

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 12 DECEMBER 1904

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MONDAY, 12 DECEMBER, 1904.

The SPEAKER (Hon. Sir A. S. Cowley, *Herbert*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

ROSEWOOD ELECTION PETITION.

CERTIFICATE OF THE ELECTIONS JUDGE.

The SPEAKER: I have to announce to the House that I have received from the Elections Judge his certificate in the matter between Denis Thomas Keogh and Robert Samuel Hodge, which I shall now read to the House:—

Supreme Court House,
Brisbane, 12th December, 1904.

In the Supreme Court of Queensland.

Court of Elections Tribunal for the trial of an election petition for the electoral district of Rosewood, between Denis Thomas Keogh, petitioner, and Robert Samuel Hodge, respondent.

To the Honourable the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

Sir,—The petition of Denis Thomas Keogh, presented on the 8th day of October last, complaining of the undue election and return of Robert Samuel Hodge, Esquire, as a member to serve in the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Rosewood, and claiming that he, the said Denis Thomas Keogh, was duly elected and ought to have been returned as the member to serve in the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Rosewood, was tried before the Elections Tribunal on the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th days of December.

The assessors chosen by the parties were George Fox, Patrick Francis Hanran, William Maxwell, John Norman, Walter Trueman Paget, and Thomas Alfred Spencer, Esquires, members of the Legislative Assembly. All the assessors were present throughout the trial.

The tribunal determined that Robert Samuel Hodge, Esquire, was not duly elected or returned for the electoral district of Rosewood.

The tribunal determined that the petitioner, Denis Thomas Keogh, Esquire, was duly elected and ought to have been returned as the sitting member for the said electoral district.

The tribunal determined that the parties should each pay his own costs.

The tribunal ordered and directed that the sum of £100 paid into court with the petition should be paid out to the petitioner, together with such interest, if any, as may be due in respect thereof.

All which I hereby certify.

A copy of the evidence given at the trial accompanies this certificate.

Dated this 12th day of December, 1904.

PATRICK REAL,
Elections Judge for 1904.

The PREMIER moved—

1. That the certificate of the Elections Judge be entered on the Journals of the House, and that the Clerk be instructed to amend the return by endorsing on the writ the decision of the Elections Tribunal in the matter of the petition in question.

2. That the evidence be printed.

Question put and passed.

MARSUPIAL BOARDS ACTS CONTINUATION BILL.

THIRD READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. D. F. Denham, *Oxley*), this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council, by message in the usual form.

DALBY-CATTLE CREEK BRANCH RAILWAY.

APPROVAL OF PLANS.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. Arthur Morgan, *Warwick*) moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the chair, and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolutions:—

1. That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed branch railway, Western line, from Dalby to Cattle Creek, in length 23 miles 70 chains, as laid upon the table of the House on Friday, the 9th day of December instant.

2. That the plan, section, and book of reference be forwarded to the Legislative Council, for their approval, by message in the usual form.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, in moving the above motion, said that the construction of a railway from Dalby towards the Bunya Mountains was a very old story. It dated back twenty-two or twenty-three years, and was first submitted to Parliament in 1889, when Sir Hugh—then Mr.—Nelson was Secretary for Railways. He brought down the plans of a proposed line from Dalby to the Rocky Point Dam, involving the construction of 14 miles 58 chains of railway. It was submitted as a line that would secure coal, timber, and agricultural produce traffic, and it was estimated that the cost would be £46,000—rather more than £3,000 per mile. The line was to run almost due north from Dalby. One of the weak points of the proposal—and the point that was commented upon most strongly by those who opposed the construction of the line—was that it would stop at a point still far distant from the unalienated Crown lands in the Dalby district. Notwithstanding that, however, so warm was the advocacy of Sir Hugh Nelson—who was then, as he was now, scarcely the man to recommend a railway unless he believed in it—that the House by a majority of more than two to one approved of the plans, the voting being thirty-seven for and sixteen against. The line he was now proposing would be 23 miles in length, and was estimated to cost only £33,000, or £13,000 less than the estimated cost of a line 10 miles less in length. Though the plans were approved of in 1889 the work was not proceeded with. Premonitory whisperings of the approaching financial storm were heard, and difficulties of finance were making themselves apparent to the then Treasurer, and it was wisely decided to shorten sail in regard to the expenditure of loan money. The crisis of 1893 followed, and the project for the construction of a railway from Dalby towards the Bunya Mountains was laid aside, and remained laid aside for more than ten years. In 1900 it was revived, when the then leader of the Government—the present leader of the Opposition—brought down, towards the close of the session, supplementary loan proposals for an expenditure of £185,000 on a number of railways, the construction of which he proposed to enter upon during the remaining six months of the financial year. Included in those proposals was the line from Dalby to Rocky Point Dam. That proposal was submitted to the House on 21st December, 1900. It happened, however, that one of the series of railways, the plans of which had been approved of by the Assembly at the instance of the present leader of the Opposition, had been rejected by the Council—a line from Dartmouth to Stonehenge, running south-westerly from a point on the Central Railway. The rejection of that line

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by the Council bitterly incensed members of the Assembly representing Central Queensland constituencies, and they attempted to take their revenge by securing the rejection of some of the other railways from the schedule submitted to the House. [Mr. J. LEAHY: Are those the lines the Treasurer proceeds upon—revenge?] He did not say that. [Mr. J. LEAHY: Well, we know it.] If the hon. member knew it, it was superfluous for him to ask the question. One of the first lines that attracted the attention of hon. members on that occasion was the proposed extension from Warwick to Thane's Creek; and, though the House had previously passed the plans of that line, it was proposed to wipe out the provision the Treasurer was making then for the construction of a section of the line—reducing the provision by £10,000. The proposal was defeated, and the attention of the Chamber was directed to the consideration of the proposal to vote £15,000 for a line from Dalby towards Bunya Mountains, and the hon. member at the head of the then Government—the present leader of the Opposition—took the somewhat unusual course—and possibly there was no other course he could take to get the business through—of moving the omission of the vote for the line from Dalby to the Bunya Mountains. In withdrawing the line, the hon. gentleman told the House that he would bring forward the proposal the following session and place it again before the House. The proposal was warmly opposed, that warmth being probably attributable to the resentment certain hon. members felt at the Council having rejected a railway in which they were deeply interested. He would point out that the Treasurer, upon whom the hon. member for Bulloo had put his finger, said, according to *Hansard*, that "his objection was not so much to the line as to the manner in which it had been introduced." The Treasurer also said: "He was prepared to support it, had it been introduced as railways were usually introduced in this Chamber. Four years had elapsed since then, and the hon. gentleman at the head of the then Government had been unable to bring the proposal before the House again. [Hon. R. PHILP: Did I promise to bring that line before the House again the next session?] He thought so. [Hon. R. PHILP: I don't think so.] It was a qualified promise. According to *Hansard*, page 2880, for 1900, the then Premier, speaking about 3 o'clock in the morning of the 21st December, said—

If the House were determined not to vote it within a reasonable time, he was not justified in keeping the House up at this hour. He moved that this amount of £15,000 be omitted, and he promised the House that next session, if the Government submitted a programme of railways, he would include this one.

After that question had been put and passed, the item of £10,000 for the Dartmouth-Stonehenge line was also omitted. The hon. gentleman did not feel himself justified in bringing down the proposal in the following year, and so the matter had remained in abeyance until this year. Now the proposal was revived in a somewhat different form. The present Government proposed to build a line from Dalby to Cattle Creek, which was roughly in the direction of the Bunya Mountains; but the line would go by an entirely different route to that originally proposed. It would go in a north-easterly direction from Dalby, and it would open up and serve better country, be more conducive to settlement, and would cost very much less than the line the plans of which they approved many years ago. In fact, this line, when completed, would be the cheapest 23 miles of railway ever constructed in Queensland. He was one of those who opposed the line in 1889, for what he considered good and sufficient reasons. The line was origin-

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ally projected as a line to serve a coal district, and he took the point that the coal had not been opened up, or its quality tested. He also took the further and more important point, that, although the line had been advocated as an agricultural line, there was practically no agriculture in the Dalby district at that time. But now conditions were changed, and agriculture was making rapid strides there. Whereas in 1889 there was no wheat grown in the district, it was estimated that the present season's wheat crop there would reach 30,000 sacks. And all that was wanted to enable Dalby to take its place side by side with Roma, Toowoomba, and Warwick in the march of agricultural progress was to make the land available

[4 p.m.] for settlement, and to give the people who settled on the land railway facilities for getting the produce they grew to market. Those were the two things the Government proposed to do—to make the unsettled Crown lands in the district available for settlement and to make it possible for the people who settled on those lands to cultivate them and get their produce to market with profit by giving them railway facilities over the black-soil lands which intervened between Cattle Creek and the present line of railway. An area of 57,000 acres of Crown lands would be made available by the construction of this railway. On a previous occasion he stated that one of the things the Government proposed to do was to make areas of Crown lands now unoccupied or devoted to grazing only available for agricultural settlement by the construction to those areas of light lines of railway, and he said they would endeavour to find districts in which there were not less than 50,000 acres of Crown lands available in which to carry out that policy. They would build light lines of railway to those districts, and spread the capital cost of those railways over the Crown lands, and so recover for the loan fund the capital cost of the railways. That was what they proposed to do in this case, as in the case of the railway from Degilbo to Wetheron. They proposed to withdraw all the unalienated Crown lands from selection, and if this line was approved by the House, as he believed it would be, then the land would be thrown open for sale or selection at a price equal to its present value plus the value added by the construction of the line. The present value would be paid into the ordinary revenue, and the added value would be credited to the loan fund account, and applied entirely to retiring the cost of the railway. This was the new principle they were endeavouring to enforce in connection with these railways, and if, as he anticipated, the added value was sufficient to pay the entire cost, then at the end of the period the Railway Department would find itself in the possession of a railway the entire cost of which had been retired. He would invite the attention of hon. members to the report of the Commissioner on this proposed railway, submitted in terms of the Railway Act. Mr. Thallon pointed out that only £196 worth of land would be required for resumption purposes. That was due to the fact that the railway traversed for a considerable length the main road. The estimated cost of the line, including station buildings, etc., was £33,122 9s. 1d. The additional rolling-stock that would be required was one locomotive, one carriage, and seven wagons, which were estimated to cost, at second-hand, £2,500. The working expenses, including traffic, locomotive, and maintenance charges, were estimated at £110 per mile, or, say, £2,640 per annum. The Commissioner went on to say—

The probable revenue which would be derived from the traffic on the line is somewhat difficult to answer at present, because for nearly 10 miles out of the

24 it runs through the freeholds of Cumkillenbar (21,000 acres) and Dalby Downs (17,000 acres), which will give little or no return to the railway.

Those two areas of land would no doubt be augmented in value to something like £1 per acre. From them the Government would have no means of recovering any of the cost of this line, but he sincerely hoped that one result of the construction of the railway would be to induce the owners to subdivide the lands themselves, and offer them for sale or selection purposes. The time was now coming when the State would expect owners of land in large areas situated as these lands were situated—between a main line and Crown lands which could only be opened up by a railway—to subdivide them, and make them available for selection, otherwise some future Parliament might adopt measures to recover a proportion of the cost of the line from those lands, as was proposed to be done in New South Wales, not by any system of confiscation or forced sale, but by taking the right to acquire those lands at a proper valuation with 10 per cent. added. The Commissioner further said—

The line, however, is not altogether dependent for its revenue on the first 20 miles. It runs through first-class agricultural land, which must be closely settled on both sides sooner or later; but it is the district at and beyond the terminus that will most affect the revenue. Last year the Pittsworth branch earned £270 per mile, and the Killarney branch £263 per mile. Putting this branch at the moderate figure of £150, it would give a gross revenue of £3,600.

The special advantages accruing to the Railway Department generally from the construction of this branch line are the extension of close settlement and consequent increased revenue, and, while in itself a paying concern, it would be the means of assisting the main line. There are beyond the proposed terminus and all within its influence an area of 40,000 acres of excellent agricultural Crown land waiting settlement, and in three years 17,000 acres more will fall in. It is, I understand, the intention of the Government to offer this land at the increased value due to the construction of the line—to credit the railway construction account with the difference between the present and the future values—and so pay the entire cost of the railway from current revenue instead of charging it to loan.

That was not quite correct. What they proposed to do was to charge the cost to the loan fund and to retire the amount by the sale of land. With regard to the route the Commissioner said—

The proposed branch commences on the main Western line, a few chains beyond Dalby Railway Station, and terminates in portion 1,588, Maida Hill, near the cemetery reserve. For the first 13 miles it runs northeasterly along the main road to Bunya Mountains, thence to the terminus takes a northerly direction through surveyed portions. The ruling grade is 1 in 66. Curves of 8 chains (there is one of 6 chains which, I think, may be avoided during construction) are adopted for the sake of economy. Very few bridges are required, and these will be low level. The permanent way will be of 42-lb. rails. No ballast will be used, and very little fencing.

Considering the advantages of this line to the owners of Cumkillenbar and Dalby Downs, I am of opinion that a strong effort should be made to induce them to pay in some form or other part of the cost of construction.

That was the betterment principle which hon. members opposite were willing to concede in the case of railways. [Mr. J. LEAHY: Which you funked at.] The hon. gentleman had better not jump too readily at that conclusion. It was convenient for him to make an assertion of that kind, but an assertion of the hon. gentleman did not always establish a fact. [Hon. R. PHILP: You said you were not going on with the Bill.] This was the concluding portion of the report:—

I have not the slightest hesitation in recommending this branch railway for immediate construction.

Now, in addition to the report of the Commissioner for Railways, which was about as strong a

recommendation in favour of a railway as had ever been submitted to the House, there was the report of Mr. George Phillips. [Mr. J. LEAHY: You said some of the Commissioner's report was not correct.] He pointed out one portion of the report which was not strictly in accordance with the intentions of the Government, but he made no challenge of the statements in the report. They had before them the report of Mr. George Phillips, who was employed by the Government to make an examination of the country to be traversed by the railway. He would not deal with it at any length, but would just quote one passage—

Should the local authorities prove unwilling to undertake the work, the question should not be allowed to remain unanswered, for, if a light railway—or tramway, as I prefer to term such low-cost lines—cannot be successfully constructed and operated between Dalby and Bell, then all I can say is, that the question of light railways in Queensland had better be dropped, for I never expect to find a more favourable locality in every respect for the experiment, if such, indeed, it may be called, where every element of success exists.

They knew that Mr. Phillips was a strong advocate of light railways, and of their construction by local authorities; but, in that case, though the Government were willing to make an experiment with a light line, they recognised that, if they were to wait for the local authority to undertake its construction, they might wait for an indefinite time. They thought, therefore, that it was wise for the Government to undertake the work in that instance. He was not quite sure that it would not be wise for the Government to undertake the experiment in many other cases where there was sufficient Crown land available. The Government were not at one with Mr. Phillips that the line should be on the 2-feet gauge. They thought that it was of such a character as to lead to close settlement, and that where the country was level it would be wiser to build a railway costing only £1,300 a mile on the standard gauge, and so save the cost which would be placed on produce for all time of transhipping. He was satisfied that the proposal was one which would commend itself to the House. It commended itself to the Government which was in office in 1889, though settlement in the district was nothing like as extensive as it was now, and the production then was nothing compared with the production to-day. It commended itself to the hon. gentleman who led the Opposition when he was in office, and it commended itself to the Government of the day. When they saw that the proposal was one which had secured the approval of every Government that had occupied office within the last fourteen or fifteen years, it might be assumed that there was merit in the proposal. The Government submitted it to the House on its merits, believing that the construction of the line would be justified by results, and that those results would be found in the rapid extension of settlement on Crown lands now unoccupied, and in the increase of production which would make the line pay at least working expenses, and add to the earning capacity of the main line.

HON. R. PHILP (*Townsville*) was a strong believer in building railways, and he proposed to vote for the motion, subject to an amendment. It was only a short time ago that the Government brought in a Betterment Bill, which was to give the Treasurer of the day one-half the increased value of land, no matter by what means it arose—whether by the spending of money in building railways, or any other means. [The PREMIER: That is not so.] [Mr. J. LEAHY: 1½ per cent. The Treasurer said that was one-half, taking money at 3 per cent.] Now, here was a railway which

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was to be built entirely through freehold land. They had had such lands built already by local authorities. In the Southern part of the State there were not so many as in the Northern part, but in the Southern part only a year or two ago a line was finished from Beaudesert towards Tamrookum, 20 miles in length. The whole of that line traversed freehold land, and beyond it there was a considerable amount of Government land—good scrub land. In the North there was the line from Townsville to Ayr, which cost £78,000. The whole of the money for its construction was borrowed from the Government, and the local authorities were paying, every six or twelve months, interest and redemption. Some of that line traversed Government land, and after it was built some of the land was taken up. Further north, on the Herbert River, they would find a line from Ingham to the Stone River, built at the cost of the divisional board, who paid interest and redemption. Further north again, on the Johnstone River, a line was being built the terminus of which was, he thought, on Government land—splendid land, unsurpassed in Queensland. That was from Geraldton up the river. [Mr. HAMILTON: They reserved that land for the Moravians, and a man told me a wallaby could not live on it.] Then, again, go to Cairns. £100,000 was borrowed by the local divisional board, and they built a line from Cairns to the Russell River. There was a good deal of Crown land there, and the line went through some of it. They had always paid interest and redemption. Going further north, there was a line from Port Douglas to Mosman. A part of the land which that line traversed was Government land. The money for that was also locally borrowed. The same at Mackay; money had been borrowed for a line from Mirani to Geddes Creek by the divisional board. He did not see why the line from Dalby to Cattle Creek, which ran entirely through freehold land, should not be built on exactly the same terms—that was, the divisional board to borrow the money and build it at their own cost. By charging special rates the interest and redemption would be met; with ordinary rates, perhaps, it would not. According to the map attached to Mr. Phillips's report, a good deal of it had been "peacocked" already. He had not been there himself, and knew nothing about the quality of the land, but it struck him that the best land was taken up already. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is not so. There is as much good land left as has been taken up.] Selectors generally did not take up the worst land. On page 3 of Mr. Phillips's report it would be seen that the total estimated enhanced value of land due to the line was £78,750 on freehold, and only £20,000 on Crown land. He submitted that it was not fair to ask the House to pass a line on such terms; and that it would be far better to follow the system adopted at Beaudesert and North Queensland; and with that view he intended to propose an amendment. [The PREMIER: What is the amendment?] To insert at the end of the 1st paragraph the words "the cost of such line to be borne by the local authorities interested." [Mr. KERR: Are you going to give us betterment?] Where a line was to be built which would benefit certain freehold lands, those lands should pay for the betterment—for the enhanced value given to them. The Treasurer introduced a Bill the other day which would have affected the whole of the land of Queensland, whether there were railways or not. And here he might remark that Mr. Phillips's report was dated the 31st December last, and it had only been presented to the House two or three days ago. They ought to have had it in their possession long ago. It did not give them time to debate the matter

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thoroughly. Those who believed in the betterment principle, he submitted, ought to accept his amendment. Those people who were to be benefited ought either to pay or to guarantee the cost of the line, as had been done in the other districts he had named. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You are coming on; you will accept the Betterment Bill directly.] [Mr. J. LEAHY: The Premier was not game to give us a chance of voting for it.] The hon. gentleman made much of his promise to vote for that line. [The PREMIER: I only stated the fact.] The hon. gentleman had not mentioned the whole of the fact. Afterwards hard times came on, and it was difficult to get the money. The late Government wanted to borrow £1,000,000 to enable them to carry out their promise. They could only borrow £750,000, and they built the lines from Warwick to Thane's Creek and from Gladstone to Rockhampton because they were more urgent than the others for which sanction had been given. His promise was a contingent one with regard to the other lines on the Government railway programme, and he could not carry out his promise. Then there were lines built on the guarantee system—to Allora, to Pialba, to Mount Morgan, and to Enoggera. Those were built under the Railways Construction (Guarantee) Act passed in 1895. That was ever so much fairer than the present project. Those districts had to pay one-half the cost and one-half the loss, if any. In this case they ought to insist on the local authority borrowing the money from the Government. They could borrow it on splendid terms now. They could borrow at 4 per cent. and have it repaid in forty years. That was, practically, that if they paid 5 per cent. per annum they would wipe out the whole amount. That was being done in other cases where the lines ran through agricultural settlement, such as Beaudesert and Cairns; and the hon. member for Cairns would, no doubt, bear him out that there was a good deal of Government land at the Russell River end of the line. [Mr. MANN: The best of it is taken up.] It might be in that case; they did not know. But if the people in those districts had to borrow money to build their lines, it was a fair thing that the people in this district should borrow the money, too. He thought it was good land—he had seen some of it himself—and very likely the divisional board might be willing to guarantee it. He hoped the Committee would agree [4.30 p.m.] to his amendment, especially those who agreed with the Betterment Bill, because it was carrying out the Betterment Bill in a much better way. He was sure nobody would say he had ever blocked railway Bills at any time; he had always been strongly in favour of railway Bills, but they would not be justified in building this line with all the knowledge they had of it. It was quite true he had proposed to build a line 15 miles long a few years ago. [The PREMIER: At a cost of £42,000.] The late Government had built lines as cheap as the present Government proposed doing. The line from Hughenden to Richmond cost something like £1,400 a mile; and if that line could be built for £1,400 a mile, then this line should be built as cheap or perhaps cheaper. This line could not get beyond the Bunya Mountains; it was only a branch line; but if it went northward to a lot of rich lands it might become a main line. A great deal of the land in this district had been sold at 2s. 6d. an acre, and he did not think they were justified in putting £1 or £2 an acre on the value of this land. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The larger portion of it was taken up under the 1876 Act, at 10s. an acre.] Mr. Phillips said the increase would be £78,000, but, of course, he

might be wrong, as he was rather inclined to take a high value, and, if he valued freehold land high, very likely he would value Government land at a higher price, too. The people who owned the land along the line would be benefited most; the Crown would not be benefited more than one-fifth of the total, and we were not justified in finding the whole of the money to build the line, and undertaking the whole of the risk of the bargain. He moved, as an amendment, after the word "instant," the insertion of "the cost of such a line to be borne by the local authorities interested."

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS hoped the Committee would not accept the amendment, because the only result of the insertion of such an amendment would be to defer for another indefinite period the construction of the railway. The hon. gentleman himself was at the head of a Government which proposed to construct a railway from Dalby 14 miles in the direction of the Bunya Mountains. That railway was to cost £10,000 more than the 23 miles of the line now proposed, yet when his successors in office came down with a proposal substantially the same—the only difference being that it was a very much better proposal—the hon. gentleman now changed about, and said this line should not be constructed by anybody but the local authorities, because the lands in the district over which the local authority had jurisdiction were going to benefit. That was not so. [HON. R. PHILP: I did not say that at all.] He said the local authority could borrow from the Government, under very favourable terms, on loans of forty years' currency. That was true. But even forty years' loans involved the payment of 4 per cent. interest and something over 1 per cent. redemption. [MR. J. LEAHY: And the line belongs to them.] So that the local authority would have to pay something like 5½ per cent. of interest and redemption on that loan from the State. What prospect was there of their building this line, and paying 5½ per cent.? How many of the main lines paid it? And, even supposing there was proof that this line would return 5½ per cent., to enable the local authority to pay interest and redemption, why should the local authority be asked to place upon the local landowners the total cost of a railway such as this, when the benefit would be shared equally between the local landowner and the general taxpayer, because every ton of freight that was brought by that branch line from the districts the railway proposed to open up would be carried over the main line to the ports and markets of the State? Why, then, should not the general taxpayer be prepared to pay his share of the cost of a railway the advantages of which he would share? The only purpose of this amendment was to shelve this project. The hon. gentleman, although opposed to the principle of taxing the benefited area, came down with an amendment which he hoped would secure sufficient support to defeat this proposal—and so bring discredit upon the Government—a public work which would promote settlement, increase production, and bring an amount of traffic to the existing lines and to the ports of the State. He hoped the Committee would not accept the amendment. It was an amendment, he was bound to say—coming from the source it did—that was proposed with the one object of defeating the motion. [THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Hear, hear!]

HON. R. PHILP: The hon. gentleman had no right to say that he wished to defeat the building of the line. The hon. gentleman voted against the line in 1889, whilst he (Mr. Philp) believed he voted for it. He tried to get suffi-

cient money four years ago to start the line, but he had no notion of building it on the extravagant plans of fourteen years ago. They had built lines since then further from Brisbane, over more difficult country, and most of the sleepers had to be carried further than they would to this line, and they had done the work for £1,400 or £1,500 a mile. Under those circumstances, was it likely they would have spent £3,000 a mile on this line? He took exception to the statement of the Secretary for Railways, that he was attempting to bring discredit on the Government. That was hardly possible. Every railway proposal should be brought forward as a non-party question. When members opposed lines he brought in, he did not accuse them of desiring to discredit his Government. Every hon. member should vote as he pleased. If it was a good line, it should be built; if it was not, it should not be built. He believed the owners of the land on both sides of this line should undertake its construction, in the same way as the people of Beaudesert and places in North Queensland had built their own lines. If the Government were sincere in bringing in the Betterment Bill, they would accept his amendment. He had frequently advocated the system of lending money to the people who owned the land to build railways, and that system ought to be carried out more extensively. Had the line from Warwick to Killarney been built on those terms, the taxpayers would have been saved a good deal of money. At the last election the theme of the present occupants of the Treasury benches was that the late Government were extravagant, and had built railways which would never pay, and he wished to save the present Government from an accusation of that kind. The Secretary for Railways opposed the amendment because the traffic brought by the local authorities to the Government lines would benefit the taxpayers. Well, if that were so, they could make an allowance to the local authorities. An allowance was made in the case of the Killarney line. [MR. J. LEAHY: Yes, 10 miles.] He did not know of any local authority that got a single shilling now for traffic brought by their lines to the main lines. There might be some reduction this year, but the chairman of the Ayr Tramway Board told him that their engine and trucks had hauled stuff down from the Six-mile, on the Northern Railway, to the jetty at Townsville, and the Government did not allow them a penny for it. [THE TREASURER: What Government was that?] The present Government. He hoped the Committee would agree to the amendment, because it was the proper course to adopt in a case of this sort. The railway could not be extended beyond the Bunya Mountains; and he believed a great deal of the land was already selected, and they might depend upon it that what was left was not the best. [THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: This is a nice sort of speech to come from you.] He had not made a personal attack on anybody, but he could if the hon. gentleman wished it. [THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You can do whatever you like.] He was not going to follow the hon. gentleman's bad example, and be personal. He did not think this was a line that should be built at the present time, and he wished to save the taxpayers' money.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS was very sorry that the leader of the Opposition had seen fit to deliver the speech he had. He was a man who had always generously recognised the requirements of the district the line would go through, and he (Mr. Bell) had taken every opportunity—he took it at the last election—of paying a tribute to the hon. member for what he had done in the past for the

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electorate. [Hon. R. PHILP: You will be sorry if you make a personal attack on me.] He was not going to make a personal attack on the hon. gentleman, but he was not going to be deterred from criticising the hon. gentleman's actions by any mysterious allusions. The hon. gentleman had always taken a generous view of the requirements of the district in the past, but he now asked the Committee to agree to an amendment in order to defeat the project he, the hon. gentleman, had already sanctioned. Was there any member so obtuse in a parliamentary sense as to imagine that what the hon. gentleman was now doing was dictated by motives of high statesmanship—that the hon. gentleman really had such a particular concern for the public indebtedness of the State that he was nervous to the last degree that they were about to add to it? He could tell the Committee that, under the cover of the amendment, the hon. gentleman was trying to get in a side thrust at him (Mr. Bell) because he did not happen now to sit behind the hon. gentleman. [Hon. R. PHILP: That is untrue.] In 1900, the hon. gentleman—very rightly, as he considered—brought in a proposal for the construction of a line to open up the very country that this railway would open up. The hon. gentleman tried to pass that line, and he (Mr. Bell) expressed his recognition of the hon. gentleman's action then, as he expressed it now. That line ran through two freehold properties belonging to different owners, but the line now proposed would run through the properties of twelve or fifteen different men—freehold land. The line proposed by the hon. member stopped within a number of miles of the unselected Crown land; it was considered an unsatisfactory route, and it would have been a comparatively expensive line to build—more expensive than this line would be. That hon. member had said that probably new plans would have been prepared, and that the line would have been more economically built under the new plans than under the original plans, and probably that would have been the case, but he ventured to say that if the line had been built four years ago it would not have been built as cheaply as this line would be built now. A great change had come over railway construction since four years ago. This Government proposed to do what their predecessors did not do—that was, to throw upon the unselected lands in the district the railway went through the cost of the line. This proposed line would run through a number of freeholds, and stop at the edge of over 40,000 acres of unselected country, and, in about three years' time, when 15,000 or 20,000 acres would fall in, they would be thrown open, and their advanced value would be taken into consideration by the Government. If the line had stopped at Rocky Point Dam, the enhanced value of the unselected land in the district would have been inconsiderable, because you would have to go from 3 to 12 miles further to get to the unalienated land; but by the construction of the present line the effect on the unselected lands would be immediate, palpable, and direct. The hon. gentleman made a strong point about the line running through freehold, but the difference between the policy of the late Government and the policy of the present Government was that this Government were going to deal with the enhanced value placed on these lands by the construction of this line. They were not going to sit down and let these lands be so much enhanced in value without taking corresponding action. They were determined to get some share out of the enhanced value of these lands. [Government members: Hear, hear!] The one object of the hon. member in moving this amendment was to upset the construction of this line. [Hon. R.

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PHILP: That is not so.] If it was not so, he was doing the hon. member a great injustice, but that would be the effect of it, if carried. In his opinion the engineer, Mr. Phillips, took a too low estimate of the value that would be conferred on the unselected lands by the construction of this line—when he placed it at 12s. 6d. He (Mr. Bell) had no hesitation in saying that their enhanced value would be from 15s. to £1 5s., and in some cases up to £1 10s. per acre—probably the average would be £1 an acre. There was a large amount of good agricultural scrub land there, which would be available soon. Even if those lands were taken up at 2s. 6d., 5s., or 10s. an acre, without a railway to the district, they would only get a poor, struggling, unsuccessful population settled there. It had been open for years, but settlement had been only spasmodic and fragmentary, and very few had been thoroughly successful. But the construction of this railway would be like waving a magic wand over the scene; it would transform the whole conditions of that district. [Mr. KERR: Is there any pear there?] He was pleased to say there was no pear on that land. He had only heard since he had come into the Chamber that afternoon that it had been said that he had some personal interest in having this line constructed. Well, he had a grazing farm about 8 miles beyond the terminus of this proposed line. That summed up the whole of the personal interest he could have in the construction of this line. If anyone thought his action was influenced by considerations of that kind, his answer was that he had advocated the construction of a line in this district long before he had an acre of land in the neighbourhood.

HON. R. PHILP: He objected to the hon. gentleman stating that he moved his amendment in order to make a subtle thrust at him. Whether the line was constructed or not was nothing to him, but he had his own constituents to consider as well as the hon. member for Dalby had his. He would only vote for this line if it was constructed by the local authorities, and not otherwise. He believed he had done more for the hon. gentleman's district than the hon. gentleman himself had done, and now, because he did not follow him to the last, the hon. gentleman said he had made some subtle thrust at him. They were told that there was no money available for the construction of railways; and now they were asked to sanction the building of two

lines in the extreme Southern part
[5 p.m.] of the State. There were lines up

North which people were willing to build themselves, without a shilling advance from the State; but the Government would not allow them to build those railways. He should vote against this proposed line being built entirely at the cost of the Government. If the people of the district could get money to construct the line at 4 per cent. for forty years, they would even then be getting an advantage over districts which could not get money from the Government for railway construction. They had no right to give the freeholders between Dalby and Cattle Creek any advantage over freeholders in any other part of the State; and he should certainly vote against this line, unless it was built by the local authorities.

Mr. COOPER: This railway ought to be made to afford employment for the unemployed. During the next six months, after the work in the sugar districts and harvesting on the Downs were over, there would be thousands and thousands of unemployed. The people employed in those industries would, unless other work offered, have to try to make wages in the sugar districts, which, as a matter of fact, was not a white man's game.

Mr. MAXWELL intended to oppose this line. The other day they had before them a Betterment Bill which made provision that any land benefited by the construction of a railway should bear a portion of the cost of that railway. But in the motion before the Committee they had a proposal to build a line through blocks of alienated land, and the whole of the people of the State would have to contribute towards the cost of that railway. It was said that the construction of this line would find employment for a great number of unemployed. Were the Government going to find employment for those people in the North who would soon be thrown out of work in the sugar districts, and those people who, through the fall in the price of wolfram, would be thrown out of work in the mining districts? Were there not quite as good lands in the North as the lands in the district represented by the Secretary for Lands, where a railway could be constructed? Look at Mr. Phillips's report, and see the value he put on the lands already alienated in this district, and say why should not those people contribute something towards the cost of the proposed line. If this line was built now, and the Betterment Bill was passed next year, those lands would not come under its provisions, as the enhanced value would have already accrued. If the Government were prepared to pass the Betterment Bill this session, then he and other hon. members were ready to assist them, but under present circumstances he intended to vote against this railway.

Mr. LESINA said he also intended to vote against this line. A sum of £46,000 had been voted on the Estimates some years ago for the line from Clermont to Blair Athol, but, so far, no effort had been made to connect those two centres, though the Government were losing thousands of pounds annually owing to the fact that coal in that district had to be carried by bullock teams, horse teams, and traction engines over bad roads, which were likely to become worse in future. The construction of that line was very much more important, commercially and industrially, to the State and to Central Queensland particularly, than the building of this small line in the Dalby district. The proposal to charge the cost of the construction of the proposed line to the whole of the people of the State, when they might adopt the betterment principle in the matter, was an injustice to the whole of Queensland, especially to those people who were interested in the passage of other railways. If the question went to a division, he should vote against the railway.

HON. E. B. FORREST would very much like to vote for this line, because he desired to see public works of some kind gone on with, instead of having stagnation all round. But he was a director of a company which was interested in timber land in the district. That company owned the 17,000 acres on Dalby Downs referred to in the Commissioner's report; and, secondly, the company he referred to owned a considerable portion of the Bunya Mountains. Under those circumstances he confessed he was inclined to think it was his duty to the House, and also to the company, not to vote at all on the matter. He did not want to refrain from voting without saying why, and he rose to explain the position he felt himself in. Plenty of reasons had been given, both by the Commissioner and Mr. George Phillips, in favour of building the railway, but he wished to say he would not vote either one way or the other under the circumstances.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to remind hon. members that there is an amendment

before the Committee, and the debate ought to be strictly confined to it—whether the cost of the railway should or should not be borne by the local authority.

Mr. HARDACRE was not altogether in favour of the local authorities building such lines, or falling back on the alternative of having no lines at all. While not losing sight of the betterment principle, they should not necessarily abandon the right of initiative on the part of the central authority as well as on the part of the local authority. Because they wanted to see the betterment principle carried, he saw no reason why they should give all the initiative to the local bodies. That would mean that they would have no public works of any kind. [Mr. J. LEAHY: Are they not public bodies?] Yes; and he should like to see public works carried out by local authorities, but not all of them. Perhaps he was wrongly informed, but he had been told that the local authorities could not at present collect the betterment in benefited areas. He was informed that a local authority endeavoured to collect the betterment some little time ago, and was told by the Attorney-General that they had no power. [Mr. J. LEAHY: What body was that?] He was not sure. [Hon. R. PHILIP: They have been doing it for years past.] [An honourable member: That is in the case of guaranteed railways.] [Mr. J. LEAHY: With the Ayr line.] What he could have wished was that the Government, in bringing the railway forward, had associated it with a Bill to provide for the collection of the betterment on the particular freeholds through which the line would pass. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It would be a crying shame if they escaped.] In Mr. Phillips's report they found the following passage:—

In this connection it should be borne in mind that the whole of the land that would be traversed by tramway from Dalby to the proposed terminus near Ensor's (23½ miles) is alienated, and would be enhanced in value to a greater extent than the remaining Crown land.

I am confident that, given a tramway from Dalby to Bell, the value of freehold land within easy reach of the line would be increased from 20 to 50 per cent.

A calculation was given which showed that the freehold lands would be increased in value by £78,000, as against Crown lands by £20,000. Why should they try and get the small increment of £20,000 from those who took up Crown lands, and allow private owners to be benefited to the extent of £78,000? He would not be a party to anything of that kind. In 1896 he voted against a bunch of railways introduced by the present leader of the Opposition. A number of those railways were losing money to-day, but if the betterment principle had been adopted there was at least one case in which there would have been no loss to the State at all. Why should hon. members vote against railways of that kind when sitting in opposition, and adopt a different attitude when they changed sides? If they had a distinct assurance that next session a Bill would be passed to make the freeholders on the proposed line pay something towards the cost of the railway, his opposition would be withdrawn. [Mr. J. LEAHY: How much?] The details would of course be provided in the Bill. He did not mean a general betterment Bill, but a special measure dealing with that particular case. [The PREMIER: You will have to give power to the Government to make a betterment area. There is no power in the law as it stands.] They should insist upon a distinct promise now, that so far as the owners of the freehold lands were concerned they would have to pay something towards the cost of the line, and then when the Bill was brought

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in they would not be able to say that the Government had no right to bring it in because they did not know anything about it. They should know now in advance that the Bill was going to be passed. He wished to say that he was not altogether enamoured of the proposal to make Crown lands pay the cost of railways, because he thought their public works should be for the purpose of giving increased facilities to selectors. If the selectors were called upon to pay for the increased advantages arising from public works, they would not be much better off. The principle also had this objection—that it made the land which was of least value pay the cost, whereas the cost should come from the land which was of most value. However, that was a detail. If the Government gave an assurance that they would make those freeholders contribute towards the cost of the line, he would be satisfied. [Mr. J. LEAHY: How much is their share?] They could not improve upon the proposal in the Betterment Bill that they should be called upon to make an annual payment of at least one-half the unearned increment. [Hon. R. PHILP: There is one-fifth Crown land and four-fifths freehold land.] [Mr. KERR: The four-fifths will have to pay.] If it was not proposed to make them pay a fair rate—say, at least one-half the unearned increment—he, for one, would be dissatisfied; but after the promise of the Government—[Mr. J. LEAHY: We have had no promise yet.] He hoped the Government would give a distinct promise, and if that promise was based on the principle of the Betterment Bill he would be quite willing to accept it.

The TREASURER: The position taken up by the leader of the Opposition—to prevent this railway from being built—was quite a new departure for him. He was a gentleman who believed in a “spirited public works policy,” yet whenever the present Government attempted to take even a small step in that direction it was opposed by the hon. member for Townsville. [Hon. R. PHILP: Do you call this a “spirited public works policy”?] Yes. The purpose the Government had in view in proposing that line was just the same that they had in view in proposing the extension of the Gayndah line. It was for the purpose of opening up more land for settlement. Unfortunately, in this case, they had to go through freehold land before reaching the lands of the State, and he regretted exceedingly that they had not been able to pass the Betterment Bill into law, because it would have satisfied the scruples of the leader of the Opposition—[Hon. R. PHILP: It would not.]—by enabling them to get something from the freeholder. But, as an hon. member pointed out, as the end of the world did not come at Christmas, so the end of the world did not come with the close of this session; and the Betterment Bill was there right enough, and they would get some return from the freeholders just as sure as he was standing on that floor. But, although their main object was to give facilities for getting at the Crown land and thereby facilitating settlement, they had a secondary object in view—namely, to provide work for the unemployed, who would be on their hands in considerable numbers in the beginning of the year. In the building of those railways, and the work that would be given by making roads and clearing land to make it available for settlement, they hoped to employ a very large number of the men who would then be idle. Shearing in the West, work on sugar plantations, and harvesting work on the Downs, all terminated about Christmas, and they had to look out, in the beginning of the

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year, that there was something to do for the very large number of men who would then be idle; and, although those two railways were only, each of them, very short ones, it was believed that the necessary work connected with them would give employment to some thousands of men in the State. The hon. member for Burke had asked if nothing was to be done for the unemployed in the North. He might say, for the information of the hon. member, that at the present moment the Secretary for Public Lands was having inquiries made up North as to suitable areas to be treated in the same way as similar areas had been treated in the South. (Hear, hear!) Hon. members must remember that you could not simply send gangs of men to a particular place because it was blank on the map. They had to find land that was likely to be selected after it had been improved before it would be profitable to send men to improve it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman is rather discussing the unemployed question than this particular railway.

The TREASURER: He was not discussing the unemployed question more than the railway. He was only wanting to give the Committee to understand clearly what was the object the Government had in view in proposing that railway.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman was dealing with the question of the unemployed in the North, which has no connection with this question.

The TREASURER: He was replying to the argument of the hon. member for Burke against building the line that nothing was being done up North, and pointing out that, as steps were being taken in that direction, his argument fell to the ground. If the amendment of the hon. member for Townsville was carried, it meant that the objects the Government had in view would be completely defeated. No matter what the local authorities in that particular district might do ultimately, hon. members knew very well that there was not the remotest chance of an arrangement being made with the local authorities for doing that work by the beginning of the year. He believed the prospect of the line turning out satisfactorily was a fairly good one; and he would mention this: that this was the first time, he believed, in the history of Queensland that an attempt had been made to save the general taxpayer of the State in that way. It might not be completely successful, but it was unmistakably an attempt in the right direction to increase the value of the Crown lands. It might be desirable also to get some of the unearned increment from the freeholder through whose lands the line might pass. But however strongly they might desire it, and however they might recognise the fairness of it, they had not the machinery—the power—to get it from them in that instance, and Queensland could not stand still until everything had been accomplished. He hoped they would get that power by and by. It was an eminently desirable power, but in the meantime this was a step in the right direction—in the direction of progress, and the progress would be much greater during the next eight months. He hoped the Committee would reject the amendment.

Mr. MACARTNEY: One thing at least could be said for the amendment moved by the

leader of the Opposition—it was bound to operate for the protection of the State, while the original resolution did not in any way protect the State, either in regard to the increment of [5.30 p.m.] the Crown lands or in regard to the betterment of the freehold lands along the line. The amendment was giving effect to the Government policy as outlined by the Premier some months ago. The Premier—he would give his words—some few months ago stated this as the policy of the Government in regard to light lines of railway into agricultural districts. He said, continuing from another subject—

Associated somewhat with that is the subject of constructing light lines of railway in farming districts. We are prepared to do this by a variety of means. We can advance the money to local authorities; or we may construct the lines under the Railway Guarantee Act, or by a new method of constructing lines to areas of Crown land, and loading the land with the cost of construction—an experiment which I am anxious to see made, and which, I think, can be carried out successfully. But in order to ensure that the people who benefit by the construction of such lines should contribute something, it will be necessary to load the land benefited other than Crown land with part of the cost, that is the land intervening between the main line and the Crown lands.

[The TREASURER: And you said the Betterment Bill was not in the Governor's Speech?] [Laughter.] He would come to that directly—

If that land derives benefit from the construction of the line, it should contribute something towards its cost. It will be necessary, therefore, to apply the betterment principle to lands so situated. Those are the lines upon which we are prepared to enter upon the policy of constructing light lines of railway to farming centres.

The Premier in these remarks referred to betterment created by local work as distinguished from the general principle upon which the Bill was recently introduced to Parliament, which was a different thing altogether. He said, without hesitation, that it was never any part of the announcement of the Government policy to give us a Betterment Bill. That was an answer to the hon. gentleman. The only way they could secure the betterment on the difference between the present value of Crown lands and their value as soon as this line was constructed would be by a special Bill introducing conditions for the ascertainment of the present value and for the ascertainment of the increased value later on—then they might say the State was protected. The amendment protected the State, because it said the money was only to be lent to the local authorities, but would secure the repayment of principal and interest later on. And although not prepared to support it until he had heard what was to be said from both sides, yet he thought there was a great deal to be said for it. He must protest against the lateness of the circulation of the report. Within a few hours perhaps of coming into the Chamber they got a report dated as far back as December last. He was now referring particularly to the consideration of the amendment—while the Commissioner's report on the matter was not twenty-four hours old. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The report did not come up for consideration by the Government till quite recently.] That was more the fault of the hon. gentleman than anybody else. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes, I probably have the most fault.] The hon. gentleman had had control, and could have called for the report, and he thought it would be a fair thing for hon. members to fairly and dispassionately consider a report of that sort,

and not have it thrust upon them for discussion at a few hours' notice. They should not be brought here blindfold, and asked to vote blindly, and accept the responsibility of their votes afterwards. He thought it was a fair thing to have made it public. He proposed not to deal any further with the amendment, but later on he should have something to say on the question.

Mr. FORSYTH: The information vouchsafed by the Premier some little time ago meant that if this amendment was accepted the railway would not go on. He presumed the local people along the line, if there was increased settlement, would be able to pay towards it. He could quite understand if they had to find the £33,000 they would probably not like to take the responsibility; but, seeing we had not got the Betterment Bill introduced, and as the Crown lands which would have to be sold were likely to bring in £20,000 by way of betterment, and as the Government could not see their way clear at the present time to get from the freeholders any betterment, would the local authorities not accept from the Government the betterment accruing from the Crown lands, because if they got that money they would be in a position to carry this Bill through without any loan at all? The Government intended under any conditions to sell the Crown lands at a higher valuation, because they were brought much nearer to market through it. [Mr. MAXWELL: They have to get buyers.] Yes, but it was understood this land would get buyers, and the price of 12s. 6d. an acre which was put down was not a high one. The Secretary for Public Lands said this land was not under value, that probably the whole of the land in this area represented £40,000, and would probably realise £1 an acre instead of 12s. 6d. The local bodies on the report of the Commissioner would, upon the basis of 5 per cent., have to find £1,600 a year. Against that the cost was to be set, £2,640 per annum for running the line. That would mean a loss of about £1,000 a year. If they could get the freeholders to pay the betterment on their lands, there would be no trouble about building the line at all. [Mr. LESINA: There are no means of getting the unearned increment unless we pass a special statute.] There was no means at present of getting anything from the freeholders, and they were going to get the bulk of the benefit, because the line would go right through their holdings, whilst it would merely touch the fringe of the Crown lands. If a betterment Bill was passed, the people who would have to pay betterment would be the people who bought Crown lands later on. According to Mr. Phillips, the amount realisable by way of betterment from Crown lands was only £20,000, and that would not be enough to pay for the line. Of course, the local authorities would not care to have a liability of £33,000 placed on their shoulders, and, if the Government could not make the freeholders contribute a portion of their unearned increment, they might get over the difficulty to some extent by giving to the local authorities the unearned increment on the Crown lands. The Commissioner stated that the Pittsworth branch earned £270 per mile last year, and he put down the earnings of the proposed line at the low estimate of £150 per mile. In that case, the local authorities would have ample money, if the unearned increments were realisable, to pay interest and redemption. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The local authorities would not have the power to take them.] No, but, if the Government could

Mr. Forsyth.]

not get hold of the freeholders, they might give the local authorities the unearned increment on the Crown lands to help them to build the line. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The Government will get the value of the Crown lands and the unearned increment of the freeholders as well.] How would they get that? [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We want legislation, of course.] If the line was built before a Betterment Bill was passed, the owners of the land would subdivide their holdings and sell, and they would get a larger price than at present. It would be most unfair to make those who bought the land at a higher price pay the betterment the following year. If the Government introduced a Bill based upon a specific betterment instead of on a general betterment, he believed every member of the Committee would be in favour of it; but, if the owners of the land sold their land before a Betterment Bill was passed, they would reap the benefit of the construction of the line without paying anything for the benefit they derived. [The TREASURER: They will not cheat us out of the betterment.] For 20 miles this line would pass through freeholds, and the whole of that land would be increased in value. The position was much worse in regard to betterment than in the case of the line from Degilbo to Wetheron, because that line would pass through large areas of Crown lands, and there would be a betterment straight away. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We will get at it.] He would be perfectly satisfied if the hon. gentleman would tell them how he would get at it. The Government did not intend to pass the Betterment Bill this year. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We will next year.] If it passed through that Chamber, it might not pass through the Upper House, and, in any case, the people who owned the land would have sold out in the meantime. [Mr. J. LEAHY: If you bring in a Betterment Bill next year, you cannot go back to the past.] [The TREASURER: What is to hinder us?] [Mr. BOWMAN: You have gone back to the past.] Mr. Phillips said that at the present time land in the vicinity of the terminus was open to homestead selection at 2s. 6d. an acre, and, unless a tramway went well into the heart of the Maida Hill district, he did not think the Lands Department would dispose of the lands tinted pink and blue on the map accompanying his report (about 50,000 acres) at any great advance on the price he quoted. According to the plan, Maida Hill district was right outside the terminus. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Maida Hill district is all round there. You are looking only at where the name is.] Mr. Phillips said that he did not think the land would be sold for more than 12s. 6d. an acre. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I told him, when I saw that, that he had vastly understated the value of the land.] [Mr. J. LEAHY: What is the good of the report, then?] If it was first-class agricultural land, which would not require much clearing, it would be worth a great deal of money. He thought the Secretary for Railways was thoroughly justified in proposing to build the line on the 3 feet 6-inch gauge, as that would save a great deal of transhipping. That would be a safeguard. He thought that the whole of the freeholders in the neighbourhood should be tackled, as they would get the whole benefit almost through the construction of this line; but the question was whether they could make this betterment retrospective. He would have no objection to the line if the Government could see their way to get at these freeholders.

[Mr. Forsyth.

Mr. KERR (*Barcoo*): The hon. member for Townsville had moved an amendment to the effect that the local authority in the district concerned should borrow the money to construct the line, but as far as he (Mr. Kerr) could make out, none of the local authorities were in a position to do that. Before local authorities could get advances from the Government for the constructing of lines, the Government had to be convinced that the revenue the board or council received would be sufficient to pay back the interest and redemption on the loan. No doubt the amendment of the leader of the Opposition, if carried, would block this line being built. The Committee had no reason to believe that the local authorities concerned would ask for a loan to build the line. There was no proof that they wanted to have anything to do with it. The local authority at Thorguna and the Blackall Municipal Council would be favourable to constructing a branch line, but there were obstacles in the way—in determining the amount of rateable property in the area, and what the revenue was likely to be, and how they would meet their loan and the interest on it. He was sure that the local authorities were not in a position to construct such a line. Then these local authorities did not hold the freehold of the lands in their areas; neither did they own the Crown lands: so whom were they going to put the increased rate upon? [Hon. R. PHILP: A special rate.] He did not think the Act gave them power to put on a special rate for such a purpose. He did not like the resolution in its original form, because he believed that the freeholders that were going to be benefited by the construction of this line ought to be got at, and he believed they would be got at. He believed that the Government were prepared to bring in a measure that would give them a certain amount of the unearned increment. He believed in Government railways, and he would like to see this line constructed by the Government; but he thought the amendment of the leader of the Opposition would block its construction, and if that happened it would prevent a lot of men who were now out of employment from getting employment, for the local authorities would not construct the line. He would like to have an assurance from the hon. gentleman in charge of the resolution that the freeholders who would be benefited by this line should be made to pay something towards its construction. If that was given, he did not think any hon. member could reasonably vote against the resolution.

HON. R. PHILP pointed out that the local authorities had already built a number of lines in Queensland. First of all they got a vote put on the Loan Estimates, and all those local authorities who had borrowed money for railway construction could put on a special rate. It was all nonsense to say that they could make these freeholders who would be benefited pay by and by—they should make them pay for the betterment at once. As to the argument that the construction of this line would provide work for the unemployed, he would remind hon. members that the same thing could be achieved by the building of

[7 p.m.] other lines which had already been authorised by Parliament.

There was the line from Clermont to Blair Athol, which was a very important railway, the construction of which would mean a considerable annual saving to the Government in regard to their coal supply in that district, as it had now to be carted by teams a distance of 8 or 10 miles. Again, if a syndicate were not to

be allowed to construct a line from Norman- ton to Cloncurry, there was no reason why the Government should not go on with the building of that railway, which would afford employment to a great number of people, and which would go through Crown lands all the way. They should endeavour to find work for the people in the North as well as for those in the South. The goldfields were not in a prosperous condition at the present time, and there were a lot of men out of work on Charters Towers and Gympie. Something should be done for them. Two lines in the South were too much, if they were not building any lines in the Central and Northern districts. If they had not much money to spend, what they had should be distributed fairly among the different parts of the State. He was prepared to vote for this railway if the people who would be benefited by its construction guaranteed that nobody else in the State would suffer any loss, but not to build it at the expense of the State. What guarantee had they that the wheat land in that district would be cultivated if the line was constructed? There were thousands of acres of wheat land alongside a railway now, and it was not cultivated. Was not the land between Toowoomba and Warwick, and between Toowoomba and Pittsworth, and between Toowoomba and Roma all wheat land? [THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: All privately held.] No; it was not all privately held. There were some thirty-seven people going up to Warra. Was that not on a railway line? There was plenty of wheat land about Roma, and it was not cultivated. He repeated that if the people of the district were anxious for this line, they should guarantee that the State would not lose a shilling by its construction. With regard to the argument of the hon. member for Barcoo that the local authorities could not get the money, he would point out that the House could vote the money for them, as they had done in other cases, and they could collect a special rate levied on the lands benefited by the construction of the railway. As to the statement that they could afterwards apply the betterment principle to the freehold lands in the district, it was quite probable that on the strength of this line being built the owners of that land would sell it and get the unearned increment. The unfortunate people who bought it would pay full value for it, and it would be impossible to get any more from them. Mr. Deakin once said that before the irrigation works were erected in Victoria people would give £1 an acre for the land benefited, but after the water was laid on they would not give 1s. an acre. The same thing would happen in this case. Once the line was built they would not be able to put a special tax on this freehold land any more than on any other land.

Mr. HARDACRE: Judging from the remarks of the leader of the Opposition, his amendment did not express his meaning. The hon. member said that the Government should build this line as long as the betterment principle was applied to it, but his amendment to refer it to the local authority was a very indirect way of trying to get the betterment. The local authority might not be disposed, or might not be able, to construct the line. If they would construct it, then he could quite understand the hon. gentleman voting for the amendment, but if the hon. member wanted to insist upon the application of the betterment principle, and make the freeholders alongside this railway contribute their share

of the cost, his amendment was not the way to achieve that result. He should move a distinct amendment to the effect that the betterment principle be applied to this particular land. His feeling was that, if the hon. gentleman would move an amendment like that, he would practically get the support of the whole House. He believed Ministers themselves would vote for it. It would be a good thing if they could get a definite resolution expressive of the feeling of the House that the betterment principle should be applied to the construction of the railway.

Mr. J. LEAHY: If he proceeded on the lines he would like, he would first of all lecture the Secretary for Public Lands, and inform him that the best way in which to get business through the House was to act in an orderly manner, and not attempt to act the schoolmaster. He was sorry that that hon. gentleman, no doubt actuated by the local interest he had in the matter, had got down to the level of the Treasurer, and had made interjections having no relevancy to the question. He must object to the principle which the Premier had announced to the House and the country—somewhat the same principle as that laid down in a resolution which was before them a short time ago. It was not exactly the same principle, for in the case of the other railway recently dealt with there was a large amount of land still in the hands of the Crown, and in the present case the line ran through land which was four-fifths in area, and nineteen-twentieths in value, in the hands of private owners, and what was in the hands of the Crown was only worth 2s. 6d. an acre. With a rainfall of about 25 inches a year, what kind of land was that through which to build a railway. [THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You are quite wrong.] Did the hon. gentleman deny that that was the report? [THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It may be the report, but it is absolutely an undervaluation.] If it was such an undervaluation, probably the cost of construction had been equally undervalued. He had nothing to say against Mr. Phillips. He knew him, and thought a great deal of him, but when he went to report on the Gayndah line he was accompanied by an officer of the Maryborough Chamber of Commerce, and when he went to the Dalby district he was accompanied by an officer of the hon. gentleman's department. Of course, those were mere coincidences, but the fact remained that he had the able assistance of a gentleman in the Minister's confidence, who had full knowledge of the district, and who knew the value of the land, and that gentleman said that 2s. 6d. an acre was the value of the land coloured pink on the map. The map was very interesting, and showed that within a mile of Maida Hill the Crown land commenced. He understood that the pink marking showed the land not taken up, but there were patches of green going through it which showed the portions selected. No doubt those were the titbits. Then there was the portion tinted blue, which Mr. Phillips described as unavailable, and he presumed, using the phraseology of the Land Act, that that meant absolutely useless. [THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No, no!] But Mr. Phillips pointed out that if that land was cleared and improved it would be fit for dairying. He confessed that, to his mind, from the public point of view, the prospects of the line did not seem very good. It was entirely through freehold property which was closed on by some financial institution, showing that it was not such a wonderful property, giving extraordinary results. But he wanted to come

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to the new principle they were going to apply to that business. The hon. gentleman wanted to apply that principle as if the line was going through Crown lands, whereas it went entirely through privately owned lands. [The PREMIER: That principle can only apply to Crown lands.] Then the principle did not apply at all, because there was very little Crown land. [The PREMIER: 57,000 acres.] Which Mr. Phillips valued at 2s. 6d. an acre. It was not 25 per cent. of the area, and not 2½ per cent. of the gross value, and it was after all the value, and not the area, they had to go on. He did not see how any such principle could be applied to the construction of a line through Crown land unless it was built at the expense of the State, or unless by means of an Act of Parliament, passed or yet to be passed, the owners of properties were called on in some way to contribute to the construction of a line which would enhance the value of their properties. But they had nothing of that kind before them. All they had before them was an enormous area of private land, and a quantity of extremely impoverished land which belonged to the Crown, and for the sake of that very inferior land they were to build a line which, when built, would not place that land in as good a position as land lying idle at present near railways which they could get nobody to settle on. The Secretary for Railways told them the line was proposed by some Government ten, twelve, or fourteen years ago, and that it had been approved of since, about four years ago. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: By a Government of which you were a member.] The hon. gentleman was entirely wrong. It was never brought before the House by a Government of which he was a member. Did the hon. gentleman endorse that policy, and was this the outcome of the great national cry to put things right? When he proceeded to put things on right lines he simply took over one of the worst pieces of the policy of the late Government which he condemned—the lines that were rejected as being the least likely to pay. That particular line was rejected four years ago. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No.] The hon. gentleman said so. He did not object to the hon. gentleman going back on his word; it was part of his nature by this time. But, apart from that, what was the new principle introduced? The improved value of the land was to go into the Treasury. That was altogether a different thing from the principle he initiated at Warwick. He said there he was going to sell land for the purpose of building railways and public works. Now the hon. gentleman was going to sell the land and put the prairie value into the Treasury, while the enhanced value was to go to the loan fund. That might be a right principle, but he wanted to see how it would work out. The motion was one to enable the proceeds of land sales to go into the Treasury—to bring a stream of revenue into the Treasury. The principle was not a new one. The late Government built lines on exactly the same terms. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I ask you to name one in justification of your statement.] The lands they sold in the Coolabunia district. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Those lands were all sold before the railway was made.] If so, they were sold with the knowledge that the railway was going to be made, and that the money for it had been voted by the House, which came to the same thing. Some of that land fetched as much as £2 an acre. [The TREASURER: And the money went into revenue.] A line did not go into a district all at once. It was talked of for years

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and years before it was built. But people knew it would go there some day, competition put a price on the land, and the very fact that a line would go there some day put an unearned increment on the land, which the Government got in advance. It was only a question of interest whether they got it before the railway was built or after. In fact, the principle was as old as Methuselah. Take the case the leader of the Opposition referred to, the line from Hughenden to Richmond. Did not that principle apply there in the fullest extent? Those lands were held under the Crown Lands Acts, 1884 to 1897, under Part VIII. of which the Government had a right of resumption at any time, and paying only the value they were worth for grazing purposes. If any increased value was given to them as agricultural land or for closer settlement the lessees were not entitled to consideration for that in the assessment of the amount of compensation they were to receive on the whole area being resumed.

This was not a new principle [7.30 p.m.] at all, but went back to the days of the first railway construction, and beyond that. Why did the Secretary for Railways not tell the Commissioner if there was any other way in which they had been going on with railway construction in Queensland? [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You have been showing it yourself quite unconsciously.] The line from Hughenden to Richmond, over which there had been no skiting, no leg-pulling of the great unwashed, had been built under the same conditions. Departing from this new principle of land values altogether, how could there be a difference in policy, if this was one of the very lines proposed by the Nelson Government, the Philp Government, and the Morgan Government? The whole of the line went through freehold land, he believed; and where was the difference in principle or policy? With the exception that hon. members talked so much about it, and tried to make the public believe it was not so, the Government were doing nothing but carrying out the policy of their predecessors. They had attempted to put three measures through, and as soon as they had had the least opposition they funked on them. This was the policy of the late Government, but it did not follow that because it was the policy of the Government for one time it was going to be the policy for all time. Conditions altered very much. Four or five years ago, after Sir Hugh Nelson's time—who, he believed, first suggested it—the policy came into vogue that persons who were benefited by the construction of a railway should contribute something for the value which they received, and if it was not a paying line they should be prepared to pay the loss. The people had to contribute in connection with the Enoggera Railway. Then there was the Allora line, of which the State was bearing one-half of the cost, and still it was not a paying line—it was only paying a little more than working expenses. The whole of that was freehold land, and the very closest form of settlement. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You cannot compare a 3-mile line with a 23-mile line.] He would compare it with the Killarney line, which was a 28-mile line. If the Killarney line did not pay, what chance was there of this line, where the whole area was practically freehold, paying? None whatever. The Braudersert people had built a line in a great deal better country than this was. They were paying as much to bring their goods 16 miles as it cost them to bring it on the public railways 64 miles from Beaudesert to Brisbane: they had to do that to pay the interest on their line, and their share of the loss on this

line. Then if a line ought to be built on any portion of the Downs it was the line 20 or 30 miles beyond Pittsworth. [Mr. MACKINTOSH: Hear, hear!] When he was up there two or three years ago there were waving fields of corn for a distance as far as the line before the Chamber traversed altogether; but though the people there had no railway they would have to bear the burden which the building of this line would put upon the general taxpayer, because the people concerned would not pay their share. Then a great many representations were made to the late Ministry about the line to Goombungee, which was a very fine district. He had been over the district, and the divisional board passed resolutions and were willing to borrow the money and build the line. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The money is available for them.] Why should not other people build their lines? Was it because Mr. O'Brien, the member for that district, was not a Minister? Was that a sufficient reason why the people of the State should be taxed in one direction or another. Because a district was not represented by a Minister, but by the leader of the Opposition or a humble member like himself, were not the cases to be decided on their merits? (Laughter.) Then a line had been passed for the district represented by the hon. member for Lockyer, which was one of the most fertile in Queensland. Why was not the line built that Parliament authorised in that locality? Would it not provide work for the unemployed as well as this line; was it not more likely to pay; was it not nearer to a market; and was not the soil far easier worked?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not speaking to the amendment before the Committee.

Mr. J. LEAHY: At the commencement of his remarks he pointed out to the Chairman that on an occasion like this it was more convenient to discuss the motion and the amendment together, and he did not know that the Chairman then intimated that he should confine himself to the amendment, afterwards addressing himself to the main question.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think the hon. member is speaking either to the amendment or to the original question.

Mr. J. LEAHY: The point he wished to discuss was whether this line should be built at all, and, if it was going to be built, whether it was going to be built on the proposal of the Government or on the proposal of the leader of the Opposition. He was giving reasons why it should not be built at all. If they were going to vote public money for the construction of railways, they should vote it in the directions in which it was most needed. If he had to choose between the motion and the amendment, he would vote for the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think it is in order for the hon. member to advocate the claims of other districts as a set-off against this particular railway. I certainly do not object to a cursory reference to any other district; but it would certainly be out of order to discuss at any length the claims of any other district, and urge its claims as an objection to passing this resolution.

Mr. J. LEAHY: Perhaps the Chairman was right, although it had been the practice of the Chamber for forty years. [Mr. KERR: Is that a reflection on the Chair?] [The PREMIER: Hear, hear!] If he followed on the lines of the

hon. member for Barcoo, he submitted he would be in order, particularly as they had the stamp of the Committee put upon them.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will keep to the question before the Committee.

Mr. J. LEAHY: Mr. Phillips said in his report that if this line did not pay they might as well give up light lines. That was a very important statement coming from such an authority. He would compare this line with some already built, and see whether the conditions were as favourable in this case, and, if those other lines did not pay, they should ask themselves whether this line was likely to pay. There was not a single branch railway built into the best districts in Queensland that was at present paying. The Killarney line was not paying. [Mr. GRAYSON: Yes.] It had not paid anything like interest until last year, and then it only paid by being given credit for the earnings of 10 miles of the main line. If they added on 10 miles to that, it might pay interest. The line they were now discussing might be made to pay too, if they gave it credit for the earnings on 25 miles of the line between Dalby and Toowoomba. They could make anything pay by such a system of ledgerdemain in connection with the accounts. [Mr. MACKINTOSH: The Pittsworth line pays.] It did not pay working expenses. [Mr. MACKINTOSH: Extend it double the distance, and it will pay double.] A subsidiary principle in connection with the motion was that the Government were going to build the line very cheaply. The Secretary for Railways intended to convey that this was a new policy, but the late Government built railways on the very same principle. The hon. gentleman told them that this line was going to be built for something like £1,300 per mile, but the late Government built the line from Hughenden to Richmond—which was a portion of a main line, passing over undulating country, and where the sleepers had to come a great distance—for under £1,400 per mile; so that the Government and the Railway Department were not entitled to much credit if they could not build a little branch line much cheaper. There was a great deal to be said in favour of the local authorities building this line. If the line paid—as the Government said it would—the local authorities would lose nothing. The adoption of that principle would also have the advantage of enabling the Government to tell the people in other districts who demanded railway construction to adopt the same principle. Those who benefited largely by the expenditure of public money should pay something in return. The people in a district should say by a vote of some kind what the benefited area would be. There was no justification for the wild, hair-brained principle which the Minister for Lands advocated. This was just the kind of country which the local authorities could operate on, and why should this system not work as well in this district as it had done in the other districts? The hon. gentleman had given no reasons against that at all. Then, what would be carried on this line? No timber—nothing, according to the Commissioner and Mr. Phillips, but cream; and how much cream would have to be carried over this line to pay for its construction? They should settle people along existing lines before constructing new lines at the expense of the country. For miles and miles along the line to Roma there were no people settled on either side, and if the Government were going to make the people who held those lands put them to better use, why didn't they do it at once? As

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they had party Government, he would stick to his leader and support the amendment. He might consider it necessary to talk for an hour on the main question.

Mr. LESINA desired to say that he did not feel inclined to vote for the amendment, and he would also vote against the whole resolution.

Mr. P. J. LEAHY (*Warrego*): He thought too much was being made of this betterment business. He recognised that it was desirable that where a railway went into a district the people who would be benefited by that railway should pay any loss the Government suffered through building of the line, but it would not be a very wise thing to make them pay for more than that. Although he was exceedingly anxious to see this country opened up, he was very doubtful that this line would pay, and he would prefer to see it constructed in accordance with the principle contained in the amendment or in accordance with the guarantee system that had been adopted a few years ago. They were told that if this line was built the Government would be able to collect the betterment next year, and a very important declaration had been made from the other side to-night—that the Betterment Bill was not dead—most people thought it was—and that it would be reintroduced early next year. [The PREMIER: What has the Betterment Bill got to do with the amendment before the Committee? Nothing whatever.] He would show that it had. If this line were built now, and the Betterment Bill was not passed until next year, the chances were twenty to one that they would get no betterment at all, unless it was made retrospective. If they made it retrospective in this case, how far back were they going? Were they going back two, three, four, or five years,

[S p.m.] or were they going to stop in this case? He ventured to say that all the indications showed that if this line was built now they would get no betterment from that land in the future. He trusted that the railway would be built, but he should be sorry if the people benefited by its construction did not contribute something towards making good the loss which the Government would suffer by its construction. [An honourable member: Are you going to vote for the amendment?] He had a perfectly open mind on the subject. He admitted at once that if the amendment was carried there was a danger that it might kill the railway altogether. He had no desire to kill this railway, but he submitted that they were not justified in voting for the proposal before the Committee without some safeguard.

Mr. MACKINTOSH: On a former occasion he voted for a railway from Dalby towards Bunya Mountains, and he did so because he always desired to adopt such measures as would develop the resources of the country. But why they should now have this proposal to construct a railway from Dalby to Cattle Creek in the direction of Bunya Mountains was a mystery to him, seeing that they had a promise at the last election that they would have light railways all over the Downs to enable agriculturists to develop the resources of that district by affording them facilities to get their produce to market. He had known Dalby for many years, and he was sorry to say that it was not much more advanced now than it was twenty years ago. There was magnificent land alongside the railway from Dalby westward—land equally as good as any at the Bunya Mountains—but what did it grow? Goats and prickly pear. [Laughter.] They would have to go 20 miles from Dalby by

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this railway before they got any Crown lands which the line would enhance in value. Mr. Phillips might be a very good engineer, but he did not know much about the value of that land. Mr. Phillips said this land was now worth 2s. 6d. an acre, and that by constructing this railway its value would be enhanced to 12s. 6d. If the enhanced value of that land would be only 12s. 6d. an acre, then his (Mr. Mackintosh's) advice to the Premier was to have nothing to do with the railway; but he believed that the value of that land for the purposes for which it was created was more than double 12s. 6d. an acre. He had gone over the list of selectors in the Dalby and the Ellangowan districts with the object of comparing the amount of settlement in each, and he could better understand a proposal to construct a railway from Ellangowan to Clifton than from Dalby to Cattle Creek. To talk of the latter costing £1,300 a mile was an absurdity. There must be very steep gradients and wide curves to cause that expenditure. The country between Ellangowan and Clifton was probably the most fertile and thickly populated country in Queensland, and how was it that the Dalby line had been selected in preference to it? Then he would refer hon. members to the proposed extension of the Pittsworth line.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must remind the hon. member that he is not discussing the question before the Committee, and I hope he will confine himself to it.

Mr. MACKINTOSH: He only desired to emphasise the fact that there were other portions of the Darling Downs equally worthy of consideration in the matter of railway construction; and, with that object in view, he was comparing the Dalby district with other districts well known to hon. members. He desired to point out that the Commissioner for Railways told them in his report that the Pittsworth line earned £270 per mile, and the Killarney branch £260 per mile, whereas he only estimated the earning power of the proposed Dalby to Cattle Creek branch at £150 per mile. He believed in the construction of branch lines as feeders of the main line, and advocated the application of the same system as that in vogue in France, where the trucks from the narrow-gauge feeding lines were lifted by cranes on to the main lines. Now, a great deal had been said about the betterment principle and the gun tax. The only thing, in fact, which the Treasurer had not proposed was a bachelor tax.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must remind the hon. member that he is departing from the question before the Committee. I hope I shall not have to remind him again.

Mr. MACKINTOSH: Railways were the only means they had for developing their resources. When he was last before his electors he laid down three planks in his platform. One was the construction of railways in agricultural centres by the sale of land; another was the construction of railways by private enterprise with the sanction of the Government; and the third was one adult vote. He intended to stick to all those. If they were to sell land for the construction of necessary railways, there would be no need to borrow money, and there would be a consequent saving of interest. Another line he would refer to was the Coolabunya line.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have already ruled that it is not in order, on this question, to advocate the claims of other districts for railway construction. I hope the hon. member will con-

fine himself to the question before the Committee. If he does not, I shall be obliged to order him to discontinue his speech.

Mr. MACKINTOSH: He would advocate a railway extension in his own district, from Oakey Creek to Happy Valley and Golden Valley, where there was soil as fertile as anybody could wish for. At present the farmers were taking cream into Toowoomba, 31 miles distant, by cart. How could good butter be made under such circumstances, and it was taken from Milmerran a distance of 45 miles. He fully believed that people whose properties were improved by a railway ought to contribute some of the enhanced value towards its construction. What his opinion was about the Betterment Bill he would state at the proper time; but if a railway went through his property and enhanced its value by £1 an acre it would be his duty to pay that money to the State. He did not know what the Government policy was, not being in their secrets. [Mr. J. LEAHY: You might ask the hon. member for Barcoo.] He would just as soon support the hon. member for Barcoo as anybody else as long as he brought forward good measures. It was measures he wanted, not men.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have called the hon. member to order several times for continued irrelevance. I am now compelled to direct him to discontinue his speech.

Mr. CAMERON: There was no member of the Committee more honestly in favour than himself of the construction of light lines or any other line of railway that tended [8.30 p.m.] to increase the prosperity of the country, and he had come to the Chamber with the full intention of supporting the motion, but after listening to the Minister for Railways and the Minister for Lands he had been shaken in his views. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And after seeing the amendment of the leader of the Opposition.] It seemed to him that if this line was constructed, the people who did not want it would be made to pay for it in some way. Allusion had been made to the freeholds of Camkillenbar and Dalby Downs, which would be traversed by this line, and although he had not got the knowledge of that country possessed by the Minister for Lands, he knew it fairly well. He thought it would be an unfair thing to tax these people for a line they did not want. [The TREASURER: How is that?] The Secretary for Lands said there was not much to choose between them, because if the line was constructed they would take it out of the pockets of those supposed to be benefited by the construction of the line. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Not take it out of them.] That was the effect of what the hon. gentleman said. The freeholds he had mentioned were at present amply served by the present railway line; and it was problematical whether this line would increase the value of their holdings. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: If no additional value is placed upon them they won't have to pay.] He was not in favour of the amendment, because that proposed to tax them by a different method. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Possibly higher.] He intended to vote against both the amendment and the motion.

Mr. HARDACRE hoped the Premier would give an assurance that he would adopt the betterment principle, which he was sure would satisfy a number of hon. members who were otherwise inclined to vote against this railway. He wanted to see the railway gone on with, work found for the unemployed, and settlement

taking place; but he wanted the lands benefited to bear the cost, so that there would be no complaint about it in the future. He had an amendment prepared, which he did not wish to move, and if the Premier, in a formal statement, would give an assurance to that effect, it would facilitate the passing of the railway, and give satisfaction to members on both sides.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He had some doubts whether hon. members on the other side who were condemning the proposal in unmeasured terms would accept any assurance which the hon. member wished him to give. The hon. member for Bulloo had indulged in a wholesale condemnation of the policy of branch lines, and hazarded the statement that there was not a branch line working profitably in Queensland. [Mr. J. LEAHY: I did not.] The hon. member did. [Mr. J. LEAHY: I did not.] He had also made the statement on the occasion of the proposal for the extension of the line from Degilbo to Wetheron a few days ago. If what the hon. gentleman had said with respect to branch lines was true, then the Committee ought certainly not to add to their number; but he challenged that view. Because the hon. gentleman was able to take a set of figures and say the lines were not paying interest and working expenses, it did not justify the statement that they were not paying the State. The hon. gentleman said the main lines were paying handsomely, but the fact was that if it were not for branch lines the receipts from the main lines would be much lower than they are. [Mr. J. LEAHY: Not at all.] These branch lines were feeders bringing traffic to the main lines, without which the main lines would not be so profitable as they are, and the majority of the branch lines were paying the State handsomely though they were not directly paying the Railway Department. He challenged also the contention that there was nothing new in the proposals the present Government had submitted to the House for the construction of branch lines. [Mr. J. LEAHY: Yes, I do.] They were entitled to claim that the lines proposed were to be constructed on terms that were new and novel and that had never been offered in respect to branch lines in this State before. The terms were that Crown lands should be made available for close settlement, and, when the lands were selected, an amount equal to the present value should be paid into the consolidated revenue, whilst the added value—the value given to the lands by the construction of the railway—should be paid into the loan fund account. Then, when all the Crown lands were sold and paid for, the loan fund would have to its credit a sum sufficient to repay the capital taken out of the account for the construction of the railway. [Mr. J. LEAHY: That was not in your manifesto.] It was entirely in keeping with his manifesto and with his addresses on the public platform, and he said that it was an entirely new principle in connection with the construction of railways. The hon. member for Bulloo cited the Coolabunia line as one which had been built on precisely similar terms to those proposed in the presence instance. Unfortunately for the State, it was not. The lands in the Coolabunia district were largely disposed of by the State before the railway was built. [Mr. J. LEAHY: And they are all disposed of here—that is the difference.] The hon. gentleman was quite wrong. They were not all disposed of. They were all disposed of but 57,000 acres. [Mr. J. LEAHY: 75 per cent. of them are disposed of, and 95 per cent. in value.] The lands in the Coolabunia case were sold before the railway was constructed; the late Government treated the money realised as

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revenue, and borrowed money to build the railway to those sold lands. The present Government proposed to withdraw the lands in the vicinity of the proposed line before the railway was authorised. While the railway was in course of construction, or immediately upon its completion, they would sell those lands, paying their present value into the consolidated revenue and their added value into the loan fund. That was the difference between the system the hon. gentleman adopted in the past and the system the Government proposed to adopt in the future. There was a very important and cardinal difference between the two systems which justified the Government in submitting the proposal to the Committee. The hon. member for Bulloo expressed a keen concern that the owners of the privately owned lands, which would have to be traversed before they could reach the Crown lands, should contribute something towards the cost of the railway. The hon. gentleman appeared in an entirely new character—as an advocate of the betterment principle. He was perfectly prepared to agree that the hon. gentleman's contention in this respect was an absolutely reasonable one. If it was fair that the people who bought the unsold Crown lands paid the added value given by the construction of the railway, it was also fair that they should look to the owners of the intervening lands for a contribution towards the cost of the railway in return for the benefit they would derive. It was only a question of how they should accomplish what they desired. The law at present was not adequate for the purpose. The hon. gentleman said they could do it under the Local Government Act; but they could only do it if the people interested volunteered to submit themselves to a tax upon the property within a specified benefited area. Undoubtedly, Parliament ought to supply the authority to meet such cases as the present, and, if the present Government remained in power, they would address themselves to securing for themselves, and for their successors, the power to deal in an effective way with situations such as they found themselves confronted with at Dalby, where they had to construct a railway through several miles of privately owned land, in order to render Crown lands available for settlement. After the speeches they had heard from the opposite bench, they should find the hon. member for Bulloo and the leader of the Opposition ardent supporters of a principle which they had been condemning in season and out of season for some time past. [Mr. J. LEAHY: Quite a different principle.] It was not a different principle; but he had not the least doubt that, when the Government came down with a proposal to enable them to do what the hon. gentleman had been urging them to do that evening, he would find some reason for describing it as robbery, theft, or by some equally hard name. It was all right now that it could be used as a stick to bang the present proposal with, but it would be all wrong when they proposed to translate it into legislation. The hon. gentleman, in expressing his intention to support the amendment, said that our experience justified the leader of the Opposition in asking the Committee to insist that the local authorities should build this line. The hon. member said that they should not build the line unless the local authorities agreed to pay for it, and that experience was sufficient to justify the Government in taking up that position. It was easy to make statements, but it was not so easy to give proof in support of them. The hon. member, in alluding to the Beaudesert line, supplied a reason why they should not require local authorities to build railways. He referred to the fact that on the Beaudesert line the fares and freight charges were two or three times as

much as the charges on the ordinary lines; and that in itself was a condemnation of the system the hon. member advocated, because these local authorities had to make such excessive charges in order to enable them to pay interest and redemption. The State would be content if they got working expenses and some interest, but local authorities had to pay 4 per cent. interest and 1½ per cent. redemption, making 5½ per cent. Where was there a Government branch or main line in Queensland that was doing that? Yet the hon. member for Bulloo said that the local authorities must borrow money to build such lines and pay 5½ per cent. interest and redemption in addition to paying working expenses. If the State could not do that, it was unreasonable to expect the local authorities to do it; and the hon. member would be a little disappointed when he gave him some figures in connection with the Beaudesert and other local authorities' light lines or tramways, to whom the Government had lent money for the purpose of constructing such lines. It was to be regretted that these tramways were not dealt with in the papers placed before the House separately, but were all lumped together in "general loan indebtedness." He would give a few cases to illustrate the position that he (Mr. Morgan) was taking up. The following local authorities who had borrowed money for the purpose mentioned were in arrears in the following sums on the 30th June last:—Interest and Redemption: Beaudesert, £294; Ayr, £341; Cairns, £2,283; the Douglas Board, £4,826—probably not all in connection with their tramway, but that was their accumulation of interest and redemption in arrears; the Pioneer Board, in the Mackay district, nearly £4,000. If that kind of thing was going on, it either proved that the speculations were bad ones, or that they could not expect the local authorities to pay so much towards the sinking fund. If they had to ask local authorities to pay a larger sum as interest and redemption than the railway or tramway could earn unless excessive fares and freights were charged, would it not be wiser to adopt the system the Government now proposed, and see that fair charges were made to enable farmers to prosecute their industries with profit, which they could not do with the heavy charges necessary under the other system? That was one justification for the present proposal. The other justification was that the line would open up lands which the Government would soon sell, and so the loan fund would be recouped for the money temporarily withdrawn for the construction of the line. He rose chiefly to assure those hon. members on both sides who so strongly advocated the betterment principle that the Government recognised that, while they were going to make the intending selector pay his full quota, it was unreasonable to allow privately owned property to escape its obligation; and it would be their duty to devise means by which the owners of those lands should pay their fair share towards the cost of the line. [Government members: Hear, hear.]

Mr. J. LEAHY contended that the Secretary for Railways, instead of answering his arguments, had twisted and distorted his words, and set up Aunt Sallies to knock down. The hon. gentleman said that his remarks about branch lines not paying were not correct, but he would point out that it was only last year, when the fares and freights were raised, that the branch lines paid anything like working expenses. At the present time they were hopelessly in arrear, with the best of seasons, and agricultural produce rolling in from all directions. Twenty years ago

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there were very few branch lines in agricultural districts, and in 1884 our railways paid 4 per cent. That was his reply to the hon. gentleman, who ought to know something about the railways of the State, but who himself did not. He was prepared to admit at once that it was the policy of the late Government, and of the Government who preceded them, that they should look ten or twelve years ahead for the indirect results that would accrue to the State through the development of the country by branch lines. But that policy was condemned throughout the length and breadth of the State. The late Government, who had adopted that policy, were denounced for borrowing millions of money and spending it on lines which were not reproductive. Now they had the leader of the Government defending the policy he denounced on the hustings, inducing the people to believe that it had led to gross abuse in the expenditure of loan money. It was on this ground that the hon. gentleman appealed to the people of the State to endorse his proposal that there should be no more borrowing for years to come. He (Mr. Leahy) contended that, as long as they had sufficient revenue from other sources to make up for the deficit on loan expenditure incurred for the development of the country, that policy was a good one, but there must be a relation between the development of the country and the revenue which the State could provide. Immediately reproductive expenditure could go on from year to year. That was the policy of the late Government, and it was the policy which the hon. gentleman had to fall back upon that evening. The position he (Mr. Leahy) had taken up with regard to this proposal was—not that he was opposed to the railway itself, but that he could not be a consenting party to the proposition that this line was going to be built and paid for on a new principle which the hon. gentleman was going to put into force, but which nobody ever heard of or could understand. If he supported this line, it would be on the principle the hon. gentleman was trying to enunciate but did not understand. He was not associating himself with this grand, new, and incomprehensible principle which the hon. gentleman thought he had discovered somewhere, until it was sat upon by his constituents. It was not the line itself that he was opposed to, because he had voted for it before, believing that the revenue of the State would be sufficient to provide any deficit in the working and interest expenses until the line became self-supporting. To support it on that principle was one thing, but it was a very different thing to support it on a revolutionary system which would bring any State to ruin. The betterment that he had spoken of in his previous speech was entirely distinct from that betterment which the hon. gentleman was afraid of. The man who had his land improved by a railway had a right to pay something towards the cost of that railway. That was a principle which was enforced under our local authorities. If a man had a road made into his district, the local authority made him pay his share of the cost of making that road, and that principle should apply whether a road was a macadamised road or an iron railroad. There was nothing new, startling, or revolutionary about that doctrine, but the doctrine as enforced by local authorities was limited to a defined area. How was it that the earnings on Queensland railways had come down from 4 per cent. to £1 12s. per cent.? The late Mr. Donaldson, when Treasurer, said that branch lines were bloodsuckers, instead of being feeders. He (Mr. Leahy) did not go as far as that. He had always supported a Government which built those branch lines for the sake of developing the country, and who looked for a secondary gain,

and he held that such a policy was warranted when they had a surplus from revenue in some other direction which enabled them to pay the interest on the cost of construction. All that policy was condemned by the Premier and his followers. They said, if money was to be borrowed, it must be spent on works that would pay interest on the cost of construction. How did the hon. gentleman justify his present position? He said the Opposition acknowledged the principle of betterment as applied to railway construction—acknowledged a principle which did not exist—a myth, a farce. Now, take the case of the Pittsworth line. In 1901, it paid 19s. 10d. per cent.; the next year, £1 4s. 9d.; the next year, £1 13s. 9d.; and last year, £2 15s. 6d.—after 10 miles had been added to it. Then take the Killarney line, running through the finest country in the State. The Canning Downs Estate belonged to the Macanshes; but they did not own 20 per cent. of the land through which that line ran. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The line skirted it for 7 miles.] Admitting that the line went through 50 per cent. of it, how did that compare with the 75 per cent. which was private land through which the proposed Dalby line ran? The Killarney line was a huge failure, just as the line under consideration would be, according to the hon. gentleman's own showing. In 1900 the loss on that line was £889; 1901, £990; 1902, £776; 1903, £1,011; and in 1904, owing to the addition of 10 miles, there was a profit of £1,580. Would the hon. gentleman tell him that the line had been paying its way, or that any other branch had paid its way? [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; the Pittsworth Branch, the Killarney Branch, and the Esk Branch.] He contended that the late Government, and Governments before it, contended that such lines paid the State to construct; but the hon. gentleman and his supporters said there had been a loss of £400,000 or £500,000 because the money had been injudiciously expended; and yet now he came forward with a proposal to expend money in the same manner. How did he reconcile his condemnatory speeches lately with the principle he was trying to establish? He asked further, how it was possible for people to get the produce to market at a price that would pay them if such lines were not constructed, and he quoted the Beauraba line. That line was about 16 miles in length, and it paid as much as it did from the junction into Brisbane, a distance of 64 miles. He said there could be no industry if that kind of thing was carried on, and that there must be cheaper rates. He was going to give cheap rates and dear land. Now, what was the difference between the two? He would sell the land in small areas at an enhanced price. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: And long terms.] That did not matter. The selector would have to pay interest on his purchase. Where did the betterment come in there? Only the other night the Secretary for Lands had a Bill before them under which purchasers of land on long terms would pay interest. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is in certain cases.] Had the Government a policy for every day in the week? That was the way the Premier was humbugging the country, giving the selectors cheap railway rates and dear land—a kind of juggling business. He did not know who was the father of the principle, but it was quite certain that that kind of juggling was not going to put the country in a sound financial condition. It did not matter two pins in a man's business whether they gave him one article cheap and another dear. It was the balance at the end of the year that told, and he contended that the

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Government could not produce permanent benefit by giving cheap railway rates and dear land. The probability was that in any case the farmer was the man who would suffer, because he would have no show against the present Treasurer, who was raking in everything he could lay his hands on in the shape of taxation. He thought he had now dealt with most of the points which the hon. gentleman had, after great deliberation, made against him. He had shown that, except in the sugar districts, not one of those lines were paying, though he admitted their value in opening up the country for settlement. It was a question how much they could afford to pay, and, as they were passing through hard times, they ought to pay no more than they could afford. There were just one or two other points to which he would briefly refer. Mr. Phillips, in reply to question No. 2, said—

From inquiries I have made it would appear that the present value of freehold land between Cattle Creek and Dalby may be placed at from £1 10s. to £2 10s. per acre.

Those lands extend over about 23 miles of the railway. The Secretary for Lands had told them what an excellent piece of country Wyobie was. Wyobie was within 3 or 4 miles of the railway, and the hon. gentleman wanted the Government to buy it under the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act. It must be very excellent land, indeed, when it could be bought for £1 5s. or £1 6s. an acre; and there could be no betterment charged to it because the line was there already. Mr. Phillips also said—

I have no hesitation, however, in saying that, with a tramway to Cattle Creek, the value of available Crown land in that district might reasonably be estimated at from 10s. to 15s. per acre, chiefly for dairying purposes, although some cultivable land would, no doubt, be included.

And in another place he estimated the present value of that land at 2s. 6d. an acre. On the merits of the case, it was evident that that would not be a paying speculation. In conclusion, he would ask the Secretary for Railways not to imagine that, because they on that side advocated the system of betterment which had always prevailed in Queensland, they were by any manner of means committing themselves as supporters of the policy he had initiated lately, and of which every common-sense man in the community was heartily ashamed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member for Bulloo had asked him a direct question with regard to Mr. Phillips's estimate of the value of freehold land between Dalby and Cattle Creek. His own opinion was that Mr. Phillips had taken an outside estimate. Within the last twelve or eighteen months exceptionally good land at a distance of 6 or 7 miles from Dalby had been sold at £1 an acre, and it was bought with all improvements, which were fairly valuable. The hon. gentleman tried to institute a comparison between the value of the Wyobie Estate and the value of the freehold land between Dalby and Cattle Creek, but there was really no comparison. The lands which would be thrown open were right under the main range where there was the greatest rainfall on the western side of the range; in addition to which it was all rich

[9.30 p.m.] land, and would be offered in comparatively small areas. The Wyobie Estate, with which the hon. gentleman attempted to compare these lands, had an area of 46,000 acres; but the nearest part of it, which was the most inferior part, was 5 or 6 miles from the railway, while the bulk of the land—and unquestionably the best—was 8 or 10 miles away. The hon. member said that Wyobie could be

had for £1 6s., when, as a matter of fact, it was £1 7s. 6d.; but it belonged to the estate of the late James Tyson, and the beneficiaries were anxious to dispose of it, hence the low price, which was not the true value at all. The reason why he asked the House to acquire it was that if it were cut up into areas the same as the land at the terminus of the proposed line would be cut up, on agricultural farm terms, they could get anything from £1 15s. to £2 5s. an acre, and up to £2 10s. an acre. There were blocks of 3,000 acres 8 or 10 miles from the line that men would pay £2 10s. an acre for to-morrow. The hon. member would see that there was nothing in the impression he desired to convey that, because Wyobie had been offered at a certain price, the value they were putting on the land near the Bunya Mountains was a fallacious one.

Mr. MAXWELL: Earlier in the afternoon he had intimated his intention of voting against the proposal, but, as the Secretary for Railways had intimated that he was going to endeavour to adopt some means by which the owners of the land benefited by the line would be obliged to contribute, he would vote for the motion. If the only portions to be taxed were those tinted red and blue on the map—that was for the first 23 miles—later on there would be no land to tax for the further construction of the line. Practically, it would go up against the range, and the man on the other side would certainly refuse to be taxed therefor. The only means of getting at the people benefited was by taxing freehold property through which it ran. The Secretary for Railways had intimated that there were 30,000 acres of freehold land in the vicinity of Dalby Downs, and, unless the Government brought in a Bill for the taxing of the land at once, they would simply be hoodwinked into passing this measure, with the idea that they were going to get the betterment, because the people who bought them would have paid the increased price put upon them by the owners.

Mr. SPENCER agreed that the people benefited by the line should pay something for the increased value of their land, but he did not see how they were going to get at them. As soon as it was decided that the line was to be built, people would put in their values at the top price, owners would practically put their own value on the land. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What is to prevent the basis of 1904 being taken as the basis.] The Treasurer had stated the other night that the owners of the land could put in their own value, in consequence of which they would put a high value, which would not increase, and there would be no betterment. They wanted to know whether it would increase settlement, or they would get a good return from it. There were some discrepancies in the report as to the value of the land. If freehold land was worth £1 5s. to £2 10s. an acre, Crown land valued at 2s. 6d. an acre must be very inferior. He would like the quality of the land to have been reported on more fully. It was said to be suitable for agriculture, but they did not know whether it was heavily timbered, well watered, or whether it was black or loamy soil. He had been told there was a large quantity of valuable timber that would take some years to cut, and, if so, a good trade could be opened up. As to the increased value that was expected to be derived from the land, they might increase the price, but whether they could sell it at the enhanced price was a different thing altogether. [Mr. J. LEAHY: They say there is no timber for sleepers there.] There was very good bunya pine, which was suitable for building, if it was not suitable for sleepers, and they could easily get timber for

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railway purposes. He did not agree with the remark in the report that this land would grow lucerne. His experience was that they could not grow lucerne about Dalby, although if there was a better rainfall at the Bunya Mountains it might grow there. Then, again, he did not think that much would be done in cutting firewood in the district, as there would be no market for it. From what he knew of the district, the line was preferable to the one they agreed to the other night; and, if it came to a vote, he intended to support the motion. There was a great deal in what the hon. member for Cambooya said with regard to a line to Ellangowan. There was settlement there already, and the farmers were carrying their produce long distances. That was a line that would pay. So also would a line from Oakey to Mount Russell, as there was a good deal of close settlement there also. He was not interested in the Darling Downs district at all, but he hoped that the next railways that were constructed would be one from Pittsworth to Ellangowan and one from Oakey to Mount Russell. He could not understand why the estimated increase in freehold lands through the construction of this railway should be from 25 to 50 per cent., whilst the Crown lands were expected to increase by 400 per cent. However, he was always in favour of building railways where they would open up the country to close settlement, and he believed that would be so in this case.

Mr. WOODS: It was his intention to support the motion as against the amendment. He knew the whole of the country through which the railway would run. He was not prepared to say, like the hon. member for Maranoa, that it was preferable to the railway they passed last week, but he had served a great many years in the district, and he had seen hundreds of acres of wheat growing there, and as fine lucerne as he ever saw on the Darling Downs. He had the same fault to find with the Commissioner's report that he had to find in connection with his report on the extension from Degilbo to Wetheron, and that was in regard to his recommendation that the line should be built without ballast. Now, in black-soil country, when the soil began to get dry, it opened up, and, if there was no ballast, the metals were twisted and the line destroyed. That happened on the Mackay Railway, which had to be ballasted afterwards at great expense. If this line was going to be built, he hoped that the Government would see that the first cost was the last. He hoped the railway would be substantially built, and that it would be constructed by day labour at standard rates of wages. One of the objections of the hon. member for Burke to the railway was in connection with the unemployed in Northern Queensland. Well, when the harvesting was over, the unemployed in Southern Queensland would flock to the Wolfram districts of Northern Queensland, where there were too many men now, unless some other employment was found for them in the South.

Mr. SPENCER: In order to emphasise the necessity of having feeders to main lines, he might mention one case where a man who carried on wheatgrowing 26 miles from the railway had to pay 2s. a bag to have his wheat carted to the railway. That meant a handicap of about 8s. an acre, but if the stuff had been carried by a feeder it would not have cost anything like that amount. It was almost impossible to establish settlement in places 10 or 15 miles away from a railway line, but he was sure that light lines into agricultural districts would pay. They might not pay for short distances, but as contributors to the main lines, as a rule, they paid handsomely.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted (*Mr. Philp's amendment*) be so inserted—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 11.	
Mr. Barnes	Mr. J. Leahy
„ Campbell	„ Macartney
„ Forsyth	„ Paget
„ Fox	„ Petrie
„ Hauran	„ Philp
„ Jenkinson	

Tellers: Mr. Jenkinson and Mr. Macartney.

NOES, 38.	
Mr. Barber	Mr. Kenna
„ Barton	„ Kerr
„ Bell	„ Kidston
„ Blair	„ Land
„ Boucharat	„ Lesina
„ Bowman	„ Mann
„ Bridges	„ McDonnell
„ Burrows	„ Morgan
„ Cowap	„ Murphy
„ Denham	„ O'Brien
„ Dibley	„ O'Keefe
„ Dunsford	„ Plunkett
„ Fudge	„ Reinhold
„ Grayson	„ Ryland
„ Hamilton	„ Scott
„ Hardacre	„ Somerset
„ Hargreaves	„ Spencer
„ Hawthorn	„ Turner
„ Jones	„ Woods

Tellers: Mr. Murphy and Mr. Reinhold.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The principle laid down by the Premier was embraced in the extract he (Mr. Macartney) had previously read out, and it amounted to the following:—That the railway should be constructed at no expense to the taxpayers; that Crown lands should be loaded with one portion of the expense and the freehold lands with another portion of the expense—they were to be so loaded that the line was not to cost the State anything. But the resolution did not protect the rights of the State, or embrace the stated policy of the Government, and he proposed to move an amendment which he thought would protect those rights. The amendment was a necessary one, because, in addition to protecting the rights of the State, it would secure to this Chamber sufficient control over the administration in connection with this line. He moved that, after the 1st paragraph, the following words be inserted:—

Subject to—

- (a) The contribution by the owners of all benefited freehold lands of a proportion of the cost of construction according to a benefited area, and conditions to be hereafter defined and declared by Parliament; and
- (b) Securing from Crown lands benefited by such construction an additional price upon the present value sufficient with such contribution as aforesaid to cover the cost of such construction on conditions to be also hereafter declared by Parliament.

After what had been said by the Secretary for Railways, and by other hon. members opposite, he had no doubt that his amendment would be accepted. It would have the effect of absolutely securing the execution of the policy set out in the Governor's Speech, enunciated again [10 p.m.] that evening, and submitted to the country in the Premier's manifesto a few months ago. He could not understand how a Government who had introduced a general Betterment Bill a few weeks ago, and who had intimated a fervent desire to pass that measure, should, now that they had an opportunity of catching the betterment in a particular instance, reject such a proposal as that contained in the amendment. The proposal as submitted to the Committee really ignored the betterment principle. The passing of the resolutions as they stood would have the effect of warning the owners of those freehold lands, and they would

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scoop the betterment. Unless the resolutions were amended as he proposed, there was no possible chance of the persons liable for betterment being actually caught. The amendment would enable the Government to carry out the policy the Premier had enunciated with regard to the construction of such branch railways. If the amendment was rejected, it would probably be another six or eight months before anything could be done in a general way in regard to the betterment of lands in districts where railways were constructed, and he was one of those who had no confidence that anything of a general nature such as they had recently had before them would be passed into law. The Betterment Bill was introduced for the purpose of keeping certain hon. members on the other side in hand. The betterment principle he was trying to establish in connection with this railway was the betterment principle which had been in operation amongst local authorities in Queensland, in England, and in America. The Opposition were in favour of that principle, and had always been in favour of it. The Premier stated that "if" the Government had an opportunity they would bring in a measure dealing with the matter. The Betterment Bill introduced by the Treasurer was dead, though the Secretary for Lands said it was not dead.

The CHAIRMAN : Order ! I hope the hon. member will not continue to refer to the Betterment Bill ; but that he will confine his remarks to the question before the Committee.

Mr. MACARTNEY said he was absolutely in order.

The CHAIRMAN : Order ! The hon. member must not dictate to the Chair.

Mr. MACARTNEY said he had no wish to dictate to the Chair ; but he thought the Chairman's sense of fair play would admit that, if the Premier asked the Committee to accept this bare resolution on the promise that "if" opportunity offered something would be done in future, that promise was worth nothing. The Committee ought not to take the hon. gentleman's promise. They had an opportunity of protecting the rights of the Chamber, and his amendment would do that. It would be a statement made by the Chamber that this railway was not to be constructed except on the conditions laid down in the amendment for securing the betterment on the freehold lands which would be benefited by the construction of the railway, and for securing the enhanced value of the Crown lands benefited by the railway. The amendment will be a warning to the people to that effect. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS : They have had notice pretty definitely already.] He could forgive the hon. gentleman, because he knew he had a great anxiety to get this railway through. The hon. gentleman had been anxious for many years to get it passed. The amendment was a reasonable one, which the hon. gentleman ought to accept, because it would place on record somewhat definitely the conditions on which the railway was to be built. So far as the Crown lands were concerned, they knew perfectly well that unless some machinery was provided to secure the additional price to the State they would find that that condition would be evaded by the Administration in time to come. People would say that the price was too high, and the hon. gentleman and his colleagues would admit the necessities of the situation, and a reduction in prices would be the result. This new method ought to be boiled down into a concrete form that they could all understand. What was the use of saying that this railway was to be built on the newly invented method of the Morgan

Government if some provision was not made to restrict them to that method ? As the resolution stood, they were not bound to do what they professed they were going to do, and altered conditions might justify them in coming down six months hence and saying, "That was all very well, but we could not do it, certain things have happened which prevent us doing it." [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS : In that case the House has the remedy in its own hands.] The hon. gentleman need not trouble him about the remedy of the House. The hon. gentleman would be in the same position as he was that night if he had the same majority. [The TREASURER : In that case, what good is the amendment ?] The amendment would be a deliberate statement by Parliament, if voted on by the other side. [The PREMIER : You hope so.] If it was passed ; but he quite understood that it would not be passed. Hon. members opposite had easy methods of departing from their lifelong principles when it suited their purposes. After all their professions, and their platform pledges, how could they consider themselves consistent in opposing an amendment of that sort, which was in accord with one of their cherished principles ? The principle of the amendment was one in which he believed. It was recognised by the statute-book ; it was recognised among the local bodies ; and in various other ways ; and it was one that ought to be enforced. But when hon. members opposite had a chance of getting some of their own principles, they did not want them. They trusted to something to come, and something they would never get.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS felt very much disposed to mistrust the Greeks even when bringing gifts, and he was very hopeful that, notwithstanding all the hon. gentleman's professions of earnestness, and his new-born zeal as regarded the betterment principle, the majority of hon. members would estimate his little effort at its true value ; that they would recognise that there was absolutely no sincerity in the amendment ; that it was designed, not for the purpose of enforcing a principle which he or his party believed in, but simply for the purpose of trying to put members of the Labour party in an awkward position. He was quite sure the members of the Labour party could see through the transparent act of the hon. gentleman. [Government members : Hear, hear !] The hon. member did not believe in it himself ; he had not the slightest hope that it would be carried, and he had practically admitted that he had moved the amendment with the object of making the Labour party stick to their principles. He was quite sure they could be relied upon to stick to their principles without the aid of the hon. member for Toowong. [Government members : Hear, hear !] There was no business in the amendment. He was quite sure that no member of the House would be more sincerely sorry to see the amendment carried than the hon. member himself. [Mr. MACARTNEY : Give me a chance.] The hon. member had, probably, another object in view. He wanted to ensure that, if the amendment was carried with the aid of the Labour party, the proposal would be incontinently kicked out when it made its appearance in the other Chamber. He hoped the majority would not allow the kicking out to be done by the other Chamber, but would incontinently kick out the hon. member's insincere proposal. [Government members : Hear, hear !]

HON. R. PHILIP : Of course, he always knew the Premier was insincere. (Government laughter.) He allowed his Treasurer to introduce a Betterment Bill, and never entered the Chamber while it was being discussed. For years past they had built railways on the principle

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embodied in the amendment, and now the hon. gentleman treated it as if it were something quite new. He (Mr. Philp) believed in that kind of betterment, but he did not believe in the Treasurer's betterment, because he would charge people who got no benefit. The amendment said that the betterment should take place on the land benefited, and the building of the line would not be delayed. As soon as the resolution passed both Houses, the Government would be able to lay a Bill before the House. [The TREASURER: Whether or no.] The whole thing was as simple as A B C. This was the first time he had ever seen a party division take place on such a matter. Every hon. member on the other side voted for the railway. When he sat on the other side, he allowed hon. members to vote as they wished on railway proposals.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not discussing the question before the Committee.

HON. R. PHILP: He was sorry the Premier had made the question a party one, and he would be sorry for it himself some day. He could not be sincere in trying to pass a Betterment Bill if he would not accept the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Toowong. The hon. gentleman had no right to impute motives either. [The TREASURER: Why do you do it?] The hon. gentleman allowed a Betterment Bill to be brought in, but when the betterment principle was introduced on right lines he opposed it. Then, again, the hon. gentleman spoke of the Upper House. What had they to do with the Upper House? If the Government were sincere in trying to pass the Betterment Bill, they ought to accept the amendment, in which case they must bring in a Bill next year to carry out the proposal of the hon. member for Toowong. [The TREASURER: They will bring in a much better proposal next year.] He intended to support the amendment, and he believed the majority would be sincere, and this time vote for their principles.

Mr. MACARTNEY denied that he had any ulterior motive in proposing the amendment, and the idea that, if it was accepted, the other House would throw out the resolution had never occurred to him. The main portion of the resolution was in the 1st paragraph. The amendment, if passed, would form a supplementary paragraph, and he saw no special reason why it should be thrown out there. The amendment was justified by what had been done by the late Government, and was in accord with the Premier's policy and promises. If they liked to reject it, well and good; but he was afraid the hon. gentleman's promises in that matter would be like those he had made in other matters, and shamelessly violated.

Mr. HARDACRE: He had voted against the last amendment on the distinct understanding that the betterment principle would be applied to this railway. Now, they had an amendment embodying that idea in a definite form to be attached to the proposal. He was quite willing to accept the assurance of the Government that the principle would be applied. He also doubted whether, at that stage of the session, it was advisable to tack on to a railway proposal an amendment which might result in its rejection in another place. Another objection to it was that it was confined to a limited area—the benefited area—and he preferred the policy foreshadowed by the Government, and at that juncture he had no desire to do anything which would interfere with it by binding them down to a hard-and-fast line.

Mr. P. J. LEAHY: The only effect of the amendment would be that it would compel the

Government to do what the leader of the Government said he was willing to do. He should have preferred to see the line built on the guarantee principle. He was not altogether in love with the amendment, but it could not do any great harm, and one of the reasons why he would vote for it was that if it was not carried they might have a Betterment Bill next year which would be very different from the principle proposed by the hon. member for Toowong, which was entirely different from the principle they had heard so much about recently. Under the latter system men might have to pay who received no betterment at all. If the amendment was carried, they would not have a betterment scheme introduced as proposed by the Treasurer, which would have an injurious effect on the country.

Mr. LESINA: The mover of this amendment had sprung a mine on the Committee. He (Mr. Lesina) was not content to take the Government promises altogether in this matter, because a whole host of things might [10.30 p.m.] happen in the course of the next few weeks to prevent them being realised.

The whole history of most Governments right through the past was broken promises. He would vote against the resolution unless it contained some definite provision that the unearned increment which would accrue to the station properties through which the railway would run would be taken for the benefit of the State. That was a very fair proposition. The Premier said he would agree to it, and that a Bill would be introduced providing this betterment for the benefit of the general community, but assured them that if the amendment of the hon. member for Toowong were carried it would be an indication to the Council to throw it out, and that we would get no betterment. Then, why should he vote for the construction of a line which could not pay, although it might promote settlement? A railway paid, perhaps, through the Customs, the Lands, and various other departments, but it was merely a question of book-keeping as a railway. The hon. member for Toowong had spiked the guns of hon. members on this side. Many hon. members of the Committee did not care to vote for anything which emanated from that hon. member, and he could not blame them. If it had been moved by a member on this side, it would have had a different reception altogether. What were the Premier's reasons for refusing to accept this amendment? Because it was moved by a member of the Committee who was alleged not to be sincere in his advocacy of the betterment principle. What did it matter whether he was sincere or not, as long as he did the right thing? He had two or three courses open: either to walk out of the Chamber and refuse to vote; or he could take the Premier's verbal promise, given on the floor of the Chamber, which he hoped they would hold him to during the coming session, or to see the promise signed in black and white in the Bill. He regarded the hon. gentleman leading the Government as a man whose word might be considered his bond; it had always been so considered; but the history of Governments all down the ages was marked by broken promises. If the amendment was rejected by the Council, what possible hope was there of the Betterment Bill going through? Some hon. members might be disappointed if the amendment were carried; but why should he allow any political principle to be sold by the fact that a man who was a political hypocrite took it up? Because a politician took up this principle for the purpose of securing a party triumph, that should not bluff a genuine supporter of the principle against voting for it. Despite the fact that the amendment came from a political opponent, who might not believe in

Mr. Lesina.]

one shred of the principle he professed to favour, he (Mr. Lesina) was compelled to vote for the amendment.

The TREASURER: Every hon. member would readily believe that, if he thought the acceptance of the amendment would further the acceptance of the betterment principle, he would vote for it; and he thought they would also clearly recognise that, if that were likely to be the effect, the hon. member for Toowong would be about the last member of the Committee to propose it. Although some young members might not clearly perceive it, the hon. member for Toowong knew quite well that the tacking of his amendment on to the resolution would not have the slightest effect in making betterment the law of Queensland. [Mr. MACARTNEY: It would fix the condition.] It would depend entirely on the Government that happened to be in power next session, and on the majority sitting behind that Government, whether the Betterment Bill, or even this small—and, he thought, mistaken—local application of the principle was passed. The amendment would not advance the principle of betterment in the least, but it might have the effect of inducing their friends in another place to throw out the resolution; and, as their friends on the other side had failed to defeat the resolution, they were now directing their attention to have it defeated in the other place.

HON. R. PHILP: The Treasurer, as usual, was full of innuendoes. If a resolution of that sort was not likely to be passed by the other House, what chance was there of the Betterment Bill, which applied to the whole of Queensland, being passed? [The TREASURER: We will deal with that when the occasion arises.] The Treasurer could not point to a single instance in which his Betterment Bill was applicable, but fifty instances could be adduced in which the principle embodied in the amendment was in force. In fact, it was in force in ten or a dozen different cases in Queensland. If a majority of the Committee passed this resolution, they could see that a Betterment Bill was brought in next session. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They can see to that without this resolution.] He did not think so. If the Council would not pass this resolution, they certainly could not pass the Betterment Bill brought in by the Treasurer. [The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: They would not pass the Franchise Bill, but they may yet.] There was a Franchise Act in force in all the other States, but none of them had ever passed such a measure as the Treasurer's Betterment Bill. If the amendment were embodied in the resolution, it would not prevent the line being built, because the Government could go on with the construction of the railway, and bring in their Bill to secure the betterment next year. He did not believe in the Treasurer's Betterment Bill, but he believed in this principle as applied to local works. It had been carried out in connection with bridges and railways, and he did not see why this railway should be built on any other principle than that proposed by the hon. member for Toowong.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The Government had given an undertaking in the clearest terms of their intention in regard to the freehold area. They declared that those lands would have to bear their share of the cost of the construction of the railway, and the whole basis of their system of parliamentary government had its foundation upon accepting the word of a Government. After the declaration of the leader of the Government as to his intentions next session, the majority would know how to deal with him if he broke his word.

[Mr. Lesina.

Mr. KENNA intended to vote against the amendment. In the first place, he viewed with very considerable suspicion any professions of democracy or liberalism that emanated from the hon. member for Toowong. His experience was that whenever any progressive, democratic measures were brought forward the hon. member for Toowong denounced them most bitterly, and voted against them. He was not going to be made a tool of by that hon. member. The assurances that the Government had given were very satisfactory—that, if any of the land which the line would run through was sold, the buyers would run the risk of having to pay betterment on it—and he was going to trust the Government. A suggestion had been made as to what might happen in the other House. The shadow of the Upper House seemed to be looming very largely in this Assembly, but that would not deter him from doing anything that he considered it right to do. For these reasons, he would vote against the amendment.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He did not intend to take any notice of the scurrilous attacks which had been made on him. His record in *Harvard* would amply reply to them, and would show that he had always been consistent. The amendment he had proposed would be effective in this way: If passed by a majority of this House, the Government would be compelled to give effect to it. [The TREASURER: You know that is incorrect.] As he had already explained, his amendment would protect the rights of the State and all concerned.

Mr. HARDACRE explained that a number of hon. members would have voted against this resolution had it not been for the assurances the Government had given.

Mr. LESINA resented the imputation of the hon. member for Bowen that any hon. member who voted for the amendment was being made a tool of by the hon. member for Toowong. He knew that the hon. member for Toowong was not sincere in introducing his amendment any more than the hon. member for Bulloo was when he introduced an amendment in the Franchise Bill giving the inmates of Dunwich a vote. It was done simply to kill the Bill in the Upper House. He (Mr. Lesina) was not going to be played with like that. Why should not the betterment principle be put down in black and white in the resolution? The Premier would not allow it to go in black and white, and Governments had to be judged by their performances.

Mr. DUNSFORD (*Charters Towers*) was surprised to see so many converts to the betterment system. Hon. members opposite formerly characterised the system as robbery and thieving, but to-night it was something good, when introduced for the purpose of killing this proposal. The hon. member for Clermont seemed to think that in voting for the amendment he would be voting for a good principle, and that in voting against it he

[11 p.m.] would be voting against the principle of the Betterment Bill. A thing might be good or bad according to the manner in which it was introduced, and this amendment was a mere betterment patch, which would be an evil thing, inasmuch as it would have only a local application. He believed in a general Betterment Bill. If the amendment were adopted, certain freeholders would be called upon to pay a portion of the interest on the cost of construction of this railway, and would also be called upon to pay their share of the interest on the cost

of other railways by which they were not directly benefited. The proposition would therefore bear very unjustly on those people. The betterment principle was one which should be made of general application, and which should be dealt with on its merits, and not be tacked on to a motion like that before the Committee. It would be just as reasonable to tack on to the resolutions a provision to the effect that they must have an eight-hour day, a minimum wage, compensation for workmen, and arbitration and conciliation. All those matters should be considered on their merits, apart from a particular proposal, and so should the betterment principle.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted (*Mr. Macartney's amendment*) be so inserted—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 12.

Mr. Cameron	Mr. P. J. Leahy
„ Forsyth	„ Lesina
„ Fox	„ Macartney
„ Hanran	„ Maxwell
„ Jenkinson	„ Paget
„ J. Leahy	„ Philp

Tellers: Mr. Cameron and Mr. Paget.

NOES, 35.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Kerr
„ Bell	„ Kidston
„ Blair	„ Land
„ Bouchard	„ Lindley
„ Bowman	„ Mackintosh
„ Bridges	„ Mann
„ Burrows	„ McDonnell
„ Cowap	„ Morgan
„ Denham	„ Murphy
„ Dibley	„ O'Keefe
„ Dunsford	„ Reinhold
„ Fudge	„ Ryland
„ Grayson	„ Scott
„ Hamilton	„ Somerset
„ Harlaere	„ Spencer
„ Hargreaves	„ Turner
„ Jones	„ Woods
„ Kenna	

Tellers: Mr. Burrows and Mr. Lindley.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. LESINA asked what was the intention of the Commissioner in regard to the construction of the line. Did he propose to call for tenders, or construct it by day labour?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He was not in a position to say what the Commissioner proposed; but if the hon. member desired to know what the Government proposed he was in a position to tell him. They proposed that the railway should be constructed by day labour. [Government members: Hear, hear!]

Mr. WOODS asked if the Government intended to pay a standard wage?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He had no present intention of doing that.

Mr. LESINA: Did he understand the Secretary for Railways to say he had no present intention of establishing a minimum wage? [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes.] He must offer a protest against that. Reference had been made to the unemployed who were to be given work on that railway, without the intervention of middlemen or contractors; and it had been said that they would be able to make decent wages; but the Premier said he would not establish a minimum wage. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I did not say that.]

[Mr. J. LEAHY: He said he had no present intention.] The intention might develop, if members sitting on that side would speak up boldly on behalf of the principle. If they sat silent, they might not get it. He represented working men who would learn with satisfaction that it was the intention of the Government to employ men at a minimum rate of wages. It was an experimental railway, and, therefore, should be constructed as cheaply as possible; but there should be no sweating. He wanted to see men get a decent wage, and he hoped the Government would eliminate the sweating element.

Mr. KERR presumed the Government had not considered the matter of a minimum wage, but he took it they were not going to "sweat" men who were working for them. To ask them at that hour of the night to give a decided opinion on the rate of wages was asking too much. His experience of the Government was that they could trust them to pay fair and reasonable wages. If the work was to be done by the unemployed, and by men who had not done navy work before, it could not be expected that they should get the rate of wages paid to an expert navy. They could not expect that work carried out as relief work would pay men 9s. or 10s. a day, as was paid at one time on the Central Railway. When he was working alongside of another man at his trade, and was turning out 7s. or 8s. worth more work per day than the other man, he certainly wanted to get an extra rate of wage. He believed the Government would deal with the men fairly, and he had every confidence that there would be no sweating the unemployed.

Mr. J. LEAHY agreed with the Secretary for Railways in the position that he had taken up. There would be, no doubt, a standard wage for a standard man; but if they had certain men who could only do half-a-day's work, it could not be expected that they should get the same rate of pay as the skilled navy. When he was in office he gave the men piecework, and he was blackguarded all over the country for it. He believed in the principle which the hon. member for Barcoo enunciated. Whatever a man was worth he should get. If he was a standard man, he should get a standard wage. He should like to see the highest wage paid that they could afford.

HON. R. PHILP was satisfied that if the work was done by day labour the Government would see that the men got fair pay. Since the debate had taken place a letter had been placed in his hands from Mr. John A. Watt, president of the Moola Farmers' Progress Association, introducing Mr. James McNery, who had been appointed to interview the Secretary for Railways with respect to railway extension from Bowenville to Maida Hill. [The hon. member read the letter, which said, in conclusion—"We know, as you have been through the district, you will be able to do us justice. Mr. McNery will be able to show you all the correspondence and the reply, and you will see how we have been treated."] He was informed that the Snowy River district was one of the most prosperous settlements in the locality.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I desire to call your attention to a remark made by the hon. member for Clermont.

The CHAIRMAN: I did not hear any remark made by the hon. member for Clermont; there was a general conversation going on at the time.

Mr. Jackson.]

HON. R. PHILP : He only desired to add that he knew Mr. Watt, who was a thoroughly good farmer, and an old resident in the district, and his opinion as to the proper route for the line ought to carry some weight.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS : If all members of Parliament read to the Committee all the letters they received in their private capacity advocating alternative routes to those proposed by the Government, the Committee would have no time to devote to anything else. It was the most natural thing in the world that the people of Bowenville should think their interests would be best served by a line from Bowenville to Maida Hill. The only reply was that the Government, having considered the whole case, have decided that the line they had recommended for adoption was the best line to serve the requirements of the largest portion of country and the largest number of people.

Mr. LESINA : His object in asking the question about the minimum rate of wages was to guard against a repetition of the system practised by the hon. member for Bulloo, when Minister for Railways, of paying men 4s. 6d., and even 3s. 6d. a day, according to their efficiency. He objected to men being compelled to "sweat their guts out" for such a pittance.

Mr. J. LEAHY : The rate of wages paid by the Commissioner for Railways under the late Government was exactly what had been paid by the present Government ever since.

Mr. WOODS : As long as he had a seat in the House, he intended to expose Ministers who employed men on sweaters' wages.

Mr. KERR : He was an employer of labour, but no one had ever accused him of sweating. He had never engaged a servant at the rate of wages paid by the hon. member for Clermont.

Mr. LESINA : That was the sort of insult a man had to put up with for advocating the rights of the working men.

Mr. MACARTNEY : It was very strange that work for the unemployed should only be found in electoral districts represented by Ministers. Last year it was Warwick and Rockhampton ; now it was the Ministerial electorate of Dalby. In view of the very large number of unemployed, he might have preferred to draw a distinction—

The CHAIRMAN : Order ! I do not think the hon. member is speaking to the question before the Committee.

Mr. MACARTNEY : This railway was going to tie Parliament down to further expenditure, and further expenditure was also [11.30 p.m.] going to be entailed in connection with the repurchased estates. The Secretary for Lands had been active for some years past in pressing the repurchase of estates on the Government of the day, and Mr. Phillips, in his report, said the railway would not pay unless the Government went in for repurchasing estates, and not only were they passing this line to-night, but they were imposing on the Government the necessity of making the railway pay. [The PREMIER : Question !] I am going to speak whether the hon. gentleman protests or not. [The PREMIER : I am protesting against irrelevant debate.] The Premier was not in the chair. [The PREMIER : You are discussing a matter already decided.] He would state what he had got to say ; he had said it, and he was content to resume his seat.

Question put and passed.

[*Hon. R. Philp.*

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to certain resolutions.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes to 12 o'clock.