater financial difficulties in the near future than he already is. Instead of curtailing their expenditure we find that the policy of the Government appears to be to maintain it at its old level. Why cannot they do what is required of all sections of the community? Why cannot they do what the Premier said should be done in his speech at the recent Royal National Association luncheon, when he called upon all sections of the community to make sacrifices in the general interests of the Commonwealth's war effort? I ask the Government now to make sacrifices in respect of some of their non-essential expenditures.

The Government complain that they have to meet increased expenditure in an increased basic wage and the pay-roll tax to finance the Commonwealth child endowment, and they make that the excuse for insisting that loan money should be made available in full to them to enable them to carry out their loan programme for the current financial year. These two items will involve an expenditure from consolidated revenue of less than £500,000 per annum, and against that the Government have the advantage of a loan conversion that will save them about £300,000 per annum. It can be seen that the Government will not be seriously inconvenienced in carrying out their financial programme by the contributions that they will have to make from consolidated revenue during the current year to meet the increased basic wage and the pay-roll tax. The savings and sacrifices by the Government in the interests of the war effort have indeed been negligible, and that is plainly seen when we compare the revenue that was received during pre-war years with the amount obtained last financial year. In 1938-39, the Government received in taxation £7,691,867, and for the last financial year they collected £8,140,363.

(Time expired.)

**Mr. BRAND** (Isis) (11.27 a.m.): Mr. Gair, I should like to take this opportunity of congratulating you upon your election to the important office of Chairman of Committees. I do not think there is any parliamentary office that calls for more tact than the one you now occupy. However, your fairly long political experience will enable you to extend justice to all hon. members irrespective of party, and that in turn will bring from hon. members the help that you deserve in the discharge of your duties. You will thereby be enabled to uphold the high traditions of your office. I compliment you and I wish you a very successful career as Chairman of Committees.

I should also like to take this opportunity to compliment the Leader of the Opposition

on his excellent debut as Leader of the Opposition. It is a very difficult position to fill, but he has clearly shown his ability to carry out the duties of the office with benefit to Parliament and to the people he represents.

We are asked to approve of the appropriation of the large sum of £7,200,000 for the services of the State for the ensuing year. I have no doubt that there will be many differences of opinion as to how the money should be spent, but I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the Government should direct their energy towards spending the money in helping to carry on the war activities to which the Commonwealth Government are committed, in order that Queensland may worthily second their efforts to bring the conflict to a successful issue. I believe that the State Government will give the service and assistance for which the national Government will call. I am of opinion that there are no enemies in this country, and that there are no enemies in this Chamber. We can afford to differ on domestic problems that confront us from time to time, but there can be only one purpose before us all in this great war—namely, a united endeavour to serve our country and to support the Governments who are responsible for Australia's multifarious war activities. Every State Parliament must give the national Government the assistance they deserve.

I am deeply interested in the work of government as it affects the great national issues that to-day confront the nation. I believe that a mistake was made at the beginning of this war in not making all Government instrumentalities active participants in the war effort. At the present time we see, in the many men who have been seconded from the public service in this State to assist in the Commonwealth Government's war effort, a clear indication that the national Government are looking for all the help that State Governments and State Parliaments can give. It is, in fact, necessary if we are to use to the best advantage the moneys available and co-ordinate the Commonwealth war expenditure with the necessary action to solve the domestic problems of State and so protect the whole community. Considerable sacrifice and loyalty have been shown by the people of this State. Throughout the last two years the people of Queensland have shown that they stand united in their loyalty and preparedness and are willing to make sacrifices to help in the war effort. Those sacrifices are seen in the enlistment of men in the fighting forces, and in the way in which many others in our community, both men and women, have offered for service in the munitions factories and other services associated with the war. I believe we had such an expression only recently from our great industrialists throughout the length and breadth of Queensland, who showed that they were prepared to make great sacrifices in an endeavour to assist in the prosecution of the war. Sometimes our efforts may be misguided, but at rock bottom I believe that the whole of our people stand resolutely behind the British cause and the cause of Australia.

As a result of the war our country districts are finding themselves in a very difficult position. Most of our great primary industries—and they are our key industries—have been compelled by the disorganisation of sea transport to realign the whole of their production, and this has entailed the provision of a great amount of storage for their products. We also find many young men leaving their work on the land and enlisting to fight for their country. This has caused a great shortage of man-power in primary-producing districts and brought about an inability of country towns to engage fully in war production. In fact, a great deal of distress has resulted, which merits special attention from this Government. From the money to be appropriated to-day, we ask that the Government give special attention to this phase of our industrial life so that business in country centres will be able to maintain solvency in the difficult period through which we are passing.

We cannot disturb the great economic processes of our primary industries without making necessary a great deal of sacrifice by the people engaged in them, and the people in the country towns, which are the centres of business and social activity in rural areas, are experiencing a very lean period. During the last week, special attention has been drawn to the conditions of affairs at Warwick. It is difficult to understand why a town of that size is unable to get some of the contracts that are being let for war purposes, and thereby enabled to use the machinery it possesses. Many small towns, however, have not the machinery necessary for munition-making, and they must look to something else to enable them to carry on. To-day they are calling for help to this Government. It is not sufficient that the Government should say that the Commonwealth Government have set up another committee to deal with man power and the loss of man power in country areas. The Government should recognise immediately the difficulties confronting the country areas and come to their aid. In the past, all our great industries—as the Leader of the Opposition rightly stated this morning—have had to look to the Federal Government for the help that was essential to them. The least we can expect from the State Government is greater assistance in these abnormal times than in more normal periods.

I disagree with the Leader of the Opposition in regard to the distribution by the Loan Council, so far as Queensland is concerned.

**The Secretary for Mines:** How long is it since you disagreed with him?

**Mr. BRAND:** We can agree to differ; that is what hon. members opposite cannot do. I believe that Queensland requires the amount that is being made available by the Loan Council; in fact, this State requires a great deal more. It is disturbing to find that the Government are making no attempt to help synthetic-fuel production, that is so essential to the wellbeing of our community.

**The Treasurer:** Have you ever heard of power alcohol?

**Mr. BRAND:** The development of power alcohol has been made a Federal issue. The men who should have the credit for what has been done are in another sphere. I have heard people taking credit where credit is not due.

**The Treasurer** interjected.

**Mr. BRAND:** If the hon. gentleman spoke rightly he would give credit for the development of power alcohol in this State to the present Federal Treasurer, Mr. Fadden, who, when a member of this House, brought the matter before the Queensland Parliament. As a result of his activities we have the Sarina factory.

I maintain that the Government are not moving to the extent they should for the development of synthetic fuels in this State. The Commonwealth Government have acted to the extent of agreeing to the establishment of four distilleries, one in each of the capital cities of Western Australia, Victoria, South Australia, and New South Wales, thereby providing some 12,000,000 gallons of power alcohol from the products of wheat. Approximately 10,000,000 gallons are to be produced from the products of sugar. It is interesting to hear from hon. members who have already spoken in this session of Parliament that the Premier of Queensland is an ardent enthusiast for the further development of power-alcohol production. I am pleased to know that.

It is disturbing to find that we are making no bold attempt to develop the great mining resources of Queensland by increasing the production of iron, steel, and copper so essential not only to the Australian nation but to the British Empire and the cause we are fighting for. Queensland is capable of producing large quantities of copper, but our industries are held back because priority must be given to the war effort. That is one of the difficulties confronting the development of power alcohol industrially and I suggest that some of the money we are asked to vote can be used in at least giving assistance to the development of iron, steel, and copper works. We certainly need these commodities. In the past I have not favoured State enterprise in the slightest, but the times demand that we should develop these resources somehow or other. Money should be found and made available for the production of these necessary commodities in the State of Queensland, which has no peer in the world in this respect.

I hope that in the coming 12 months there will be a renewed effort by the Government to develop the many industries we can establish in the State.

For instance, although we know the difficulties that surround the question it is disturbing to find that whereas we have the men and the machines, we cannot provide sufficient blankets for the needs of the people. Certainly, we are aware that the military authorities are requisitioning and have been requisitioning for all the supplies that the present machines can produce, but we have the men with the ability to make the machines that could manufacture a larger amount of our wool into products to meet the

requirements of the people. Much development could take place and if we miss the present opportunity for the establishment of secondary industries in Queensland we miss it for all time. The Southern States are reaping a greater advantage from the war expenditure, because they have the manufacturing industries already established.

**Mr. Maedonald:** Why?

**Mr. BRAND:** The hon. member knows why. We must not ignore the fact that unless we encourage the manufacture of our wool, which we have in abundance, our people will be for all time without a great manufacturing industry in the State, and moreover we shall lose the opportunity to assist the great primary industries and build up a large population which in turn would stimulate wealth production in the State.

Year in and year out I have listened to debates on motions from this side of the Chamber imploring the Government to do certain things. Now we have a motion by an hon. member on the Government side seeking to establish the very things that we on this side have been urging for years.

**Mr. Rfordan:** Most of them were destroyed by your Tory Government.

**Mr. BRAND:** The hon. member persists in living in the past. This morning we are entering upon the important work of a new Parliament, and my complaint is that at a time when industry is struggling under the additional loads caused by the war the Government, through their various instrumentalities, seek to place still further imposts upon it and its people. Only recently we had an intimation from the Minister for Transport that because of the increase in the basic wage and the imposition of the pay-roll tax it had been decided to increase railway freights and fares in Queensland by 5 per cent., thus placing a still further impost upon the very people who are labouring under the same difficulties so far as wages and taxes are concerned. This increase is imposed at a time when transport facilities on our seaboard have been disorganised by the war and much trade diverted to the railways, and it must bear heavily indeed upon those people who are situated in the country districts far removed from the large centres of population. I protest against this decision of the Railway Department. I believe that the railways can be managed in a way that will enable them to carry on without imposing this additional burden on the people. It is easy to make the railways pay if freights and fares are increased at a time when traffic is increased because of war conditions, but the clever man is the one who can carry this additional business without placing further burdens upon industry. The Railway Department badly needs a complete overhauling with a view to getting down to a better economy that will enable us to carry on our industries without loss.

**The Secretary for Mines:** Did you not have enough economy between 1929 and 1932 to do you for a lifetime?

**Mr. BRAND:** Again hon. members on the Government side want to live in the past. I am speaking of the present, when an entirely different set of conditions is operating, conditions that certainly are not due to any wise policy pursued by the present Government. I ask, when we are passing this large amount of public money for use by the Government in carrying out the services of the State, that special consideration be given to the difficulties confronting our primary industries, country towns, and business in country districts in general, and that careful and favourable consideration be given also to the establishment of manufacturing industries for the development of our iron, steel, and copper resources, with consequential beneficial results to our country and our nation.

**Mr. NIMMO (Oxley) (11.15 a.m.):** I should like, first of all, to congratulate you, Mr. Gair, on your elevation to the position of Chairman of Committees of the House. You have a very onerous duty to perform, but I feel sure that you will perform it well. You are placed in a position in which you could be tyrannical if you wished, but, knowing you as I do, I am sure you will not use your power unduly. I hope that you will be very lenient; as a matter of fact, many of us need leniency and I feel quite sure that, with you in the chair, we shall get it.

To-day we are called upon to discuss an Appropriation Bill submitted by the Treasurer involving a large sum of money. I was astounded that the Treasurer did not make a speech in introducing the Bill so that we should have some idea of what he was doing. I really think that we might have had some remarks from him this morning.

**The Treasurer:** That is usually done at the Ways and Means stage.

**Mr. NIMMO:** Our first consideration is the winning of the war. We have a very big problem ahead of us, and I was hoping that everyone would devote his whole effort towards that objective alone. I can assure the Government that it will be the policy of the Country-National party to co-operate with them to the full in any efforts they make to achieve that object. All party interests should be dropped to-day; this is no time for parties. Party considerations seem to have ruined many of the countries that have gone to war. The Government of the day seem to consider their party first, and I hope that as this session develops more consideration will be given to the war effort and less to preserving party interests. Unfortunately, Mr. Gair, the Government have not been acting in that way, particularly in financial matters.

The policy we have had outlined to us seems to be one of "grab everything, stick to all the Loan Funds, keep taxes up to their high level, and carry on as if there were no war at all." You would expect, Mr. Gair, that a lead would be given by the Government in assisting the Commonwealth Government. We have the spectacle of the Premier

on every opportunity trying to belittle the Prime Minister—

**The Treasurer:** That is not a true statement; it is definitely untrue.

**Mr. NIMMO:** That gentleman delivered a speech some time ago—a brilliant speech—and the Premier's reply was that it was a very fine speech but "he does not follow through." That is just an example of that little belittling of the Prime Minister that is so irksome to-day. The greatest effort the Government are putting forth in connection with the war, so far as I can see, is lip service with no desire to do the job that should be done by the Government of a State. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, one would have thought from the attitude adopted by the representatives at the Loan Council that there were two wars in progress, one against the Axis partners and the other between the State Treasurers and the Federal Treasurer. The State Treasurers fought like tigers. They wanted to see how much more loan money they could get out of the Loan Council. The Premier of Queensland stuck out absolutely for a sum of £25,000,000 for loan expenditure and it was only on the casting vote of the Federal Treasurer that the amount was reduced to £20,000,000. I ask hon. members: is that doing the best to help the war effort? The policy of the Queensland Government is to grab as much money as they can. The Treasurer said that the Commonwealth Government were not spending a proper amount on the war effort in this State.

**The Treasurer:** I said that it was not £12,000,000.

**Mr. NIMMO:** The Treasurer is only using a figure of speech in saying that it is not £12,000,000. As a matter of fact, the munition works at Rocklea will cost a big sum of money. Unfortunately, there are only small engineering works round Brisbane and that is the fault of the Labour Government. However, these small works are doing their best in producing munitions of war, and if we had 100 more of such industries employing from 500 to 600 hands every one of them would be engaged on defence work. As I said, unfortunately, these works are not here, and it is because of the advent of Labour in this State. They put a sprag in the wheels and these industries did not develop. Everybody knows that. At any rate, we are not able to cope with all the work that is available to us to-day. Naturally, the Commonwealth Government are anxious to maintain munition-production at the highest point, but hon. members opposite know that, unfortunately, we have not the artisans to do that work. A great job of work is being done at the Technical College in training men who previously had no opportunity to learn a trade. Again, we have not enough lathes to do the work. We need a thousand more. What a tragedy to think that a Government should have occupied the Treasury benches so long in this State and

that thousands of men have not been given an opportunity to learn a trade!

**Mr. Hayes:** That is not the fault of the Labour Government.

**Mr. NIMMO:** The hon. member has been endeavouring to have some of his constituents placed in the technical college with the opportunity of learning these trades. They are a very fine type of people, but they have never had an opportunity to learn a trade while the Labour Party was in power. When the Rocklea works are completed, work will be available for 5,000 operatives, but where are they to come from? Why, we have not 5,000 unemployed men in Queensland. We shall be very busy in trying to get these men.

**Mr. Riordan:** How many of those workers are women?

**Mr. NIMMO:** The hon. member ought to know that.

I also want to refer very briefly to a statement made by the Premier in which he said—

“State spending must be maintained to avert a return to depression conditions.”

The greatest factor we in Queensland and Australia must consider is our man power. It is very limited. A great number of men have joined the fighting services, while a large number of other men are engaged in munition work. If we have the Government of a State competing for available man power in order to carry out State activities that are not essential at the moment to win the war, then we must rob the Commonwealth Government's war effort of that man power. That is the biggest problem facing us to-day. Even if we get all the money required for the prosecution of the war, if we cannot get the man power, that money will be useless. Man power is the great factor that counts.

Another matter I wish to refer to is the policy being continued by the Government of erecting public buildings that are not essential. At the commencement of the war public buildings and bridges were proceeded with in England, but it was soon discovered that this work was not essential to the war effort, and consequently it was discontinued.

**The Secretary for Public Works:** Are public buildings not essential?

**Mr. NIMMO:** Of course public buildings are essential, but at present we should have one purpose only in view, that is, the winning of the war. We have the hon. gentleman's department on the one hand proceeding with the construction of public buildings and bridges, and on the other hand another Minister proceeding with air-raid precautions and asking the people to assist him. The two things are contradictory. At present a building is in the course of erection at the rear of the offices of the Commissioner for Railways, which I understand is ultimately to house the State Advances Corporation and other State activities. In its construction huge steel girders are being used that could be utilised for the construction of many tanks vital to the winning of this war. It

is a scandalous shame in these times of a scarcity of material for such work that a State Government should proceed with the erection of a building that could be embarked on at a later date. Such a policy virtually tells the community that there is no possible danger of its suffering from an air raid, or of war's coming to our shores, but at the same time we have another Minister appealing to our citizens to become air raid precautions workers and undergo training to meet possible air raids. Are not members of the Government Party ashamed of the erection of this building? Every time I pass it I feel that the Government are letting the country down. This is not a small matter; it is a very big matter, especially, as I pointed out, when material used in its construction could be used for a vital war purpose. We might arrive at such a stage in this country when we shall be compelled not only to demolish that building in order to obtain the steel used in its construction, but also to demolish the Story Bridge to obtain steel required for our war effort. It is all very well for Government members to smile, but our war effort is our biggest job. Here we have Evans, Deakin and Company Limited embarking on additional enterprises to assist the country by building ships, and at the same time we have the Government competing with them for riveters and similar artisans to erect public buildings. That is a scandalous state of affairs, and something should be done at this very moment to discontinue this and similar public works to prevent competition for labour essential to our war effort.

The Queensland Government are 100 per cent. behind the war effort so long as they have not to sacrifice any revenue or any means of currying favour with certain individuals.

I should now like to refer to some of the statements the Treasurer has been making. He excuses an increased revenue, because he says there has been a big increase in the basic wage and the pay-roll tax. The total of these is less than £500,000, but I am given to understand there has been a saving of £300,000 in the recent loan conversion in London. The Treasurer says nothing about that. He says he has £500,000 extra to meet in pay-roll tax, and on account of the recent basic wage rise. There can be no excuse for demanding all the revenue he is asking for to-day.

In every walk of life the men and women of this State are making sacrifices and they are willing to see the job through. We have a wonderful people. Only the other night the Secretary for Health and Home Affairs arranged for a blackout and the co-operation by the people was remarkable.

**A Government Member:** It was the organisation of it that was responsible.

**Mr. NIMMO:** It was the co-operation of the people. You can have all the organisation, but if you have not the co-operation of the people you will not have much success. The people co-operated fully in making the blackout a success. While the people are doing

everything they possibly can and making sacrifices, the Government are not doing their share; in fact, they are not making any contribution at all.

Another matter I wish to refer to is to the decline in unemployment relief. The Government do not know what to do with the employees in the department responsible for it. The number of recipients of relief has dropped so remarkably that to-day we have an army of officers who cannot be employed. I think that those matters should be taken into consideration and the Government should, even at this eleventh hour, consider whether they will not co-operate to the full with the Federal Government in the prosecution of the war. The Federal Treasurer made certain proposals, but they were not accepted.

The recent rise in railway fares and freights, I think, is a scandalous thing. Immediately they get a monopoly—immediately road transport is driven off the road—the Government raise fares and freights. There was no need for this rise. Under good management the increased revenue would have enabled them to carry on and revenue would have balanced expenditure. The petrol rationing seems to be exploited by the Government in order to get extra revenue from extra railway fares and freights.

I should like to show how the Railway Department has consistently increased fares where it had no opposition. In rates, the department has competition from the post office. If one wishes to send a parcel up to 11 lb. in weight to Cloncurry the department charges 2s. 9d., which is the same as the post-office charge; but when it comes to a 12 lb. parcel, which the post office will not carry, we find the charge is 3s. 9d. It has risen 3d. a lb. up to 11 lb., but as soon as competition is eliminated they boost it up and we find a rate of 3s. 9d. And so it goes on. If one analyses the charges one will find they increase at a very much greater rate than the department could get for the smaller weights.

I now wish to refer to the proposal of the Federal Treasurer that was turned down by the Queensland Treasurer—i.e., that the Commonwealth Treasurer take control of taxation during the war period, the amount to be paid to each State to be fixed on the basis of population.

**Mr. T. L. Williams:** You would not like to see that come about.

**Mr. NIMMO:** The great point the Treasurer made was that they did not want to sacrifice their sovereign rights, but if Hitler or the Japanese came here these sovereign rights would go.

**The Attorney-General:** And if the Nimmos come?

**Mr. NIMMO:** So would their O'Keefe rights go. They must have their full pound of flesh. The Premier put forward a ceiling proposal. That was just in keeping with the outlook of the present Government at all times, to tax the people as high as possible

and spend the money as fast as possible. Many of our difficulties are the result of that policy. The Federal Treasurer is in a difficulty, because of Queensland's attitude. He cannot raise taxation over the whole of Australia, because if he did the Queensland taxpayer, highly taxed as he is, would be paying a much larger amount than the taxpayers in the other States. Thus the high taxation in Queensland blocks the raising of the taxation in other States. One can understand that argument very simply by taking the taxpayers with larger incomes; if Federal taxation was any higher these taxpayers in Queensland would have very little income left. Naturally, the Federal Treasurer has to find some other method. There is some talk of cutting out, for Federal purposes, the deductions of State income tax paid. If that is done again the Queensland taxpayers will be taxed higher than those in any other State in the Commonwealth, because their State taxes are the highest in Australia. The Premier came forward with the ceiling proposal, really a reversion to the John Lang proposal—no income over £500 a year.

**The Treasurer:** No, it was not that proposal.

**Mr. NIMMO:** It was virtually the same thing. It really does not matter what the ceiling is raised to; the income is fixed. I would ask hon. members if they would kill the incentive in men to earn a larger income. Of course, members of the Government cannot conceive such a thing.

**The Treasurer:** What would be the use of a larger income if Hitler gets here?

**Mr. NIMMO:** The hon. gentleman cannot appreciate the point I am making. He cannot realise that it is the hope of reward that sweetens labour.

**The Secretary for Mines:** You believe in more profiteering.

**Mr. NIMMO:** I do not believe in profiteering, but I believe in encouraging everyone to put his full energy into his work. The hon. member for Ipswich is so narrow-minded that he cannot see further than his nose. He cannot understand that without the incentive of reward for his work a man will not make the necessary effort. A man is asked to go ahead and work to build up an industry and when the work is done he is to be given £500 a year on which to live. Did one ever hear of a more brainless proposal than that of the ceiling limit?

(Time expired.)

**The TREASURER** (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer) (12.15 p.m.): At this stage I think I should say one or two things, chiefly to put those of the Committee who are criticising the Government on the right path.

In opening the discussion, the Leader of the Opposition made a plea for co-operation by the State with the Commonwealth, and I want to say that this State has offered all co-operation and full co-operation in every way to the Commonwealth Government in

the war effort. We have not at any time harshly criticised the Commonwealth Government, when we might have done so. We have refrained from criticism that might even have been considered to hamper the Commonwealth Government. At no time have we put up any barrier against the Commonwealth Government's war effort. The Leader of the Opposition said that his party would co-operate with this Government in all war matters. He did not go beyond that. He has given us the assurance that he will co-operate with the Government in all war matters, but he has not promised the co-operation of the Opposition with this Government in all matters? Why? Simply because his political conscience will not allow him to do that, and one respects him for having that much regard for his political conscience.

**Mr. Nimmo:** Is not that the only thing that counts to-day?

**The TREASURER:** The war effort is a thing that counts, and it is a big thing but there are certain things that must be done if we are going to maintain the war effort. Unfortunately, the hon. member for Oxley has not that complete survey of the whole situation that would allow him to know what the war effort is. He can see only the one spearhead. I remind him that behind the spearhead there must be an organisation and an ability to organise that makes the spearhead effective.

I think I should deal with two statements that were made by the Leader of the Opposition. One was that this Government were prepared to grab all taxation, and the other that we were prepared to grab all loan money.

**Mr. Muller:** The figures show that.

**The TREASURER:** This Government have never been prepared to grab all taxation. Over the past nine years Parliament after Parliament has made reductions in taxation.

**Mr. Yeates:** Very slight.

**The TREASURER:** Here comes the voice of one crying in the wilderness! It cries, "Very slight." I desire to inform the hon. member for East Toowoomba that it is a direct contradiction of his leader who said that we were prepared to grab all taxation, and I thank him for so ably and quickly correcting his leader in this matter. We have not been prepared to grab all taxation. We have made remission after remission, and the remissions made by this Government over the last nine years have amounted to more than £2,000,000.

**Mr. Muller:** Name some of them.

**The TREASURER:** We made reductions in what we called the relief tax. We made reductions in the State development tax and we have made other reductions. When the interjection, "What reductions are you suggesting?" was made to the Leader of the Opposition he said immediately "The company tax." That was the only thing that

he could think of at the moment that should be reduced, and it shows just where this new political party is. It shows where its heart is and where it lives. You remember, Mr. Gair, one verse of that worthy poem of Kipling's, "The Recessional," which states—

"The tumult and the shouting dies,  
The Captains and the Kings depart."

The Opposition seem inclined to parody Kipling—this going to show just where the Country-National Party is, what it is most concerned about, and what its desire is so far as a reduction of taxation is concerned. We can sum them up in these words—

"The tumult and the shouting grows;  
The captain and the troops depart;  
But still the Opposition crows,  
With vested interest in its heart:  
Lord, God of Hosts, O give us yet—  
The dividends we love to get."

The Opposition have no concern for anything else and they remind me of what Dickens so aptly said in his parody, "The Canterbury Horse": Property-prop, property-prop, property-prop—nothing else seems to count with those people. Human interest and the thing that inspires the great effort being made to-day is of no avail with them. "Give us a reduction in company taxation—give us that and all will be well."

**Mr. Macdonald** interjected.

**The TREASURER:** I am afraid the hon. member will have to get me an interpreter. With my Australian accent I am sorry I cannot attend to him.

Now let me deal with the other statement made by the Opposition about the grabbing of all loan money. I feel that I must say a word or two about the Loan Council. As hon. members of this Committee know, a Co-ordinator of Public Works was appointed by the Loan Council and it is the job of that Co-ordinator to review the proposed programmes of the various States. Sir Harry Brown is the Loan Council Co-ordinator, and he travelled the States of Australia and reviewed the respective State programmes. It was that gentleman who submitted to the Commonwealth Government the proposal for £25,500,000 for the States. When the proposal was put forward, the Premier of Queensland made a suggestion to the Loan Council whereby that amount might be reduced by at least £2,500,000. For hon. members of the Opposition to say that the State of Queensland was out to grab all that it could get is, therefore, wrong. In fairness to the Premier I should state that he believed in his own heart that that reduction would lead to a reduction of £5,000,000 in the amount of money allocated to the States by the Loan Council. It is wrong to make a statement, Mr. Gair, simply for the sake of making it. Such statements are made to lend verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative. The criticism of the Leader of the Opposition or the hon. member for Oxley was simply an attempt to put all the blame on the Premier of Queensland. The Premier

of Victoria, who, I believe, is the Leader of some National-Country Party, was one who voted against a reduction in taxation. The Premier of Victoria voted with the Premier of Queensland. To attempt to put that statement on the back of the Premier of Queensland is wrong. There were four States that opposed the proposal and two who voted for it—Tasmania and South Australia.

**Mr. Barnes:** Why did Tasmania vote for it?

**The TREASURER:** I suggest that the hon. member for Bundaberg ask that question of the Premier of Tasmania; he never explained why he so voted, but I suppose it was because he considered it was the right and proper thing to do.

**Mr. Barnes:** Because, in his opinion, the Premier of Queensland ignored the constitution on his books by not asking for national credit.

**The TREASURER:** I think that the hon. member for Bundaberg is confusing the Premier of Tasmania with the Treasurer of Tasmania. I am not so fully conversant with the views of the Premier of Tasmania on the matter of national credit, as to be able to enter into that discussion on behalf of the Premier of Tasmania; nor have I any desire to do so—that gentleman is well able to take care of himself. However, I have pointed out that the statements made by the Leader of the Opposition are wrong. The Premier of Queensland, I repeat, suggested ways whereby the loan money available to the States might be reduced.

**Mr. Nimmo:** Was that reported in the Press?

**The TREASURER:** Loan Council proceedings are not reported in the Press, and are not open to the Press, but interested parties who desire to use Loan Council meetings for political purposes do make reports not strictly in accordance with the truth in that they do not report the whole of the Loan Council discussions. The hon. member might accept my statement on the matter that the proposal was made.

The Leader of the Opposition also said that State spending should be reduced. I want to remind the Opposition—and I dare say that you will remember it, too, Mr. Gair—of their policy speech when they went to the country at the beginning of the year. Do you remember all the things they suggested should be done? Why, bless my heart and soul, the programme that they submitted to the people of Queensland would have meant the spending of millions and millions of money. "The mythical millions of Mr. Maher" was one of the jokes of the campaign. The proposal that he put forward was preposterous.

**Mr. Muller:** Who put up the bogey about the mythical millions?

**The TREASURER:** I think it was a gentleman named Maher.

**Mr. Muller:** It was the Government.

**The TREASURER:** No, it was a gentleman who proposed that all these things should be done. He suggested the abolition of the State development tax.

I want to point out what has been said in reference to these matters. In dealing with the Premier's statement rejecting the proposal to abolish the State development tax and review it next financial year the "Courier-Mail" in a leading article of 24 January, 1941, said, *inter alia*—

"... It can be readily understood that the Government's first concern is to keep the State Budget balanced and to protect employment. . . ."

How different from the words of the Leader of the Opposition to-day! He was not concerned about employment in any shape or form.

Let me continue with the extract from the "Courier-Mail"—

"Unless a Government is in the fortunate position of finding itself with a large surplus, real relief of taxation can be effected only by reduction of public expenditure."

What public expenditure do hon. members opposite suggest should be abolished? The building programme of the State? That was the suggestion of the Leader of the Opposition, ably backed by the hon. member for Oxley, who virtually suggested that the building programme of the State should be discontinued immediately in order that we might help the war effort. I want to tell them that the building programme is helping the war effort. It is providing the people with opportunities for work and thus it is helping the war effort, something that they could not do if they were out of work. Hon. members opposite know quite well, and, indeed, the whole country knows quite well, that a great deal of the prosperity of Queensland to-day is due to the fact that the Government realise that wise expenditure encourages production, and thereby produces greater wealth for the State.

**Mr. Taylor:** That is shown by the investment in war-savings certificates in this State.

**The TREASURER:** Of course it is. If there was no work for the people there would be no great measure of investment in war-savings certificates and thus no appreciable contribution to the war effort.

Let me get back to the State development tax. Discussing the decision of the recent Labour Convention, which rejected a motion for the abolition of State development tax, the "Courier-Mail" in a further leading article of Wednesday, 19 February, 1941, said, *inter alia*—

"... Proper prudence guided the Government in refusing at one stroke to deprive the State Treasury of a source of revenue that is supplying it with more than £2,000,000 a year. Co-ordination of State and Federal taxation to assist the financing of the war is at present under consideration, and all States are facing the prospect of

having to adjust public works expenditure to lessened allocations of loan money. It is, therefore, only to be expected that the Queensland Government should husband all its revenue resources until the outlook for the next financial year becomes clearer."

That is what the Government are doing, and they have never departed from that proper course. We are seeing to it that the resources of this country are used to maintain production so that wealth is produced, and we are thereby placed in a position to help the Commonwealth, and indeed, the Empire war effort more and more.

The Leader of the Opposition said that the Commonwealth Government proposed to spend £12,000,000 on the war effort in Queensland.

Let me give you that estimate. They estimated that they would spend in New South Wales £56,000,000; they estimated that they would spend in Victoria £50,000,000; they estimated they would spend in Queensland £11,000,000—

**Mr. Macdonald:** You know why.

**The TREASURER:** I will tell the hon. member why in a minute.

They estimated that they would spend in South Australia £13,000,000, in Western Australia £7,000,000, and in Tasmania £3,000,000. The percentages of expenditure are—

	Per cent.
New South Wales .. ..	40
Victoria .. ..	36
South Australia .. ..	9
Queensland .. ..	8

Yet hon. members opposite ask you why that was done! It was done, as they well know, because there are people in authority in the Commonwealth Government who ignore the State of Queensland. If they were au fait with the position, as they should be, they would know that there are people in the Defence Department to-day with the idea that there is no need to protect any other part of Australia except that part of New South Wales which lies between Newcastle and Port Kembla. There is a notable defence authority who told a man very high in military circles that there was no need to go beyond Brisbane in the matter of defence, because beyond Brisbane there were only one or two villages that did not matter.

**Mr. EDWARDS:** That is too silly for words.

**The TREASURER:** The hon. member knows that there are Southern interests that absolutely ignore the State of Queensland. That is proverbial; the whole of the people know it. There are people in this country who know that high authorities in the Southern States have said that things cannot be done in Queensland that have been done in Queensland. The hon. member for Oxley as a director of a big woollen company ought to know it. He does know it; he knows it perfectly well. He knows of other

directions where the whole of Queensland interests have been absolutely and completely ignored. Why? Because of base misrepresentations that have been made from time to time about this State by people who should be boosting this State rather than damning it.

**Mr. Nimmo:** I know that ten times more orders could be got for Queensland if we could carry them out. (Government interjections.)

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**The TREASURER:** Let me get on to something else. I want just for a moment or two to refer to the new party that sits opposite. If I have its name correctly I believe it is the National-Country Party. If that is right well and good, but one can be pardoned for getting a little boxed in the name of the party opposite, as in the last session of Parliament it was known as the United Australia Party, the Country Party, and the Independent Party. During the 25 or 26 years that I have been in this Parliament I can say that on the other side of this House there have sat 12 different parties so far as the name is concerned, but it is only in name. I believe, Mr. Gair, that we should be giving that party its proper designation if we were to characterise it as the Permanent Opposition. Just as the organisations of the Government Party are known as the W.P.O., or the A.L.P., or the C.P.E., we should call this party, it being the Permanent Opposition, the P.O. Party. So far as this party is concerned, this P.O. Party is just the same old party we have had in this Chamber for generations.

It is the same party that continues to make misrepresentations. The Leader of the Opposition got up and attributed a statement to the Premier, and the hon. member for Oxley, to make assurance double sure, got up and read the same statement not once but twice. Here is the statement—

"The Queensland Government will claim that State spending must be maintained to avert a return to depression conditions."

The hon. member for Oxley quoted that as the Premier's statement.

**Mr. Nimmo:** I did not.

**The TREASURER:** Although the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Oxley attributed that statement to the Premier, I can say that the Premier never made that statement. It was made by the political writer of the "Courier-Mail" on 5 August, 1941. That writer simply said that the Commonwealth will say this and the State of Queensland will say so-and-so. It does not say in the "Courier-Mail" that the Premier stated that the Queensland Government would claim that. That is the phrase of the political writer of the "Courier-Mail" and not the words of the Premier.

**Mr. NIMMO:** I rise to a point of order. The point I make is the Treasurer said that the hon. member for Oxley said that he quoted from the "Courier-Mail" where the

Premier said so-and-so. What I said was that the Queensland Premier was reported to have said before the Loan Council meeting that spending must be maintained to avert a return to depression conditions. I did not say where I got that.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The difference between what the Treasurer stated and what the hon. gentleman claims to have said is so small that there is no point of order.

**The TREASURER:** That shows that in attributing the statement to the Premier the hon. gentleman was entirely wrong.

Then the hon. gentleman made one of those astonishing statements he frequently makes and does not explain. He referred to the Premier's policy as the "ceiling policy." He said, "If you rob a man of his salary you rob him of incentive." I wonder if Churchill's incentive has gone. Has Churchill lost all desire to do the job because the £10,000 a year is reduced to £3,000 by reason of the taxation? Has that reduced the incentive of Churchill? Of course it has not. Taxation that is used for the fighting of the war will not reduce the incentive of a man who has a love of his country and puts country before self.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**The TREASURER:** I admit there are specimens who will say, "I am not going to work for the Government; you will not get me making money that the Government will take from me." I know there are people who take that narrow view, but I believe the great bulk of the people will yet stand behind the proposal put forward by the Premier if it is necessary to save Australia—and I believe it may be necessary to save Australia.

The hon. member for Oxley made reference to what he called the "fine proposal" put forward by the Federal Treasurer in the matter of the States' surrendering taxation powers and levying of uniform taxation throughout the Commonwealth. I believe I am right in saying that proposal did not come from the Commonwealth Government. I do not believe the Commonwealth Government ever approved of it. It was possibly the creature of the economists standing behind the Federal Treasurer. But what did the proposal mean? It meant Queensland would have lost 37 per cent. of its revenues, that Western Australia would have lost 32 per cent. of its revenues, and that New South Wales would have lost 34 per cent. of its revenues. Three leading Labour States were to lose 37, 32, and 34 per cent. respectively: the other States of the Commonwealth not so much. It showed there was a desire to differentiate. You have experts who talk about the need for uniform taxation when conditions are not uniform. Look at the wonderful country of ours that has been developed—and not only by this Government; a meed of praise is due to the people who have gone before us who visualised Queensland as a great State. Right down the coast if you look at the ports, there are Cairns, Townsville, Bowen, Mackay, Port Alma, Gladstone,

and Brisbane—seven excellent ports on the coast of Queensland. You can see going out from those ports a railway from Cairns, one from Townsville, from Rockhampton, from Brisbane—away out 500 miles into the interior of this State. Look at New South Wales. What ports have they? The port of Newcastle, which ships coal and coal only; the port of Port Kembla, which ships iron and iron only. The whole of New South Wales commerce is centred in one spot—in Sydney.

Look at Victoria. It has only Port Melbourne and a bit of a place at Geelong. South Australia has one port, Port Adelaide. Here we have in Queensland this amazing decentralisation of ours—seven major ports to which overseas ships come.

**Mr. Nimmo:** Nature provided those ports.

**The TREASURER:** Nature did not. Nature provided the opportunity for virile Governments to develop the ports. There are many opportunities on the coast of New South Wales, as Port Stephens, Grafton, Shoalhaven and Jervis Bay, for ports, but the idea that actuates hon. members of the Opposition, the love of dividends and profits, has meant that the whole of New South Wales has been centred in Sydney. New South Wales has had the same opportunities as Queensland, but we have developed this State. Over this immense territory there are 1,000,000 people, whereas in a narrow little section of New South Wales they have 2,000,000 centred at one port. We have to have school teachers, clerks of petty sessions, magistrates, mining wardens, and all the other facilities that the Government can afford stationed in places in the far north and as far south as Coolangatta; from Point Danger in the east to Birdsville in the west. To say that a State such as Queensland, giving the wonderful service it gives in every department, giving the splendid governmental facilities that it gives to every person, can be governed with the same taxation as a pocket-handkerchief State such as Victoria is absurd, and only people who cannot visualise the greatness of Queensland or those who have forgotten the greatness of Queensland and the prominence it has given them could put up a proposal that there should be uniform taxation in all the States. Nothing could show a lack of appreciation of this Commonwealth as a Commonwealth, more than that lopsided, absurd proposal. To show how lopsided and absurd it was, I will hold up my hand and extend my fingers to show the States that voted for it. Not one State voted for that proposal. It was turned down by the unanimous vote of all the States of Australia, but the hon. member for Oxley comes into this Committee and urges it as a very fine thing that should have been done, and talks of the perfidy of the State of Queensland toward the Commonwealth of Australia. The Commonwealth of Australia is made up of the States. The States of Australia with one accord and one voice absolutely refused to listen to the proposal for uniform taxation and the surrendering of taxation to the Commonwealth.

Nothing has been said in this debate so far that causes the Government the slightest pang. We know we have endeavoured to do all the things we have done fairly, decently, and honestly. The hon. member for Oxley tells us that possibly the steel might yet have to be taken out of the Story Bridge to provide munitions of war. Well, that shows some vision; but he did not have enough vision when he sat on this side of the Chamber and sat behind the Government who proposed to give a company the right to build that bridge and were willing to guarantee 8 per cent. for 40 years. He completely overlooked that had that bridge been built it is quite possible we might still have had to take the steel out of it and we might still have had to pay the 8 per cent.

**Mr. NIMMO:** I rise to a point of order. The Treasurer has said that I sat behind the Government that guaranteed 8 per cent. for the building of the bridge. That is untrue, and I ask for the statement to be withdrawn.

**The TREASURER:** If the hon. gentleman says he did not sit behind the Government that guaranteed 8 per cent., I have to accept his denial. That is all there is to it. Maybe he sat with them. My English might not be just as good as it ought to be.

The hon. gentleman fulminated against the expenditure by the Government in developmental matters, but he, himself, sees to it that he is not behind the door when things are handed out.

**Mr. Nimmo:** What are they?

**The TREASURER:** A beautiful new school building is being erected at Yeronga in the hon. gentleman's electorate. He asked for it. I also see a very nice new bridge being erected over Oxley Creek. I doubt if there is any need for a bridge, because the creek will soon be thick enough to bear all the traffic over it, but he asked for that and the expenditure is proceeding. I see in his electorate the erection of a very fine building for the housing of the mounted police, their accoutrement, equipment, and horses. He did not object to that. I have also seen at Darra a very fine job being done by the Railway Department by the expenditure of public money. I have not yet read in the Press or heard the hon. gentleman object to the expenditure of public money in his electorate. The hon. gentleman runs the risk of being tongue-tied. If he continues to speak with his tongue in his cheek, something will happen to it sooner or later.

The Supply that is being asked for to-day will carry on the services of the Government for a period of about three months. It makes provision to meet all the essential requirements, and it will take us to about the end of November. The amounts applied for on account of Consolidated Revenue and Trust Funds respectively are those appropriated by the Act of last year, which allows us to carry on until the end of August, or about that time.

We are doing the usual thing in asking for this appropriation. It is necessary to have

the money so that the services of His Majesty may be continued, and I know that this Committee, in its wisdom, will grant the money in order that the Government may continue to do in the future the excellent work that they have been doing in the past.

**Mr. MULLER (Fassifern) (12.46 p.m.):** I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Gair, upon your elevation to the position of Chairman of Committees. I am sure that I am expressing the opinion of every member of the Opposition when I say that we wish you a very successful term of office. We appreciate just what your office requires. It demands of you a good deal of tact, discretion, and sound judgment, and I believe, because of your experience in this Chamber, that you will at least endeavour to carry out your duties in conformity with what is required.

This being the first session of a new Parliament, I join with the Leader of the Opposition in expressing the hope that during the war period, at least, we shall endeavour to create a greater feeling of co-operation and co-ordination in this Parliament. I realise that if a national Government are not acceptable to the people and the members of Parliament throughout Australia, perhaps the next best step might be greater co-operation between State and Commonwealth Parliaments.

I should like to take this opportunity, also, of congratulating the Premier on the speech he made at the Exhibition the other day. Without throwing any bouquets at the Premier, I feel, as a member of this Assembly, that it is my duty to express my feelings about his speech. I feel that in the course of his remarks he did more to create the right war atmosphere than anything I have heard previously. I believe that he inspired a spirit which, if emulated by hon. members of this Assembly and the people of this State, will have a wonderful effect throughout the Commonwealth. I assure the Premier that I agree entirely with the views expressed by him on that occasion and I feel proud to think that a leading citizen of this State should take up that attitude. We do require a great deal more of that spirit throughout Australia at present. I feel that the people of the Commonwealth have not appreciated our real position. Whilst we have had much lip service throughout Australia, we have not had that co-operation and that service that are needed. Perhaps we fail to realise that the enemy is knocking at our door louder now than he has ever done before. During the course of his speech at the Exhibition the Premier said—

“Let us all be up and doing before it is too late.”

That is a true statement of the position, and I want to assure you, Mr. Chairman, that any contribution that I make during this session will be purely of a constructive nature. If I am slightly critical in my remarks, I want the Government to be assured that so far as it is within my power to do so, I shall endeavour to help in every possible way.

Let us remember at all times that if we lose the title deeds to this country it does not matter very much whether we are governed by the Labour Party, the Country Party, Independents, or anybody else.

**The Premier:** We should have no say in the government at all under such conditions.

**Mr. MULLER:** We have an unusually large crop of Independents in Parliament to-day, and I believe that that is because the feelings of the people generally are hostile to party politics. They are looking to men who are willing to forget that they belong to a party, and who will regard the war effort as their most essential duty.

The question before the Committee this morning is that of Supply. The Leader of the Opposition threw out the suggestion that it would be advisable for the Government to consider seriously their policy of expenditure in the future, in order that they might co-operate with the Commonwealth Government to a greater extent. Whilst it is not advisable, perhaps, to cut out our vast loan policy completely, and endeavour to wipe loan expenditure aside for the time being, I believe that common sense should prevail and that a good deal of our loan-works programme might be delayed. We should endeavour to carry on the affairs of government for the time being, and much of our loan-works programme might with advantage wait until a more opportune time presents itself. If such a policy could be adopted, I believe we could help the Commonwealth Government to a greater extent than we are doing at the present.

The Treasurer, in the course of his reply this morning, endeavoured to twist remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader in reference to the Premier's policy regarding future taxation, as stated at the Loan Council meeting. I did not deduce, when listening to the speech made by the hon. member for Oxley, that he was entirely looking for profits; the Treasurer endeavoured to misconstrue his statements, and prove to this Committee that the only objective at the back of the mind of the hon. member for Oxley was profit and profit alone. If the Premier's policy had been adopted—that is to say, limit all incomes to £500—

**The Premier:** I never said that at all.

**Mr. MULLER:** I must accept the Premier's denial. I was referring to Press reports—

**The Premier:** You cannot produce a Press report in which I said that.

**Mr. MULLER:** Press reports conveyed that impression—

**The Premier:** It was the Press that said that, not I. I never used that figure nor did I use any figure.

**Mr. MULLER:** The Press report inferred that it would be desirable to limit incomes to £500, or, rather, to establish a form of taxation having that effect.

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**The Premier:** That report was circulated for the purpose of injuring the proposal.

**Mr. MULLER:** I am not going to argue whether it was or not, but, nevertheless, I feel that the Premier's contention was to limit incomes to a certain amount. That suggestion was perhaps a little different to the Press report, but nevertheless—

**The Premier:** I will give you a copy of my speech if you like.

**Mr. MULLER:** It does not affect the basis of the argument.

**The Premier:** I will give you a copy of what I actually said.

**Mr. MULLER:** I should be pleased to have it, but, as I said, it does not affect the basis of my argument. What I am concerned about is not the question of profit to the individual or to the company, but the question of production. If business concerns are to be so hamstrung with taxation as to prevent their expanding, there will be a detrimental effect upon employment. It will also have a detrimental effect upon production, and I think that is why the Federal Treasurer was opposed to the policy enunciated at the time by the Premier of Queensland. Whilst the Premier's idea may appear to be sound in theory, nevertheless such a scheme would have a serious effect upon production as a whole. It is not so much a question of how it might affect the income of the various States as how it might affect production in a big way. Perhaps the man in the street would support the idea in the belief that if we were sincere in our efforts with regard to the war, it could properly be argued that if it is right that Bill Jones should be content with an income of £5 a week for the duration of the war, Tom Smith should accept a similar amount. However, that is entirely beside the argument. The question is how are we going to stimulate production and enlistment. It was said by way of interjection that if we reduced loan expenditure or lessened the works programme we should thereby prevent people from getting the wherewithal to contribute to war-savings certificates and to similar funds. We agree with those sentiments, but would not the same argument apply if we interfered unnecessarily with industry so as to prevent its development and expansion, thus reducing the purchasing power of the people and thereby their ability to contribute to war-savings certificates?

**The Premier:** It is true that the Government could not get the same amount twice.

**Mr. MULLER:** That is true. I believe that if we were willing to adopt a policy of greater co-operation and greater co-ordination there would not be the same argument about the different amounts received by the respective States. It is not a question what Queensland is going to lose or New South Wales is going to lose so much as it is what the Commonwealth are going to gain so as to maintain the war effort.

Much has been said about the money that has been spent in Queensland, but let us be fair. Let us examine the position. We have had a number of opportunities to accept war contracts, but we have not had the facilities to carry them out. In many instances material is in short supply. Indeed, the primary industries have had to make sacrifices because they were not able to get the material they need. It is being used for war purposes.

**The Secretary for Public Instruction:**

Can you name some of the contracts that we have had to turn down?

**Mr. MULLER:** I am not blaming the Federal Government; I am not blaming anybody. I am trying to discuss the matter apart from any party political considerations at all. I am endeavouring to point out that whereas orders were available to Queensland we had not the factories nor the equipment to carry them out. Therefore, it would not be much use making £5,000,000 available to Queensland by way of war expenditure if we did not have the plant to carry out the work involved. The Secretary for Public Instruction will agree with that.

Reference was made to a woollen company in which the hon. member for Oxley is interested. We know very well that a little while ago it was almost impossible to get such woollen goods as blankets. I know that such material as saddle lining was not being made. I made inquiries about a week ago and I was informed by the manufacturers that their instructions were to carry out war orders; and that other things had to wait. That is the real position.

**The Secretary for Public Instruction:**

You said that we could have obtained the orders, but we could not carry them out. You have said, in effect, that the companies are carrying out the orders that have been obtained.

**Mr. MULLER:** When dealing with the Government's financial policy this morning the Treasurer called to his aid Kipling, Shakespeare, and other writers in order to justify his case. In reply, I propose just to quote a few facts to show that it was misleading for the Treasurer to say that the Government had endeavoured to co-operate with the Commonwealth Government in their war efforts and that his Government had reduced taxation in order that a greater amount of money might be made available to the national Government for war purposes.

**The Treasurer:** I did not say that. I said that over our nine-year period of office we had reduced taxation and the hon. member for East Toowoomba backed me up.

**Mr. MULLER:** I will begin with the income tax. In 1932 the total amount of income tax collections was £1,674,329, whereas in 1940-41 it was £3,966,399, or an increase of £2,292,070.

**The Treasurer:** That is not due to an increase in taxation; it is due purely to an increase in prosperity.

**Mr. MULLER:** There is a good deal more attached to this question if the Treasurer will have the patience to listen to me.

**The Treasurer:** I will try.

**Mr. MULLER:** Those figures disclose that in this nine-year period the amount of income tax levied was almost doubled. Take the unemployment relief tax, now called the State development tax. In 1932 the amount levied for this tax was £1,089,645, whereas in 1940-41 that increased to £2,369,883.

**The Treasurer:** What was the first year you quoted.

**Mr. MULLER:** 1932.

**The Treasurer:** That was in the days of the Moore Government when you taxed the washerwoman and others on low incomes.

**Mr. MULLER:** I will show how this tax has progressively increased. In 1939-40 the State development tax yielded £2,255,197. Now let us look at the receipts last year. The Government obtained from this source alone £2,369,883, or an increase of £114,686 as compared with the tax levied in 1939-40. If we look right along the line we see similar increases. Take the total taxation levied—that is, the total of income tax and other taxes. In 1932 the records show that the total taxation collected was £4,189,749, whereas last year the total was £8,140,363, or almost double.

**The Treasurer:** That is accounted for by a record prosperity.

**Mr. MULLER:** I want to mention this point because the hon. member for Gregory made reference to it yesterday in the course of his speech, while the Treasurer, following it up this morning, told this Committee that the Government had balanced their Budget without financially embarrassing anyone—in other words, without increasing taxation. That is not altogether correct.

Take the total revenue collections—that is, the combined receipts from taxation and other sources, including railways, land, mining, and other departmental receipts. We find that in 1932 the Government collected a revenue of £14,083,758, while last year that amount increased to £21,539,749, an increase of £7,455,991, or 30 per cent.

Now, what has happened? We find the Government spent the whole of it. The Leader of the Opposition was perfectly right when he made the point that no endeavour is being made to curtail expenditure. It is a matter of collecting as much money as possible from the community and spending it, and getting as much loan money as possible and spending it all and then telling ourselves that we are prosperous. An examination of the position shows that we are really not prosperous. Virtually the whole of our income last year was spent. Although a record amount of £21,000,000 was collected there is a surplus of only approximately £28,000. Take the position of the Trust Funds. In 1931-32 the Trust Fund revenue was £3,795,468, and in 1940-41 it had risen to £8,761,980, and the expenditure had gone up from £3,129,169 to £7,565,721. After all, there is nothing very

wonderful about that system of finance. It is purely a matter of collecting as much money as you can and spending it. It is true that in so doing you create further employment, but, after all, that is not everything; you have to consider industry as well.

While I am not one who advocates gross profits for the individual or the company, I should like the Treasurer to realise that these companies, besides providing some profit for their shareholders, are of considerable assistance to the Government in that they provide employment. They are the blood of the nation and should be encouraged. If we are going to increase the rate of taxation to the extent that it makes it impossible for them to carry on or restrict them in their development we are going to kill the goose that lays the golden egg.

**The Treasurer:** Would you say a tradesman who has doubled his turnover must increase his price to do it? Might he not do it by extending his business as the State has extended its business and doubled its income?

**Mr. MULLER:** That is perfectly true. Common sense enters into the picture. If the Treasurer is going to set himself out to clip the wings of these industries that are spreading—as he says they are—and thus remove inducement to expand or carry on, he is not going to improve the position of the State. I am wondering how long this system can continue to operate. We have to remember all the time that there is a war on and that money is urgently needed for fighting purposes. A great deal of the money being put into works should be used for war purposes. A good deal of these works could wait until we can see daylight.

If we get down to taintacks and examine the position carefully, we see that it discloses an astonishing state of affairs. I notice that interest on the public debt to-day is £6,812,377, whereas in 1932 it was £6,415,734.

**The Treasurer:** Tell us what it was in 1832 and in 1732.

**Mr. MULLER:** I will not allow the Treasurer to draw me off my path. The point I wish to make here is that there has been an increase of £396,643 in the public debt in nine years, or by approximately £45,000 a year. There is a body of opinion throughout the Commonwealth that suggests we should abolish State Parliaments. I am not one who holds that view—I am not an advocate of unification—but, unfortunately, we do provide such persons with an argument when such a state of affairs as I have outlined operates. After all, the cost of our Legislative Assembly, from the Premier down to the most humble of us, costs approximately £45,000 a year.

The interest bill is increasing at the rate of £45,000 a year, and with the population we have in Queensland I am just wondering where this sort of thing will end. I can only assume that the Treasurer appears to have an utter disregard for the finances of the State as they will apply to the people who will follow him.

These are points that the Treasurer should take into consideration at least during a period of war. It is only a question of what amount of money the Loan Council is willing to provide in order that we might satisfy the community, who in a great many instances would be absorbed in other avenues of employment. The policy that it is the responsibility of the Government to provide work and wages for all is wrong. We should be more self-dependent. We should encourage industry and private enterprise to provide work and wages. If we continue to pursue the policy of borrowing money to provide work and wages for the people we shall find that that money is limited to a certain amount. It will then be necessary to take the other course of increasing taxation. I again wonder where it is all going to end. The people of Queensland to-day are almost unanimous that the State development tax should go by the board. His Excellency yesterday mentioned that unemployment had fallen to approximately 3 per cent.

(Time expired.)

**The PREMIER (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay) (2.27 p.m.):** Mr. Gair, there are one or two matters that I wish to deal with this afternoon in order to give the Committee, and through the Committee, the country, certain information. I do not propose to give any categorical reply to any speeches made in opposition to the Government. Some hon. members of the Opposition think it their duty to oppose; in other words, in process of time they become permanent negatives. That may be very regrettable, but it is a fact that is becoming increasingly apparent.

In the course of this debate reference has been made to Loan Council proceedings, to war-time activities, to co-operation, and to the expenditure of Loan Funds. I propose to apply myself to these things.

The Loan Council operates under the Financial Agreement. It is a council composed of the Governments in Australia. In reality it is an economic council, the duty of the members of which is to estimate the resources of Australia, to make provision for the needs of Australia within the limits of those resources, and generally to co-operate for the development of Australia and the promotion of good government, law and order through the country. The proceedings of that council, like meetings of the Governor in Council and the Cabinet, are not open to the Press, but they are of considerable public interest, with the result that many statements are published that are speculative in character. Newspapers, unable to obtain information, frequently indicate that such and such a Government will take a certain line of action. They feel that that will call forward a statement in either rebuttal or affirmation, and that premature disclosures might be made. It is obvious that no-one with experience will indicate, before attending such a meeting, what his attitude will be, because you can only define your attitude after you have heard all the evidence and had the opportunity of analysing all the facts.

Having regard to those circumstances, while there may be differences of opinion at meetings of the Loan Council, those differences of opinion do not in any way prevent the Council's functioning. Taking the whole of the provisions of this part of the Constitution by and large, I believe that the Loan Council and the Financial Agreement have been a distinct success. I believe that financial conditions in Australia are better to-day than they would have been had such an agreement not been made. Mistakes in policy occur from time to time; there is human error in all things, but my experience has been that members of that council apply themselves to immediate problems, always having as their objective what is in the best interests of Australia.

Since the outbreak of war, all State Governments have agreed that the Commonwealth should have the first call on funds to carry on defence activities and finance Australia's share in the war. Furthermore, the public works policy within a State has been devised so that those works shall be of defence value. In order to secure that, a Co-ordinator-General of Public Works, who has access to the various Commonwealth departments, has been appointed to control defence and war-time activities. He determines what proposals and what projects promote the defence effort and should be given priority. All States have spent a considerable proportion of their loan funds in directions definitely approved and considered necessary by not only the Commonwealth Government, but also by the supreme authority controlling defence in Australia. Roads and bridges have been built; aerodromes have been constructed; emergency landing grounds have been provided; work has been done in military camps; fortifications and all works of that nature have been much more widespread than the public are aware.

It is not my purpose to disclose in this Parliament the full details of all the works that have been undertaken in Queensland by the Commonwealth and State Governments conjointly, because all our communications with the Commonwealth are marked "Secret and confidential" by the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth may and does disclose them from time to time, but if I get a document from another Minister of the Crown, from another Government, marked "Secret and confidential," I must treat it as such. In any case, the Commonwealth, through the defence authorities, have the power to determine the volume of information that may be safely given with regard to these things.

My own view is that it would be much better for Australia and would improve the general morale of the people if there were more candour and frankness about the things done in this Commonwealth.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**The PREMIER:** If that were done a very fine picture could be shown. This country is making a magnificent war effort under tremendous difficulties, and it is sad indeed

that the black portion of the picture is shown in relief and the big things that count for the nation are little known by the people. However, that is not my immediate responsibility. I say on behalf of the people of this country and those who are charged with carrying out the executive functions that wonderful work has been done and is being done by all sections of the community who are fired with zeal to serve. With the zeal and the will to serve many men are engaged in industries that they are learning as they go along. Work is being performed in Australia that 18 months or two years ago was regarded as impossible by experts.

I asked the Prime Minister to look into the question of munition-manufacture in Queensland. A delegation of authorities was sent to Queensland. That delegation investigated the industrial plant operating in various parts of the State, and they reported that there was no engineering shop capable of making munitions, that there were not in existence machine tools capable of working to the degree of accuracy that was urgently essential. I told those people at once that I did not believe them. However, that report went in, but the Queensland Government continued to press the defence claims of this State until ultimately a very considerable amount of work is being done in Queensland. The machine power of Queensland has been extensively mobilised and placed on a war-time footing. Work is being done here and machine tools are being made here that were once regarded as incapable of production in this country.

**Mr. Muller:** It has taken time to do that.

**The PREMIER:** It has taken time to do that; everything takes time. When the time factor is important, having regard to your objective, no time can be spared or lost. Little or no value results from the holding of post-mortems.

Machinery intended for Australia from overseas countries was despatched to the Commonwealth, but not landed here. In recent months this machinery has been manufactured in Australia and Australian workmen are turning out work of an excellent nature, comparable with that of any other country in the world. These things should be known and appreciated. Let us condemn, if we will, wrong-doing of all kinds.

Let us at the same time see that right action by the great bulk of the people of this country is not overwhelmed by wrong-doing. The great bulk of the people of this country are willing loyally to serve the Commonwealth, and where they are able they are indeed serving the Commonwealth now.

We were told that the Toowoomba foundry was no good for the manufacture of munitions. The Ipswich railway workshops were dismissed with a shrug of the shoulders and Walkers Limited, Maryborough, was regarded as a conglomeration of ill-assorted machinery. And so the report went on. Since then, because of pressure by the Queensland Government and pressure of public opinion, and the fact that there are enterprising business firms

in Queensland who refused to be discouraged and who went out after the work, a great deal is being done in Queensland and that work is being stepped up regularly. Ships have been built here, machinery of all kinds has been erected and a very large number of people are employed directly in this State on war activities for the Defence Department. They are doing good work. Further investigations by technicians, and especially by Sir Roger Alexander, have prompted them to speak in the highest possible terms of what is being done in Queensland. Mr. Essington Lewis, on his last visit to Queensland, spoke in the highest possible terms, not only of what Queensland is doing, but of what Queensland industry was capable of carrying out. Sir Roger Alexander said that the plant at Ipswich was capable of being used to build marine engines and of carrying out any type of engineering work as efficiently as any plant in Australia and better than most.

We had to overcome that attitude, that Queensland was not an industrial country and could not undertake industrial processes. That idea was firmly embedded in the minds of certain people and had become so by the adverse propaganda, ill-considered, and ill-thoughtout, by people in the past.

In all practical directions we have co-operated with the Commonwealth, but when we speak of co-operation we must clearly define the term. My conception of co-operation with anyone does not mean standing at a listening post taking orders from someone else. My idea of co-operation is that we sit down and consider our problems as equals and having arrived at a decision we have an equal responsibility in giving effect to it. That is co-operation, and that is the only form of co-operation that can bring about satisfactory results. Because the Commonwealth Treasurer argued that Queensland should evacuate the field of taxation and accept a grant in lieu thereof, being 37 per cent. less than the revenue of the State for the past year, to accept that blindly would not be adequate co-operation within the federation.

There is no constitutional difficulty in Australia. The whole notion of the legal powers of the Commonwealth and State Parliaments means that the two together are capable of dealing with any situation that may arise that requires legislative or administrative or executive authority. It is only where people seek to extend their sphere of influence and covet power for the sake of serving interests apart altogether from public interests that difficulties arise. What right have we as a Government to surrender any powers of the Constitution? We are not given such powers to hold lightly. My oath of office, together with those of my colleagues, demands that I shall protect the Constitution. I am not allowed under my oath of office to fritter it away at the invitation of a member of any other Government. That proposal was not even put forward with the full authority of the Commonwealth Government. It was a proposal of the Treasurer.

**Mr. Nimmo:** It was to be only temporary.

**The PREMIER:** That is so, but we know all about that. (Government laughter.) No Parliament can give up the right to tax and remain a Parliament. Why, even a hospital board has the right to levy, while local authorities established under the law of the State have power to tax, yet here was a proposal—approved by the Opposition simply because it desired to take a view contrary to that of this Government—that would have placed this Parliament on a lower status economically and financially than a local authority under the law of the State.

**Mr. Muller:** We never suggested it.

**The PREMIER:** That is the position. It indicates very clearly that the attitude of the Opposition is not helpful. They may speak, but they are like a duststorm during a drought—they merely create a little difficulty here and there. The position boiled down is: if this Government put forward an affirmative, they immediately take the negative. Their speeches this morning followed the old beaten track—the same line of activity and the same form of criticism. I am not at all worried about that, but I do say that this State and its people, as well as its Government, are doing their parts in the war-time activity.

The hon. member for Oxley talked about the possibility of dismembering the Story Bridge in order to use the metal for munitions. Does he not realise that the building of that bridge enabled plant and machinery to be established in Queensland that is now being used in the manufacture of munitions and has enabled us to train a number of skilled technicians who are now engaged on munition work? That is something on the credit side that is never mentioned. But I want to point out to hon. members with all the solemnity at my disposal that if the time ever comes that that bridge need be used for munitions then it must be used.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**The PREMIER:** If that time ever comes it will not be a question of putting a ceiling on incomes—the hon. member for Oxley will be glad to get food, clothing, and shelter—but if we win the victory in the fight to hold this country, then that will be worth while.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**The PREMIER:** That is the position as I see it. This country is challenged. The people of Australia have all their freedom in this country and everything that they enjoy and hold most dear. Are we going to jeopardise the future, because some people want more than 5 per cent from their investments? Some people talk glibly about human life, but the same people place profit on a higher level than human life. I say that during a period of national emergency all property rights must be subordinated to the interests of the people.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**The PREMIER:** That is quite definite and clear, and there is no ambiguity about it.

The only real trouble in Australia to-day is the lack of central drive in the Federal Government—everyone knows that—whatever may be the cause. The lack of central drive in government, the irresolution, the bold statements that fritter away and fade in the course of a day or two—these are the real difficulties and the cause of most of the trouble and most of the unrest in Australia to-day.

**Mr. Nimmo:** Why cannot they all get together and get the best brains?

**The PREMIER:** Well, I do not know what the hon. member for Oxley means. Who does he mean when he asks, "Why cannot they get together?" Does he mean the people who are biting the heels of the Prime Minister in the United Australia Party, or what does he mean? Are not they his chief trouble—the men pledged to support the Government biting his heels at the present time in any move he has made? Put your own house in order before you talk about other people.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The Premier has exhausted the time allowed him under the Standing Orders.

**The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS** (Hon. E. J. Walsh, Mirani): I move—

"That the Premier be granted an extension of time."

**The CHAIRMAN:** There is no provision in the Standing Orders for an extension of time in Committee, but there are instances during debates in Committee in which an extension of time has been granted. I propose to submit the question to the Committee.

"Is it the pleasure of the Committee that an extension of time be granted to the hon. the Premier?"

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**The PREMIER:** I thank hon. members; I shall not take long.

I will deal squarely with the question of unity in national objectives. There is unity of national objectives. No war measure of any weight brought down by the Government has been opposed by the party to which I belong. The war policy decided upon at the Labour Conference in Melbourne in June, 1940, is acceptable to the Prime Minister in complete detail. He said so; he has said so publicly. There are no differences of opinion regarding national unity in relation to the winning of the war. Every party is pledged to indissoluble unity with the cause of Great Britain and her allies. We are an integral part of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Members of Parliament in this country, as well as in others, have a right to criticise the efforts of any Government, and it would be a disaster if that right were ever taken away.

Objective criticism is no disturbance of unity. The disturbers of unity are those who haggle in the market place for excess profits and those who are prepared to plot for personal power and personal aggrandisement. That is the actual position—haggling in the

market place on the basis of, "What is there in this for me?"—others again plotting, because they have not obtained the preferment that others have gained—but so far as the great big issues are concerned, those that vitally affect this country, there is complete unity, and resolution is required to give effect to that unity and carry out the policy 100 per cent., as the saying is. That is what is needed to-day. No one man can accomplish everything, but there are basic principles on which all good Australians are completely united, and on those basic principles we are fighting and are engaged in this the most tragic drama in our history. It is lamentable in the extreme that executive authority that should be exercised in this country is attenuated and sometimes frittered away because of endless disputation about matters that are of no consequence.

Is that not the truth? Every person knows it to be true. But we, individually, can resolve, both by precept and example, that we shall do our duty so far as we know and understand it in giving effect to a policy in the best interests of the people of this country. We should be prepared to give every service and to make every sacrifice that is necessary to give effect to the great Australian objective that I have enunciated. It is all set out in the Labour platform; it is there for anyone to read.

I repeat that there is not, and need not, be any break in the unity of the people of Australia in regard to our war-time objective, and if time is wasted by malversation of figures and in idle argument calculated to cause misunderstandings among the people, then it is not conducive to a 100-per-cent. war effort.

This Government have a complete mandate from the people of this country. We will loyally carry out that mandate to the best of our ability, honestly and resolutely. The people have approved of this Government's policy in no mistakable fashion, and that policy will be proceeded with, and, I am satisfied, will contribute very largely to building up and strengthening this country where building or strengthening is required.

**Government Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. DECKER** (Sandgate) (2.59 p.m.): As a new member of Parliament I take this first opportunity of congratulating you, Mr. Gair, on your elevation to the position of Chairman of Committees, and hope that when occupying the chair you will follow those who have gone before you in extending to us the justice we really expect.

In asking for approval for money to carry on the work of State for a further period, the Government should take particular notice of the criticism and the suggestions made by the leader of our party this morning.

Contrary to the way in which it has been received, I know that it has been offered with the right intention. From my observation of the debate to-day, I have gained the impression that the remarks of the Premier and all other hon. members on the Government side,

while being directed towards bringing before our notice the wonderful effort that has been made in the interests of a successful prosecution of the war, at the same time remind us how wonderfully well cared for the people of this State have been by a Labour Government. It would appear that Labour has a monopoly of looking after the people of this State. At least, it claims to have it. There are hon. members on this side of the Chamber who are just as earnest as any hon. members occupying the Government benches in their desire to do their share for the country's good, to have good government and to do everything that will tend to a complete and successful termination of the war.

The Premier made an extremely loyal speech to-day, but he must not forget that hon. members on this side of the Chamber are not here just to be an annoyance to the Government.

**The Premier:** You are not by any means.

**Mr. DECKER:** I and my colleagues shall be only too pleased and ready to be of some aid, if we are only given the opportunity to do so, but I am afraid that we are not given that opportunity, nor are we asked for help that perhaps could be given by hon. members of the Opposition. And in face of this the Government talk about unity! No unity can be achieved unless we all have the one ideal for which to fight.

It is all very well to come here and make loyal speeches—we can all do that because we are loyal citizens—but the depth of our loyalty can be proved only by actions. When we look round we can ask ourselves, as each hon. member takes his place on this floor, "What has that man done for his country? What is he doing? Is he giving of his maximum effort?"—and we can formulate our opinions on that basis. All the debate in the world will not make the slightest impression if it is not backed up by some direct effort by those who talk.

As a new member of this Assembly, I contend that some of the suggestions that have been made by hon. members on this side of the Chamber are of such vital importance to this State and our war effort that they can bear some further reference. The hon. member for Oxley touched on a very important point—man power. I suggest that if we endeavour to carry on the government of Queensland on the basis of peace-time conditions and at the same time profess to be making a total war effort, we shall have a set of conditions under which, in our endeavour to carry out the domestic works of the State, we shall be depriving our war programme of the man power that is essential to its success. The argument might be carried even further. We can say that it is the duty of this Government, recognising the seriousness of the man-power position, to take some steps to ensure that country local authorities time their programmes so as not to clash with the seasonal requirements of the man on the land.

If we are to allow local authorities to spend loan money and absorb labour from the farms

when it is required for the seasonal needs of the people, we are robbing the country people of the man power that is necessary to enable them to carry on. If we as Government do the same thing we are robbing the national war effort. We should be willing to do things at this time that we would not in ordinary times think of doing.

I should like to refer to some remarks made by the hon. member who moved the adoption of the Address in Reply. He spoke of his party as representing the commoner and said that the commoner was winning this war. Such a statement requires some enlargement. I should like to hear his definition of what he really meant by the use of the word "commoner" because I feel that class distinction is not a matter that should be debated in this Committee at present. This is an all-in war effort where class distinction does not exist. It would be a very bad policy for an hon. member to bring up such a question in this Committee, if the remarks made were intended that way. If his remark was only brought in accidentally and he was referring to the worker—an expression we so often hear from those sitting opposite—there might be some excuse for it.

**The Attorney-General:** You are taking great care to advertise it.

**Mr. DECKER:** We are all workers in this State; even hon. members on this side of the Committee are workers. We are all working for the same objective and no man is worthy of representation in this Assembly if he puts party politics before a full war effort. All through the debate we have had a trickle of party politics; some to impress upon the people of the State that they should elect certain members of a party in preference to others. Party politics might be all right on the stump outside when trying to win a seat, but in this Chamber we have something more serious to consider. We should be concentrating on unity, as the Premier remarked. He endeavoured to give us an example of the unity he would like to see in this Committee. I wish to say that we are willing to throw in our weight, as the Leader of the Opposition explained, behind the Government in their effort to improve this State's war-time effort. I do not think we are getting that to-day.

I was disappointed indeed to hear the Treasurer indulging in such levity in the Chamber as he did to-day; he went to such extremes as to say that this party should be called.

I am sure that his statement will be omitted from his proof when he gets it to-morrow. I do not think he would allow such a remark to appear in "Hansard." For the hon. gentleman to make use of such remarks in this Committee makes hon. members lose the confidence they perhaps hold in the Government.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** You will live and learn on your own side.

**Mr. DECKER:** I should be inclined in normal times to have something to say to that, but have no wish to do so under the existing conditions. We have to get down to something concrete, something uplifting, and help

one another to make the Government recognised by the people as one whose members have endeavoured to do their best in the successful prosecution of the war.

**Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. MACDONALD** (Stanley) (3.10 p.m.): First of all, I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Gair, upon your appointment as Chairman of Committees. From my experience of you, I believe you have the right temperament to see that a fair and square deal is given to us all.

In listening to the debate two things stand out—one, the experience of the Jewish nationality and the other the Treasurer's contribution to the debate. Shorn of all its trimmings, little remains. There is very little grain left after the chaff has blown away. It appeared to me that his explanation of what took place at the last Loan Council meeting must remind him very strongly of prehistoric tendencies, of the law of the jungle, of the law of the tooth and claw. Mr. McKell, the Premier of New South Wales, said himself that he had been fighting like a tiger and his remarks were commented upon in the Sydney "Bulletin" of the 20th of this month. Those comments apply also to the Premier and his satellites who were beaten only on the casting vote of the Federal Treasurer. This is what the Sydney "Bulletin" suggested Mr. McKell should have said—

"While I was still struggling for words to express my indignation a flood of new thoughts burst into my mind. Suddenly there unfolded before me a mental picture of this great Australia of ours—its coasts, its mountains, its plains, and the long rivers of the inland; the forests of the east and of the far south-west; the sheep country and the wheat farms, the cattle stations of the north, the sugar country, the mines. I saw, like a moving picture, the cities and the towns, the villages and the camps and the roads between; the great industries and the small; the warm Australian suns and the people they have made and the graves of the pioneers.

"And I saw, too, the graves on Gallipoli and Palestine and France, and the newer graves in Libya, Syria, Greece, and Crete, where lie men of our race who went forth as volunteers, with that devil-may-care Australian walk of theirs and the free Australian look of them, to face what I and most of you hon. members have never faced and may never have to face so long as that spirit lives in our land. I saw, too, the enemy in all his might; under his feet the beaten nations, and in his path, shaken but resolute, battered but undaunted, the islands in the north whence we sprang. I saw the grey ships of war and the rusty, old merchantmen beating gamely into the Atlantic, never knowing but what the next wave may be their last wave, and in the skies that hold the emblem on our Australian flag young lads of our race going forth on wings of war. All this I saw, and more—much more—in that flash of time that was like an age.

"I want now to tell hon. members that before that vision, before the thing which all that vision interpreted, the so-called rights of this State faded into insignificance."

**Mr. YEATES** (East Toowoomba) (3.14 p.m.): First of all, I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Gair, upon your appointment to the position of Chairman of Committees. I feel that you will deal out justice to all sides and that even I shall get on well with you. (Laughter.)

This is a serious vote, as it provides for the expenditure of a large amount of money, something over £7,000,000. Therefore, we should take some interest in it and should know how it is proposed to be spent. I should like to sound a note of warning to the Government, and in view of the war situation advocate more careful administration and a certain amount of economy. So far, I have not noticed any economy to speak of, with the exception of cutting down of the paper supplies and things like that. I could make a lot of suggestions in that respect. Economy should be effected in expenditure on public buildings—for instance, the creation of the new State Advances Corporation block at a cost of something over £100,000. That is not a wise proposal when viewed from the angle of the strenuous times through which we are passing. I realise that a certain amount of public money should always be spent on public buildings, particularly when the State is emerging from a depression. Such a period might very well occur at the conclusion of the war. Who knows? Is it not far better to save our money in the meantime while unemployment is down to the record low level of 3 per cent.—there is hardly any unemployment in this country to-day—because of the war and labour engaged in the production of munitions and the like?

**Mr. Riordan:** Do you think the Government should stop building the Toowoomba court house?

**Mr. YEATES:** I am not taking much notice of interjections. (Laughter.) If the expenditure on the Toowoomba court house is, say, £25,000, that will cost the taxpayers £25 a week in the way of rent and interest. That could have stood over for 10 years. What would be wrong with that? I should not say "no" to the Government's building a school in any place where school accommodation was required. It is perfectly advisable to proceed with the building of schools, but work done in conjunction with the court house could have been done in any old shed. I never came here to ask the Government to spend that money. The average taxpayer does not look for that kind of thing. As a rule, the Government are out for votes in connection with the inauguration of such work. That has been going on for years and years. That practice is not confined to this Government; it was followed by past Governments as well. I have told this Committee before that I am not enamoured of party politics.

I agree with certain remarks made by the Premier to-day. He is able to rise to a very high pitch at times; I have noticed it before. His was a first-rate speech, unequivocally loyal. I never think anything else about the present Government, not so far as the Ministry go. I want to know more about the Government's co-operation in the war effort. I should like the Premier to tell me who it was that was sent to Walkers Limited, the Ipswich workshops, and the Toowoomba foundry, and reported that they were unable to do this work or that work. Who was it that inspected those workshops and made such an adverse report?

The Government have a definite job to do, and they have done nothing more than carry out their duty in co-operating with the Federal Government to the extent they have done. The Government can go still further in co-operating with the Federal Government, and in that I will help them in every way in my power. Whenever any Bill is before the House for the purpose of prosecuting the war, I, like the Leader of the Opposition, shall be right behind the Government and assist to facilitate its passage. If we are going to continue State Governments—and that is a controversial matter that I will not enter into now—then let us be as one in this Chamber in regard to any measure that will further the war effort. Apart from that, when dealing with domestic matters we have a perfect right to offer constructive criticism, and nothing but constructive criticism comes from this side, notwithstanding what the Premier has said on occasions. A short while ago the Premier said that speeches from this side were trying to defame the Government, or words to that effect. I refer the hon. gentleman to "Hansard" from 1929 to 1932, which contains a record of what was said by the Opposition that was led by him.

A large amount of this money is going to the public service, and I wish to draw attention to something that appeared in the journal "State Service." It is headed "National and International Politics," and reads—

"Item 11—Mr. Bacon moved, seconded by Mr. Brennan—

'Congress declares that the war now raging is a struggle between rival imperialist Powers for the redivision of the world's territories, markets, and sources of raw materials.

'Should the war spread to the Pacific, as appears inevitable, Australian finance-capital will participate in it for its own advantage and without heed for the well-being of the people of Australia.

'Congress therefore declares that the working-class can give no support to this war which menaces its very existence. On the contrary, the organised workers must realise their historic responsibility to end the war and abolish its cause by working in all countries for the overthrow of Capitalism and the institution of Socialism.' "

'Messrs. McCawley and Davis supported the motion.

'Messrs. Redwood and O'Donohue opposed the motion, and Mr. Barry moved the following amendment, which was seconded by Mr. McCormack:—

'Congress declares, and all organised workers must realise, their responsibility to end successfully this war by working in all countries for the overthrow of Capitalism and the institution of Socialism and thus abolish all further causes of wars.'

'Mr. Kenyon supported the amendment.

'After considerable discussion, in which the general secretary took part, Mr. McGuire moved—

'That the question be now put.'

'Seconded by Mr. Young. Carried.' "

I could go on reading very much more of this article and I shall probably do so in the course of the debate on the Address in Reply.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** Who was the mover of the motion?

**Mr. YEATES:** We shall see all about that.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** Did he not oppose a Labour candidate in the last election?

**Mr. YEATES:** Why was the Premier so silent when all these things were going on in this section—a small section—of the public service of Queensland. I have a very high regard for the public servants of Queensland generally. This small section were wanting overtime for the time occupied in doing air-raid-precaution exercises and work in the Government's time. When I say, "the Government's time" I mean the taxpayers' time. After all, when one analyses the position one finds that it is the primary producers who are paying the salaries of the public servants of Queensland, more or less. Without primary production essential services could not go on. There would be no suburban trains carrying workers to and from the city each day. Some of the public servants who pushed this motion forward and also spoke of overtime when doing exercises and training for air-raid-precaution work really should be ashamed of themselves. I have wondered why the better class of public servant—and indeed, the great majority are in that category—took no action. No doubt, they went home and stayed there in comfort. They do not bother about the service institutions or unions, but merely pay the fee because it is compulsory to do so, as are most of these things. Many in the Government believe in compulsory unionism, but if it comes to giving compulsory service in some other direction what a howl there is from the soapboxes! That is just by way of parenthesis (Government laughter). It is high time, in fact, the time is overdue, when the Premier should give some sound advice to these men and let them know just where they stand and where he stands in the community. It is useless for him to come here and say "We are loyal and we are going to do everything." I know that

the hon. gentleman is honest in all that, but he is not satisfactory when it comes to partyism. Previously I have said that he knows his job thoroughly, he is a marvellous speaker, and can "put over" a first-rate speech. Many of the jobs he does I believe in, but I do not go all the way with him. The person in charge of the Government should have shown his authority and let the small disgruntled section, probably not more than 10 per cent, or even less, know where they stood. The men in that section were running the show absolutely. They published views that really defamed what I term a first-rate service generally.

The raising of the railway fares and freights was wrong. I do not say this merely for the sake of opposing the Government—nothing I have said to-day is for that purpose—but to endeavour to help them to do what is proper.

I have said before, and I repeat now, that if the Premier would like any of us to go and see him about any subject at any time and talk it over with him on equal terms in a co-operative spirit—as he has suggested to-day—I am quite willing to do so. So far I have not been invited to do that. This is a time when the Government should be thinking seriously of reducing railway freights and fares, giving faster services, and making the railways popular. At the time when petrol rationing was introduced I warned the Government that that was as nothing compared with what was coming. I suggested then that it was time for the Government to be on the alert, to live up the railway service and to cater for the people in order that the railways might retain the business that would be coming to them. To-day extra business is being compulsorily diverted to the railways, not by any good management by the department, but by the unfortunate occurrence of the present tragic war. I want the Railway Department to look after its customers, to give every passenger—even the man with the second-class ticket and the swag—every attention in order that people will be encouraged to use the railway services when motor cars are once again running about all over the place, and I hope that that will not be any more than two or three years from now. The travelling public should be catered for in a better way than at present.

Train services, generally, are no faster now than they were years ago. We still have 22 Up on Sunday morning leaving here at 8 o'clock and arriving at Toowoomba at 1 o'clock. They have the effrontery to call it the Toowoomba passenger train despite the fact that it stops 21 times between Brisbane and Ipswich, and this on a section of the line that is catered for by 11 other trains on the same morning. I urge upon the Government the advisability of seriously investigating the matter with a view to economising without sacrificing efficiency. I know that it will be a difficult task. We all recognise that there are such considerations as votes and unions. We know that the unions might kick over the traces and ask what the Government were doing. Knowing

all this, it is amusing to hear the Premier denouncing the central Government. It is not the fault of the central Government that certain things are done. The Premier said to-day that his Government had the complete confidence of the people. He forgot to remind the people that there were other things that helped to keep up that majority. I referred to them in the session of 1938, and I ask you, Mr. Gair, to look up "Hansard" and see what happened then.

**The Premier:** You should remember what happened then.

**Mr. YEATES:** I have accounted to a large extent for the big majority on the Government benches.

**Mr. Riordan:** Was that when you got put out? (Laughter.)

**Mr. YEATES:** When in the South recently the Premier spoke about the great confidence that the people of Queensland had in the Government; he also used language referring to the great majority his party had and said that the people must be pleased with the management of the State. Not a word is said by the Attorney-General or anybody else in command here arguing that the matter of State electoral boundaries should be handed over to a Supreme Court judge. I close my remarks on that note.

**Mr. EDWARDS (Nanango) (3.37 p.m.):** I rise first to add a few words of congratulation to you, Mr. Gair, on being unanimously elected to the high office you now occupy. In doing so I should like to say, as other hon. members have done, that I have always thought that your present position calls for great patience, even more patience than is required by the Speaker, because as Chairman of Committees you have to occupy the chair for hours at a stretch. I wish you well and hope that you will be the success everybody expects you to be during this troublesome period.

I have listened with great interest to the speeches made in reference to the subject before the Committee to-day. I was sorry that once again there was brought into the debate, particularly by the mover and seconder of the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, that old flogged-out idea of dividing the people instead of looking at the position as big Australians. I say that this is the time to drop that feeling of dividing the people; let us look at the position we are in. We in Australia enjoy a wonderful heritage. I do not think there is any other country in the world that enjoys the heritage we in Australia do. We are responsible for the development of this country, and so far as we can should assist towards the happiness of its people. I feel sure that the men who are gathered together in military service—whether they volunteered for service abroad or at home—do not refer to their political opinions or ideas. They have volunteered with one outstanding idea in their minds, that this is their homeland and it is part of the Empire. They are standing shoulder to shoulder as

Australians, not as representatives from the Labour Party or any other party. They are going out to fight the battle for freedom in the interests of this country that we love so well.

Never before have the Government met the House on such a serious occasion. They are faced with tremendous responsibilities, and no hon. member of the Opposition, nor indeed anyone else, should hinder them in carrying out their duties. Day by day the war situation is becoming steadily more serious, not only in the Homeland, but also in our own country. In many parts of Queensland, and indeed other parts of Australia, the position has become almost unbearable. What I mean is that all the male members of families, including the father, have gone to the war, or are engaged on military duties, and thus are not able to give any time to the work on the land. They have not hesitated, but have gone out to do their bit regardless of what disaster may occur in their absence. Therefore, I contend that it is the duty of the Government to help the people who remain to carry their burdens during the war. I am sure that the Government realise the seriousness of the position, but I am trying to impress upon them that they should not linger and that they should immediately obtain all the information necessary to convince them of the seriousness of the position. I am prompted to say that because during recent weeks I have heard men on the land say that they do not know whether they should go ahead and prepare their land and sow the crops when there is no guarantee that they will be able to obtain the necessary labour to reap the harvest. It is the function of the State Government to help them.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** The matter is being investigated by the Federal Government.

**Mr. EDWARDS:** I know that, but the State Government have the necessary administrative machinery and are much better equipped to give this help than the Federal Government are. After all, the Commonwealth Government must be held responsible for maintaining our first line of defence, but it is the duty of the State Government to maintain the second line, and that is to see that the country is maintained in a sound condition so that production may be carried on with the least possible amount of interference.

That reminds me of a statement often made by the Premier that we should take care to win the peace. I do not know exactly what the phrase really means, but I suppose it is that we should keep this country in a sound state. However, we can do that only by seeing to it that labour is made available to carry on the means of production, so that when the men return from overseas they will have an opportunity of engaging in industry again with a fair degree of success. As I have already said, we have a wonderful country,

and it can be developed to a high state of efficiency if we are willing to grapple with our problems in a practical way.

I am endeavouring to get the Government to focus greater attention on those sections of the country where the wealth is produced. After all, the Government must pay close attention to those industries on which the population depends for food and clothing. If they keep that principle well in the forefront and take immediate steps to cope with the position, they will greatly assist in easing the tremendous burden now falling on the producers in those districts. I have seen regrettable instances in which only two old people have been left on the land and they have been endeavouring to carry on the work on the farm. I have heard certain hon. members make reference to unemployment, but no able-bodied man, not one, in this State, need talk about unemployment, because there is work for all. Labour cannot be obtained at all in many districts.

**The Attorney-General:** You know that a lot of young men have been called up for military training.

**Mr. EDWARDS:** That is quite true; it has aggravated the position.

**The Attorney-General:** They should have been called up in the slack season.

**Mr. EDWARDS:** I quite agree with the hon. gentleman. I also think that wherever possible local authorities should carry out their major works in the slack season. That would help. Perhaps the Government could help along those lines, too. Most of our important primary industries are seasonal. For instance, the sugar, meat, cotton, and peanut industries operate only at certain periods of the year. The dairying industry is certainly having its labour difficulties, but the primary producer has no encouragement to plant big and heavy crops because he has no guarantee that he will obtain the right class of labour to harvest them.

I have in a nutshell stated the difficulties of the country people to-day. The Government should take steps to relieve the present labour position in the rural districts before it becomes aggravated. As I said at the opening of my remarks, this is the greatest country in the world and it is worth fighting for. Nothing should be left undone to protect it, and certainly no action to create discontent among the sections of the community should be tolerated. We should remember that we are all true Australians, interested in the successful conclusion of this war, and the continuance of the freedom we enjoy, as well as our liberty to develop this country as we have done previously. I hope the Government will take the position seriously, drop all carping party criticism, which divides the people into sections, and get on with the job in the quickest possible way.

Motion (Mr. Cooper) agreed to.

Resolution reported, received, and agreed to.

## WAYS AND MEANS.

## COMMITTEE.

VOTE ON ACCOUNT, £7,200,000.

(Mr. Gair, South Brisbane, in the chair.)

**The TREASURER** (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer), I move—

“(a) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1941-1942, a further sum not exceeding £4,000,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Queensland, exclusive of the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.

“(b) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1941-1942, a further sum not exceeding £2,500,000 be granted from the Trust and Special Funds.

“(c) That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty, on account, for the service of the year 1941-1942, a further sum not exceeding £700,000 be granted from the moneys standing to the credit of the Loan Fund Account.”

Motion agreed to.

Resolutions reported, received, and agreed to.

## APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 1.

## FIRST READING.

A Bill founded on the resolutions was introduced and read a first time.

## SECOND READING.

**The TREASURER** (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer), I move—

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

**Mr. NICKLIN** (Murrumba) (3.56 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, I have no desire to say very much on this reading of the Bill, but wish to reply to the Treasurer on one or two matters he raised at the earlier stage. The hon. gentleman appeared to be very concerned that I did not offer the Government the full co-operation of the Opposition in matters other than the war effort. I thought he knew us better than that and would know that we shall assist the Government as much as we possibly can in all business that comes before the House. In fact, I have often wondered how the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock would manage when he is putting through the House some of the Bills that concern his department if he had not the assistance of the Opposition.

**The Premier:** I think he holds you in a very high regard and esteem.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** I can assure the Treasurer, though I was remiss in offering our co-operation in regard to matters other than the war effort, that he will have it.

The Treasurer became very “het-up” this morning about various things that hon. members of the Opposition are alleged to have said. In fact, many of the things that he alleges hon. members on this side said I do not remember being said at all. Certainly I did not say some of the things that the hon. gentleman has attributed to me. To bear out his arguments he quoted some alleged poem. I do not know whether he is endeavouring to have the mantle of poet laureate of this Assembly cast upon his shoulders.

**The Treasurer:** No.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** I must admit that he was better at reciting poems than in quoting some of the statements alleged to have been made by hon. members sitting on this side.

He accused us of being concerned only with the remission of company taxation.

**The Treasurer:** That is all you mentioned.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** We certainly are concerned about that. The development of secondary industries is of vital importance to the State and undoubtedly company taxation is one of the things that are keeping secondary industries from Queensland, and if we are concerned at the incidence of company taxation we have every right to be. As good Queenslanders we wish to see secondary industries developed and the best method of encouraging that development is to make Queensland company taxation comparable with that of the other States. Companies do not only pay dividends, they pay wages and taxes, and for that reason, if for no other, should be encouraged, and I hope that the industrial development that is taking place in the State to-day, largely as a result of the conduct of the war, will continue. After all, although Queensland has great possibilities as a primary-producing State, it cannot become the brightest jewel in the Commonwealth—which we all hope that it will be—unless secondary industries develop side by side with our primary industries. The responsibility of seeing that secondary industries do develop in this State rests with the Government. I do not desire to labour that question any further. I merely wish to explain that misconception by the Treasurer of my statements.

The Treasurer said that since he attained that office he has spent most of his time in remitting taxation.

**The Treasurer:** Hardly that.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** That was certainly a staggering statement to make. It certainly staggered us all on this side of the Chamber, and during the luncheon adjournment I endeavoured to ascertain what those remissions of taxation were. Upon looking down this Government's record since they were elected in 1932 I find that they have increased income taxation, that they have reimposed the super land tax, that State transport fees have been increased, that motor registration fees have been increased—and, in passing, I hope that consideration will be given to the incidence of motor registration fees in this State—and that there have been no remissions in railway

fares and freights, but three separate increases.

**The Treasurer:** That is not taxation; that is payment for services rendered.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** It is a burden on industry. There have been no remissions in those things that I have mentioned. I have saved until the last mention of the State development tax. Immediately the present Government attained office the first thing they did was to double the State development tax. They have made one or two small reductions and remissions in this tax during their term of office, and that is the only instance that I can find of any remission of taxation by the present Government.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** There was no increase in the income tax in this State by a Labour Government since 1932.

**Mr. NICKLIN:** There has been.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** In income tax?

**Mr. NICKLIN:** Yes. It has been increased since the present Government came into power.

**The Secretary for Public Lands:** Since 1932?

**Mr. NICKLIN:** Yes, since 1932, and the only remissions that have been made are those granted in connection with State development tax. I might mention here that the time is overdue for further remissions of the State development tax. Although no mention of that is made in the Governor's Speech, I hope that it is the intention of the Government to afford the taxpayers of this State remissions of taxation, particularly of State development tax, in the very near future.

**Mr. NIMMO (Oxley) (3.4 p.m.):** This morning the Treasurer did get very hot when replying to statements made by the Opposition. As a matter of fact, we on this side of the Chamber were merely endeavouring to point out to him some of the difficulties under which Queensland is labouring. Although I raised the point of the high taxation, the taxation that the Premier proposed to adopt—the ceiling tax—would have a tendency to prevent people from putting forward their best efforts. The fact remains, although he says no-one would take any notice of that—

**The Premier:** Who said that?

**Mr. NIMMO:** The Treasurer said no-one would take any notice of a ceiling tax, as everybody would go on putting forth their best effort. I had the pleasure this morning of reading a letter from a fairly large cane-grower in North Queensland. This is, in substance, what he said—the cane crop was very good on this occasion, but he would not be putting the whole of his area under crop; he was going to spell the land because taxation had got so high that he did not feel like undertaking the worry of going in for large developmental work on his farm. I ask hon. members: would there be any incentive to make the best possible effort if there was a ceiling tax, and men were able to earn only

up to a certain amount? Human nature is such that we are all inclined to be lazy; none of us love work, we want to be spurred on. People, particularly those getting up in years, would not be inclined to make great efforts. They would be content to go along making £1,000 or £500 a year, or whatever ceiling was provided. That is just what would happen. The Treasurer made it appear that Queensland taxation was all right, but the Premier knows that a commission was appointed in Queensland to inquire into taxation matters. The Premier also knows that there is something wrong. That commission has taken its evidence and done its work, but we have not had its report, nor have we been given any indication as to what the report is likely to be.

As an illustration showing that there was something wrong with company taxation in Queensland I must say that Queensland is virtually the only cotton-growing State in Australia. All the cotton produced in this State is taken South for manufacture into cotton goods. Why should we not have cotton mills in Queensland? I answer that question by saying that taxation is too high. We have not got a Government able to face up to the job and put things right. That is the crux of the matter.

The Premier delivered an excellent patriotic speech this afternoon; most people could deliver such a patriotic speech and make a wonderful showing of it. With what the Premier said I agree. I thought his speech was good, but it is the follow-through that counts. We do not get that follow-through so far as Labour politics are concerned.

**The Premier:** My word, you do; and that is what you complain of.

**Mr. NIMMO:** Everybody in Australia knows there is something wrong in the Federal sphere; there is something wrong as far as political affairs are concerned. We know that Labour is trying to get as much kudos as possible; but it is not prepared to accept responsibility. As the Premier said, the Commonwealth War Advisory Council has been putting forward excellent suggestions. Labour is willing to take all the credit, but is not willing to accept criticism for things that might have gone wrong. Labour is prepared to pounce upon the things that go wrong in the Federal political arena. Labour says, "We will not help in a national Government; we will not get into it; we will keep out of it and make the other side so unpopular that the country would hound it out." Instead of dropping party politics and getting on with the job, that is what it is doing, and the Premier knows what I am saying is true. Over in Great Britain all parties are represented in the Government.

Mr. Bevin, one of the greatest Labour men of all time, has accepted the full responsibility of government in England, but how different is the position in Australia! On 11 August, Mr. Curtin, the leader of the Federal Labour Party, made a public statement in which he said that the war situation

was fraught with extreme danger to Australia, but on the following day Mr. Beasley, Mr. Forde, and Dr. Evatt endeavoured to make political capital by saying that the situation was not as dangerous as Mr. Menzies and Mr. Curtin would have us believe. Those are the statements that are being made for party political purposes, and it is very wrong. Anyone can make patriotic speeches, but unless he is willing to get in with the Government and accept full responsibility he is not pulling his weight in the war effort.

**The Premier:** You had better have a kick at the dingoes in your own party.

**Mr. NIMMO:** That is no excuse: I know that some members of our own party have been in the wrong, but every political party has some members who do not play the game. To-day the best brains in Australia should be collected in the Cabinet to carry out the work of government. They should be prepared to accept the full responsibility of the work. The Labour Party has not a monopoly of the brains of the community, and the country demands that the best brains of all the parties should be behind the war effort. I say emphatically that the Labour Party is not playing the game in Australia to-day in refusing to accept the responsibility of government.

The Premier mentioned that it had been reported that the Ipswich railway workshops were able to manufacture marine engines. Of course, they can make marine engines, and they should have been making them over a long period, but they have had no encouragement. Times out of number I suggested in this House that the Ipswich railway workshops should build engines for rail motors, but I was laughed to scorn and the Minister said that they could not do the work, that other work was more urgent, and that they had not the men to make the engines. Of course, they had the men capable of building them, and they should have been built. However, nothing was done and the engines were imported from overseas. If they had been built at the Ipswich railway workshops, what a wonderful thing it would have been in the interests of the war effort, because the engines could then have been used for many purposes.

I should like to mention another instance in which the Government have fallen down on their job, thereby creating an ugly situation to-day. The Commonwealth Government realised that during the depression a large number of young people were deprived of an opportunity of learning a trade. When they made a grant of £50,000 to the States for the purpose of training youths, the Queensland Government haggled before they would accept their share and eventually when they did fall in with the Commonwealth proposal they taught them clerical work, farming, and mining. If any hon. member sitting behind the Government thinks that the Government did the right thing on that occasion in refusing to give the boys an opportunity to learn other trades, as was done in New South Wales and Victoria, then I am surprised at their

reasoning. When the Commonwealth Government made the money available, it was for the purpose of having boys taught trades such as turning, fitting, and other work associated with the building industry, so that they would be available for more important work later on. To-day, with so much work available, they are scratching round looking for men able to use a lathe, and cannot get them. The only limit to Commonwealth contracts in this State is that imposed by the man power available to carry out the work. We cannot take any more Commonwealth orders, because the amount of skilled labour in this State is restricted.

That does not apply to engineering supplies only, it also applies to clothing and every article of woollen goods in this State that the Commonwealth requires. The orders can be obtained by manufacturers in this State for an unlimited quantity of supplies. Certain industries may be handicapped in procuring certain raw materials, but that is not the fault of either the Commonwealth or State Governments. Nevertheless, had we played the game and given these boys an opportunity to learn a trade when the Commonwealth was willing to help us we should have been in a very different position to-day with respect to artisans, and could have accepted more contracts.

I desired to refer to these things because the Premier when speaking led the Committee to believe that I said that the Story Bridge could be pulled down and used in the war effort. I made no such statement. I was referring to the erection of the large State building at the rear of the office of the Commissioner for Railways and said it was a sin to use the steel required in that building when it could be more usefully used in the war effort. I also said that the time might yet come when, in order to provide instruments for the defence of our country, we should have to look round for all the iron we could get, and if that time came we should have to take the steel out of the Story Bridge. I did not say that we should have to pull the Story Bridge down, but I said the time might come when the iron in it would be required.

It is unquestionably wrong for the Government to continue embarking on works that will attract man power from the production of implements of war to save the lives of our boys at the front.

**The TREASURER (Hon. F. A. Cooper, Bremer)** (4.17 p.m.), in reply: I wish to say a word or two in reply in order to correct the many misstatements that have been made, particularly with regard to taxation, as well as deal with the figures used by the hon. member for Fassifern. He used figures to show that in 1933 a certain amount of tax had been gathered, while in 1940-41 a greater amount had been gathered. He said this was because taxation had been increased. Of course, this is an entirely wrong view. The real position is that the business of State has been increased. A storekeeper who doubles his turnover does not double his turnover because he doubles his prices, but usually

because he gives service to the community and attracts greater custom. The Government have doubled their turnover in tax collections because they have given service. The State has attracted custom and stimulated industry to such an extent that industries not paying taxation in 1932, 1933, and 1934 are now paying taxation, and individuals who had no income in those years now have taxable incomes. That is the reason why greater revenue has come in. There was no increase in taxation in the manner made out by the hon. member for Fassifern.

It was the Leader of the Opposition who, when quoting figures in relation to taxation, said, "What about motor-vehicle fees? What about road-transport fees? What about railway fares and freights and what about all these other things?" That is a classic example of the criticism that seems to run in the blood of hon. members on the Opposition benches. I remember the present Federal Treasurer making a similar mistake. He included in taxation tram fares and electricity charges and things of that description, and called them taxation. If that is taxation, then all I can say is that the people of Queensland are paying about £1,500,000 a year in taxation to the butter farmers, because they buy their butter to the extent of £1,500,000 a year, and when they buy those goods and pay for services they are taxed to keep the butter and other industries going. As the hon. member for Fassifern knows, that is not so. We pay for the use of our railways and main roads, and in such other directions as we obtain service, but that is not taxation.

We have to remember, too, that some inequalities will always crop up. I saw a 16-stone man in a tailor's shop and I knew he was going to get a suit for the same price as a 9-stone man. When I look round at the hon. member for Bowen and the hon. member for Fassifern I know if they go into a barber's shop it is the same price for both of them—(laughter)—although the crop may not be the same.

Let me tell you, Mr. Gair, something about reductions in taxation in Queensland. Since this Government came into power in 1932 the annual remissions granted are as follows:—

Unemployment Relief Tax and Income (State Development) Tax.			
Part III.—		£	£
1d. reduction ..	160,000		
2d. reduction and exemption of basic wage .. ..	760,000		
			920,000
Part VI.—			
1d. reduction ..	88,000		
2d. reduction and exemption of basic wage .. ..	450,000		
			538,000
Total .. ..			£1,458,000

That is virtually £1,500,000. These figures are on record; they are there for people to

read and to measure, and we are proud of the fact that we have done this. Notwithstanding this huge remission of taxation we are still getting a greater amount of taxation to-day than before by reason of the fact we have contributed largely to the increasing wealth of the State and have given the people an opportunity to pay taxation where they had no opportunity to pay taxation before.

**Mr. Barnes:** You will get none from the garages and hotels this time.

**The TREASURER:** What we lose on the roundabouts I presume we shall pick up on the swings. I know if people do not spend money in garages and hotels the chances are they will spend it somewhere else. People are much like Governments—they live fairly closely to their incomes. They struggle to get incomes on which they can live at a certain standard. This Government struggle to get a larger income in order that they may give a better standard to the people, they claim to have increased the wealth of the community, to have helped production, and to have done all things that give a better opportunity to the people and a better opportunity to the State. As it is with the State, so it is with the individual. The more money we have the better opportunities for trade and commerce and industry and the better for the community. We all know that if those people who save money put it into a hole in the ground it would get nowhere. It is work that creates wealth, and the more work we can give as individuals or as a Government the greater will be the wealth of the community. People who advocate the lessening of work are advocating something that is not to the benefit of the country.

The hon. member for Oxley and some other hon. member—I think it was the hon. member for Fassifern—rebuked the Government for putting up a building in Anzac square. Well, let us take the rebuke. Let us pass on to the Commonwealth Government for the Commonwealth Bank they are erecting in King George square at the corner of Adelaide and Albert streets. Are they also to be rebuked? Are we also to rebuke the Commonwealth Minister this year for proposing to spend £1,500,000 in post office works? Is a social service that is very necessary not to go on? Of course it is to go on.

**Mr. Barnes:** Not if they are using steel we cannot afford to use.

**The TREASURER:** That is not so. There are certain things that have to have priority. Certain people have prior claims on steel manufactured in this State, and the Army and Navy and defence services come first. They have the first claim on those manufactures, and to say we are using steel in those buildings that could be used in other directions is casting aspersions on the Commonwealth Government who have the supreme control of those things—they and not this Government and not individuals. As the Premier reminds me, time and again we have

altered our specifications to do without structural steel so far as we could to help the Commonwealth Government to get on with building in other directions. In any case, the matter is in their keeping and charge.

The hon. member for Oxley made reference to apprenticeship. It is true that in some States of the Commonwealth apprenticeship was at a particularly low ebb, and that there was virtually no control of apprenticeship in any way whatever. I am proud to be able to say that Queensland has, and has had for many years, the best apprenticeship system in all the States of Australia. It is a system that has been copied by other parts of the world. States in America have copied our particular system of apprenticeship, and it is a system that has done more to train artisans than any system in any other part of Australia. In other parts there is no training of any particular kind, but in this State we have trained artisans in engineering and other trades whom one now finds scattered, not only throughout the Commonwealth, but over many parts of the world, upholding the splendid training they have received in their apprenticeship in Queensland, particularly in the technical colleges.

**Mr. Nimmo:** I raised no question about the Apprenticeship Committee. You know very well it was the Commonwealth training scheme I spoke of.

**The TREASURER:** The hon. gentleman may have shifted into a bog and I have no desire to follow him into that bog.

That virtually answers all the matters that have been raised. I am sorry if I have not given all the explanations hon members have desired, but I have endeavoured to correct some of the misconceptions, if I may call them that, that have been given expression to this afternoon.

Motion (Mr. Cooper) agreed to.

#### COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Gair, South Brisbane, in the chair).

Clauses 1 to 4, both inclusive, and preamble, as read, agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

#### THIRD READING.

Bill, on motion of Mr. Cooper, read a third time.

The House adjourned at 4.31 p.m.